



Agenda Item Report

City Commission - Feb 07 2023

Department

Municipal Services &
Operations (MSO)

Staff Contact

David Cronin, City Engineer

Recommendations

Consider request from Douglas County to participate in the Wakarusa Extension Project.

Executive Summary

In June 2022, the City of Lawrence and Douglas County provided a letter of commitment to KDOT for a total local contribution of \$13,920,500 for the west leg expansion of the South Lawrence Trafficway. KDOT agreed that local contribution could be used for local improvements that tied to the state project. Project costs developed for the original commitment:

Project	2024 Estimated Cost	City Share	County Share
A) Wakarusa extension south	\$10,311,000	\$4,124,400 (40%)	\$6,186,600 (60%)
B) Wakarusa reconstruction 27th to Clinton Parkway	\$2,476,224	\$2,476,224	
C) Replacement of E1200 Rd Bridge	\$475,592		\$475,592
D) Realignment of E902 Rd at N1452 Rd	\$273,284		\$273,284
E) E900 Road curb, storm sewer	\$384,400	\$384,000	
Total	\$13,920,500	\$6,985,024	\$6,935,476

The discussed local cost share agreement with KDOT is for the City and County to pay for the actual project cost of A) Wakarusa extension south and reimburse KDOT for projects B, C, D, E (City funding Project B & E at \$2,860,224 / County funding Project C & D at \$784,876). The local contribution will be met if the Wakarusa Extension project is completed, regardless of how the City and County split the costs.

The City's adopted 2023-2027 Capital Improvement Plan included project MS1-00012 (South Lawrence Trafficway Improvements) for \$7,000,000 of local contributions in 2024. Specific project details were removed due to concerns about the city participating in costs to extend Wakarusa south of K-10.

In November, Douglas County approved it's 2023-2027 CIP with the inclusion of the [Wakarusa Extension project](#). The project has a revised cost estimate of \$9,000,000. The County's CIP

project assumes the city will participate at the original commitment rate of 40% or \$3,600,000. The County has requested the City determine if it will commit funding to the project.

Scenarios for the City Commission to consider:

1. Participate 40% of the construction cost of the project assumed at \$3,600,000 and total city contribution is \$6,460,224. The KDOT request for local participation is met.

Project	2024 Estimated Cost	City Share	County Share
A) Wakarusa extension south	\$9,000,000	\$3,600,000 (40%)	\$5,400,000 (60%)
B) Wakarusa reconstruction 27th to Clinton Parkway	\$2,476,224	\$2,476,224	
C) Replacement of E1200 Rd Bridge	\$475,592		\$475,592
D) Realignment of E902 Rd at N1452 Rd	\$273,284		\$273,284
E) E900 Road curb, storm sewer	\$384,400	\$384,000	
Total	\$12,609,100	\$6,460,224	\$6,148,876

2. Do not participate in the Wakarusa extension and the County would be required to fund the balance of the project. The County does not plan to include a shared-use path in the project to reduce the project cost by \$1,000,000. KDOT does not consider this scenario meeting its request for local participation. The intent of including the Wakarusa extension as a participating project is for multi-modal connectivity; without a shared-use path this is not accomplished.

Project	2024 Estimated Cost	City Share	County Share
A) Wakarusa extension south (No Shared-use Path)	\$8,000,000		\$8,000,000
B) Wakarusa reconstruction 27th to Clinton Parkway	\$2,476,224	\$2,476,224	
C) Replacement of E1200 Rd Bridge	\$475,592		\$475,592
D) Realignment of E902 Rd at N1452 Rd	\$273,284		\$273,284
E) E900 Road curb, storm sewer	\$384,400	\$384,000	
Total	\$11,609,100	\$2,860,224	\$8,748,876

3. Only participate in costs to include a shared-use path, estimated at \$1,000,000. The KDOT request for local participation is met.

Project	2024 Estimated Cost	City Share	County Share
A) Wakarusa extension south (Include Shared-use Path)	\$9,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$8,000,000

B) Wakarusa reconstruction 27th to Clinton Parkway	\$2,476,224	\$2,476,224	
C) Replacement of E1200 Rd Bridge	\$475,592		\$475,592
D) Realignment of E902 Rd at N1452 Rd	\$273,284		\$273,284
E) E900 Road curb, storm sewer	\$384,400	\$384,000	
Total	\$12,609,100	\$3,860,224	\$8,748,876

4. Do not participate in the Wakarusa extension and if the county chose not to proceed with the Wakarusa extension project, the KDOT request for local participation will not be met. This scenario is unlikely as the County has indicated it will reallocate resources to proceed with the project.

Project	2024 Estimated Cost	City Share	County Share
A) Wakarusa extension south			
B) Wakarusa reconstruction 27th to Clinton Parkway	\$2,476,224	\$2,476,224	
C) Replacement of E1200 Rd Bridge	\$475,592		\$475,592
D) Realignment of E902 Rd at N1452 Rd	\$273,284		\$273,284
E) E900 Road curb, storm sewer	\$384,400	\$384,000	
Total	\$3,609,100	\$2,860,224	\$748,876

Alignment to Strategic Plan

Connected City

Fiscal Impact

Project MS1-00012 (South Lawrence Trafficway Improvements) is in the 2024 CIP for \$7,000,000.

Action Requested

Direct staff to draft a response to Douglas County indicating the city's participation in the Wakarusa Extension Project.

Previous Agenda Reports:

[May 17, 2022 Consent Agenda D.7f\)](#)

Authorize the City Manager to submit a commitment of participation letter with Douglas County to the Kansas Department of Transportation for \$13,920,500 in local funds for the South Lawrence Trafficway Project. Authorize staff to draft a local funding agreement with Douglas County. Revise the 2022-2026 CIP to amend the details of the Wakarusa extension

project (MS-22-0029) to 'South Lawrence Trafficway Improvements' including improvements on Wakarusa north of K-10 and E900 Rd.

Attachments

[June 3 2022 Commitment Local Participation](#)

[DG Co Wakarusa CIP Project](#)

[Wakarusa Drive Extension - Letter From BOCC](#)

[Public Comment - Added 02/07/23](#)

[Public Comment - Added 02/06/23](#)



City of Lawrence



June 3, 2022

Julie Lorenz, Secretary of Transportation
Kansas Department of Transportation
Eisenhower State Office Building
700 S.W. Harrison Street
Topeka, KS 66603

Sent via email on June 3, 2022

RE: 10-23 KA-3634-03 K-10 South Lawrence Trafficway
Commitment of Local Participation

Dear Ms. Lorenz,

The City of Lawrence and Douglas County are excited to see the South Lawrence Trafficway West-leg Expansion project moving forward. Completion of the four-lane freeway is vital to improve safety and accommodate future traffic growth. The city and county support the possible decision to move project 10-23 KA-3634-03 to the construction pipeline.

The Lawrence City Commission and the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners have authorized this letter of commitment to provide \$13,920,000 in local funding to the project:

- 1) The city and county will pay the actual costs for the Wakarusa South Extension project, estimated to be \$10,311,000; and
- 2) The city and county will reimburse KDOT a lump sum amount of \$3,609,000 for:
 - Replacement of Bridge 1267-1200
 - Realignment of E902 Rd at N1452 Rd
 - Wakarusa Reconstruction - Clinton Pkwy To 27th Street
 - Improving E900 Rd (curb & gutter, storm sewer) to city standards

Lawrence and Douglas County appreciate our partnership with KDOT, and we welcome the opportunity to further discuss details on this regionally significant project.

Sincerely,

Craig S. Owens
City Manager

Sarah Plinsky
County Administrator



We are committed to providing excellent city services that enhance the quality of life for the Lawrence Community

Wakarusa Drive Extension, Clinton Parkway to N 1200 RD

Project Number: 2021-R1
 Construction Year: 2025
 Total Cost: \$9,000,000

Description: This project will coordinate with KDOT improvements to the South Lawrence Trafficway. The planned K-10 / Wakarusa Drive interchange provides the point of connection for this new roadway connecting Wakarusa Drive, south 1.3 miles to E1000 Road. The project includes a new bridge over the Wakarusa River. Additional information is provided in a 2022 report available on the county's website.

Project Costs and Funding

LineItem	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Balance forward	\$3,251,209	\$3,900,000	\$4,850,692	\$5,270,000	\$4,970,000	\$4,670,000	\$2,550,000	\$0
CIP budget allocations	\$230,000	\$530,000	\$400,000	\$0			\$130,000	
Engineering				(\$500,000)	(\$250,000)			
Right-of-way					(\$250,000)			
Utility Reloc						(\$100,000)		
Construction						(\$3,700,000)	(\$4,200,000)	
Deposit KDOT FFE	\$418,791	\$420,692						
EOY reallocate CIP funds			\$19,308					
Lawrence cost share				\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,680,000	\$1,520,000	
Project Balance	\$3,900,000	\$4,850,692	\$5,270,000	\$4,970,000	\$4,670,000	\$2,550,000	\$0	\$0





DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

1100 Massachusetts Street
Lawrence, KS 66044-3064
(785) 832-5268 Fax (785) 832-5148
www.douglascountyks.org

November 2, 2022

Mayor Courtney Shipley
Lawrence City Commission
6 E 6th Street
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

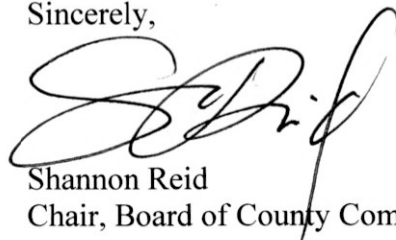
Dear Mayor Shipley,

On behalf of the Douglas County Commission, I am asking that the Lawrence City Commission please clarify their support and financial involvement in the proposed project to extend Wakarusa Drive south across the Wakarusa River. In June of this year, the City and County both supported the proposed project in a letter of commitment to KDOT with a pledge of local matching funds in support of their proposed expansion of the South Lawrence Trafficway. The City's share of that commitment was \$4.1 million, which included \$1.0 million for a parallel shared-use path.

As you know, the project extends along the city limits and connects two city recreational facilities to local roads and state highways. This project has long been included in both Douglas County and the City of Lawrence's Capital Improvement Plans and other planning documents. You may also know the County Commission conducted a public town hall meeting on September 29, 2022 to gather additional feedback on the proposed project. We would be glad to discuss the feedback and comments received in greater detail, but a common question raised across small group discussions was, "What are the City's plans?"

The County Commission is currently reviewing the proposed five-year Capital Improvement Plan, including funding for the proposed extension of Wakarusa Drive. Therefore, we are seeking clarification on the City's involvement in the project, and whether a shared-use path is considered a priority. Please let us know how the City Commission intends to proceed. Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely,



Shannon Reid
Chair, Board of County Commissioners

Lawrence City Commission
Lawrence City Hall
Lawrence KS 66044

7 February 2023

re: participation in the Wakarusa Extension

Mayor Larsen and Commission:

Have our County officials not favored cars over all other values? Their Wakarusa Extension road project makes cars more important than prime farmland, than the Wakarusa River riparian corridor, than the Wakarusa Wetlands, than Native American culture, than containing sprawl, than a Douglas County Open Space Plan, than Plan 2040 growth tiers, and oh so typically more important than bicycle transportation.

In their ill conceived and outdated plan, Douglas County's latest move is to cynically use the shared use path (SUP) as a bargaining chip for this roadway. They initially trotted out the SUP as window dressing for the road, claiming that bicyclists would benefit. But the typical performance and endurance cyclists on County roads don't care for a shortcut. Their whole point is to go the longest, hilliest, and most challenging route. They actually eschew SUPs, and would much more benefit from the County building wide shoulders along North 1200 Rd. and East 1000 Rd. This Wakarusa Extension is a high price to pay for a marginal bikeway.

Biodiversity is also low on the County's list, very concerning since biodiversity is the foundation of all life support. A large body of scientific data indicates that since 1970, our planet has lost 69% of population numbers of most species. Furthermore, they warn that we have entered the sixth mass extinction event in history - [Why you should care about the current wave of mass extinctions](#). Hundreds of experts from 50 countries have estimated that a staggering 1 million species are at risk of extinction in the next few decades due to human-related causes. And what is the single-most important driver of both climate disruption and biodiversity loss? Modifications to the land.

By proposing the Wakarusa Extension to the south, County officials are dismissing years of community work on Plan 2040, that concluded for Lawrence not to grow south, but west. At the 9 November 2022 County Commission meeting, Chairperson Patrick Kelly said that "Plan 2040 has many internal contradictions", meaning they can choose to ignore growth tiers. In fact, Plan 2040 contains many competing values, not contradictions, and sprawl is not one of those values.

Finally, it's a red herring whether or not Lawrence meets the KDOT request for a local funding match for the SLT West Leg project. It's a request, not a requirement. The SLT (Kansas K-10) is a state highway project, funded by Kansas, using Federal Highway Administration dollars. If it were a local project using FHWA dollars, then yes, a local match would be in order. Regardless, Lawrence has other local project options to serve as a match, most notably the approximately \$1 million Lawrence Loop overpass at the SLT-Clinton Parkway interchange, proposed by KDOT. This project is integral to the SLT upgrade, whereas the Wakarusa Extension is not.

Please choose Option #5, the "no build" option.

Thank you,

Michael Almon

Sandra Fangohr

From: Joe Douglas <joemdouglas99@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 4, 2023 10:16 AM
To: City Commission Agendas
Subject: proposal to help fund extension of Wakarusa Drive

External Email. Be careful with links and attachments.

- City of Lawrence IT Helpdesk

February 3, 2023

I am opposed to the extension of Wakarusa Drive south of the Wakarusa River, and I urge you to refuse to help fund this unneeded project.

I don't know who really is behind this proposal. I attended the planning meeting at the old Wakarusa School, and it was evident that the county staff already had decided this project would be done. They were not seeking approval from county residents.

I have little difficulty getting to the south side of the Wakarusa River by car or by bicycle. I don't need or want to spend \$10M to get there a few minutes faster.

As an active cyclist and member of the Lawrence Bike Club I can assure you that bicycle riders have no problem getting to southern Douglas County. I see no reason for a shared use path which would take walkers to a county highway and is not needed for cyclists. It appears that the county staff are suggesting the \$1M path as an option primarily to make the entire project qualify for additional state funds. This is a horrendous waste of money.

An advantage of living in the city is ready access to various services. Disadvantages include crowding, traffic, noise and light pollution. A disadvantage of living south of the Wakarusa is less ready access to services. Advantages are lack of crowding, traffic, noise and light pollution. We all understood that when we decided where to live.

I hope we can stop this unneeded project. Please do not spend city funds to subsidize it.

Thank you,

Joe Douglas
2804 Oxford Road
Lawrence, KS 66049

From: Thad Holcombe <tjholcombe@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 4, 2023 8:44 AM
To: Lisa Larsen; Amber Sellers; Courtney Shipley; Bart Littlejohn; Brad Finkeldei; Craig Owens; City Commission Agendas; Steve Cadue
Subject: Wakarusa Avenue Extension

External Email. Be careful with links and attachments.

- City of Lawrence IT Helpdesk

City Commissioners: I am sending this note on behalf of Lawrence Ecology Teams United in Sustainability (LETUS). LETUS is an interfaith network of nine earth care teams associated with faith communities related to the Roman Catholic, Protestant, Unitarian Universalist, Muslim, Jewish and Zen Buddhist faith traditions in Lawrence. We are diverse in many ways but in agreement that our faith traditions ask us to speak on behalf of the earth in ways that remind us we are a part of the web of life. We are not the pinnacle or a species superior in our society that primarily expresses itself in a patriarchal way.

Many of our concerns will be expressed by others that will be speaking to you at the City Commission meeting regarding the Wakarusa Avenue extension. We are concerned about the environmental impact. In addition, our musing about this concern includes the question, "Why are we having to address this issue - what is the perspective/values that have sustained the wanting to extend a street, a paved path for cars/trucks into an area that is outside of the city limit that is going to begin the development for extending the urban borders of Lawrence?" It has been said that such is not the case, but we disagree, it is similar to a faucet that has a small drip which eventually becomes a stream that can not be fixed with a new gasket.

I think, at least, possibly, that we are opposing an endeavor similar to the use of plastic bags. This may seem to be a bit exaggerated...but consider. One of the main reasons for having plastic bags, which we, as humans, survived without for years, is that they are convenient. So convenient, that we have become addicted to convenience. And in the instance of the Wakarusa extension, we are acting out of an addiction to what we think is "progress" - more convenience, save time and help the flow of traffic - and do so with assistance of \$'s contributed.

I think this kind of thinking may be what helped create a climate change that endangers us and all of life as never before. We rationalize and say, "Well, it is not much to build a road across a river and over farmland" Actually, we are not just crossing a river, we are destroying a riparian area which is an amazing place of biodiversity and we also do the same when disturbing prime farm soil. It seems we do not see the slow suicide that is being perpetuated by such an endeavor.

Addiction is difficult to admit and difficult to go beyond, but if we do not curtail this road, we are addicted, but live in denial.

Again, we ask you to abandon this extension and see with new eyes that we are being asked to connect to a highway we can live without. We can then let live those kin who live in the soil and riparian area of the river and in the water. Otherwise we continue to say we humans are the superior ones....and the same ones who have wrought havoc in effecting a climate change that disrespects the earth.

**Thad Holcombe
Moderator for LETUS**

Sandra Fangohr

From: Steve Cadue <steve.cadue@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 4, 2023 3:15 PM
To: Thad Holcombe; Lisa Larsen; Amber Sellers; Courtney Shipley; Bart Littlejohn; Brad Finkeldei; Craig Owens; City Commission Agendas; Carole Cadue-Blackwood
Subject: Re: Wakarusa Avenue Extension

External Email. Be careful with links and attachments.

- City of Lawrence IT Helpdesk

The Native American human beings and Haskell Indian Nations University have never recovered from the price of progress of the South Lawrence Trafficway. Recovery, in whose mind? Indian people witnessed the debacle and breaking of the meaning of Indian treaties by the decision-makers of the powerful in the SLT outcome. Yet, it was the principle found in Indian Treaties why Haskell was built and former Indian treaty lands could be donated to Lawrence for education. cWhat was the benefit to Indian people? Answer; Indians need no benefit, they (Indians) have an antiquated school and the majority must be rewarded. The only thing, Indians could do is not to come to Haskell for education and many Indians do not even come to visit. The Hypocrisy of practicing 'green in Lawrence satisfies the conscience or is important to some, but not all. The miracle of the National Science Foundation Hub grant to the Haskell Foundation is rooted in the bounty of Mother Earth but the Trustee of HINU has but a few more acres to donate to the benefit of the Lawrence community. Maybe, our Indian people should go back to the Indian reservations. There is still time to treat Indians as human beings but the window is closing as we witness the devastation of HINU. m'gwitch, Steve Cadue

From: Thad Holcombe <tjholcombe@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 4, 2023 8:44 AM
To: Lisa Larsen <llarsen@lawrenceks.org>; Amber Sellers <asellers@lawrenceks.org>; Courtney Shipley <cshipley@lawrenceks.org>; Bart Littlejohn <blittlejohn@lawrenceks.org>; Brad Finkeldei <bfinkeldei@lawrenceks.org>; Craig Owens <craigowens@lawrenceks.org>; ccagendas@lawrenceks.org <ccagendas@lawrenceks.org>; Steve Cadue <steve.cadue@hotmail.com>
Subject: Wakarusa Avenue Extension

City Commissioners: I am sending this note on behalf of Lawrence Ecology Teams United in Sustainability (LETUS). LETUS is an interfaith network of nine earth care teams associated with faith communities related to the Roman Catholic, Protestant, Unitarian Universalist, Muslim, Jewish and Zen Buddhist faith traditions in Lawrence. We are diverse in many ways but in agreement that our faith traditions ask us to speak on behalf of the earth in ways that remind us we are a part of the web of life. We are not the pinnacle or a species superior in our society that primarily expresses itself in a patriarchal way.

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I think, at least, possibly, that we are opposing an endeavor similar to the use of plastic bags. This may seem to be a bit exaggerated...but consider. One of the main reasons for having plastic bags, which we, as humans, survived without for years, is that they are convenient. So convenient, that we have become addicted to convenience. And in the instance of the Wakarusa extension, we are acting out of an addiction to what we think is "progress" - more convenience, save time and help the flow of traffic - and do so with assistance of \$'s contributed.

I think this kind of thinking may be what helped create a climate change that endangers us and all of life as never before. We rationalize and say, "Well, it is not much to build a road across a river and over farmland" Actually, we are not just crossing a river, we are destroying a riparian area which is an amazing place of biodiversity and we also do the same when disturbing prime farm soil. It seems we do not see the slow suicide that is being perpetuated by such an endeavor.

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Again, we ask you to abandon this extension and see with new eyes that we are being asked to connect to a highway we can live without. We can then let live those kin who live in the soil and riparian area of the river and in the water. Otherwise we continue to say we humans are the superior ones....and the same ones who have wrought havoc in effecting a climate change that disrespects the earth.

Thad Holcombe
Moderator for LETUS

Sandra Fangohr

From: Stefan Cerbin <stefan.cerbin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 10:18 AM
To: City Commission Agendas
Subject: Wakarusa road extension

External Email. Be careful with links and attachments.
- City of Lawrence IT Helpdesk

Dear City Council,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed extension of Wakarusa Road over the river. I strongly believe that this project will have a negative impact on the local wildlife, wetlands, and important areas for Haskell University and that the cost is not worth the destruction it will cause.

As someone who rides my bike to Baker wetlands on 1350 Road, I have observed firsthand the devastating impact that increased traffic can have on local wildlife. I have seen numerous road kill, including monarch butterflies, which are of great importance to our city. The extension of Wakarusa Road will only perpetuate this killing and lead to further harm to the delicate balance of the local ecosystem.

The proposed extension will inevitably disrupt the delicate balance of the local ecosystem and harm the diverse range of wildlife that call this area home. The road will not only lead to loss of habitats, but also increased noise and light pollution that will have a profound impact on the animals. Moreover, the construction of the road will result in the destruction of valuable wetlands that play a crucial role in flood control, water purification, and carbon sequestration.

Additionally, the road will negatively affect important areas for Haskell University, such as research sites, wildlife preserves, and outdoor classrooms. These areas are essential to the university's mission of promoting environmental education and sustainability. The construction of the road will restrict access to these areas and diminish the quality of learning experiences for students.

Furthermore, the cost of this project is not worth the destruction it will cause. The extension of Wakarusa Road will only promote further sprawl and contribute to the increasing pollution in our city.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the city council to reconsider the proposed extension of Wakarusa Road over the river. The potential harm to the local ecosystem, wildlife, and educational opportunities, as well as the cost, far outweigh any perceived benefits of this project. I hope that you will take my concerns into consideration as you make your decision.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Stefan Cerbin

Sandra Fangohr

From: Phil Englehart <ppajck@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 10:55 AM
To: City Commission Agendas
Subject: H.2. Wakrusa Extension request

External Email. Be careful with links and attachments.

- City of Lawrence IT Helpdesk

To: City Commission

Subject: H.2. City's Participation in the Wakarusa Extension Project

Planning documents like the City's Strategic Plan and Plan 2040 are necessarily broad and ambiguous expressions of the community's collective vision for how it would like to grow and change – physically, socially, environmentally, and economically. We have examined both documents in fair detail and based on this examination conclude that the presented vision emphasizes building on **existing** assets (physical, cultural, and social), and encouraging **more compact** growth that may prove to be **fiscally and environmentally** sustainable. The Wakarusa Extension Project runs almost completely contrary to this vision – in our opinion it is just another extension of the same tired post-WWII development mindset; one that ignores the rapidly evolving realities of 21st century American communities. On this basis, we urge you: 1) not to approve city funding of the Wakarusa extension, and 2) perhaps more importantly, to work more closely and productively with your counterparts on the County Commission to build a strong and 21st-century competitive Lawrence and Douglas County community.

Phil & Peggi Englehart

Sandra Fangohr

From: Myles Davis <myles.davis@haskell.edu>
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2023 1:47 PM
To: City Commission Agendas
Subject: Wakarusa Extension

External Email. Be careful with links and attachments.

- City of Lawrence IT Helpdesk

Hello Commission,

As a Lawrence resident and a Haskell student, I would like to let you know my opinion on the Wakarusa extension. The Haskell wetlands provide a form of Groundwater recharge and flood control, etc. The Haskell wetlands is an ecological transition zone with dense biodiversity. How do you plan to recover from these losses if you go through with the extension?