



**Frequently Asked Questions:  
RevivieNdo Gateway Overlay District  
Zoning Proposal  
February 2003**

**Q. Why is a zoning change necessary?**

A. The vision of redevelopment and reinvestment that has emerged from a two-year community-led planning process for the mill district, North Common neighborhood and downtown Lawrence cannot be achieved under current zoning. Reinvestment in new housing and small business opportunities are inadvertently restricted by the current zoning regulations.

**Q What is the RevivieNdo Gateway Overlay District Zoning Proposal (RGO)?**

A. The RGO is technically an overlay district that does not affect current development regulations or affect any other area in Lawrence. What it provides is an incentive to choose a development option that reflects the vision and hopes of the local community.

**Q. What must a property owner give back in order to use the RGO?**

A. All projects using the RGO will be subject to Site Plan Review, a process that provides assurances that what is proposed is actually built and that features like lighting and points of access of are taken into consideration for the benefit of the community and abutters. Also, for all residential projects over 20 units the RGO requires that 10% of the units be designated for affordable housing, in this way protecting existing residents as reinvestment proceeds.

**Q. What does the RGO mean to Lawrence?**

A. It does not change existing regulations in the city, but it may provide an example of how to unlock reinvestment potential in other areas. It also illustrates how Lawrence can best serve its own community development interests in the future by working to develop a clear vision and goals that help to shape the zoning for a particular area.

**Q. Is zoning the only change needed for revitalization?**

A. No. Zoning is one of many efforts that must be in place to create a revitalized Lawrence, but appropriate zoning is the critical first step, the foundation upon which all reinvestment depends. Without proper zoning all planning and improvement hopes are essentially limited if not crippled. The RGO is the key to unlock the potential of the Gateway district.

**Q. What are some of the RGO particulars?**

A. Essentially, the RGO would allow traditional and common uses to occur. For example, it would permit mixed use (residential use over a commercial first floor) in the

mill district by right. It removes inadvertent barriers for reinvestment into multi-family buildings; it creates standard regulations for uses such as biotech, printing and publishing. However, most importantly it removes inadvertently restrictive regulations for small-scale residential use and small family businesses.

**Q. How does a zoning amendment happen?**

A. The process of public meetings has been established by the State for all communities. Essentially, the City Council starts the process by accepting a zoning proposal for debate. The Planning Board acts as an advisor and holds a public meeting, and they send their written comments back to the City Council. The City Council then holds another public meeting and may seek the advice of its ordinance committee. It is a long process, usually 4 to 5 months but at each step of the way the public has the opportunity to participate in the debate. Once voted by the City Council, the amendment becomes law after 20 days.

**Q. What can we as citizens and business people do to help?**

A. The most important thing is to stay informed, and we will be pleased to provide you with information and answer your questions. Also, it is important that, if time permits, you attend the public meetings and let your voice be heard.

**Summary Statement.**

The Reviviendo Gateway Overlay proposal reflects the neighborhood renewal vision of literally hundreds of people who participated in the RGI planning process over the past two years. It is the crucial first step in the renewal process. Without more logical and modern development regulations, the City will not be able to unlock the potential of the neighborhood for the benefit of the people who live there.

The proposal is respectful of all other parts of the community. The technique chosen, an overlay district, has no impact on any other area in the community. The RGO is a framework for future reinvestment that establishes traditional opportunities for existing homeowners, small businesses, and property owners. In many cases it simply removes inadvertent barriers to traditional development. The RGO is the foundation for all future community development in the neighborhood, and by creating a zoning district that reflects the vision of the people it affirms the best in Lawrence and provides the greatest opportunity for success.

**If you would like more information about the RGO zoning proposal, please contact:  
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