



"We Have Tomorrow – Bright Before Us, Like A Flame." *Langston Hughes*



World Cup: How to Stay Informed

The World Cup is coming to Lawrence, and the excitement is just getting started. Get ready for an unforgettable summer full of energy, events, and international pride.

Want to stay in the loop and see what's ahead? Head to scorelawrence.com for all the details and updates!

OUR MISSION
We create a
community where
all enjoy life and
feel at home.

City information is available at lawrenceks.gov and on cable Channel 25.

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May is Affordable Housing Month

A closer look at what we mean by "affordable" housing

As we celebrate Affordable Housing Month, it's a great time to take a closer look at what affordable housing really means and how it works in our community.

When we talk about affordable housing, we are talking about more than just lower rent or home prices. It is about making sure housing costs do not take up so much of a household's budget that other basic needs become harder to afford.

In general, housing is considered affordable when a household spends no more than 30% of its income on housing costs, including rent or mortgage and utilities. That benchmark helps ensure people can still afford essentials like food, healthcare, and transportation.

In Lawrence, affordability is built into how housing is planned, funded, and maintained. Through tools like the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the A Place for Everyone plan, and other local housing initiatives, the City works alongside community partners to create and preserve housing options for households earning at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

How Affordable Housing Is Priced

Affordable housing is not based on the private market. It is based on what people in our community actually earn.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development sets income levels based on Area Median Income, or AMI. Housing programs then use those benchmarks to determine what is affordable at different income levels, such as 30%, 50%, 60%, or 80% of AMI.

Here is a simple way to think about it: If a household earns \$50,000 per year, housing is generally considered affordable if it costs about \$1,250 per month or less. This income-based approach helps ensure that housing costs stay aligned with what residents can realistically afford.

Affordable Rental Housing

Many affordable rental homes are created through programs like the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. In these developments, rents are set so households would typically

pay about 30% of their income toward housing.

For example, a household earning around \$48,000 per year, which is about 60% of AMI, might pay roughly \$1,200 per month or less in rent. Residents must meet income qualifications to live in these homes, ensuring they reach those who need them most.

Affordable Homeownership

Affordable housing also includes homes for purchase. These homes are priced based on what a household can reasonably afford, not just what the market dictates.

Programs calculate a purchase price that keeps monthly costs near that same 30% benchmark. For instance, a household earning \$60,000 annually might be able to afford a monthly housing payment of about \$1,500.

Lawrence programs also include resale guidelines, helping ensure that when the home is sold in the future, it remains affordable for the next buyer.

How Affordability Lasts Over Time

A key part of affordable housing is making sure it stays affordable, not just today, but for years to come.

Housing supported through public subsidy (or support) includes long-term requirements. For example, affordable rental properties constructed by private developers through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program must maintain income limits and rent caps for at least 30 years. Affordable rental and homeownership housing developed by mission-based nonprofit developers are affordable in perpetuity, meaning that investment from the community will always benefit the community.

Working Together to Make It Happen

Affordable housing is the result of intentional planning, strong partnerships, and dedicated funding. Through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the City of Lawrence works with local organizations to create and maintain housing that remains accessible and sustainable for the community over time.

Get Ready for Summerfest 2026!

Summerfest 2026 is bringing FUN to the Douglas County Fairgrounds on July 4, 2026! This year's event will include:

- America at 250 – an exhibition celebrating the spirit of public service and honoring the dedicated individuals, past and present, who help Lawrence and Douglas County thrive. Presented in partnership with the Watkins Museum of History and the Dole Institute of Politics.

- Performances from talented musicians
- Family-friendly games and activities in the Kids Zone
- A spectacular drone show

You'll definitely want to gather your friends and family for an unforgettable day filled with live music, mouthwatering food trucks and endless entertainment. Mark your calendars, spread the word and join us for Summerfest 2026!



A promotional graphic for Summerfest 2026. The top half features a blue background with white clouds, a string of colorful bunting flags, and the word "SUMMERFEST" in large, bold, blue letters. Below it, a white banner with red text says "JULY 4TH 4 PM - 10 PM". To the right, a dark blue starburst contains the text "USA 250". The bottom half has a yellow background with the text "DOUGLAS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS 2120 HARPER STREET". Below this, a list of activities is shown: "-Live music", "-USA 250 Exhibit", "-Food Trucks", "-Done Show", "-Kids Zone", and "-& More!". On the left, there is a small image of a neon sign that says "HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY". At the bottom, the Lawrence Kansas logo is visible, and a URL "more info: www.lawrenceks.gov/summerfest" is provided.

Exciting Affordable Housing Project Updates

We have a few updates on affordable housing projects supported by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund! More information is also available on our online project dashboard: lawrenceks.gov/pds/affordable-housing.

New Hampshire Lofts

This development, led by Flint Hills Holdings Group, brings 48 affordable housing units for residents aged 55 and older to our community. Supported by funding from the City of Lawrence's Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the project has now moved from vision to reality. Today, the New Hampshire Street Lofts are complete and all affordable units are occupied – providing stable, accessible homes for older adults in Lawrence.

Affordable Rental Management from Tenants to Homeowners

With support from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Tenants to Homeowners rehabilitated a small one-bedroom home to make it safe and livable.

It is now rented at a reduced rate to a senior earning below 30% of the Area Median Income. Work is also underway on a second home, which will benefit a low-income veteran who would have become homeless instead stay safely housed.

Outdoor Aquatic Center Update

Follow along throughout the project at engage.lawrenceks.gov

It's been nearly 30 years since the Outdoor Aquatic Center got a major refresh, and things are still moving forward.

The renovation project is progressing smoothly, with work carefully planned to avoid disrupting the 2026 and 2027 swim seasons.

Here's the project timeline:

Phase 1 (happening now): Early work is already underway and on schedule. This phase includes demolition in the bathroom and admissions areas, setting the stage for key upgrades to those spaces.

Phase 2 (beginning fall 2026): The next phase will focus on improvements to the pool itself and the surrounding aquatics features. This work remains on track for completion by Spring 2027, before the 2027 swim season.

What You'll See This Season

When you visit the pool this year, you'll start to notice some improvements, including:

- A new admissions entry
- Updated bathrooms and changing rooms
- A refreshed party room with new flooring and paint
- Repairs to the building exterior

What to Expect Overall

The project will bring long-needed updates to the facility, including repairs to aging infrastructure, improvements to pool functionality, and enhancements that will help the space better serve the community for years to come.

One major update residents can expect at the end of the project includes a separated zero-depth entry shallow pool. It will run on it's own system to promote efficiency in cleaning and functionality. The shallow pool will feature fun and kid-friendly amenities.

The scope of the renovation includes the preservation of the existing lap & diving pool.

Construction will continue in a way that keeps the pool open during the summer months, so residents can still cool off and enjoy the Outdoor Aquatic Center while improvements are underway.

Want to stay up-to-date on this project?

Head to our new community engagement platform, Engage Lawrence, and click to follow the Outdoor Aquatic Center page updates: engage.lawrenceks.gov.

