

League of Women Voters of Lawrence-Douglas County

P.O. Box 1072, Lawrence, Kansas 66044

September 19, 2004

RECEIVED

SEP 20 2004

City County Planning Office
Lawrence, Kansas

John Haase, Chairman
Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission
City Hall
Lawrence, KS 66044

RE: ITEMS NO. 17 AND 18, AMENDMENTS TO HORIZON 2020 AND TRANSPORTATION 2025

Dear Chairman Haase and Planning Commissioners:

An important goal of *Transportation 2025* is the prevention of unmanageable automobile traffic congestion. *T2025* emphasizes that measures to alleviate problems that will occur by the year 2025 must be planned now. The Plan suggests approaching solutions using many different methods, including planning road configurations in advance of development, so that easements and rights-of way may be obtained. In Items 17 and 18, the Planning Commission proposes to adopt a change to the arterial alignments map in Sections 21 and 28 that would create a four-lane arterial between Sections 21 and 28 from Peterson Road to Queens Road. The proposal to study the alignment of the arterials shown on the current *T2025* was precipitated by the Planning Commission's concern with the projected increase in internal city traffic, the anticipated result of KDOT's proposed widening of Highway 10 at the Lawrence eastern entryway. After examining the developing sections included in the Northwest Plan (Sections 20, 21, 28, and 29), the Planning Commission in April of 2003 realized that the currently planned east-west street connections were inadequate. One suggestion was to extend Peterson Road west from the Peterson Road/Folks Road intersection to Queens Road. Subsequent analysis of three individual alternative arterial routes made by the City Transportation Planner projected that traffic congestion would best be alleviated by extending Peterson Road to Queens Road west from the intersection with Folks Road.

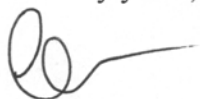
Up to this time, the *T2025* arterial plans had shown the connection of Peterson Road to County Road 1750 to Queens Road as the main east-west arterial route north of 6th Street and south of Interstate 70. We assume that this route originally was chosen because the rugged terrain in the center of the Sections 21 and 28 would act as a constraining environmental feature and we question the proposal to align the east-west arterial along (or near) the dividing section line between Sections 21/28, based only on a simple comparison of traffic volumes. We see the three problems with this analysis: (1) It did not also factor in comparisons between the environmental impacts of extending the three routes (see box "*A word of caution*" on p 60 of *T2025*), including actual construction cost projections and mitigation; (2) It considered individual arterials separately, without also considering combining alternative routes; and (3) It did not factor in need, discussed in the next paragraph.

One of the important features of arterial extension in the Northwest Plan area will be to get traffic to the future most heavily developed residential areas west of Queens Road without causing added congestion on 6th Street. The most easily developed areas will be closer to 6th Street than to Peterson Road extended because of the extensive ridge patterns in the northern portion of Section 29. It seems logical to emphasize an east-west route through the center of Section 28, rather than on its northern section line.

We urge the Planning Commission to recognize that the current analysis on which the proposal to change the arterial alignment to the section lines of Section 21 and 28 is not adequate to justify this change without further study, including environmental impact analyses, total cost analyses, and comparisons of combined alternatives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,



Caleb Morse, President



Alan Black, Chairman, Land Use Committee

Attachments.

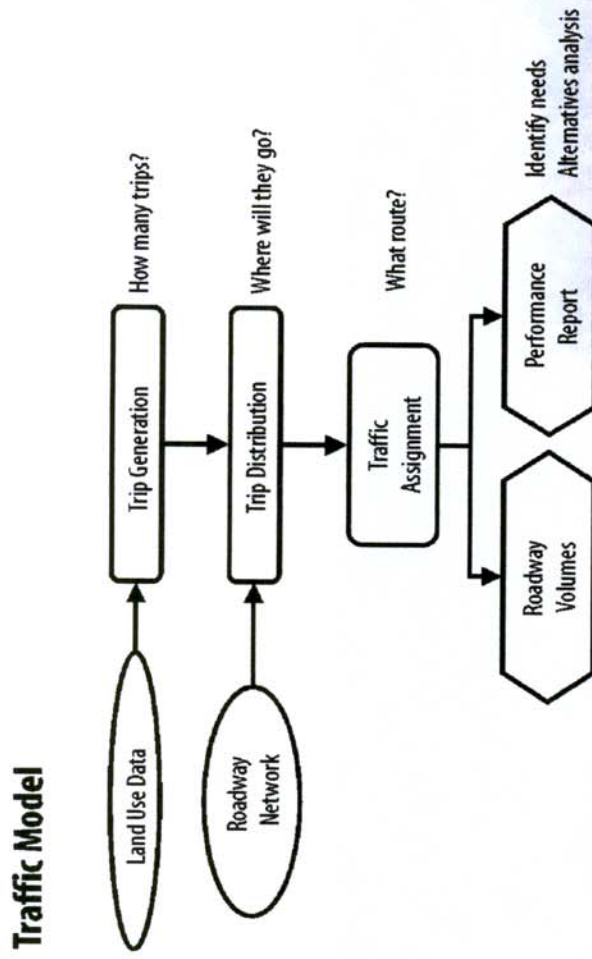
Analysis Tools – Lawrence Travel Demand Model

As *Transportation 2025* was developed through an analysis of system deficiencies and potential alternative solutions, the process relied on estimates of future travel demand. Travel demand is forecasted using the Lawrence Travel Demand Model, developed and maintained by the Kansas Department of Transportation.

The model process, shown graphically in Figure 6.7, uses estimated of household and employment data and the existing roadway network as input assumptions. The Trip Generation module calculates the amount of trip-making that takes place based on activities associated with household and employment data. The Trip Distribution module determines the origin and destination of each trip. In the Traffic Assignment module, the specific route is computed through consideration of travel time, distance, and congestion.

The model can produce reasonable results for several land use and roadway network scenarios. The intent is to produce estimates of average weekday traffic volumes for each roadway segment in the network. These are converted to peak hour traffic volumes for level of service analysis. In this manner, roadway deficiencies can be identified and potential alternative solutions evaluated.

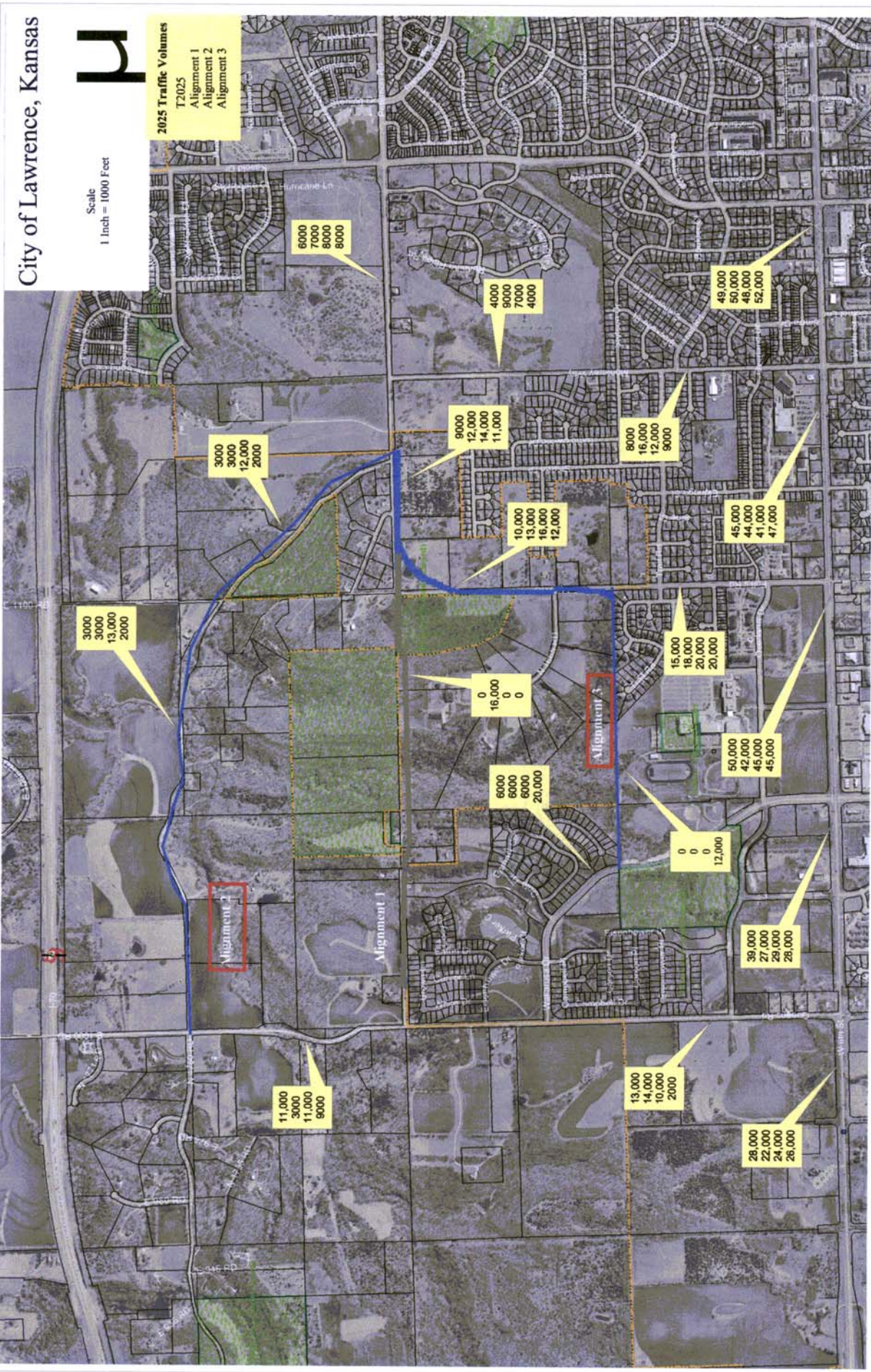
Figure 6.7
Lawrence Travel Demand Model Process



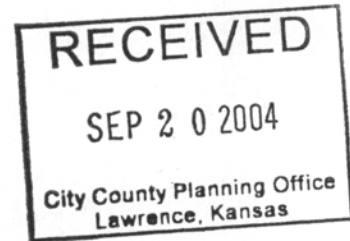
A word of caution: the model is a tool that can be used to assist with the evaluation of potential roadway improvements. It is not a crystal ball. While the model provides valuable information, it is not sensitive to all aspects of the planning process. Model results should be considered in the context of other information, such as feasibility, environmental concerns, public acceptance, cost, and other criteria.

Please note: The red border has been added by annotation for emphasis.

This map has been annotated with LWW suggested alignments in place of Alignment 1. Added connections are shown in blue.



2131 Terrace RD
Lawrence, KS 66049



September 20, 2004

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Last week we sent you a letter regarding the upcoming recommendation to select Alignment 1 as the westward arterial from Peterson Rd. (Agenda Items 17 and 18, text amendments to Horizon 2020 and Transportation 2025).

Due to a printing error in the letter we sent you, the full quotation at the bottom of page 2 was omitted, and we provide it here, because we think it is very pertinent to this issue. This quotation is from Goal 2, Policy 2.3b of Chapter 8, Transportation, in *Horizon 2020*:

"The alignment of all streets must take into consideration physical constraints like the protection of drainageways, existing land use, and topography."

We do not believe these factors have been taken into account in the recommendation you received relating to Alignment 1.

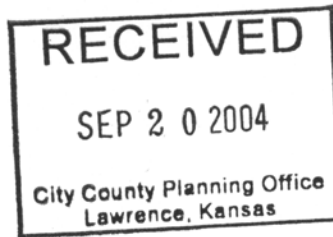
We hope that you will give careful consideration to this issue.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob".

Bob Lichtwardt

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Betty".

Betty Lichtwardt



September 17, 2004

Dear Chairman Haase and Members of the Planning Commission,

At its September 16, 2004 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Jayhawk Audubon Society (JAS), unanimously agreed to express our profound concerns on the proposed extension of Peterson Road west to George Williams Way (extended) along Alignment #1 as the preferred alternative.

There are several reasons why Jayhawk Audubon Society board members believe that Alignment #1 should not be the preferred alternate:

- First, several members of JAS have been actively involved in the Open Space Working Group of ECO2. We believe that selecting Alignment #1 as the preferred route would send a deeply troubling message to any landowner contemplating enrolling his/her property in ECO2's program for natural-areas protection. This alignment would have to go through heavily wooded areas that provide habitat for wildlife; it would traverse several steep hillsides; and it would bisect two adjacent parks, thereby further fragmenting any wildlife habitat in the park areas. The park properties that have been set aside adjacent to Alignment #1 characterize the open lands that are anticipated for permanent protection under ECO2.
- The potential for disturbance and abuse of these natural areas is considerable, with a major arterial immediately adjacent to them. Although it is commendable that the City of Lawrence has been foresighted in acquiring several adjoining properties, this proposal to site a 4-lane road along their boundaries will undoubtedly have lasting negative edge effects (see further discussion of this point below).

An **edge effect** is the effect on an ecosystem of juxtaposition to a contrasting environment. Most often, the term is used in conjunction with the boundary between wild land, especially forest, and disturbed or developed land.

When an edge is created to any natural ecosystem, and the area outside the boundary is a disturbed or unnatural system, the natural ecosystem is seriously affected for some distance in from the edge. In the case of a forest where the adjacent land has been cut, creating an openland/forest boundary, sunlight and wind penetrate to a much greater extent, drying out the interior of the forest close to the edge and encouraging rampant growth of opportunistic species at the edge.

Jayhawk Audubon Society, P.O. Box 3741, Lawrence, Kansas 66046-3741

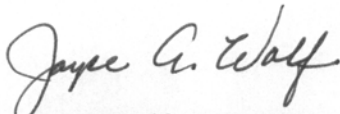
The amount of forest edge of this sort is some orders of magnitude greater now in the United States than when the Europeans first began settling North America. Some native species have opportunistically benefitted from this fact, especially the Brown-headed Cowbird, which is a nest parasite that lays its eggs in the nests of songbirds nesting in forest near the forest boundary. Thus, the more edge in relation to the forest interior, the more cowbirds and the fewer songbirds as a result.

In the case of developed lands juxtaposed to wild lands, problems with invasive exotics often result. Species such as Japanese honeysuckle and multiflora rose have done terrible damage to natural ecosystems.

(from: http://www.fact-index.com/e/ed/edge_effect.html)

- And finally, Robert and Betty Lichtwardt chose to donate their property to the City of Lawrence, believing that by doing so, the parcel would remain in its natural state in perpetuity. While Alignment #1 would not legally violate the easement agreement, we believe it certainly violates the spirit of the intention of these donors and the easement which spells out its protection. For the reasons already discussed, we believe this proposal and subsequent action certainly would cause others to question the City's commitment to honor its agreements in accepting such gifts in good faith and respecting the objectives of the donors.

Sincerely,



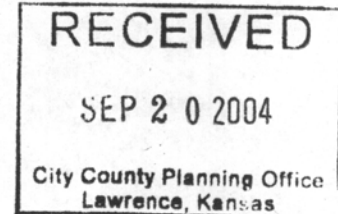
Joyce A. Wolf, Recording Secretary and
Member, Conservation Committee

Submitted on behalf of the following members of the JAS Board of Directors: Jennifer Delisle, Pam Chaffee, Susan Iversen, Sharon Ashworth, Dayna Carleton, Bridget Chapin, Chuck Herman, Julie Maxwell, Cynthia and Ed Shaw, Bunnie Watkins, Sarah and Harley Winfrey, and Ron Wolf

Items 17418

Francis Kelly and Cheri Varvil
1036 North 1700 Road
Lawrence, KS 66049
(785) 842-9159

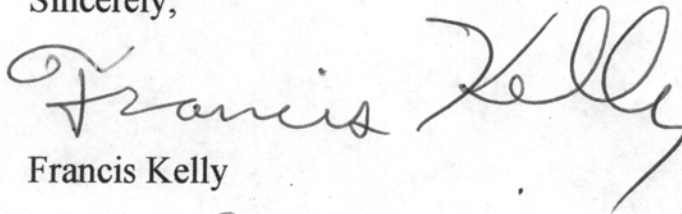
City Planning Commission
City of Lawrence
City Hall

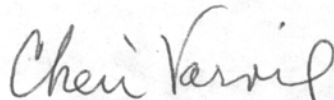


Dear Commission Members,

We wish to support the concerns and efforts of Bob and Betty Lichtwardt against a road being constructed along the southern boundary of the park for which they donated land. For all the reasons they cited, as well as the additional concerns we have about how a road in that location would impact our own home and property as well as our neighbors, we hope the city will choose one of the options previously being considered. These options involve already constructed roads and would not have the adverse effects on the local terrain that the extension of Peterson Road directly westward to Queens Road would.

Sincerely,


Francis Kelly


Cheri Varvil



NORMA Kampschroeder
1008 N. 1700 Rd.



MIKE RUNDLE, MAYOR
COMMISSIONERS
DENNIS "BOOG" HIGHBERGER
DAVID M. DUNFIELD
SUE HACK
DAVID M. SCHAUNER

City of Lawrence KANSAS

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MIKE WILDGEN, CITY MANAGER

Items 17 & 18

September 22, 2004

John Haase, Chair
Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Commission
P.O. Box 708, City Hall
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Dear Chair Haase and Planning Commission,

This correspondence is in regard to Item #18: Text Amendment To Transportation 2025 To Amend Roadway System Plan And Major Thoroughfares Maps on the September 22nd Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Commission meeting agenda.

One of the elements of Chapter 9 – Parks, Recreation and Open Space of the Horizon 2020 plan states “the preservation of the community’s natural, scenic and open space areas are encouraged to play a role in the identification, acquisition and development of future parks, recreation and open space areas of the community.”

Since the incorporation of the urban growth areas in the Lawrence Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, the City has acquired over 490 acres of land through donations or purchases for future parks. Many of these areas include expanding open space, providing linkage to neighborhoods via trails and preservation of unique natural areas for the future. The 97 acres north and west of Peterson Road and Folks Road is an excellent example of this.

The City worked with Bob and Betty Lichtwardt for a donation of 40 acres of land in this northwest corridor to preserve a unique area along Baldwin Creek. The City has purchased three other parcels of land; two of the four have conservation easements with restrictive covenants, to save a natural open space corridor west of Folks Road to Wakarusa Drive, if it were extended north.



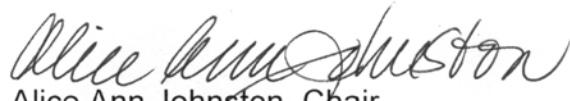
The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board feels Alignment #1 would be a disaster to park planning efforts to preserve this sensitive environment. This geographic area will surely be in the City limits in the near future.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board voted on September 14th to oppose this recommended alignment and to encourage you to support preservation of this natural area park and corridor northwest of Peterson Road and Folks Road.

Although most of this proposed future alignment does not touch the park property, it runs parallel to it and would directly affect its environs. The proposed road alignment does cross a 22-acre future neighborhood park and would separate it from the 40-acre of donated land and additional fragile, steep sloped natural areas to the west, which were acquired between 2000 and 2002.

Alignment #2 or #3 would work better to not disturb this natural corridor by going either north or south of this future park and open space. We hope you will consider one of the other alignments to help preserve the environmental qualities of this existing park property, reduce any adverse impact to creative park planning and to honor the City's long-term commitment to this park.

Sincerely,


Alice Ann Johnston, Chair
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board