

League of Women Voters of Lawrence-Douglas County
P.O. Box 1072, Lawrence, Kansas 66044

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CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS

August 19, 2012

Mr. Bob Schumm, Mayor
Lawrence City Commissioners
City Hall
Lawrence, KS 66044

RE. CONSENT AGENDA NO. 9, CODE REVIEW AND TEXT AMENDMENT INITIATION

Dear Mayor Schumm and City Commissioners:

On behalf of public concern, the League asks that Item No. 9 be removed from the Consent Agenda and opened for discussion.

This Memorandum is asking the City to initiate seven Land Development Code and *Horizon 2020* changes that would radically change our land use planning system in Lawrence. All of the proposals in the Memorandum need to be carefully scrutinized and we ask that you not initiate any of them. Below we have discussed the two proposals that are of most concern to us.

A. Text revision No. 3: "Review the requirement that development projects be required to comply with Horizon 2020."
The language further explains, "Removing the requirement for comprehensive plan compliance for rezoning requests would streamline the application process..." This proposal would remove the essential purpose of the comprehensive plan: to be able to plan ahead. It is the means by which through its goals, policies and specific area plans, plus the plans which are also a part of it such as the Transportation Plan, it creates the framework that allows everything in the city to connect appropriately and function properly. Our Land Development Code states as follows:

"20-104 PURPOSE This Development Code is intended to implement the Lawrence/Douglas County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and other applicable plans adopted by the City Commission, hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Comprehensive Plan" – in a manner that protects, enhances and promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Lawrence."

Removing the mandatory compliance with *Horizon 2020* of zoning applications would eliminate the policies that determine where and when rezoning is appropriate and valid and would create an arbitrary approach to zoning. It would allow zoning decisions to be determined on the basis of opinions rather than facts. It would eliminate the predictability essential for private and public economic and functional decisions.

B. Text Revision No. 2. "Review the requirement for a Retail Market Study to be submitted with zoning and site plan applications." [Note added: This specifically applies to the 50,000 square foot provision for retail uses.]

Removing this requirement would essentially remove the standard that would trigger a market analysis. These market analyses are important for new business investors as well as for existing business owners who rely on population demand to maintain viable businesses. These are essential tools for our community to maintain a healthy business environment. Predictability is critical in maintaining a well-functioning business environment,

There are other reasons for not changing any of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code provisions as proposed in this Item No. 9, and we ask again that you not initiate any of these text amendments.

Sincerely,

Milton Scott
Vice President

Alan Black
Alan Black, Chairman
Land Use Committee