PUBLIC INPUT QUESTIONNAIRE

Background

Identified as a priority in the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan, Plan 2040, Douglas County is embarking on an 18-month planning process to establish the Douglas County Open Space Plan. We want to hear your vision for how open spaces could be preserved and utilized in ways that benefit the greater community into the future. The resulting Open Space Plan will guide how the County prioritizes partnerships, funding and a range of ecosystems and land uses, such as prairie, floodplain, agriculture, historic sites, trails, and more.

What do present and future opportunities for open space in Douglas County look like to you? We want YOUR feedback to help prioritize the most critical aspects of the Douglas County Open Space Plan. This questionnaire will take about 10-minutes to complete.

Please complete and return this questionnaire via the paid postage envelope.

Study Area: Rural and unincorporated Douglas County will be the focus area of analysis for existing and future open space conservation and enhancement opportunities. When answering the questionnaire please keep this study area in mind.

1. **What does open space in Douglas County mean to you?**

2. **What places in Douglas County do you connect with and how?**

3. **Why do you think open space is important to Douglas County?** *(Select up to 5)*
   - ❑ Maintain wildlife populations and biodiversity
   - ❑ Protect water quantity and quality for aquatic life and recreation
   - ❑ Provide water availability for agricultural users
   - ❑ Provide water quality and quantity for local residents
   - ❑ Preserve agricultural heritage and local food economy
   - ❑ Maintain and create multi-use recreation areas for healthy lifestyles
   - ❑ Preserve historic and cultural landmarks
   - ❑ Provide access to natural areas for spiritual and psychological health
   - ❑ Increase climate resilience to natural disasters
   - ❑ Foster natural carbon capture through plant life
   - ❑ Preserve recreation opportunities to support the economic benefits of tourism
   - ❑ Provide and improve hunting access
   - ❑ Provide and improve angler access
   - ❑ Other (please provide): _____

4. **The following land uses and natural resources are all important and will be considered within the open space planning effort. Which of the following provide the most important benefits to Douglas County or are at the most at risk? Using the scale, assign each category a priority level.**

	Highest Priority 5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**Low Priority 1**
Wildlife Habitat					
Floodplain Protection					
Wildlife Corridors					
Outdoor Recreation Opportunities					
Rivers, Streams, and Wetlands					
Agricultural Lands					
Migratory Bird Habitat					
Wooded Areas					
Native Prairies and Grasslands					
Historic, Cultural, Indigenous, and Archaeological Sites					
Other (please provide):					

5. **What do you think is most important to consider when protecting <u>working farms and ranches</u> in Douglas County?**
   - ❑ Preserving agricultural heritage and sense of place for future generations
   - ❑ Supporting local food production
   - ❑ Conserving native plants and wildlife habitat (grasslands, wetlands, riparian areas)
   - ❑ Facilitating natural carbon capture through plant life
   - ❑ Other (please provide): _____

6. **What do you think is most important to consider when protecting <u>natural plant life</u> in Douglas County?** *(Select up to 5)*
   - ❑ Grazing lands for agriculture
   - ❑ Habitat for wildlife
   - ❑ Pollination
   - ❑ Diverse native plant communities (native prairie, functional wetlands, healthy woodlands, etc.)
   - ❑ Tree canopy / shade
   - ❑ Water quality
   - ❑ Soil stabilization and flood protection
   - ❑ Carbon storage
   - ❑ Specimen trees (large cottonwoods following streams / rivers, unique species)
   - ❑ Endangered, threatened, or rare species (Western prairie fringed orchid, Mead's milkweed, etc.)
   - ❑ Limit the spread of noxious and invasive plant species
   - ❑ Cultural importance of native plants (edible, medicinal, and other culturally significant uses)
   - ❑ Other (please provide): _____

7. **What do you think is the most important to consider when protecting <u>wetlands, riparian areas, lakes, streams, rivers, and floodplain</u> in Douglas County?** *(Select up to 5)*
   - ❑ Access to clean drinking water
   - ❑ Native fish populations
   - ❑ Aquatic species biodiversity
   - ❑ Wildlife habitat diversity
   - ❑ Food for wildlife
   - ❑ Access to water for farm and ranch irrigation
   - ❑ Floodwater retention for community safety and property protection
   - ❑ Resiliency to natural disasters
   - ❑ Recreation opportunities (fishing, boating, swimming, etc.)
   - ❑ Other (please provide): _____

8. **What types of outdoor recreation do you currently enjoy in Douglas County?**
   - ❑ Hiking and walking
   - ❑ Mountain biking
   - ❑ Road / gravel biking
   - ❑ Fishing
   - ❑ Foraging
   - ❑ Hunting
   - ❑ Visiting historical or cultural site
   - ❑ Meditation / yoga
   - ❑ Swimming (lake, beach, etc.)
   - ❑ Outdoor play (picnicking, sports, playground, etc.)
   - ❑ Boating / kayaking / canoeing
   - ❑ Stargazing
   - ❑ Wildlife viewing (bird watching, etc.)
   - ❑ Other (please provide): _____

9. **What types of outdoor recreation would you like to see more access and/or opportunity for in Douglas County?**
   - ❑ Hiking and walking
   - ❑ Mountain biking
   - ❑ Road / gravel biking
   - ❑ Fishing
   - ❑ Foraging
   - ❑ Hunting
   - ❑ Visiting historical or cultural site
   - ❑ Meditation / yoga
   - ❑ Swimming (lake, beach, etc.)
   - ❑ Outdoor play (picnicking, sports, playground, etc.)
   - ❑ Boating / kayaking / canoeing
   - ❑ Stargazing
   - ❑ Wildlife viewing (bird watching, etc.)
   - ❑ Other (please provide): _____

10. **What modes of transportation would you use to reach open space in unincorporated Douglas County?**
    - ❑ Personal vehicle
    - ❑ Carpool with family or friends
    - ❑ Rideshare service
    - ❑ Walk or bike
    - ❑ I don't currently have an option
    - ❑ Other (please provide): _____

11. **What additional thoughts would you like to share about the value of open space in Douglas County?**

Demographics

The following demographic questions will help us better understand who we are hearing from and to meet our goals of reaching out to a representative sample of the population.

1. **Which of the following areas best describes where you live in Douglas County?** *(Select one)*
   - ❑ Baldwin City
   - ❑ Clinton Twp
   - ❑ City of Eudora
   - ❑ Eudora Twp
   - ❑ Grant Twp
   - ❑ Kanawaka Twp
   - ❑ City of Lawrence
   - ❑ City of Lecompton
   - ❑ Marion Twp
   - ❑ Palmyra Twp
   - ❑ Wakarusa Twp
   - ❑ Willow Springs Twp
   - ❑ Other (please explain): _____

2. **How long have you lived in Douglas County?** *(Select one)*
   - ❑ 0-1 year
   - ❑ 2-5 years
   - ❑ 6-10 years
   - ❑ 11-15 years
   - ❑ 16-20 years
   - ❑ 20+ years

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

4. **What is your relationship to Douglas County?** *(Check all that apply)*
   - ❑ Full-time Resident
   - ❑ Part-time Resident
   - ❑ Short-term Resident (student, etc.)
   - ❑ Business Owner
   - ❑ Like to Visit
   - ❑ Own your home and/or property
   - ❑ Rent your home
   - ❑ Retired
   - ❑ Own short-term rental property

5. **What is your age?**
   - ❑ under 18
   - ❑ 18-24
   - ❑ 25-34
   - ❑ 35-44
   - ❑ 45-54
   - ❑ over 55
   - ❑ Do not wish to disclose

6. **What is your race/ethnicity?** *(Check all that apply)*
   - ❑ Asian
   - ❑ Black
   - ❑ Hispanic or Latino/a/x
   - ❑ Native American
   - ❑ White
   - ❑ Do not wish to disclose
   - ❑ Other (please describe):