DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS

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Executive Summary

Douglas County Kansas is creating a Climate Action Plan for municipalities and unincorporated areas of Douglas County. The plan will prepare our community to reduce greenhouse gases and better adapt and recover from the risks of climate change. One part of community engagement and feedback was a community engagement survey distributed in in 2021. Survey outreach included distribution of project flyers with survey QR codes around Lawrence, a tabling event at EudoraFest and at Art Emergency in Lawrence, Baldwin City Lumberyard Art Center, and at the Douglas County Farm Tour. Survey links were placed in Lawrence's Flame newsletter, included with utility bills. Links were also distributed through email lists of the Sunrise Project and Just Food. Links were posted on the Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Facebook page, and on the Climate Action in Our Community website.

Appendix III displays the survey questions and format. Respondents are predominantly full-time employed college-educated Lawrence residents with adequate incomes for their cost of living. Most are White 25-65+ year old homeowners. Climate change, water quality, and heat are the top environmental issues faced by their neighborhoods. The vast majority use cars for transportation. Energy from fossil fuels and insulated homes keep residents cool in the summer and warm in the winter. The community would like to increase the efficiency of their homes and use renewable energies, often mentioning their concerns about using fossil fuels to heat and cool their homes. Residents rely most on sidewalks and trails, the food shed, and green space to be healthy. Lack of healthcare access, poor environmental quality, and a lack of healthy food makes them and their families unhealthy.

Demographic Representation

Appendix I covers demographic information of respondents. None of the demographic questions were required questions, thus each graph includes a "Total responses" count of respondents who disclosed information. The survey captured 554 total responses from zip codes within Douglas County. 25 responses were excluded for being outside the Douglas County limits. 46 respondents did not disclose their zip code but were included. Lawrence residents represented 83.9% of respondents. 73.5% of respondents have at least an undergraduate degree. This is disproportionate to the 2020 Census 5-year estimates that 31.9% of respondents have at least an undergraduate degree. 77.3% of respondents are not college students. 49.5% of respondents are employed full time. 83.6% of respondents self-estimate that they have either enough income or more than enough income for their living needs. 68% of respondents are homeowners, which is disproportionate to the 2020 Census 5-year estimates that homeowners account for 51% and renters account for 49% of the total number of households in Douglas County. 56.3% of respondent's households have 2 to 3 members.

82.8% of respondents are 25 years old or older. This is disproportionate to the 2020 Census 5-year estimates showing that 58.4% of residents are 25 years old or older, while 24.5% are 19 years old or younger. 51% of respondents identified as female, while 34% identified as male. 75% of respondents are White. This closely matches the 2020 Census 5-year estimates showing that 78% of Douglas County is White. However, only 3% of the English-language survey respondents are Hispanic/Latino, compared to the 6% shown in the 2020 Census 5-year estimates to reside in Douglas County. Spanish-language survey responses filled out and in possession by a local organization have yet to be translated and integrated into the data. Asian, Native American, and Black residents were similarly underrepresented by survey respondents. The Douglas County CAP Survey Demographics dashboard (not yet published) will represent this data in graph form, while Appendix I shows count and percentage tables.

Note that in order to obtain multicultural representation in our community outreach, community coordinators were hired to interview members of our community. Those results will be shared in a separate document.

Climate and Community

Appendix II covers survey responses related to climate change and health of the community. The first survey question asked respondents to indicate the top environmental issue that is facing them

and their neighbors. 36.4% of respondents selected climate. This included increased hazard events like tornadoes. Water quality and heat were the next highest concerns at 10.8% and 10.1% respectively. 28 respondents selected the category "other" and explained their concern for habitat and land degradation and loss from development and damaging agricultural practices. These responses were grouping into the "Green space access" category. Others expressed concern about light and noise pollution, a lack of walking/biking infrastructure, the coal plant, aging infrastructure, and a need for renewable energy. These responses were grouped into the "Nearby polluting infrastructure" category. Several expressed concern for the overuse of pesticides and fertilizers. These responses were put into the "Water quality" category. The remaining "other" responses were not clarified by the respondent, or the comments were unrelated to the question and were not included into the categories.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked what topic areas of the CAP Plan they would like to give input on during the development process. Respondents could select as many categories as they would like. 42 respondents chose to not select any input categories. The top three categories of input selected were "Energy Generation" at 46.6%, "Food Systems" at 46.2%, and "Land" at 44.9%.

81% of respondents have thought "some" or "a great deal" about taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. 74.2% have thought "some" or "a great deal" about preparing for extreme weather. Responses to open-ended questions from the survey were categorized and represented in Appendix II pages 8 – 11, selected quotes are included alongside the questions in Appendix II. All of the quotes can be made available by request to Douglas County Sustainability staff. Most responses fit into multiple categories. Some respondents chose to leave questions blank, thus "Total responses" represents the total number of respondents who disclosed information. Exceptions include the questions "What would you change about how you keep cool?" and "What would you change about how you keep warm?". With these questions, giving no response was categorized together into the "Satisfied" category with respondents indicating they were satisfied with how they choose to keep warm and keep cool.

Over 90% of Douglas County residents who responded to the survey use a personal vehicle to get around. 87% use energy to keep cool, giving responses mentioning energy use, conventional air conditioning, heat pumps, geothermal cooling systems, and using fans. 31% use ventilation, mentioning window dressings, opening and closing windows, insulated homes, and wearing appropriate/light clothing. An almost equal percentage mention using local environmental resources such as going to the

lake, staying in the shade, planting trees, spending time under trees, exercising/doing activities outdoors during cool times of day, lake and pool swimming. 0.7% are unable to keep cool.

39.7% of respondents would like to change how they keep cool by increasing building efficiency, mentioning passive cooling architecture, updating windows, insulation, painting house white, landlords changing systems/weatherizing, increasing energy efficiency, and using less energy. 19.5% would like to use renewable energy sources. 11.6% would like to improve environmental resources and infrastructure, mentioning wanting a clean river, misting stations, pools, splash pads, and planting trees. 6.3% would like to reduce the cost of keeping cool. Numbers are similar for how surveyed residents would like to change how they keep warm. However, environmental resources are not mentioned and a higher percentage (28.9%) of respondents would like to use renewable energy to keep warm.

86.6% of respondents use energy sources to keep warm, mentioning heating units, adjusting the thermostat, electric space heaters, zone heating, fireplaces, warm drinks, and warm food. 46% mention insulation as a method to keep warm, discussing closing/insulating windows and doors, opening shades for sunlight, weatherstripping, insulated house, staying indoors, dressing warmly, and using blankets. 0.4% use public spaces such as the housing shelter to keep warm. 0.2% don't stay warm.

47.1% of respondents think that public infrastructure keeps them healthy, mentioning walkability, biking/bike trails as exercise infrastructure, running, gyms, pools, exercise facilities, and water quality as it relates to drinking water. 37% think community food access keeps them healthy, mentioning grocery stores, The Merc, healthy food, farmers markets, and farms and gardens. 34.7% think community green space keeps them healthy, mentioning the outdoors and outdoor spaces, parks, trails, hikes, yard work, and air quality. 19.1% think community health care keeps them healthy, mentioning clinics, insurance, vaccinations, and mask access. 13.9% think people in the community keep them healthy, mentioning safe neighborhoods and communities, local leadership and government, policing, sport clubs, teams and classes, and connecting with friends. 3.2% think housing keeps them healthy, mentioning quality housing, access to housing, apartment complex exercise facilities, indoor air quality, and stable housing.

32.4% of respondents think a lack of healthcare access makes them unhealthy, mentioning stress, anxiety, hereditary health conditions, age, pathogens, unsafe work conditions, and sedentary work. 30.5% think bad environmental quality makes them unhealthy, mentioning air pollution, the coal plant, allergies, wildfire smoke, mold, indoor air quality, soil pollution, lead in the soil, and a dirty river.

28.9% think public infrastructure makes them unhealthy, mentioning proximity to transportation infrastructure, lack of safe bike paths, not being able to be outside, noise and light pollution, poor water quality, and excessive heat. 20.5% think lack of food access makes them unhealthy, mentioning fast food, poor diet choices, and processed food. 8.6% think the cost of living is making them unhealthy, mentioning high taxes, housing costs, unaffordability, and overwork. 5.9% think poor housing quality makes them unhealthy, mentioning slumlords, homes not being kept to code, mold, chemicals and products in housing construction.

Appendix I: Demographics

Cities

CAP Survey		
Lawrence	465	**83.9%**
Eudora	19	**3.4%**
Baldwin City	13	**2.3%**
Lecompton	2	**0.4%**
Overbrook	1	**0.2%**
Undisclosed	54	**9.7%**
Total Responses	**500**	

Education Level

CAP Survey			2020 Census		
Post Graduate	221	**40.4%**	Post Graduate	16626	**13.7%**
B.A./B.S	186	**34.0%**	B.A./B.S.	22063	**18.2%**
Some College	106	**19.4%**	Some College	35887	**29.6%**
H.S. Diploma	31	**5.7%**	H.S. Diploma	18077	**14.9%**
Some H.S.	3	**0.5%**	Some H.S.	4123	**3.4%**
Undisclosed	7	**1.3%**	**Total**	**121,304**	
Total	**547**				

Student Status

CAP Survey		
Not a student	428	**77.3%**
College Student	102	**18.4%**
Undisclosed	24	**4.3%**
Total Responses	**530**	

Employment Status

CAP Survey		
Full time	274	**49.5%**
Retired	96	**17.3%**
Part time	94	**17.0%**
Unemployed	48	**8.7%**
other	41	**7.4%**
Undisclosed	1	**0.2%**
Total Responses	**553**	

Income Estimate Self-Evaluation

CAP Survey		
About Enough	286	**51.5%**
More than Enough	179	**32.3%**
Not Enough	79	**14.2%**
Undisclosed	10	**1.8%**
Total Responses	**544**	

DGCO Tenure by Household

CAP Survey			2020 Census		
Owner	378	**68%**	Owner	24,333	**51%**
Renter	149	**27%**	Renter	23,639	**49%**
Other	15	**3%**	**Total**	**47,972**	
Undisclosed	7	**1%**			
No permanent Housing	5	**1%**			
Total Responses	**547**				

Appendix I: Demographics continued

Members in Household

CAP Survey		
1	94	17.0%
2 to 3	312	56.3%
4 to 5	98	17.7%
5 to 7	14	2.5%
Undisclosed	36	6.5%
Total Responses	**518**	

DGCO Age

CAP Survey				2020 Census		
17 or under	5	**0.9%**		19 or under	29,732	**24.5%**
18-24	78	**14.1%**		20-24	20,683	**17.1%**
25-34	95	**17.1%**		25-34	17,843	**14.7%**
35-44	102	**18.4%**		35-44	14,558	**12.0%**
45-54	69	**12.5%**		45-54	11,446	**9.4%**
55-64	71	**12.8%**		55-64	12,216	**10.1%**
65+	122	**22.0%**		65+	14,826	**12.2%**
undisclosed	12	**2.2%**		**Total**	**121,304**	
Total Responses	**542**					

DGCO Gender

CAP Survey		
Female	285	**51%**
Male	190	**34%**
Undisclosed	58	**10%**
Gender Nonconforming	21	**4%**
Total Responses	**496**	

DCGO Race

CAP Survey			2020 Census		
White	413	**75%**	White	94,090	**78%**
Undisclosed	68	**12%**	-	-	-
Multiple Races	36	**6%**	Multiple Races	5,648	**5%**
Hispanic or Latinx	14	**3%**	Hispanic or Latinx	7,762	**6%**
Asian	12	**2%**	Asian	6,343	**5%**
Native American	6	**1%**	American Indian & Alaska Native	2,178	**2%**
Black	5	**1%**	Black	4,812	**4%**
Total Responses	**486**		**Total**	**121,304**	

Appendix II: Climate and Community

Top Environmental Issue		
Climate change	196	35.4%
Water quality	60	10.8%
Heat	56	10.1%
Housing	47	8.5%
Infrastructure pollution	32	5.8%
Flooding	30	5.4%
Food access	27	4.9%
Green space access	23	4.2%
Pests	16	2.9%
Garbage	15	2.7%
Outdoor air quality	13	2.3%
Indoor air quality	11	2.0%
Noise	0	0.0%
Other	27	4.9%
Total Responses	**526**	
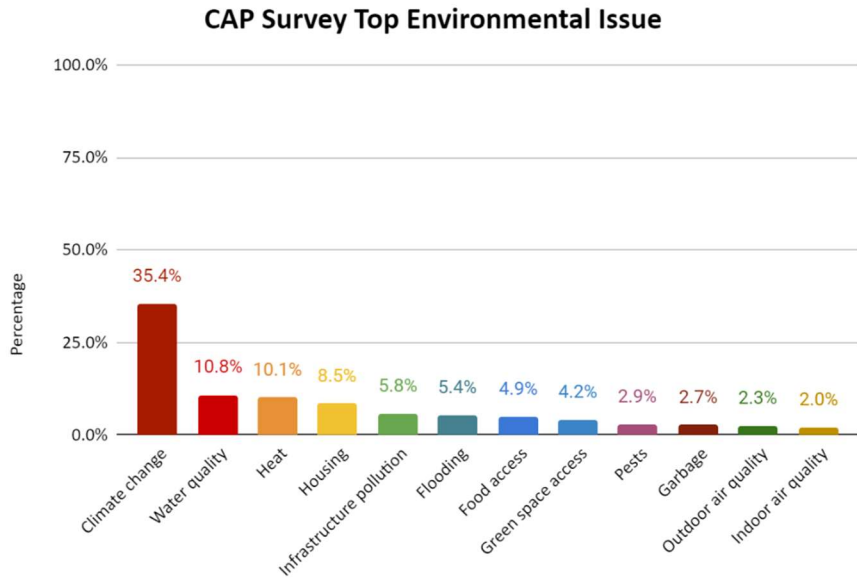
CAP Survey Top Environmental Issue

| Which of these topic areas are you most interested in giving input on during the development of the Climate Action Plan?		
Energy Generation	258	**46.6%**
Food Systems	256	**46.2%**
Land	249	**44.9%**
Mgt of Waste	241	**43.5%**
Homes & Buildings	218	**39.4%**
Transportation	196	**35.4%**
Accountability	151	**27.3%**
Community Resilience	146	**26.4%**
Economic Dev	107	**19.3%**
None	42	**7.6%**
Total Responses	**512**	

CAP Survey Areas of Input
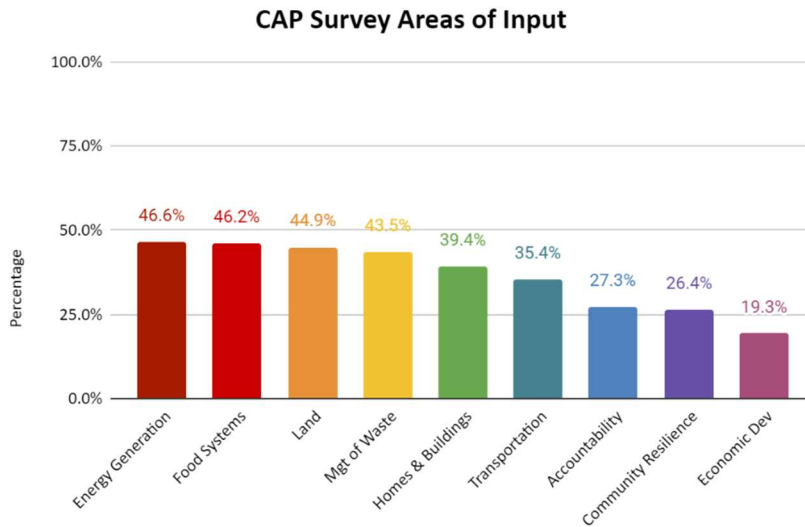
Appendix II: Climate and Community continued

How much have you thought about taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?		
A great deal	306	**55.2%**
Some	143	**25.8%**
A little	54	**9.7%**
no thought	51	**9.2%**
Total	**554**	

How much have you thought about taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
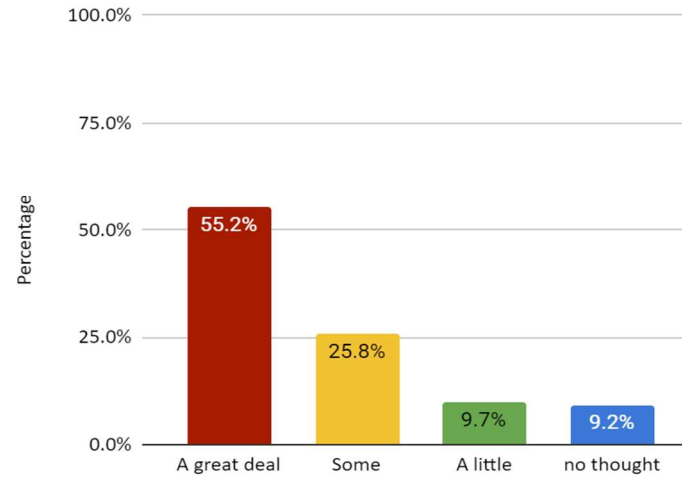
How much have you thought about preparing for extreme weather like major flooding and extreme heat or cold?		
A great deal	173	**31.2%**
Some	238	**43.0%**
A little	102	**18.4%**
no thought	41	**7.4%**
Total	**554**	

How much have you thought about preparing for extreme weather?
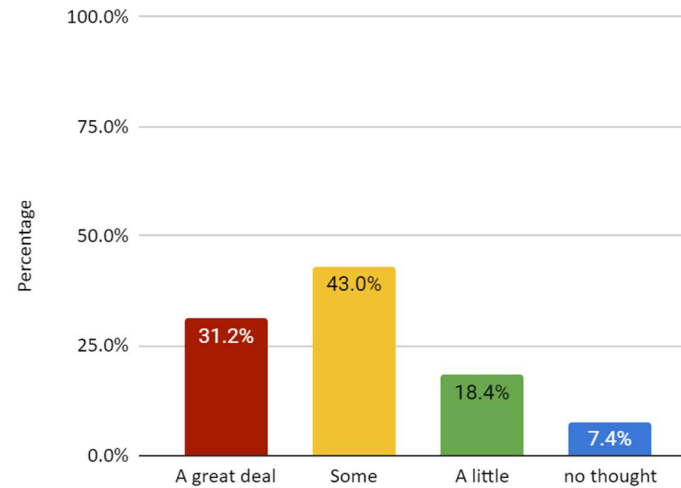
Appendix II: Climate and Community continued

How do you get around in your community?		
Car	508	**91.7%**
Walk	194	**35.0%**
Bike	135	**24.4%**
Public Transit	60	**10.8%**
Ride Share	8	**1.4%**
No Response	13	**2.3%**
Total Responses	**541**	

"We love biking the bike paths and do some errands on them but we drive too. We have put our bikes on bus and taken them downtown too. We hope to buy electric vehicles soon."

"I drive (blegh)."

How do you keep cool in the summer?		
Energy Sources	482	**87.0%**
Ventilation	172	**31.0%**
Environmental Resources	168	**30.3%**
Don't Stay Cool	4	**0.7%**
No Response	11	**2.0%**
Total Responses	**543**	

"Acclimate to weather; air conditioning; trees for shade; appropriate home infrastructure I.e. light colored house paint; window shades, etc."
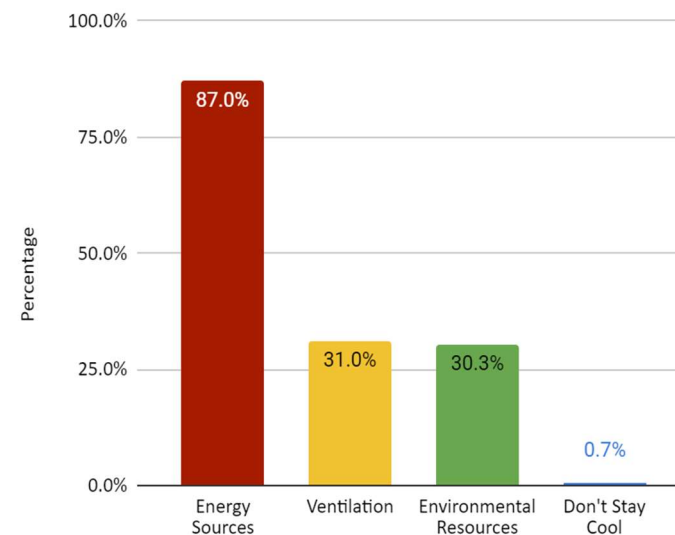
"Go to public places with AC."

"I keep air set to 75 degrees and shut shutters against the sun, put up awnings, even put white foam core in windows between the closed shutters that get the most heat. I've planted shade trees everywhere I've lived, too."

How do you get around in your community?
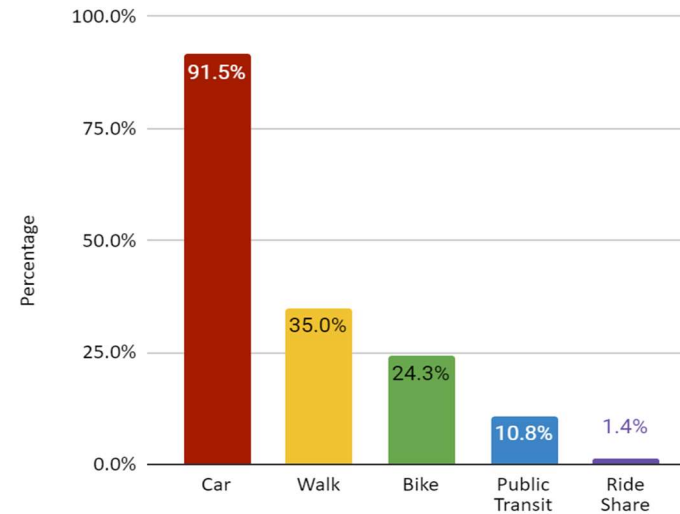
How do you keep cool in the summer?

Appendix II: Climate and Community continued

What would you change about how you keep cool?		
Increase Building Efficiency	220	**39.7%**
Satisfied	164	**29.6%**
Use Renewable Energy	108	**19.5%**
Improve Environmental Resources	64	**11.6%**
Reduce Cost	35	**6.3%**
Unsure	21	**3.8%**

"I'd like to use the AC less and have better windows/insulation to allow that."

"My family is saving to get solar panels so electricity isn't coming from the coal plant."

"Would love to have more places to swim with clean water"
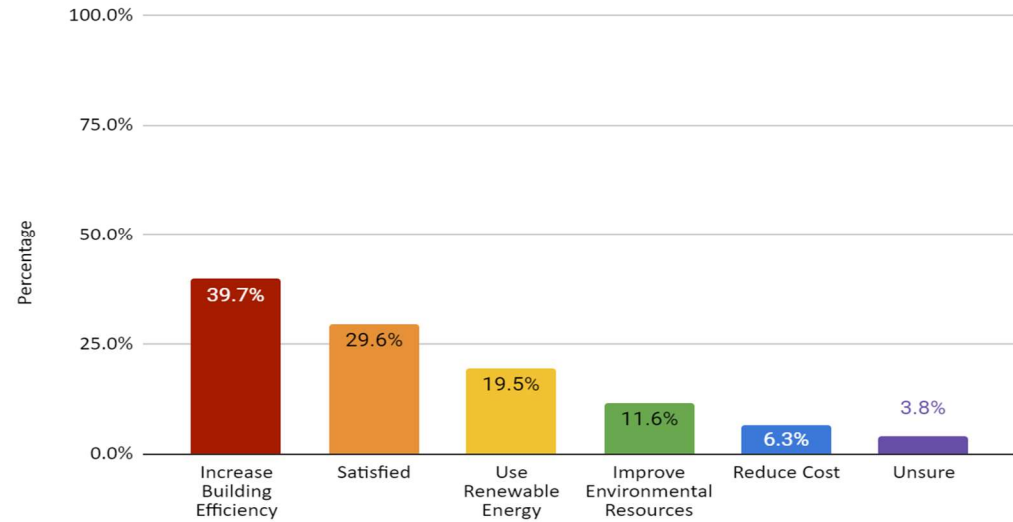
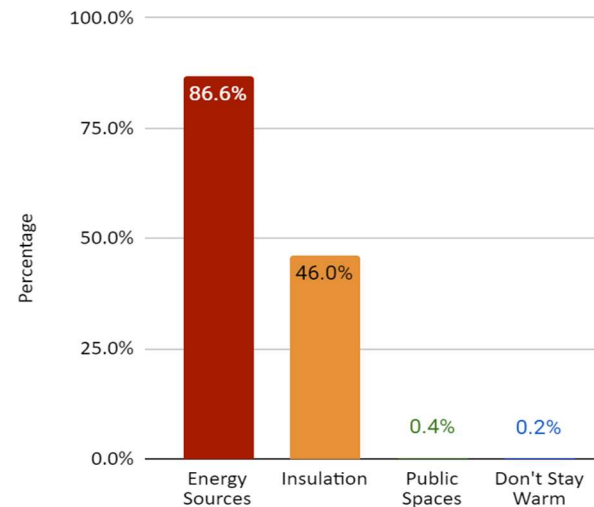| How do you keep warm?		
Energy Sources	480	86.6%
Insulation	255	46.0%
Public Spaces	2	0.4%
Don't Stay Warm	1	0.2%
No Response	19	3.4%
Total Responses	**535**	

"Wood stove as a primary. Mini split heaters and gas furnace as back up. Also exercise; biking, walking, working outside in the winter keeps you naturally warm."

"Dress appropriately, insulate home, use sunlight to warm house"

What would you change about how you keep cool?

How do you keep warm?

What would you change about how you keep warm?		
Increase Building Efficiency	203	36.6%
Satisfied	175	31.6%
Use Renewable Energy	160	28.9%
Reduce Cost	34	6.1%
Unsure	18	3.2%

"Better insulated home, more efficient heating unit and appliances."

"We are planning to switch to electric heat. We would like to add emergency battery power and wood stove."

"Add a humidifier to keep air from being too dry. Would be nice to have it all in one package and a purifier too."

What would you change about how you keep warm?
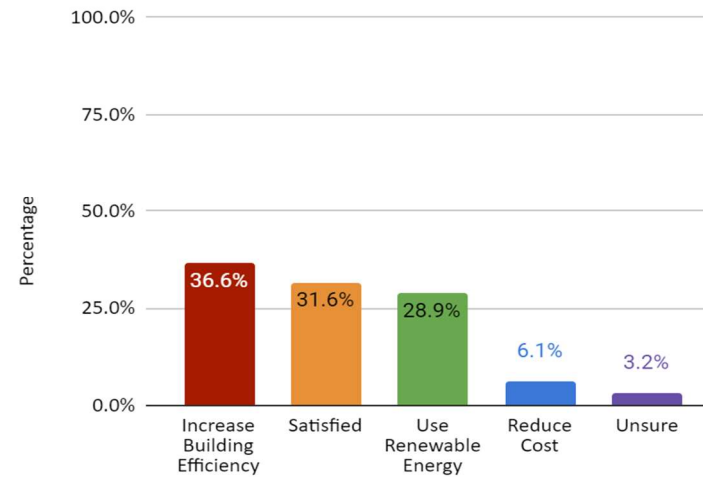
What in your community keeps you and/or your family healthy?		
Infrastructure	261	**47.1%**
Food Access	205	**37.0%**
Green Space	192	**34.7%**
Healthcare	106	**19.1%**
People	77	**13.9%**
Housing	18	**3.2%**
No Response	78	**14.1%**
Total responses	476	

"The trails around town, the outdoors space, and the opportunities to get outside in nature. Also, the campus clinic."

"My privilege to buy fresh produce and have safe places to run"

"Access to clean, filtered drinking water, Just Food, amenities like the gym or the pool at my living complex."

What in your community keeps you and/or your family healthy?
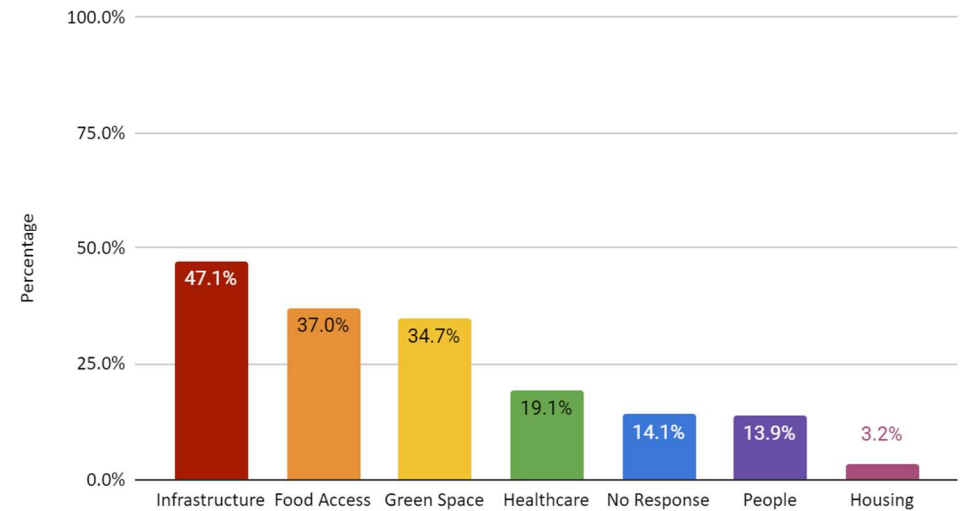
Appendix II: Climate and Community continued

What do you think makes you and/or your family sick or unhealthy?		
Healthcare Access	180	**32.4%**
Environment	169	**30.5%**
Infrastructure	159	**28.6%**
Food Access	114	**20.5%**
Cost of Living	48	**8.6%**
Housing	33	**5.9%**
No Response	117	**21.1%**
Total Responses	**437**	
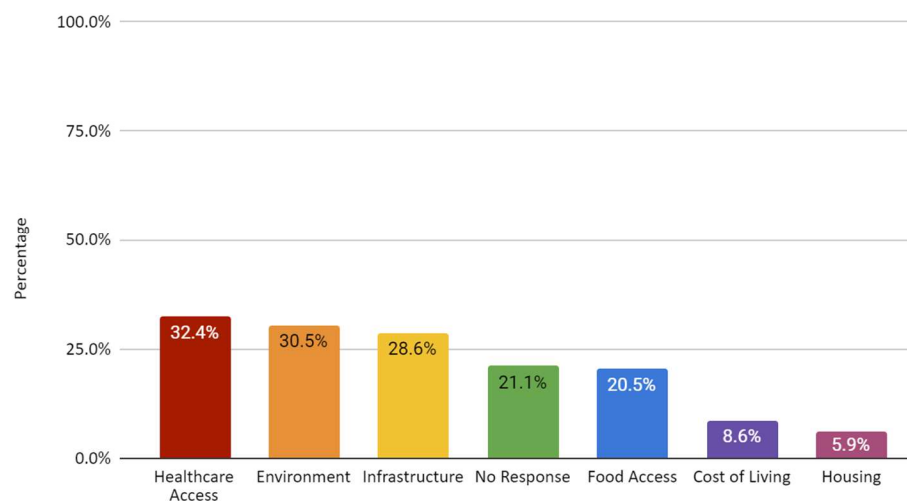
"The heat making it too hot to be outside much"

"Climate change causing poor air quality."

"Evergy coal plant nearby, the pollution from all of the cars on our roads, and poor water and air quality in badly maintained/not upgraded rental houses."

"Community stress -- worrying about unhoused neighbors, families who don't have what they need, and climate change. Also the grind of work/school, and being very busy."

"Shortage of affordable housing, employers that take advantage of low minimum wage, lack of affordable childcare."

"Poorly maintained infrastructure. Lack of support for low-income families and houseless individuals. Urban planning that doesn't incorporate walkability."

What do you think makes you and/or your family sick or unhealthy?

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

The City of Lawrence and all of Douglas County are building a Climate Action Plan to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate and do our part to slow climate change. We are looking for voices from every corner of the community. We want to hear from you. *(required questions have an *)*

1. Rank the top **three** environmental issues you believe you and your neighbors are facing, **rank them in order of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd**. Ignore the remaining choices. *

   ___ Heat

   ___ Flooding

   ___ Noise

   ___ Access to parks or green space

   ___ Pests, such as roaches, rats, or bed bugs

   ___ Water quality

   ___ Indoor air quality (including mold, lead paint, dust exposure)

   ___ Outdoor air quality

   ___ Access to food

   ___ Nearby polluting infrastructure or activities (like a highway/ high traffic area or factory)

   ___ Garbage (including from illegal dumping)

   ___ Permanent/reliable housing

   ___ Climate change (including increased hazards such as tornadoes)

   ___ Other:

   _____

   _____

2. How much have you thought about preparing for extreme weather like major flooding and extreme heat or cold? (choose one)
   - ☐ A great deal
   - ☐ Some
   - ☐ A little
   - ☐ none

3. How much have you thought about taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? (choose one)
   - ☐ A great deal
   - ☐ Some
   - ☐ A little
   - ☐ none

4. How do you keep cool in the summer?

5. What would you change about how you keep cool?

6. How do you keep warm in the winter?

7. What would you change about how you keep warm?

8. How do you get around in your community?

9. What in your community keeps you and/or your family healthy?

10. What do you think makes you and/or your family sick or unhealthy?

_____

11. Which of these topic areas are you most interested in giving input on during the development of the Climate Action Plan? (check one or as many as you want)

☐ Transportation: Getting people from place to place

☐ Land: Using land to reduce greenhouse gases and absorb extreme weather events

☐ Healthy & Resilient Homes and Buildings: Preparing buildings and homes for extreme weather and energy efficiency

☐ Energy Generation: Producing energy with less emissions

☐ Economic Development & Innovation: Supporting businesses and entrepreneurs

☐ Food Systems: Improving how we produce, buy, eat, and dispose food

☐ Management of Waste: Reducing, reusing, and recycling materials

☐ Community Resilience: Preparing for and recovering from extreme weather events as a community

☐ Leadership & Accountability: Implementing and reporting progress of the climate plan

☐ None.

☐ Other (please describe here).

Provide your email address if you would like to continue to share input throughout the Climate Action Plan development and have a chance to win some prizes.

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Demographics

It is important to hear from all types of people who live, work, and spend time in our community. Please share a few details about yourself so that we can better understand whose voices are present and may be missing.

1. What is your race/ethnicity?* (check all that apply)
   ☐ Asian
   ☐ Black
   ☐ Hispanic or Latino/a/x
   ☐ Native American
   ☐ White
   ☐ Multiple races
   ☐ Do not wish to disclose
   ☐ Other, please describe here:_____

2. Gender*
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Non-binary
   - ☐ Transgender female
   - ☐ Transgender male
   - ☐ Do not wish to disclose
   - ☐ Other, please describe
     here:_____

3. What is your age?*
   - ☐ Under 18
   - ☐ 18-24
   - ☐ 25-34
   - ☐ 35-44
   - ☐ 45-54
   - ☐ 55-64
   - ☐ 65 or older
   - ☐ Do not wish to disclose

4. What is your zip code?*

5. How many people (including you) live in your home?
   - ☐ 1
   - ☐ 2-3
   - ☐ 4-5
   - ☐ 6-7
   - ☐ Other, please describe
     here:_____

6. What is your household income?
   - ☐ My household does not have enough
   - ☐ My household has about enough
   - ☐ My household has more than enough

7. Housing status:
   - ☐ Do not have permanent housing
   - ☐ Rent
   - ☐ Own
   - ☐ Other, please describe
     here:_____

8. Employment status
   - ☐ Working part-time for pay
   - ☐ Working full-time for pay
   - ☐ Not currently employed, looking for paid work
   - ☐ Not currently employed, not looking for paid work
   - ☐ Fully retired
   - ☐ Other, please describe
     here:_____

9. Current student status:
   - ☐ Not a college student
   - ☐ K-12 student
   - ☐ Community college or trade school student
   - ☐ College or university student

10. What is the highest level of education you have received?
    - ☐ Some high school
    - ☐ High school diploma
    - ☐ Associate's degree/ some college
    - ☐ Bachelor's degree
    - ☐ Trade school or certification
    - ☐ Post graduate degree
    - ☐ Other, please describe
      here:_____