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2011 Annual Report

By the Numbers:

Development Services: Building Safety Division

The Building Safety Division is responsible for ensuring all structural development in the City of Lawrence meets the code standards that have been adopted by the city. The division, in reviewing building permit applications, identifies code issues and works with applicants to resolve any issues prior to construction. The division performs all applicable building inspections throughout the construction process, as well as administering a contractor licensing program to maintain construction standards.

Permit Type	2008	2009	2010	2011
Single-Family	102	110	146	95
Duplex	12 (24 units)	16 (32 units)	10 (20 units)	4 (8 units)
Multi-Family	27 (557 units)	15 (172 units)	6 (220 units)	19 (363 units)
Commercial	11	9	9	15
Remodel	271	200	275	317
Mech./Plumb./Elec.	1165	1090	1313	1243
Signs	386	370	340	348
Other	204	188	156	131
Total	2,179	1,988	2,255	2,172

- Inspections performed – 7,653
- Inspections requested via Inspection Hotline – 3,864
- Plan review actions completed – 4,210
- Licenses issued –
 - Building contractor licenses issued – 411
 - Trades contractor licenses issued – 360
 - Trades worker licenses issued – 498
- Percent of permit applications reviewed within target timeframes:
 - Residential applications within 5 days – 97%
 - Commercial applications within 15 days – 96%

The Building Safety Division provides monthly permit reports to the City Commission and monthly articles for the Lawrence Home Builder's Association Newsletters.

Accomplishments:

Development Services: Building Safety Division

- Staff worked with education vendors to provide and promote continuing education programs in Lawrence for contractors and trades workers. Programs were held on November 18th and 19th, and December 2nd. Education topics presented included *2008 NEC Electrical Calculations, Healthcare Facility Electrical Provisions under the 2008 NEC, Common Framing Errors, Adaptive and Universal Residential Remodeling, Home Energy Audits During Construction, Concrete 101, and Concrete Troubleshooting.*
- Adopted the 2009 International Codes, which became effective January 1, 2011. Significant issues in the updated codes include increased energy conservation standards that are estimated to improve building performance by 8% to 10%; requirements for carbon monoxide detectors in newly constructed dwellings and existing dwellings where work requiring a permit is performed; tamper-resistant electrical outlets in new dwellings; revised wall bracing and foundation anchorage requirements; and revised venting requirements for clothes dryers.
- BSD participated in the Insurance Services Office, Inc. program *Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule*, in which building departments are rated on community efforts to mitigate property damage due to natural disasters through the adoption and enforcement of the most current building codes. Ratings are assigned based on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being outstanding. BSD received ratings of 4 for one- and two-family dwelling construction, and 3 for all other construction. According to ISO, approximately 65% of building departments receive ratings between 4 and 6, and only 16% receive ratings between 1 and 3.
- Staff also participated in several outreach initiatives to promote and educate the public about building code issues. These efforts included participation in the Lawrence Home Show, along with presentations at Remodelers Council meetings and Lawrence Home Builders Association general membership meetings, and articles for monthly LHBA newsletters.
- BSD staff attended a total of 156.5 hours of continuing education training. Staff attended training on various building code topics, disaster assessment, state regulations related to technical professions, and sustainable design, as well as CPR classes and internal safety discussions.

The Building Safety Division provided continued support to numerous advisory boards, including:

- Electrical Code Board of Appeals
- Plumbing Code Board of Appeals
- Building Code Board of Appeals
- Contractor Licensing Board
- Mechanical Code Board of Appeals

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Programs and Services: **Development Services: Community Development Division**

The Community Development Division (CDD) administers multiple grants provided directly by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC) and the Kansas Department of Commerce. Those include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), and the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs.

- There were 25 Emergency or Furnace Loan applications approved and completed for a total of \$86,732.
- The First Time Homebuyer Lawrence Community Housing and Land Trust (LCHLT) program provided down payment assistance and placed seven first time homebuyers in new homes for a total subsidy of \$196,461.
- There were 83 properties that received Weatherization assistance. Attic insulation, weather-stripping of entry doors, and new storm windows were installed for a total of \$84,014. In addition, CDD staff handed out over 1,000 light bulbs to low-moderate income households in partnership with the Take Charge Challenge.
- The Community Development Division, in partnership with Tenants to Homeowners, Inc., completed 2123 Rhode Island, which was a redevelopment project on vacant land utilizing the Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding. The City applied for, and was awarded, an additional allocation of \$475,000 in NSP funding.
- During 2011, seven homes were completed in the Comprehensive Rehabilitation Program for a total of \$146,117.
- Development Services staff recycled 72 lbs of aluminum cans throughout 2011. The money received from this project benefitted the Lawrence Humane Society.
- Margene Swarts, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services, passed the Kansas Department of Commerce Certified Community Development Block Grant Administrator exam.
- Tony Hoch, Project Specialist, received the Kansas National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (KSNAHRO) Nadine Burch award, which recognizes the Member of the Year in the Kansas chapter.
- Tony Hoch, Project Specialist, received the National Healthy Homes Practitioners certification.
- In 2011 CDD staff participated in spring and fall conferences for KSNAHRO, planning and summer conferences for Southwest NAHRO, the Kansas Statewide Homeless Coalition Homeless Summit, MARC Sustainability Conference, MARC Green Build Conference, Kansas Housing Conference, as well as several other HUD-sponsored mini-conferences.

Programs and Services:

Development Services: Community Development Division



Before



After

Comprehensive Rehabilitation loan helps Lawrence woman make her home safe

When Lawrence resident Beth Meyer qualified for the city's Comprehensive Rehabilitation Loan program, she thought she would get a new roof, at best. However, in the end, she received repairs ensuring safety throughout the interior and exterior of her home.

The Comprehensive Rehabilitation Loan program, funded through Community Development Block Grant, provides funding for rehabilitation of Lawrence homes for qualified applicants for such improvements as foundation repair, wiring, plumbing, painting and more.

Prior to applying for a Comprehensive Rehabilitation loan, Meyer's job had evaporated from a company that folded. Her 1960's built home was rotting and did not meet property maintenance codes. She needed a new roof but knew she couldn't afford to pay for it on her own.

After qualifying for the loan, not only did Meyer receive a new roof, but also numerous repairs throughout her home.

The interior repairs include: new floors, counters and outlets in her kitchen and bathroom, new lights and windows in her basement, new window sills in the bedroom, and insulation the attic.

Exterior repairs included a new roof with ridge vents, new siding panels, a new paint job on siding and shutters, new gutters, a porch railing and new drain piping.

"It's wonderful to have a program that makes your house safe and easy to live in for people of every age. It's literally like I have a new house. I don't have to worry everyday anymore," said Meyer.

Explaining her experience Meyer said: "No one slacked off; everything was done in five weeks, if that. I am an evangelist for this. I know so many people that would benefit from this program but don't think they will qualify or have never heard of it."

Department employees hold more than 100 certifications, which is almost six certifications per employee. The department also was able to hold several different training opportunities for our residents and contractors throughout the 2011 year, including sessions for contractor education.



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Programs and Services: **Development Services: Code Enforcement Division**

The Code Enforcement Division enforces the Property Maintenance Code, Environmental Code, Weed Code, Sign Code, Development Code, Fence Code, Sidewalk Dining Ordinance, Rental Inspection Ordinance and the Sidewalk Snow Removal Ordinance. A great deal of the division's time is spent investigating cases involving blighted properties, site plan compliance inspections, sub standard housing inquiries and managing the rental inspection and licensing program.

- Worked with City Auditor to review Rental Licensing and Inspection Ordinance to provide report to City Commission in early 2012.
- Hosted the annual fall Kansas Association of Code Enforcement (KACE) conference.
- Worked with City Attorney's Office to revise the Rental Licensing and Inspection Ordinance based on direction from the City Commission. There are several important code revisions to the ordinance which include the following:
 - Not having a license prior to renting a dwelling unit is now identified as a requirement.
 - The definition of family is now included within the ordinance.
 - Owners that live outside a forty mile radius of the City are now required to identify a local resident agent.
 - The acts of probation and revocation are clearly identified which includes the process for placing a rental unit on probation or revoking the rental license.
 - All dwelling units, regardless of structure type, that are located in single dwelling districts are now required to be licensed and inspected.
 - The fine schedule has been increased and is now set at a minimum of \$500.00 and a maximum of \$2,500.00.
- Worked with Planning Staff to revise Development Code occupancy standards and definition of family. These text amendments coincided with the revisions to the Rental Licensing and Inspection Ordinance. The amendments clarify regulations in relation to occupancy and the total number of people allowed to live together in a dwelling unit. The definition of family was revised to provide greater intent of what it means to occupy, or "live" in a dwelling unit. Furthermore, the definition of family is now included in every non-RS zoning district that permits residential uses. Staff believes these revisions will provide better code language for enforcement of these regulations.

By the Numbers:

Development Services: Code Enforcement Division

Type	2008	2009	2010	2011
Snow Removal	326	310	479	652
Graffiti	171	156	146	182
Structural Blight	48	79	47	32
Environmental Blight	448	542	500	381
Tenant Complaint Housing	54	45	66	44
Weed/Grass	1043	1000	949	818
Rental Inspections	431	743	435	337
Zoning	24	27	15	19
Total	2,545	2,875	2,637	2,465

- Total number of cases opened for each violation type. Does not reflect total number of inspections completed for each case type.
- Staff experienced an increase in the amount of internet complaints received from citizens. In 2009, staff received 121 complaints, In 2010 334 were received and in 2011, 496 were received.

Got a question about the First Time Homebuyer Program?

Want to report a Code Violation?

Have a question regarding Building Codes?

Give Development Services a Call: 832-7700

or

Visit them on the Web:

<http://www.lawrenceks.org/pds/>



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Programs and Services:

Planning: Transportation Planning Division

The Lawrence–Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (L-DC MPO) is designed to foster cooperation among local governments in the region to plan for and develop a multimodal transportation system that meets the mobility needs of the area’s residents and serves the region’s economy. Special emphasis is placed on providing equal access to a variety of transportation mode choices (transit, bicycling, walking, automobile, carpool, etc.) and ensuring effective public involvement throughout the planning process. The L-DC MPO develops the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which together establish the planning policy and transportation investment priorities for Douglas County.

During 2011, the MPO and its staff continued to review and update existing documents and processes to ensure that the MPO is fully compliant with all federal regulations for metropolitan transportation planning. The MPO staff has worked with KDOT staff, advisory committees, and others to ensure that the MPO operation is fiscally sound and operationally competent. The following are document approvals and changes made during 2011.

- 2011 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendments #1 that programmed an additional \$50,000 in non-competitive Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) funds for travel demand modeling and public participation consultant assistance in the development of the new Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- 2012 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) that programmed an additional \$160,000 in competitive Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) funds for work on a set of multimodal projects including the Commuter Park & Ride Study, the Fixed Route Transit & Pedestrian Accessibility Study, and the Countywide Bikeway System Plan
- 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to replace the 2008 TIP and bring the TIP document into compliance with federal planning regulations
- Development of a Lawrence-Douglas County MPO logo and informational pamphlet
- Formation of the Regional Transit Advisory Committee (RTAC) and completion of the draft Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan
- Formed the T-2040 Advisory Committee to help the MPO staff in the development of the new transportation plan - Transportation 2040
- Approval of a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan to guide the MPO process and staff in how they deal with persons requesting translation services
- Work on special studies including the 5-County Regional Transportation Study and the K-10/US-40 Interchange Area Transportation Study
- Work by MPO staff and committees on various other topics including bikeway system planning and bicyclists counting, air quality conformity, roadway functional classification mapping, website improvements, comprehensive plan – transportation chapter changes, grant administration, and other topics

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Programs and Services: **Planning: Transportation Planning Division**

Spotlight on Complete Streets:

Complete Streets are planned, designed and operated to enable efficient and safe access for all users--pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. The MPO Complete Streets (CS) Resolution passed on September 15, 2011 supports local efforts of governments to develop CS Policies for designing and building streets for all users and commits the MPO to including CS and multimodal transportation planning principles in MPO documents including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which will be updated in 2012.

During 2011 the MPO staff continued to keep busy attending meetings, drafting documents, and participating in planning studies affecting the transportation system in Douglas County. This involved work on bikeways, roadways, and transit systems as well as work designed to coordinate the region's transportation planning with land use planning done by local governments in the area.

That transportation-land use planning coordination was part of the work done by the MPO staff in 2011 to prepare for the update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The current MTP document called Transportation 2030 is scheduled to be replaced with an update by March 2013. Most of the projects listed above (e.g., Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan, formation of the T-2040 Advisory Committee, MPO Complete Streets Resolution) are directly related to drafting the new Transportation 2040 MTP that will be done in 2012.

Starting in 2010 and continuing in 2011 the focus of the MPO staff switched from getting a new MPO up and running well to moving ahead with updates of MPO documents and processes leading to the update of the region's transportation plan. That focus on the MTP update will reach its peak in late 2012 with the completion of the Transportation 2040 draft.



Spotlight on Bicycles and Pedestrians:

MPO staff organized the second annual counts of pedestrians and bicyclists in 2011 as part of the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project. 30 Volunteers counted **1,805 pedestrians and 768 bicyclists** at 14 locations around Lawrence.

Programs and Services: **Planning: Historic Resources Division**

In 2011 the City of Lawrence continued its participation in the **Certified Local Government Program**. The Certified Local Government Program (CLG) is a preservation partnership between local, state and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grass roots level. As a CLG, the City of Lawrence is an active partner in the Federal Historic Preservation Program and the opportunities it provides. Participation in this program also allows the City of Lawrence to apply for CLG designated funding. In 2011, the City of Lawrence was awarded a **Historic Preservation Fund** grant for \$30,000 to hire a consultant to draft design guidelines for the Oread Neighborhood. The Oread Neighborhood contains two National Register of Historic Places Districts – the Oread Historic District and the Hancock Historic District – and a Lawrence Register of Historic Places district – the Oread Historic District. Being a CLG also shows the community's commitment to keeping what is significant from the past for future generations.

In addition to participation in the CLG program, the Historic Resources program continued to provide **technical support about preservation issues** to over 200 property owners. During National Preservation Month in May, the program sponsored the Preservation Month proclamation issued by the Mayor and presented special programming about preservation issues in the City and Douglas County.

Kansas Register of Historic Places listings in 2011:



Ferdinand Fuller House

1005 Sunset Drive
Lawrence (Douglas County)
Listed in State Register 02/12/2011 Architect:
Fuller, Ferdinand
Category: Single Dwelling

Ferdinand Fuller, an architect and one of Lawrence's first residents, built this residence for his family in the early 1860s. He arrived in the Kansas Territory on August 1, 1854 as one of 29 men in the first party of settlers sent west by the New England Emigrant Aid Society and was elected vice-president of the first legally constituted town association. He designed several buildings in early Lawrence including North College (the first building on the campus of the University of Kansas), the Free State Hotel (burned during the sacking of Lawrence), and the original Central School. The Fuller family lived in this residence until the mid-1880s by which point a substantial rear addition had already been erected. The property was nominated to the state register for its associations with Ferdinand Fuller and for its mid-nineteenth century architecture.

By the Numbers: Planning: Historic Resources Division

- Grand opening of the **1904 Carnegie Library** as the Visitors Center and offices for Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area and offices for the Lawrence Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- **Preservation is Sustainability** was the title of the program presented by the Historic Resources Administrator on May 19th during preservation month. The program identified the connections between a sustainable community and the reuse of historic structures.
- New infill development at **901 New Hampshire Street** changed Downtown Lawrence's streetscape and provided new options for downtown living. The new construction project of 81,545 square feet is seven stories tall and includes a fitness club, space for a new restaurant, office space, and 55 apartment units of which 90% are already leased. The exterior of the structure utilizes new materials that are compatible with the historic character of Downtown Lawrence to create a modern structure that will continue the architectural legacy of the City.
- The East Lawrence Industrial Historic District is undergoing changes as the historic **Poehler Mercantile Building** is being rehabilitated for use as loft apartments. The 1904 Poehler Building is the only multi-story, industrial brick warehouse building from the early Twentieth Century in Lawrence. The rehabilitation of the Poehler Building includes sensitively cleaning and repair of the historic brick structure while subdividing the large warehouse spaces into loft apartments. All but two of the new apartments will be affordable units leased to tenants with incomes at or below 60 percent of the local median income. The rehabilitation project uses a combination of the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits and the Low Income Housing Tax Credits. The East Lawrence Industrial Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2007 for its importance in local history in the areas of commerce, industry and community planning and development.

Kansas Register of Historic Places listings in 2011:



Lane-Duncan Stable

1132 W 11th Street
Lawrence (Douglas County)
Listed in State Register 08/13/2011
Category: Agricultural outbuilding; secondary structure

The Lane-Duncan stable is built into the eastern slope of a steep hill located along the northern edge of the campus of the University of Kansas. It is oriented to the east and once had a commanding view of downtown Lawrence and the Kansas River valley, but trees and twentieth-century development have obscured that view. Despite exhaustive research of the historical record, much of this building's early history remains unknown. What is known about this building is that its vernacular Gothic Revival limestone architecture is reflective of the settlement period and that it is a rare surviving example of a stone outbuilding within the current city limits of Lawrence. The building was nominated for its architecture and potential to yield information

Programs and Services: Planning: Current and Long-Range Division

Assistance and Applications

A great deal of the department's time is spent handling information requests from the development community, other departments, neighborhood groups, and the general public. The Planning Division handled roughly **25,000** separate phone calls, emails and in-person city/county inquiries during 2011. As a department, this amounts to roughly 13 different requests for information per business hour. The Planning Division reviewed a total of **500 applications** and conducted close to **100 pre-submittal** meetings in 2011. Also in 2011, **53.3 acres** were annexed into the City of Lawrence.

Spotlight on Top 2010 Applications	2008	2009	2010	2011
Board of Zoning Appeals	20	21	14	11
Development Plans	13	11	15	6
Floodplain Development Permits	19	24	20	16
Plats	40	21	33	22
Rezoning	26	30	19	37
Site Plans	112	56	65	83
Special Event Permits	36	37	35	31
Special Use Permit	10	11	10	8
Text Amendments	25	23	8	16

Spotlight on 2011 Site Plans

The Planning Department processed **83 site plan** applications in 2011. 61 site plans were approved, 6 were withdrawn and 15 are still pending as of this date. Of the 61 site plans that were approved, close to **60% were approved in less than 30 business days.**

Bowerswock's North Powerhouse Hydroelectric Plant

Construction started on a new hydroelectric plant on the north side of the Kansas River called the North Powerhouse. Staff worked with the Bowersock Power and Mills Company, their engineers, their contractors, the Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Kansas, Division of Water Resources to move the project through the development process.

The GIS Division provides integral support to the Planning Division, as well as answering requests from the general public. In addition to recurring monthly duties associated with current planning activities, they maintain and update the planning division website which is an important part of the department's customer service and outreach goals.

Programs and Services:

Planning: Current and Long-Range Division

Floodplain:

The City of Lawrence participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) administered by FEMA, making flood insurance available to all community property owners. In addition, the city participates in the **Community Rating System** (CRS) which enables property owners to receive a discount on flood insurance. As part of our participation in the CRS program, the Planning Division conducts numerous outreach activities throughout the year, including placing a flood information brochure in all water bills & mailing a brochure to the owners of all properties located in the floodplain. In 2011, the City of Lawrence was recertified as a CRS community Level 8, which enables flood insurance policy holders in the City to receive a 10% discount on their flood insurance. The brochure provides information on obtaining flood insurance, flood safety, obtaining a floodplain development permit, and historical information on floods in Lawrence. In 2011, the Planning Division processed **16 floodplain permits**.

Spotlight on Long Range Planning in 2011:

- In 2011, a new chapter, **Chapter 16: Environment**, was adopted as an addition to Horizon 2020, the Comprehensive Plan. The chapter sets out goals and policies concerning environmental features and issues, such as streams, woodlands, air quality and recycling. Work will continue in upcoming years on implementation activities associated with the adoption of the chapter.
- Planning and Development Services, with the assistance of property owners and other stakeholders, continued the process of planning for the future of an area north of Lawrence that is part of Grant Township. **The Northeast Sector Plan** outlines goals and policies to address identified topics and guide the future land use of the planning area. As part of the planning process, various public meetings were held in 2009, 2010 and 2011. Work will continue on the plan in 2012.
- Staff worked to update the **Southeast Area Plan** to reflect the alignment of 31th Street (N 1300 Road) based on the 31st Street Preliminary Alignment Study and update to reflect changes in current conditions since its original adoption.
- Staff continued the implementation of the **Burroughs Creek Corridor Plan** through the rezoning of the 800 Block of Lynne Street.
- Staff worked with property owners and stakeholders to develop the **Inverness Park District Plan** which outlines the future land use of the area south of Clinton Parkway bordered by Inverness and Crossgate Drives. The plan was adopted in Fall of 2011 and an update to the plan will be processed in 2012.

**Want to know what zoning district your property is in?
Want to know if your property is located in the floodplain?
Check out Interactive Mapping on the Web!!**

www.lawrenceks.org/city_maps