



GUIDING GROWTH FOR A VIBRANT AND THRIVING
LENEXA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Elected Officials Roundtable Workshop Summary

November 9, 2021 | 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

On Tuesday November 9, 2021, the City of Lenexa and Houseal Lavigne’s project consultant team hosted an Elected Officials Roundtable at City Hall. It was attended by 19 participants, made up of Planning Commission and City Council members. Attendees were given worksheets prompting them to identify top five issues or concerns confronting the Lenexa community. Next, all responses were written on a large poster board and attendees were asked to select their top three most important issues discussed so far. The group was also asked to identify three specific projects or actions they would like to see undertaken in Lenexa, as well as the City’s primary strengths and assets. The number of attendees who voted for or shared the same response is tallied in parentheses.

Most Important Issues and Concerns

Several themes were revealed in the comments on issues facing the City. There are concerns about the types of development, the development process, public services, and public administration. The issues that received the most votes were:

- Lack of affordable and attainable housing (8)
- Difficulty of finding, hiring, and retaining employees (5)
- Maintaining the current level of safety (5)

Infrastructure & Transportation

Comments related to transportation and infrastructure touched on quality, capacity, and type.

- Lack of cohesive mass transit or active transportation networks (3)
- Funding of roads and City facilities (2)
- Need for resilient infrastructure for climate change, including stormwater management (2)

Property Development

Many comments were related to real estate development and covered topics like infill opportunities, difficulties in the development process, and lack of cohesion between residents and developers.

- Lack of redevelopment interest (3)
- Old Town has been largely forgotten, in need of attraction and investment (3)

- NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitudes towards certain development types, like multifamily, affordable housing, or homelessness support (2)
- Quality infill projects and finding tenants for vacant retail (2)
- Relatively high property tax
- Understanding development incentives
- Balancing developers' wishes with local desire for more retail
- Data centers becoming a popular land use

Planning Values & Leadership

Several comments were related to the social values of planning and public administration. Certain issues that can be addressed at the City's management level can filter down into everyday life. These include:

- Maintaining the City's high quality of life while remaining an inclusive community (3)
- Creeping partisanship has potential to cause issues and limit innovation (3)
- Uncertainty of planning in a time of fast-changing social conditions (3)
- Incomplete pandemic response/recovery
- Lack of neighborhood diversity
- Improving language and ADA accessibility
- Need for governmental transparency
- Conflicts with state agencies

Other Issues

- Excessive litter
- Lack of public mental health services
- Losing natural areas to development

Most Desired Actions or Projects

Attendees provided a wide variety of desired actions or projects, including public infrastructure investments, goals for private redevelopment, public administration and services, and outreach methods.

Infrastructure & Public Investment

- Build infrastructure first before development
- Build a fire station where the old City Hall is
- Improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Partner with Johnson County and Shawnee to build a riverfront park in the northwest corner of Lenexa
- Continue investment in stormwater infrastructure
- Work with the County and other stakeholders to build a homeless shelter through a public-private partnership

Redevelopment

- Create outside-the-box incentives to encourage developers to build affordable housing
- Form a district of incentives around the Old Town
- Add infill development along 87th Street

Planning & Administration

- Create a new sales tax to fund roads and fire needs
- Create a complete Comprehensive Plan

Outreach & Public Engagement

- Update the City website, serving as the City's "front door "
- Add livestreaming options for public meetings
- Form a public information initiative around affordable housing projects
- Develop a public understanding of what planning initiatives have been completed and what is in progress

Top Strengths and Assets

Attendees shared many positive attributes about Lenexa, including a concentration of comments praising the City staff and leadership. Other comments included topics like sense of community, public parks and services, and the tax base.

Residents & Culture

- Culture that promotes doing the right thing
- Small town feel
- Community pride
- Community events
- Quality citizenry

Leadership and City Staff

- Forward-thinking, quality City staff and political leadership (4)
- Strong relationship between elected officials and City staff
- The City's visioning process

Other Strengths & Assets

- Lenexa's location
- Diverse tax base
- Public schools
- Parks and trails