

# Climate Action Plan Community Narrative

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## INTRODUCTION

The Douglas County Sustainability Office is leading an effort to build a Climate Action Plan that will be tailored to our community's priorities, account for our assets and vulnerabilities, and include specific short-term and longer-term action items and strategies.

These values will guide the establishment of the Climate Action Plan from community engagement through adoption.

- **Authentic and Transparent:** listening to understand, sharing what we gather, and checking to make sure we get it right
- **Equitable:** centering those who are most impacted by the burdens of climate change
- **Collaborative:** incorporating the input, lived experience, and expertise of community members and staff
- **Relevant:** connecting climate to people's everyday lives

Ensuring that communities who are more vulnerable to climate change are represented in the data is a core component of the Climate Action Plan. We prioritized communities who face historic and current inequities and marginalization, have limited resources to adapt to the effects of climate change, or both. The Sustainability Office contracted with the Climate + Energy Project and Sunrise Project to hire and train ten Community Coordinators who reach a variety of communities in Douglas County, including residents who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), Spanish speakers, LGBTQIA2S+, elders, women of color, youth, disabled, low-income, unhoused, and outdoor workers, as well as those in addiction recovery and the foster care system. Across Fall of 2021, our Community Coordinators processed, documented, and synthesized information and stories that were collected to ensure the Climate Action Plan reflects the lived realities of all of our community members.

This document reflects those narratives and was written by the Climate + Energy Project with editorial support from Sunrise Project.

# OUR PEOPLE. OUR STORIES.

A brief overview into our different, more thoughtful, approach to collecting stories for the **Climate Action Plan**.

## our commitment to equity

When we designed our approach for this project, we knew it was vital to acknowledge that traditional approaches to policy-making perpetuate racism and often exclude the experiences of marginalized groups. The environmentalism movement has historically centered the experiences and input of privileged, able-bodied, white people. This has resulted in policies that reinforce systems of oppression and worsen the experiences of those most impacted by climate change, namely creating a system of environmental racism. By centering the experiences of systemically marginalized communities, our hope is that this engagement project will lead to equitable policies for a more just Douglas County.

This project centers the experiences of people in our community who are systematically marginalized from public policy processes. Through our strategic approach to reach underrepresented groups, we were able to collect stories from many diverse perspectives, including the BIPOC community, the LGBTQIA+ community, low income individuals and families, disabled and chronically ill individuals, unhoused individuals, children, teens, college-aged, and elderly individuals, individuals experiencing food insecurity, and more.

We prioritized privacy and respect, and collected a signed Consent Form from each participant. We are proud to have offered stipends to many of our interviewees to thank them for participating in a conversation that can often be challenging and deeply personal. We also offered aid with transportation, childcare, and access to community resources. We ensured each of our Community Coordinators had the knowledge and skills to approach sensitive topics with empathy, understanding, and equity at the forefront of their research.

**"It's the only way to do it. Organize, get the numbers, generate enthusiasm, and go all out on all fronts!"**

**- Climate Action Plan Interviewee**



"Wondering With" (2021)

An original collage by Mad Marshall - inspired by their experience as a Community Coordinator.

## CONTRIBUTORS

### Lawrence-Douglas County Community Members

**One hundred fifteen** community members from Douglas County shared their stories and insights with our Community Coordinators. Without them, this project would not have been possible.

### Community Coordinators

**Anna Balmilero**  
**Jenna Bellemere**  
**Kelly Chellberg**  
**Fatima Cruz**  
**Billie David**

**Ezekiel Gibbs**  
**Tiana Harding**  
**Mad Marshall**  
**Jasmine McBride**  
**Emmy Rivera**

### Sunrise Project

**Melissa Freiburger**, *Executive Director*  
**Ella Dominguez**, *Director of Programs*  
**La'Pourchea McConico**, *Board of Directors*  
*President*

### Climate + Energy Project

**Dorothy Barnett**, *Executive Director*  
**Rachel Myslivy**, *Former Assistant Director*  
**Erin Kruse**, *Program Director*  
**Ma'Ko'Quah Jones**, *Project Coordinator*

### Lawrence and Douglas County Sustainability Offices

**Jasmin Moore**, *Former Sustainability Director*  
**Kim Criner-Ritchie**, *Sustainability & Food Systems Analyst/Interim Sustainability Director*  
**Jamie Hofling**, *Food Waste Reduction Specialist*  
**Kathy Richardson**, *Interim Sustainability Director*

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## PROCESS AND TIMELINE

**SEPTEMBER 2021:** Community Coordinators participated in two days of training led by Climate + Energy Project with support from Sunrise Project. The training included leadership development, climate change informational seminars, and opportunities to practice skills while building relationships and community with one another.

**OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2021:** Community Coordinators went out into the community and collected stories from a range of perspectives. They prioritized collecting stories from underrepresented groups through strategic outreach. Community Coordinators also distributed Douglas County's Climate Survey to participants.

**JANUARY - MAY 2022:** All of the data and research collected have been synthesized to create a central narrative and pull out notable themes. Climate + Energy Project created Spotlights that documented the Community Coordinators' experience in the project. Sunrise Project hosted a Recognition Celebration to commemorate the accomplishments of the Community Coordinators.

## NARRATIVE

Community Coordinators documented 115 stories in an online archive of over two hundred transcribed pages. These stories were then reviewed with the Community Coordinators, using their personal reflections of the process to highlight eight key focus areas and themes: [Community Solutions & Justice](#), [Physical & Mental Health Impacts](#), [Accessibility & Safety](#), [Food Systems & Security](#), [Transportation](#), [Housing & Anti-Displacement](#), [Financial Stability & Energy Justice](#), and [Environmental Stewardship](#). Within each of these themes, there are several subthemes. Each story was then key-worded for every time an experience, emotion, or suggestion aligned with each of these themes and subthemes, which are synthesized below and supported with several compelling direct quotes pulled from interviews with community members.







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**Climate change affects the community in myriad ways that are not immediately obvious. Any adaptation plan must take this into account and be flexible so that it can help all members of the community, not only those with the most common or easily apparent problems.**

## KEY FOCUS AREAS/THEMES

### Community Solutions & Justice

*“While climate change is causing unprecedented weather-related events, Douglas County community members felt as if the county itself was also one of the main causes of their unknowing regarding the climate. Reflecting on the conclusion of my role as a Community Coordinator, I feel like the Climate Action Plan project came at the opportune time to start the process of updating policy to mediating the community's anxieties around climate change. Moving forward I think one of the biggest challenges the Douglas County Climate Action Planning team has is doing justice to the population they sought input from. One of the challenges addressed during our Community Coordinator training was how to not treat the underrepresented individuals we were collecting stories from. We had to be intentional so that storytellers felt like their story was being genuinely heard and not like they were being used. A lot of the people who shared their story were vulnerable and trusted me, and I would like to see that taken seriously by Douglas County decision makers in both the policies they write, the grants they approve, and the way they communicate with their constituents even after this project has concluded.” - Jasmine McBride Reflection*

### Indigenous Knowledge

In more than 10 stories, the need to truly engage Indigenous Knowledge into the plan and involve Indigenous leaders at every level of decision-making was prioritized. One community member and anonymous expert on Indigenous issues challenged traditional climate science for failing to go beyond merely explaining the mechanisms of climate change and emphasized that policy planners not only need to shift their perspectives of the environment as a resource but also examine the role of community.

- “The interviewee stressed that the Indigenous movement and climate movement are inextricably tied together. Indigenous activism, the interviewee argued, will always be concerned with the environment, which means that making the environmental movement more inclusive to Indigenous voices is absolutely critical. The interviewee stressed that just reading articles written by Indigenous peoples isn’t enough (and neither is it enough for the County Commission to just read this summary). **Instead, the climate movement needs to focus on making sure that Indigenous voices are present at every level of decision-making, and that non-Indigenous members of the climate movement meet with Indigenous leaders in-person, so that they can form personal as well as professional relationships.** The interviewee stressed that these conversations have to be had with an acknowledgement of the power imbalances inherent when primarily white, middle-class climate activists try to work with less privileged members of the population.” - *Anonymous Expert on Indigenous Issues, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*



## Collaboration

Collaboration was referenced 15 times, in a variety of ways, all encouraging that the policy and decision-making process should be intentional in creating community partnerships, open and transparent, and based in community solutions and self-determination.

- “Despite this feeling of hopelessness, which seems to have in some capacity arisen from the sort of isolation our current socio-political moment has constructed, most everyone I spoke with was excited by and interested in: 1) better, more hands-on education about the ‘how, why, and now what?’ of climate change for children and adults alike, 2) more holistically-accessible and environmentally-aware indoor and outdoor community hubs and infrastructures, and 3) deeper, more meaningful community connection and support networks.” - *Mad Marshall Reflection*

## Community

Community was a highlight of nearly every Community Coordinator, with over 30 stories referencing the spirit of Douglas County’s community, as well as needs that could help foster greater community engagement in a climate-safe way, as extreme weather becomes commonplace. While many see Douglas County’s sense of community as a place to foster greater collective mobilization and climate action, it is important to note that many community members also feel that bigotry and white supremacy keep spaces from being fully welcoming, inclusive, and engaging, primarily for BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+ neighbors.

- “I think also, again, Lawrence prides themselves on community and the small businesses, but what does it look like for a very elitist place like The Merc to invest in the community to show things like food sustainability or to promote free classes on how to be environmentally friendly? But also we don't have local news channels. I'm thinking about places like the Haus of McCoy. That is the only place in Lawrence where we have an excessively queer space for students, for young people for Black and BIPOC folks that are queer.” - *Rinne Fruster, Collected by Anna Balmilero*

- “A theme that came up in many of the conversations I had about climate change – a need for deeper community and support structures for all aspects of people’s wellbeing with specific care to the new sorts of experiences of this precarious climate moment. Folks feel isolated, hopeless, and fearful because they aren’t given the time or space to invest in community connection, care and relation. Developing support groups (with access to financial resources as well) to deal with climate grief, to support physical and emotional needs, as well as educate on climate change, etc. seem to be an impactful part of an approach to facing and working in accordance with the stressors being put on the world at large (especially those most marginalized folks) as a result of climate change as it continues to emerge and progress.” - *Mad Marshall Reflection with Created Collage (above), Collected by Mad Marshall*



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## Education

Education was mentioned across 26 stories. Whether they were young and discussing current teachings in classrooms, elderly and reflecting on past teachings, or parents concerned for their children's future, all storytellers had the same general theme: we need more community outreach and education focused not only on the issues and impacts, but also on the solutions and ways forward to adapt and coexist with a changing climate.

- “The topic that people were most emphatic about was education, teaching our young people how to deal with what is coming. Many had suggestions on how to do this, including thematic lesson plans, getting kids outside more and teaching them how to reduce the impact of climate change, encouraging environmental clubs, and providing plenty of hands-on experience, such as helping set up solar panels.” - *Billie David Reflection*
- “I think it'd be such a good thing like Lawrence has so many community centers, so many wellness centers, we have the library without such a big budget. I think having classes on something like how to collect rainwater, like one like what are the laws against that and how do we collect rainwater? How do we reduce our carbon footprint? But also like, again, how do we make it accessible to working families, undergraduates, graduates who are already six figures in debt? What are ways that you can invest in the people around us? How can you make this a collective effort?” - *Rinne Fruster, Collected by Anna Balmilero*
- “In all there is a case to be made for the development of educational resources and opportunities that uplift the Indigenous people who live here, as well as redistributing wealth and land back to Indigenous communities for the betterment of the relationship to the land. Likewise, education on the native ecology of our location and how to exist, grow, and develop new modes of being with our environment instead of acting upon it. In line with this, folks also expressed interest in an increased investment in spaces that foster this sort of ‘play, learn, experience’ mode of learning about and addressing larger climate change impacts. Folks talked about ensuring spaces were free, accessible, and comfortable even in more strenuous weather situations (e.g. shade, cooling, water for extreme heat), interactive pollinator and native flora gardens, community gardens, and other modes of growing and community development.” - *Mad Marshall Reflection*

## **Physical & Mental Health Impacts**

*“Every person I talked to made at least one comment about how the extreme heat in the summer and the extreme cold during the winter affected their physical health and mental wellbeing. Storytellers shared memories of how they used to be able to do more outdoor activities all year long in Kansas, and now things have become unbearable, and their physical health does not enable them to be able to be outdoors as much as they used to. Parents shared stories about their children’s asthma getting worse over this past year because of the intense summer heat and one young woman shared with me how, during this past summer, she would see people walking to the Lawrence Pantry on extremely hot days pass out in front of her house. These experiences were traumatic for both her family and the people suffering from heat exhaustion.” - Jasmine McBride Reflection*



## Climate Grief

Overwhelmingly, nearly all Community Coordinators had interviews that were coded with negative emotions regarding climate impacts both current and impending. Grief, anxiety, vigilance, unwelcomeness, concern, stress, depression, disturb, sadness, exhaustion, trauma, and overwhelm were referenced a collective 87 times. Some discussed how this grief has impacted them severely to cause depression and a fear of the unknown, especially for future generations and their ability to thrive.

- “Reid Nelson said that climate change has affected him emotionally in the form of stress, not only because of what he sees is coming and the impact it will have on people, but also its impact on other species. This knowledge has had an impact on Reid's decision-making, including what he buys for his house, the car he drives, and the economic choices he makes. ‘With global warming, things are going to be bad for our economy and for our lives,’ Reid explained, ‘but there are still things we can do. It is going to happen, but we have to mitigate it. It’s a moral obligation.’” - *Reid Nelson, Collected by Billie David*
- “It concerns me for my baby. It was terrifying thinking about bringing a child into the world the way it is. Like right now it looks like the earth has been pushed to its limit of toxins it's taken as well as damage to the ozone layer. How will it be when he is my age? What will he have to live with? It is scary to think that there will not be a sustainable planet left for him to live on... There should be more conservation efforts in place in the US, like there are in other parts of the world. The United States is not on track to fix what's going on. Are we running out of time or is it too late?” - *India, Collected by Emmy Rivera*
- “I feel like they should be able to give free counseling services. Like I know Watkins has some free services and stuff like that if you're a KU student, but not everyone is. A lot of Lawrence is homeless, and I'm sure they still are in crisis mode, and they need help too. For instance, I've been having some mental health issues along with some other friends of mine, and I went to a medical provider and I won't be able to seek therapy about issues that I'm having for like, four to six weeks I'm on a waitlist and who knows if I'll even have a therapist by then. I feel like we don't have enough access to what we need to I guess the lines have been like extremely busy for I don't know different mental health services like the suicide hotline. And just having access to counselors and medical providers.” - *Alissa, Collected by Ezekiel Gibbs*
- “Those who exist at the intersections of more marginalizations tended to be more hyper-aware/anxious about climate change and, likewise, more activated about action regarding climate change. These feelings of anxiety and fear were also almost always paired with at least an initial feeling of hopelessness or defeat.”
  - “These feelings of anxiety and fear were also almost always paired with at least an initial feeling of hopelessness or defeat. A recent KU grad and trans woman author in Lawrence, on this subject, noted that, ‘To be honest I also sometimes feel kind of hopeless about our prospects of redirecting the path we seem to be on and trying to create a better future, although I try to not get overwhelmed by that feeling. I just think about how society needs to be radically overhauled and how much resistance there is to that from governments, corporations, etc.—like not to go on a tangent but the whole pandemic has been a pretty glaring example of how people in power respond to crises by just protecting their self interests... and that just makes me think about how the climate crisis will just cause more and more natural disasters and other emergencies, and how marginalized people will suffer the most.’”



- *Mad Marshall Reflection with Collage Created by Violet (above)*



## Heat Impacts

Heat Impacts was another concern that was referenced in over 30 stories. From impacting one's ability to work, to causing chronic illness and pain flare ups, from the risks of heatstroke and heat exhaustion, to being confined to the house rather than enjoying the outdoors with pets and children, many community members are already experiencing several impacts from the increased hot weather days in Lawrence.

- “And now that I'm paying for my bills for heating and cooling, it's like oh, wait, I don't want to turn it on. But the summers are really bad because I don't do well in heat. So that's the biggest issue for me is having to keep it on for longer parts of the year. Just being able to like sleep because I was living on the third floor of a place at the very top level and it was so extremely hot. And I had one little window on the side. And it was just not enough air and it would be sweltering in there. Even with AC on.” - *David Balmilero, Collected by Anna Balmilero*
- “He repairs A/C units for a living and he has definitely been affected. He states that he has been working in more severe heat, especially when having to climb around in attics. He states that it is becoming more difficult to do his job. He has also experienced an increase in utility expenses.” - *Resident, Story Collected by Kelly Chellberg*
- “He enjoys playing sports and being outdoors. He is concerned about the hot summers and bugs that bite him during the summer. He does not enjoy the heat at all.” - *M.H. III, age middle school, Collected by Tiana Harding*

## Flooding & Housing Impacts

Flooding is a large cause for concern for many community members and was mentioned over 50 times. Many listed business and housing impacts, health-related concerns, and displacement as major impacts of unmanaged flooding.

- “She notices that there has been a decrease in humidity, and an increase in diseases spreading such as Covid-19. She lives in Eudora and experiences increased flooding. She states that it seems like it is flooding everywhere. She has had an increased cost associated with allergy medication.” - *Sonja K Collected by Kelly Chellberg*
- “All the homeless people are being forced to the north side. And that's like the worst place. There's a lot of flooding going on over there. There's no protection from the elements. There's no trees during the summer, you can't hang clothes out to dry or anything. Just no protection from the sun or the winds or nothing and we're right there by the levee. It's like you go cross that bridge 20 degree drop in temperature alone and you freeze. How many times are people going to have to move to survive? How many times have you had to move locations in order to make it through being homeless? We've had to move five times down and that's just since June.” - *Jennifer, Collected by Fatima Cruz*

## Health/Allergies/Asthma

Health, allergies, and asthma were all of major concern, with nearly all community members stating that these issues have worsened over the years. Allergies (22), asthma (12), sickness (27), medication (11), and health (67) were referenced numerous times across all 115 stories. Others emphasized the disparate impacts of health and medical access across marginalized poor, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA2S+ communities.

- “The house was always loud and full of love but we were poor when I was growing up. I remember nights with no heat in the house. The family would have to sleep together to keep warm at night. They were hard winters. I still suffer from seasonal affective disorder. Vitamin D is important but how do we get it if it's too hot to go out in the summer and too cold to go out in the winter? During the short breaks between summer and winter I have allergies to contend with, and they are getting worse every year.” - *Kalila Vega, Collected by Emmy Rivera*

- “Most recently he has had breathing difficulties due to the high pollen count. The sweltering heat in the summer keeps him homebound as well due to the humidity.” - *M. H., Sr. Age 70+, Collected by Tiana Harding*
- “One specific fear I have is the way trans people will be affected in unique ways. While everyone is going to be impacted by resource shortages and difficulties supplying essential things, I feel like trans people will feel that especially hard because there’s already so few support systems in place for us and these problems are invisible to mainstream cis society.” - *Violet, Collected by Mad Marshall*

### Extreme Weather

Extreme weather—mentioned over 40 times along with heat (34) and cold (14)—impacted the community in several ways: from anxiety of what’s to come, to autoimmune disease flare ups, to physical impacts due to energy burdens and lack of shelter.

- “It’s like 60 degrees, like December 15—that’s weird. And I think that almost worries me more. Just from like the wildlife and like insect populations with bird population. We might be able to adapt to these occasional floods, but like, there’s some things that we probably aren’t even going to feel the effects of. But then 20 years down the line afterward, it’s just like, kind of all it feels like it’s like silently building.” - *Maddie Backus, Collected by Anna Balmilero*
- “Last winter I was able to [manage the cold]. I was staying inside then, but this fall when it came up, I was homeless—boy it got cold at nights, and I got into this shelter down here. And it’s cold in there too. Yeah, there isn’t very much ventilation in the shelter. So it gets cold in there at night too, especially in the morning time. Yeah, it’s real cold.” - *Archie, Collected by Fatima Cruz*

### **Accessibility and Safety**

Community members would like to see planning that encapsulates disaster preparedness, more community spaces for safe recreation, and greater accessibility to vital information and community resources.

### Safe Recreation

Community members were concerned about a lack of outdoor activities, several noting that there aren’t very many places to take their children, indoors or outdoors, with extreme temperatures both in the summer and winter. Others explained how lack of access to community spaces impacted their health, or the ways they provided enrichment for their pets. These issues were detailed in forty-six stories, collectively.

- “The parents, young teens, and people who moved to Lawrence from out-of-state all expressed that they wished Lawrence had things to do during the winter and summer seasons. Parents of young children wished that Lawrence had splash parks—like you find in cities on the East Coast—during the summer that they could take their children to so that they could cool off. Parents of teens, and teenagers themselves, wished that during the winter Lawrence offered winter activities like a portable ice-skating rink. People highlighted that in other places around the country where they moved from, that also had extremely hot summers and colder winters, there would be activities provided by the city for them to do, which improved their quality of life.” - *Jasmine McBride Reflection*
- “Another result of climate change that has affected Nedra personally is that the chiggers are more abundant, and she must deal with chigger bites every time she goes out. The impact of climate change on the COVID pandemic has also created distress for Nedra, she said, because the city had to close the swimming pool early this summer and she depends on the low-impact exercise that she can get there because she has painful joints. ‘It really affected me hugely when they closed the swimming pool,’ she said. ‘I was so depressed about that. I gained a lot of weight because I couldn’t exercise at the pool.’” - *Nedra, Collected by Billie David*



- “Allison’s daughter got exposed to COVID at her school and as a result now has long COVID in her lungs. Her daughter is only 5, so over the summer it was hard to find activities/things to do in Lawrence for young children outside of going to the park which was not good for her daughter’s health (heat+long COVID lungs).” - *Allison, Collected by Jasmine McBride*
- “Many clients don’t have access to wifi. Improving access to wifi for low-income residents.”- *Alli Presnell, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*

### Disaster Preparedness

*“The overwhelming anxiety being felt by the storytellers I talked to all revolved around the unknown immediate and long-term effects of climate change. People criticized the City of Lawrence for the lack of preparedness and planning during the winter, highlighting that the snap freeze last winter which showed them how unprepared the city was at keeping them safe. Grandparents talked to me about the fears they have of the city not acting fast enough to do enough change so that their grandchildren would be able to live a healthy adult life. An older woman of color highlighted that whenever she is moving to a new apartment in Lawrence, she makes sure she is never living on the second floor because the fear of flooding is greater than the toll walking upstairs does on her body and is doubtful that the city would do anything to help mitigate her concerns.”* -

### **Jasmine McBride Reflection**

- “Helping them be prepared, helping them to know what’s coming, because the not knowing is what’s really kicking us in the butt. And like me, I don’t have phone service. So even to go catch Wi Fi somewhere when you’re not allowed out. I can’t even check the weather on a daily basis. You know, it just makes it really difficult. So it’s mainly knowledge and information, making it available for people and not just people who can afford to pay for it or people who can go places where it is got to be put out there where people who don’t get to do that can get it. It’s very hard to do.” - *Jennifer, Collected by Fatima Cruz*
- “One woman of color shared how everyday she is nervous leaving the house and making sure her school-aged children are properly dressed because of how drastic the weather changes each day. She moved to Lawrence from St. Louis and was upset that Lawrence did not have their own local news station or radar that she could get daily weather updates from so she could make sure her children with asthma did not end the day wheezing and having difficulty breathing because the temperature from the morning was drastically different from the temperature in the late afternoon.” - *Jasmine McBride Reflection*
- “More efficient/safe planning regarding shelter for those facing home insecurities during the winter **and** summer—safety from extreme cold and extreme heat while also maintaining social distancing protocols.” - *Suggestion Collected by Jasmine McBride*
- “I also spoke to an expert on Indigenous and sustainability issues, who asked to remain anonymous. The expert emphasized the importance of community in adapting to climate change. They argued that climate change is analogous to a disaster scenario, and that the most effective disaster responses always center community decision-making and autonomy. This source emphasized the importance of informal meetings where community members can interact, build friendships, and eat together. These meetings absolutely must be accessible to low-income people and people with disabilities. This means offering transportation to people without access to it, and holding meetings at times when people are not working. They stressed that this community-building is especially important as a way to include Indigenous voices in conversations about climate change, and bridge whiteness-centering climate science with traditional Indigenous knowledge.” - *Jenna Bellemere Reflection*

## **Food Systems & Security**

Several community members were concerned about access and affordability of food, as a whole food issues were discussed in 28 stories. Many offered community solutions like more community gardens, but a few were concerned about the accessibility and inclusivity of those already in place. Aside from growing their own food, community members also advocated for a greater regional food hub and stronger reliance on local food systems rather than national and international distribution.

## Agricultural & Food Impacts

Concern for erratic weather patterns and the agricultural impacts of the region were common among a few community members, while others were concerned about how much more people were needing affordable food resources.

- “I noticed that there's food drives. A lot more food drives coming in to help people in need. I know that there's this place in Lawrence that you can go once a week or a few times. I think you can go every day actually. To go and get free groceries. For those that can't afford it because I know a lot of people have been out of their job, or because like sickness, and I don't know just people being laid off and such like that. There hasn't been I don't know there's just been people not able to make the money that they can to comfortably live and especially families with multiple people in their household. I know it's been a little bit difficult, like I am in a Lawrence Community Facebook group, I know a lot of people are struggling with being able to provide for their children right now. So I can't really imagine how it's going to affect future generations. Hopefully it'll get better but we don't know.” - *Alissa, Collected by Ezekiel Gibbs*
- “Farmers are suffering (husband's family in KS are beef and pork farmers) because of the inconsistencies of recent past weather (polar vortex) v. this winter/fall weather—they can't accurately predict seasons as easily.” - *Story Collected by Jasmine McBride*

## Community Gardens

Many saw community gardens as one bridge to close the gap between local food access and renters, as well as food apartheid in areas without accessible grocery stores. However, it is important to note that the culture surrounding these gardens need to be accessible and inclusive, as existing ones have made Black, Indigenous, and People of Color feel less than welcome and hypervigilant of their presence and safety in predominantly white spaces.

- “Yes, we see a lot of these food, these community gardens, but who is it accessible to because these are predominantly white spaces. These are predominately neoliberal femme spaces. Right? And uh, you've [Anna] walked me past them and I'm like, it doesn't even feel as a Black person walking by I do not feel welcomed. I do not feel accepted. I feel hyper-vigilant.” - *Rinne Fruster, Collected by Anna Balmilero*
- “You have to own land in order to do that [grow food/garden/etc.], you know, you need a place you can go and stuff. And yeah, I've been homeless, you just don't really have that. You know, I was more vagrant. Right now I'm down, but it seems like I'm not gonna be kicked out, you know, but I've got a lot of times, you know, property trespass scenes and stuff from where I had my camp and whatnot. And so it's just really having a place to do that. That would be nice. I want to go to the community gardens and stuff when they come up, and help out if I can. It did seem like some of the stuff that they have this year didn't seem to do so well, on a lot of gardens, I think.” - *Karlin, Collected by Mad Marshall*



## Local Foods

As people continue to want access to fresh, local, affordable food, community members have also expressed a need for community education on how to be more self-reliant in community food systems. There is also growing concern about food shortages and price increases.

- “Dan said that citizens should grow plenty of plants, and the city should consider encouraging people to grow food in their yards and do away with conventional lawns along with the chemicals that destroy diversity, and the city shouldn’t prosecute people who turn their lawns into gardens. They should be less concerned about what lawns look like, thus reducing lawn mowing and the pollution it produces, and should help make it easy for people to grow food in their yards, and also make it easy and legal to collect rainwater.” - *Dan Bentley, Collected by Billie David*
- “It was interesting to see what days people would come on, and it's different when the weather is really severe, we'll have less of a crowd because, honestly, it's tough for them to get out. We do have a lot of people who are wanting to get food and so that makes a big impact on them. And especially if they're having to wait, I mean, we can serve up to 300 people in a night and yeah, it shows how important these things are but I also believe that they can continue to expand and support helping with whatever needs are in the way of people's access to food and stuff.” - *Sunrise Project Volunteer, Collected by Mad Marshall*

## **Transportation**

*“Transportation and Public Transportation was mentioned in every interview [of Anna’s] except one, and was an important thread connecting folks. Folks want to see improved public transit that is more reliable and has enclosed shelters to protect people from the weather (shade for heat, cover for rain/snow, cover from wind, etc. instead of a bench or sole sign).” - Anna Balmilero Reflection*

## Bus Stops

Six community members detailed that maps and shelter enclosed benches are not currently available at most stops. Neighborhoods have had to install their own chairs and seating because of a lack of provision of accessible seating. The removal of bus stop enclosures for benches has been perceived by community members as anti-homeless hostile architecture and many advocated for full shelters protected from the elements to be reinstated at all bus stops.

- “They're taking the fully enclosed [bus stops] down. I've noticed to put weird, trendier benches where it really just seems like it's targeted at people affected by homelessness. Taking away any protection from the elements that they might have. Just to have something that just like, doesn't offer anything besides a bench. Yeah, it really doesn't seem like it's aimed at being a useful thing for people it really just seems like it is supposed to be targeted toward the most affected by wealth inequality here and then like if you're using for public transportation for the most part, it's like you're not doing this because you want to, it's really your only option to be able to get around and then yeah, having you sit in the heat, cold and rainy snow, extreme weather. Because being in Kansas we get all of it. And then just having just a bench with no covering or they've moved from down to like two thirds or like, back wall and maybe one side. It just doesn't make sense. Because they're taking away something and then spending more money for less. And also a lot of the bus places here people are having to put up benches and chairs, like there's lawn chairs and benches people in the communities have made because the city doesn't invest in literally just, besides a sign, on the side of the road instead of having a bench for someone. Not everyone is able to stand. Some people need to sit down and it makes no sense but people in the communities had to go out and spend time and money to do something that the city should be providing.” - *David Balmilero & Tara Zhang, Collected by Anna Balmilero*

- “LeFanzo also often uses public transit in Lawrence to get around. He said that, while the bus system is fairly intuitive, it might be more popular if bus stops had maps posted near them for people who prefer to learn more visually.” - *LeFanzo Wesley, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*

### Bus Routes

Twelve community members specifically desired bus routes that are more inclusive of the rest of the community outside of KU students, stating that if routes were expanded and buses reliable they would drive less, and that current routes and reliability are often an economic barrier to gainful employment, as folks cannot guarantee that they will arrive to work on time.

- “I would say a bigger influence on public transit for sure from both of us. Going to KU and having that transit of that small little bubble of getting anywhere and everywhere we needed to from where we were living close to campus, being the ease of going back and forth between home and school. And then it seemed like the difference between that and then the rest of the whole city because it is a college town. So not everyone can afford to just pay for parking on campus. So making sure that's taken care of because it's not just a problem for students. It's a problem for everyone who lives in the county and especially in the Lawrence area. It's a right to be able to have safe and effective public transportation.” - *David Balmilero & Tara Zhang, Collected by Anna Balmilero*
- “She also talked about the lack of good bike routes in Lawrence. She said that the city needs another route from east to west, like the 21st street route. She said that the current route is insufficient, because it requires going up and down the hills on campus.” - *Kaylen Peterson, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*

### Walkability

Several factors of accessibility were of concern to 25 storytellers. From sidewalk maintenance and ADA compliance, to car-free downtown ideas. Of primary interest still was that many community needs and resources, like food, are not accessible by bus or walking and that policies and development planning need to take these issues into priority, creating walkable neighborhoods with scattered smaller markets across town instead of big box stores, where people can walk to do shopping.

- “A lot of the sidewalks are on people's property or like it's on the owner's responsibility, but it's never going to get fixed that way. I think if you invested in making an accessible neighborhood, people could use their cars less because a lot of things it's like I could have walked here in theory, but your sidewalks are crooked. I can't use that.” - *Rinne Fruster, Collected by Anna Balmilero*
- “It was interesting to see what days people would come on, and it's different when the weather is really severe, we'll have less of a crowd because, honestly, it's tough for them to get out. We do have a lot of people who are wanting to get food and so that makes a big impact on them. And especially if they're having to wait, I mean, we can serve up to 300 people in a night and yeah, it shows how important these things are but I also believe that they can continue to expand and support helping with whatever needs are in the way of people's access to food and stuff.” - *Sunrise Project Volunteer, Collected by Mad Marshall*



## Housing & Anti-Displacement

Housing as a climate issue is of high priority to many community members, with related keywords like housing, sprawl, energy efficiency, building codes, and more referenced 95 times. Folks advocated for more community programs to provide resources for efficiency upgrades, building electrification, and renewable energy infrastructure, as well as policies to increase affordable housing for both homebuyers and renters, with greater renter protection. Gentrification and displacement were also of great concern, emphasizing that rather than curbing public use projects, local officials should enact policies that mitigate displacement. Community members also recounted personal experiences of being housing insecure and the lack of adequate resources and shelter available while more and more infrastructure and policies are creating barriers to access stable housing.

### Housing Stock Quality & Affordability

Many community members lamented that housing is getting harder and harder to find at an affordable price. Meanwhile, many homes are without necessary upgrades to help with energy efficiency and cost savings. Folks advocated for more community programs to provide resources for efficiency upgrades, building electrification, and renewable energy infrastructure, as well as policies to increase affordable housing. Several stories mentioned sprawl and sustainable development that include retrofitting and renovating existing structures rather than building new, conserving residential green space, and implementing building codes for better energy efficiency and conservation of local farmland for community agriculture. Rather than curb public use projects, enact policies that mitigate displacement.

- “By the time I was ready to buy a home, Lawrence had become unaffordable for me. During the time I lived in Lawrence I moved every year. Usually due to roommate issues, like them getting married. When I finally found myself in the position to afford to live alone, I sadly had to leave Lawrence, and I bought my first home, in Paola.” - *Melissa Martin, Collected by Emmy Rivera*
- “Kaylen discussed the need for more affordable housing in Lawrence. Her gas bills have been higher recently as a result of climate change, and she said that more affordable housing for people who aren’t seniors could help residents make rent and avoid getting evicted.” - *Kaylen Peterson, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*
- “So I guess that would be the kind of support that would be helpful, to have enough money, or just like just a resource, like something that maybe the city could provide as far as what you can do if you need to get new windows or what you can do if you need a backup source of heat, etc.” - *Sunrise Project Volunteer, Collected by Mad Marshall*

## Renters

Renting creates another set of challenges for 15 community members, who have less decision-making power in their housing stock, heating and cooling, water, repair, and abilities to do things like recycle, compost, or garden.

- “We had a burst pipe. In the downstairs on the washing machine because it wasn't insulated. Burst. Yeah, it flooded the whole ground floor. It was a huge mess. It wasn't insulated, and it's like been a hidden problem but it was so bitterly cold for so long. That it literally just burst the pipe. It was such a mess because we walked down stairs after doing a load of laundry. And then as soon as you hit the stairs, it's right next to the front door. And then it was just all water. And it was just screaming. It's like I don't know what's going on. Alright, and just trying to figure out where the water had come from. Because when we had moved in, we had leaks everywhere. Because they'd ridden a bunch of stuff so every single pipe leaked. So it's just like which one is it? Why is this happening? And it was an insane amount of water. I think we contacted the landlord but I mean like he had to come in and just cut a hole in the wall. Because like there was really nothing like at the time he could really do because the pipe was outside. It was right on the outside wall. So you just got the hole to have some hot air going in. And then we couldn't do laundry for like a week plus. Because you'd have to heat at the time it took to heat up to unfreeze. Oh, that was terrible.” - *David Balmilero, Collected by Anna Balmilero*

## Sprawl

Fifteen stories mentioned sprawl and sustainable development that include retrofitting and renovating existing structures rather than building new, conserving residential green space, and implementing building codes for better energy efficiency and conservation of local farmland for community agriculture. Several were also diligent to point out that continued development has harmed local ecosystems like the wetlands split by highway infrastructure.

- “Ask developers to contribute to a prairie tax, contribute to allow prairies to thrive.” - *Verónica Rodríguez-Méndez, Collected by Anna Balmilero*
- “One way Douglas County could address climate change would be to have better building codes that would encourage energy-efficient houses and also discourage sprawl, which contributes to climate change by requiring longer driving distances and by decreasing cropland. Also, legislation could encourage more local farming and consumption of local food.” - *Clark Coan, Collected by Billie David*

## Gentrification

*“Storytellers upset about the gentrification going on in Lawrence all expressed the same complaints about how making Lawrence less urban and rural has made it unlivable during the heat and cold. During the summer there is not enough shade or places to sit because the city is getting rid of trees, and during the winter resources to maintain roads and keep people warm are not distributed equally. One family shared a story about how they made the decision to move out of Lawrence to Baldwin because they enjoy being outside and missed having an abundance of trees in their neighborhood to provide shade during the summer.*

*The Indigenous woman, who shared multiple stories with me, brought to my attention how the Haskell Wetlands have been slowly deteriorating, and the animals who inhabited the Wetlands have been suffering due to the noise pollution from the new developments being built in West Lawrence. She expressed how even though her community has been trying to talk to the city about this issue—about how the new construction is separating the Baker Wetlands from the Haskell wetlands, causing further harm—she feels like their concerns are unheard and there is no accountability.” - **Jasmine McBride Reflection***

- Gentrification specifically was discussed among six different community members, including areas of downtown, as well as new developments that focus on “luxury rentals” rather than affordable housing and dense neighborhoods.

- “Julie mentioned gentrification as a major concern: changes to a neighborhood, like planting more trees or adding a splash pad, can increase property values and force people out of their homes.”
  - Rather than curb public use projects, enact policies that mitigate displacement.  
- Julie, Collected by Jenna Bellemere

### Housing Insecurity / Hostile-Anti Homeless Architecture

There are several concerns with resources and shelter for housing insecure folks, primarily in Lawrence, where hostile architecture has been implemented at bus stops, tent communities are being forced to north Lawrence where flooding has increased and there is a lack of protection from the elements, and city shelter programs have changed and may not be as sufficient. These concerns were referenced across 16 stories, both from folks experiencing housing insecurity and neighbors concerned for their well-being and treatment.

- “Due to unstable housing in the last couple of years a tent community has grown along the river in North Lawrence. A lot of them got out when it flooded this spring but it was sad to see that the little they did have was washed away.” - Chris Herman, Collected by Emmy Rivera
- “Last winter I was able to [manage the cold]. I was staying inside then, but this fall when it came up, I was homeless—boy it got cold at nights, and I got into this shelter down here. And it's cold in there too. Yeah, there isn't very much ventilation in the shelter. So it gets cold in there at night too, especially in the morning time. Yeah, it's real cold.” - Archie, Collected by Fatima Cruz
- “[Redacted] talked about the city’s program last year to provide hotel rooms to unhoused people in the winter. The program was started because of the harsh winters Lawrence has been experiencing as a result of climate change. The program [Redacted] referenced didn’t come back this year; instead, the city is housing people in the rec center. **Is the new program sufficient? This seems like something we should look into more.**” - Story of a homeless individual collected by Jenna Bellemere
- “Jane is an individual that wishes to remain anonymous. We met over the phone, and she was scheduled for an in-person visit. She is not secure in housing and faced criminal charges in Douglas County where she was taken to jail. We spoke about current conditions for the unhoused population and the impact climate has had with finding shelter. While incarcerated she was only allowed out of her cell for two hours per day because they were ‘full.’ Upon release Jane was awaiting shelter determined by the County based on the temperature outside. Severe weather has impacted her ability to maintain housing when most employers require a home address. I provided a list of services to assist with her transition.” - Jane Doe, 40+, Collected by Tiana Harding

### **Financial Stability & Energy Justice**

A common theme for community members were the core tenants of energy justice: “social and economic equity in the energy system and remediating social, economic, and health burdens on those disproportionately harmed by the energy system” ([www.iejusa.org](http://www.iejusa.org)). High bills and energy burden, financial stress and anxiety that led community members to not heat and cool their homes adequately to their health and safety, and a lack of access to resources for solutions were referenced nearly 70 times.

*“There needs to be a comprehensive look at how poor communities, people of color, and poorer rural agricultural areas are used,” he said, explaining that if one looks at local and regional maps, including the Kansas City area, they show that fossil fuel emissions are found next door to communities with the lowest incomes, producing health problems such as children coping with asthma. These issues can be improved with strictly regulated rezoning and the outlawing of fossil fuels, he said.” - Creed Shepard, Collected by Billie David*

### High Bills / Energy Burden

High bills and energy burden were detailed and referenced 50 times, collectively across all Community Coordinators' story collection. This financial strain negatively affects how community members eat, use transportation, and keep homes at stable and healthy temperatures.

*“Climate change has put massive financial strain on many community members: Ali Presnell, a financial empowerment specialist at a local charity, said that many of her clients struggle with paying power bills caused by extreme high and low temperatures. Even families who are mostly stable can be blindsided by high utility bills because of harsh winters and hot summers. She added that measures intended to help can often make this problem worse: the city can stop energy shutoffs, but then people can get behind on their bills and end up in debt. The city can also set up payment plans, but they often have unexpectedly high balances that catch some low-income people by surprise. Ali also talked about her own experience with climate change. Her charity doesn't have enough funding to keep the heating and cooling on during the extreme heat and cold caused by climate change.” - Ali Presnell, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*

- “My electric is like crazy high. My gas is okay. Because I don't use gas that much. I mean, I cook with it, but it's not that bad. But my God, my electric is like through the roof. It's like double what it used to be. And my water I don't know, because it's wrapped into my rent. I try to limit the use of the electricity of the house. Because it's sky high. I try not to go places I don't need to go. So I don't have to use gasoline in my car so often. I've told my kids they need to find their own way home from work. And their own way to work. Because I can't afford the gas.” - Jacky, Collected by Fatima Cruz

### Financial Stress & Anxiety

The community was overwhelmingly anxious about the rising costs of living, primarily with energy bills, many opting to go without when they would and should rather not. Most storytellers had anxiety for loved ones and their futures as climate impacts progress. Most notably, fears were high after energy blackouts and the following rising energy costs from the 2021 winter storms and polar vortex. These concerns were referenced a collective 112 times across all 115 stories.

- “I now attend Haskell Indian University full time, and work part time making food deliveries with Eatstreet. Most nights are worth it but some nights I spend more money on gas than what I make, which can be frustrating. It is an older car so if it's too cold out, the heater goes in and out. If it's too hot out, the A/C doesn't work at all. I don't know which is worse but it is all I can afford right now. I try to save money to replace the car but it's impossible with food and bills.” - Kalila Vega, Collected by Emmy Rivera



## How to Access Climate Solutions

Many community members advocated for greater expansion of programs to access community climate solutions such as weatherization, energy efficiency upgrades, and renewable energy investments, both residentially and as a community.

- “Why not have programs that could help get solar panels to people that can't afford that kind of technology?” - *Dalylah & Created Collage (right), Collected by Mad Marshall*
- “One important way that the city can address climate change is by updating its building and residential codes, addressing energy efficiency improvements so that we burn less fossil fuel, he said, adding that the city is looking at going to renewable energy, and they have already passed the resolution, and he hopes that they pursue that. “I would love for the city to look into more solar energy,” he said, pointing out as an example how Baldwin City now has a solar field that supplies the city's energy.” - *Reid Nelson, Collected by Billie David*
- “More solar power is needed, and houses should be weatherized and insulated, Dan continued. This is something the city could sponsor, and it would put people to work and help them lower their energy bills.” - *Dan Bentley, Collected by Billie David*



## **Environmental Stewardship**

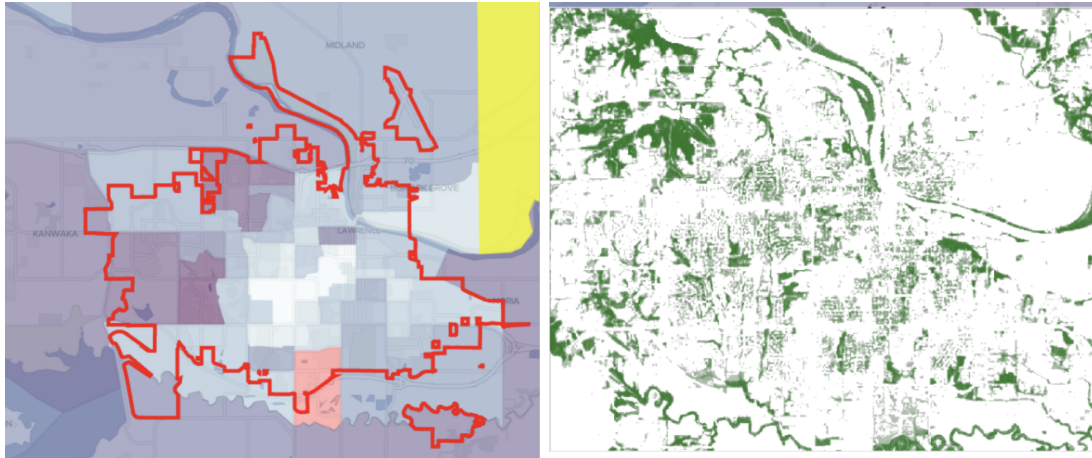
A natural direction toward environmental stewardship was common in community members' climate stories, with several people advocating for more natural green space, protection of the wetland ecosystems and Kaw River as well as other bodies of water, and better management of recycling and waste programs.

### Agriculture/Green Space

Thirty-seven community members advocated for more nature parks, native prairie restoration and a movement away from traditional lawn landscaping, the planting of more native trees for increased shade that won't create large plumes of pollen, and additional areas for pet recreation beyond the off-leash park at Clinton Lake.

- “Another undertaking we should adopt, he said, is regenerative agriculture, or agricultural practices that improve the ecological system as a whole rather than planting just one crop with the main goal of producing high yields. That's because working with natural ecosystems and encouraging the interaction between soils and microbes improves the soil, which improves air quality, Creed explained. Not only does healthy soil absorb carbon dioxide, but it also encourages better growth of trees and plants, thus lowering the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. In addition to regenerative agriculture, air quality can be improved by adding green corridors, preferably with native plants, preserving natural areas, and creating much tighter local food hubs, he added.” - *Creed Shepard, Collected by Billie David*
- “People would like to see more trees planted in Lawrence (NOT ones that produce a lot of pollen).”
  - For aesthetic appearance
  - For shade in the summer - the lack of shade in Lawrence for people who want to walk around/don't have a car- *Story Collected by Jasmine McBride*

- “Living in Lawrence was an overall positive experience, but Lawrence didn’t have enough shade: ‘In Eudora, we’ve got shade all over the place... but not in Lawrence.’ Eudora also had more open space and wildlife, he said, and adding more trees would make a big difference in Lawrence.” - *Eric, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*
- *Tree Cover and Income Maps provided through Jenna Bellemere’s story collection.*



### Wetlands

One Douglas County-specific issue—referenced 25 different times—is that of the Wakarusa Wetlands, which used to be 18,000 acres. Now, they’re massively diminished. Lawrence and the county, however, have continued to develop around them, gradually encircling a critical ecosystem. - *Key takeaway from Anonymous Expert on Indigenous Knowledge, Collected by Jenna Bellemere*

- “The Indigenous woman, who shared multiple stories with me, brought to my attention how the Haskell Wetlands have been slowly deteriorating, and the animals who inhabited the Wetlands have been suffering due to the noise pollution from the new developments being built in West Lawrence. She expressed how even though her community has been trying to talk to the city about this issue—about how the new construction is separating the Baker Wetlands from the Haskell wetlands, causing further harm—she feels like their concerns are unheard and there is no accountability.” - *Jasmine McBride Reflection*
- “The South Lawrence trafficway has expanded from two slow lanes on 31st street to four lanes of high-speed highway right through the wetlands, and we’ve had other developments, like the Nest and the Union Loop, in the area. These developments are absolutely devastating to the wetlands ecosystem health. The side of the wetlands near Haskell is particularly damaged, which has had massive cultural as well as ecological impacts. Put simply, Lawrence is slowly destroying a massively important ecosystem, an issue that will only become more dire as rainfall in the region increases and the water has nowhere to go. The interviewee discussed reading the county’s climate preparedness documents (he called them the “2050 docs”) and finding little mention of the Wakarusa wetlands. Urban planning in Lawrence has completely ignored the need to protect the wetlands, which he characterized as an extremely egregious omission. **Any functional Climate Action Plan absolutely must include expanded protections for the wetland ecosystem.**” - *Jenna Bellemere Reflection*

## River/Flooding

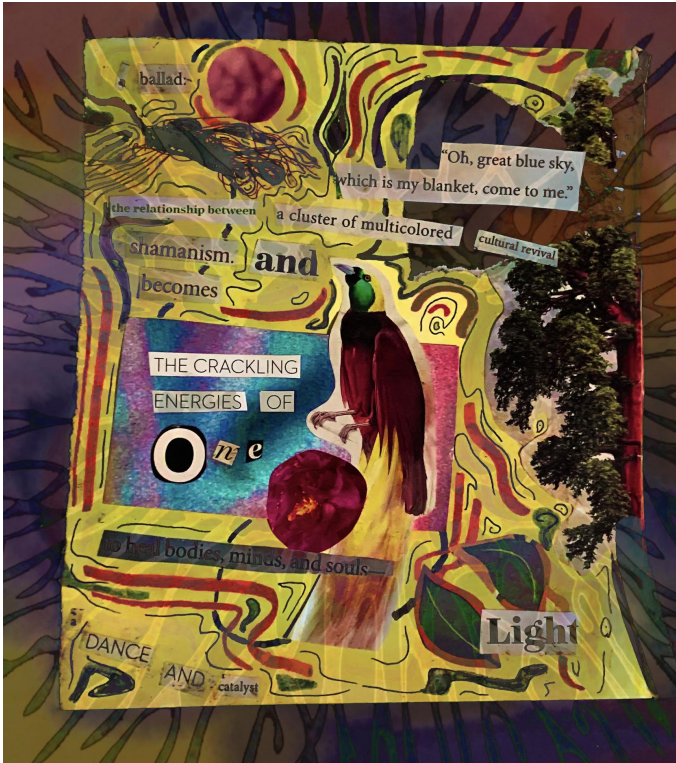
Thirty-nine community members showed great concern not only for health and housing impacts of increased flooding, but also for the quality of the Kaw River and other bodies of water, especially with a lack of a state water plan. Others recounted again how the wetlands which are being disturbed could help mitigate flood impacts but the ecosystem is at risk with continued developments.

- “As climate change becomes more of a threat and the population of the city continues to grow, citizens must deal with the problem of standing water and the insects, such as mosquitos, that thrive there.”
- “I have seen some environmental impacts while working along the Kansas River where the water levels change often. A few years ago, we had record breaking rainfall all across the state. Water levels were high and we could see floods happening in a lot of areas, and it was just wild to see how much gets washed down the river. They had to time the opening the dam, so water could pass down all the way to Missouri before they could release water from the dam. There was so much water because of the rain and if they were to release it all at once it would flood all through the river and surrounding areas which would have included downtown Lawrence. I was working one night and the water level was so high up that the city officials were sent out. We put sandbags on our bottom floor which is right along the river. Usually, the water’s edge is very far down. You can see the water but it’s 35 to 40 feet away from us, but that night it got within 4” of coming over and cresting which would have flooded our hotel and area.” - *Chris Herman, Collected by Emmy Rivera*

## Recycling & Waste Management

Several community members have concerns about wide accessibility and efficacy of community recycling programs, litter in greenspaces and bodies of water, and potential policy action regulating plastic pollution, all mentioned a collective twenty times.

- “Then In 2015, out of the blue, a teacher showed the 4th grade students at Kennedy Elementary School a 5-minute film by Greenpeace about plastics. The students asked what they should do about it, and they went to the City Commission. ‘And we also went to the City Commission and two other Earth care groups went,’ Thad said. ‘They told us to go to the Sustainability Advisory Board that meets monthly, and we went to them, and they said they will make it a priority.’ Word got out to the state legislature as the Sierra Club in Wichita also got involved, and the Kansas government put a stop to it, but the city could still do it, Thad said, but at this point they haven’t done anything. One reason for that is because COVID slowed it down, not only because people wanted to make sure that the bags they carried their groceries home in were not contaminated with the virus, but also because plastic equipment is needed in the hospitals to treat patients with COVID. ‘But we can limit the use of plastics and then move toward some alternative,’ Thad said.” - *Thad Holcombe, Collected by Billie David*
- “So I noticed that they have recycling bins and the trash bins, but then after that, as the trash will come, they don’t even separate it. They just like put it all together. And it doesn’t make any sense how they say we should recycle but then again, like they’re not separating that whatsoever. So how are we supposed to keep recycling if like, you know, you keep putting it back in the landfill area. So that doesn’t make sense. I think that’s one of the things that should be brought up about that is you know, have a different trim trashcan I don’t know like vehicle to get just recyclables only. Yeah. And then after that, like just get the the ones that are not nonrecyclable. Yeah, I think that would help a lot.” - *Autumn, Collected by Jasmine McBride*



***A special thank you to the one hundred fifteen community members who shared their stories with us. This narrative of Our Climate Story in Douglas County would not have been possible without you!***

***Mad Marshall Individual Feelings Collage Art Piece***