Lawrence County
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Strategic Plan | 2022-2025

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

In January, 2022, the Board of Trustees of the Lawrence County Public Library determined that a strategic plan should be created for the operation of the library for the four-year period beginning with the 2022-2025 budget year. The board desired that the plan utilizes Board, employee, and community inputs to address the many internal and external factors affecting the library and hired Miller Consulting Group to facilitate the input and planning sessions and to help draft the final plan. The strengths, weaknesses and opportunities identified in the input process helped the board draft the goals contained in this plan.

Work began on the plan, evaluating Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. After evaluating board and staff inputs, work began to gather public input. Strengths and weaknesses were revisited from the previous plan and the consultant spent time with the staff discussing the events of the previous two years and lessons learned from working during a pandemic. It became clear that the next few years will be more about adapting and serving than planning. The library can't control the pandemic or the public's response to it, so the most logical approach is to create a plan for targeted goals for the next three years and then create a more strategic plan down the road.

A public survey was launched to gage the public's feelings about the library as is stands now, after the renovation and still dealing with the pandemic. In general, the public is supportive and understanding and they have adapted to the current situation. No glaring library deficiencies were identified as a result of the Board, staff, and community input. However, common themes were identified. This input was used to help craft the goals set by the board in this plan.

In its final planning session, after considering all the input, the board set five major goals for the next three years. While each individual idea and issue could not be included, the board focused on those that were mentioned the most and those that had the greatest community focus. All other input was evaluated by the board for possible inclusion in future planning.

Strategic Planning Process

The Board of Trustees of the Lawence County Public Library approved the following process for completing the strategic plan.

Strategic Planning Process Begins

Board Planning Session #1

Staff Input

Public Input

Board Planning Session #2

Plan Writing

Board Review of Draft Plan

Board Approves Final Plan

Methodology

The fundamental goal during the strategic planning process was one of inclusion and openness. The process for creating and writing the strategic plan for the Lawrence County Public Library followed the traditional method of evaluation of current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
Specific variables that impact the library and the citizens of Lawrence County were evaluated to determine how they might impact the library and its ability to serve the community. These variables included current library use, current and projected population as well as the impact of population growth on library use, and an estimation of future population changes in the County.

Usage and Population Variables → Board, Staff, Community Input → S.W.O.T → Board Goals

Strategic Plan Timeframe

This strategic plan covers the Calendar years 2022-2025, beginning September, 2022 and ending December 31, 2025. The plan allows for flexibility and leaves room in the final year for action items that might need to be pushed back due to unforeseen events.

Role of Consultant

Dan Miller, of Miller Consulting Group, met regularly with the Library Director and the Board of Directors; he also led the board, staff and community input sessions.

Miller Consulting Group generated the strategic plan report using the information gathered and the decisions of the Board.

Library Mission Statement

The following Mission Statement was reviewed and affirmed at the March 2022 meeting of the Board of Trustees. The strategic plan reflects this Mission Statement.

Mission Statement:

The Lawrence County Public Library is place for entertainment, insight, inspiration, instruction and innovation.

Vision Statement:

The Lawrence County Public Library will be the recognized source of knowledge and information, the place to gather and discuss, the encourager of reading, and the leader in cooperation with the city, schools and organizations. We will be the gatetay to life-long learning, offering a full spectrum of services, materials and programming.

Kentucky Public Library Standards

The Kentucky Public Library Association in cooperation with the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives has established standards for measurement of public library services.   Public libraries are judged to be essential, enhanced, or exemplary based on measurements established by the Standards Committee. The Lawrence County Public Library completes a self-evaluation bi-yearly to determine progress made toward achieving exemplary status.

Throughout the strategic planning process, the Standards were used as a measurement tool for successful accomplishment of the plan goals. The Lawrence County Public Library seeks to improve in each of the seven standards areas during each measurement period in order to reach and maintain exemplary status.

> "Planning is the keystone for a dynamic, evolving organization. For years the public library community has embraced planning as a core value. The most effective tool for evaluating a library's progress and defining goals for future development is a written plan. Planning is a prelude to effective utilization of standards and is reflected in the seven key service areas of Kentucky Public Library Standards.
>
> Standards provide a guide to excellence. They define the kind of public library services that should be available to all Kentuckians. Stressing ongoing planning and evaluation, standards provide baseline data and establish a strong foundation from which to develop local goals to address local needs. They are an essential assessment tool to use in evaluating the library's effectiveness and a guide to assist in planning for improved services. The utilization of standards can maximize the library's role in the community by focusing resources. The ultimate outcome is heightened visibility and support for the library." *

The Seven Standards are:
- Governance and Administration
- Human Resources
- Collections
- Services
- Facilities
- Technology
- Marketing/Public Relations

The entire standards document is available at:
http://kpla.org/wp-content/uploads/KPLA-Standards-5th-edition-2014-2015.pdf

*"Introduction" Kentucky Public Library Standards: Direction and Service for the 21st Century, 5th Edition, 2014-2015. Kentucky Public Library Association in cooperation with the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives.

Evaluation of Population Growth and Distribution

Using data provided by the United States Census Bureau, the Library Board looked at population growth over the past two years and projections for the future. Lawrence County population has stayed stable from the beginning of the pandemic according to the Census and projections. This is better than other counties in the state.

This population stability is atypical for Kentucky counties, especially those in the Eastern half of the state. It bodes well for the stability of the tax base in the coming years.

Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in Kentucky: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021			
Geographic Area	**April 1, 2020 Estimates Base**	**Population Estimate (as of July 1)**	
		2020	**2021**
Kentucky	4,505,836	4,503,958	4,509,394
Lawrence County, Kentucky	16,293	16,288	16,290
Note: The estimates are developed from a base that incorporates the 2020 Census, Vintage 2020 estimates, and 2020 Demographic Analysis estimates. For population estimates methodology statements, see http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical-documentation/methodology.html. The estimates feature geographic boundaries from the Vintage 2020 estimates series; the geographic boundaries for these 2021 population estimates are as of January 1, 2020.			
Suggested Citation: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in Kentucky: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021 (CO-EST2021-POP-21) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division Release Date: March 2022			

Source- US Census Bureau
See Appendix #1 for more detailed information about US Census projections for Lawrence County.

Library Usage

The Lawrence County Public Library records statistics on a variety of usage measurements. Statistical areas include: attendance, circulation, computer usage and the number of public meetings held. Usage data is compiled and reported to the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives annually.

The Library Board determined that usage statistics for the past two years were not indicative of future use and the focus should be on service and adaptability for the next three years.

Community Input

The Library Board and Library Director asked that the strategic planning process include input from the staff and the community. The staff provided valuable input through a staff input sessions providing many new ideas and identifying several opportunities for internal improvement. The Board and Library Director reviewed all suggestions from the staff.

Community input was provided using an online survey to solicit ideas and opinions from the residents of Lawrence County. Nearly 100 individuals participated in two different surveys online.

The questions on the survey were open ended, thus giving those responding the opportunity to comment on any area of library service.

S.W.O.T Analysis

The best way to begin planning for the future is to understand where an organization stands currently. A common way to accomplish that understanding is to evaluate Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T). This strategic plan was created by first evaluating the S.W.O.T. as perceived by all main constituency groups: the Library Board of Trustees, the staff, and the community. Community input was open to all. The community input focused on strengths, weaknesses, ideas and opportunities. The Library Board also listed threats in addition to the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

The S.W.O.T. analysis was conducted using an open and inclusive process. Anyone interested was invited to contribute feedback. All input from the surveys was combined and collated to provide the Library Board with a complete list of all strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that were mentioned. The Library Board evaluated the entire list. Using the frequency of mention and by combining like statements into categories, the Board developed the lists of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Ideas presented on the following pages.

The complete lists will be used by the Library Director and the Library Board to create tactical plans and budget items for each year of the three-year plan cycle.

The Facts

All discussions of Strengths and Weaknesses began with an acknowledgement of the facts. These were external to the library and out of the library's control.

- COVID 19
- Funding didn't drop
- The information changes rapidly
- We are not in control
- Population/Economy

Strengths

The following strengths were identified as the most mentioned and relevant to the situation. These are listed in no particular order.

- Facility
- Staff
- Technology
- Outreach Services
- Children's Programs/Services
- Collection
- Meeting rooms/Space- Flow, Safety, Teen area, Study rooms

Weaknesses

The following weaknesses were identified as the most relevant to the situation. strategic planning process. These are listed in no particular order. Weaknesses do not imply problems, but are areas where the board, staff and constituents see room for improvement. Weaknesses related to internal processes will be addressed through tactical plans and in the budget.

- Hours
- Marketing
- Staffing level-Need more staff/Need OT- Possible more Part Time
- Library Management System- Old and need to be updated
- Book Vendor-Need second choice
- Children's area- Furniture, Sensory, Toys, Children's Tech

Opportunities and Ideas

Many ideas and opportunities were presented during the input process. The board and staff will use the complete list of ideas as they consider goals related to the following:

- Hours
- Programs
- Facility- Learn new ways to use
- Technology- print station, remote print
- Outreach
- Sell stamps, Be a FedEx and UPS dropoff and pickup location
- Tax Prep- Pay for it orPay for TurboTax on computers?

Threats

Threats are almost always external to the institution. While there is rarely any action to be taken, it is important that the board be aware of them and prepared just in case.

- COVID 19
- Economic uncertainties
- Inconsistent messaging related to COVID 19 from state, local and federal government
- Supply Chain
- SB 167
- Misinformation from local news blogs/social media

Goals

Strengths are used as tools to accomplish goals, weaknesses and opportunities are used to determine the goals.

To be successful, the board sought to make each goal specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. Each goal is evaluated as to the strengths the goal uses and the weaknesses it addresses. Specific steps toward achieving success for each goal are listed, and each goal has deadlines that are realistic and measurable.

Improvement in each area of the Kentucky Public Library Standards is addressed and included as a measurement tool.

Ongoing Process

Each year of the strategic plan, the Library Director will present a budget to the board that addresses the goals and the steps needed to accomplish the goals. The annual budget may include additional goals as set by the board.

All input gained from the staff and community during strategic planning will be evaluated by the Director and incorporated, when possible, into the yearly plans.

Lawrence County Public Library-Goal #1- Staffing/Hours

Evaluate the budget and determine how the library can provide the best service to the public. Create a comprehensive staffing plan to address the needs identified in the staff and public survey. Evaluate current and future operating hours and present a plan to the board of trustees for approval.

Action Item	Assigned to:	Due date:
Create a committee of interested parties- staff, trustees and patrons to study the library operating hours and suggest additional hours if warranted.	Carlie Pelfrey	10/15/22
Evaluate current staffing levels considering public input. Evaluate current staff strengths and areas of expertise and determine a staffing level that would prepare the library for accomplishing the goals stated in the strategic plan. Present the plan to the board for approval	Carlie Pelfrey Board of Trustees	11/15/22
Combine feedback from the committee and staffing evaluation to determine a preliminary amount of funds needed to add to 2023-24 budget to accomplish first year staffing plan. Add that amount to the budget	Carlie Pelfrey Board of Trustees	1/15/2023
Approve staffing/operating hours plan	Board of Trustees	No later than 2/15/23
Begin new staffing/ operating hours plan	Carlie Pelfrey	7/1/2023
Evaluate staffing changes for adjustment and budget impact on the 2024/25 budget	Carlie	4/24
Present suggested changes to board of trustees for approval and inclusion in 2024/25 budget	Carlie Pelfrey Board of Trustees	5/2024
Implement additional staffing changes if necessary	Carlie Pelfrey Board of Trustees	7/2024

Goal #1

Strengths Used	Weaknesses Addressed	State Standards Addressed
Staff	Staffing Levels	Staffing
Technology	Operating Hours	Programs/Services
Meeting Rooms		Governance & Admin
Facility		

Lawrence County Public Library-Goal #2-Programs

Evaluate the Library's current programs to determine the need for expansion or change related to feedback from staff, patrons and the community.

Action Item	Assigned to:	Due date:
Assign staff program leader to lead evaluation process	Carlie Pelfrey	8/1/22
Evaluate current programs for attendance and need. Involve Director, staff, and patrons	Staff program leader	8/1/22-12/31/22
Present findings, recommendations to Director for budget consideration	Staff program leader Carlie Pelfrey	1/1/23-1/31/23
Approve changes not needing budget support	Carlie Pelfrey	2/28/23
Recommend additions for inclusion in budget	Carlie Pelfrey	4/30/23
Implementation of new programs	Carlie Pelfrey Staff program leader	7/1/23-6/30/24

Goal #2

Strengths Used	Weaknesses or Opportunities Addressed	State Standards Addressed
Staff	Programs	Programs
Programs	Outreach	Marketing
		Governance & Admin

Lawrence County Public Library-Goal #3-Outreach

Evaluate the Library's outreach effort to determine the need for expansion or change related to feedback from staff, patrons and the community. Seek best practices from other libraries and national library organizations.

Action Item	Assigned to:	Due date:
Assign staff program leader to lead evaluation process	Carlie Pelfrey	8/1/23
Evaluate current outreach efforts for participation and need. Involve Director, staff, and patrons	Staff program leader	8/1/23-12/31/23
Present findings, recommendations to Director for budget consideration	Staff program leader Carlie Pelfrey	1/1/24-1/31/24
Approve changes not needing budget support	Carlie Pelfrey	2/28/24
Recommend additions for inclusion in budget	Carlie Pelfrey	4/30/24
Implementation of new programs	Carlie Pelfrey Staff program leader	7/1/24-6/30/25

Goal #3

Strengths Used	Weaknesses or Opportunities Addressed	State Standards Addressed
Staff	Programs	Outreach
Programs	Outreach	Marketing
		Governance & Admin

Lawrence County Public Library-Goal #4- Technology

Review the library's technology in light of the new building renovations. Are there gaps in the technology? Can self-service technology be a staff-multiplier? Does the library have adequate technology support?

Action Item	Assigned to:	Due date:
Evaluate age and functionality of all technology in the library.	Carlie Pelfrey/ Library staff	Begin in January 2023
Create short-term technology plan for most impact.	Carlie Pelfrey/ Library staff	3/2023
Present plan to trustees for review	Carlie Pelfrey	4/2023
Add funds to budget to accommodate purchasing needed in year one	Carlie Pelfrey Board of Trustees	5/2023

Goal #4

Strengths Used	Weaknesses or Opportunities Addressed	State Standards Addressed
Staffing	Staffing Level	Technology
Technology	Technology	Collections
Facility		Governance & Admin

Lawrence County Public Library-Goal #5-Policies

Evaluate every policy over two years. Update all to make sure you have good policies approved by the board. Staff should review each policy for proposed updates and present to the board with changes highlighted for board review

Action Item	Assigned to:	Due date:
Begin presenting one or two policies at each board meeting for review.	Carlie Pelfrey	9/1/23
Review each policy and approve as is or with changes and update policy with review date	Board of Trustees	9/1/22-8/31/24
Continue process going forward.	Board of Trustees Carlie Pelfrey	9/1/24-Forward

Goal #5

Strengths Used	Weaknesses or Opportunities Addressed	State Standards Addressed
Staff	None	Governance & Admin

Resources

Kentucky State Data Center. *2010 Population Projections*. Louisville, KY, USA: University of Louisville, Kentucky State Data Center, 2010.

Nelson, Sandra S. *Strategic Planning for Result*s. Chicago, IL, USA: American Library Association, 2001. Print.

Nelson, Sandra S. *The New Planning for Results: a Streamlined Approach*. Chicago, IL, USA: American Library Association, 2001. 2nd edition. Print.
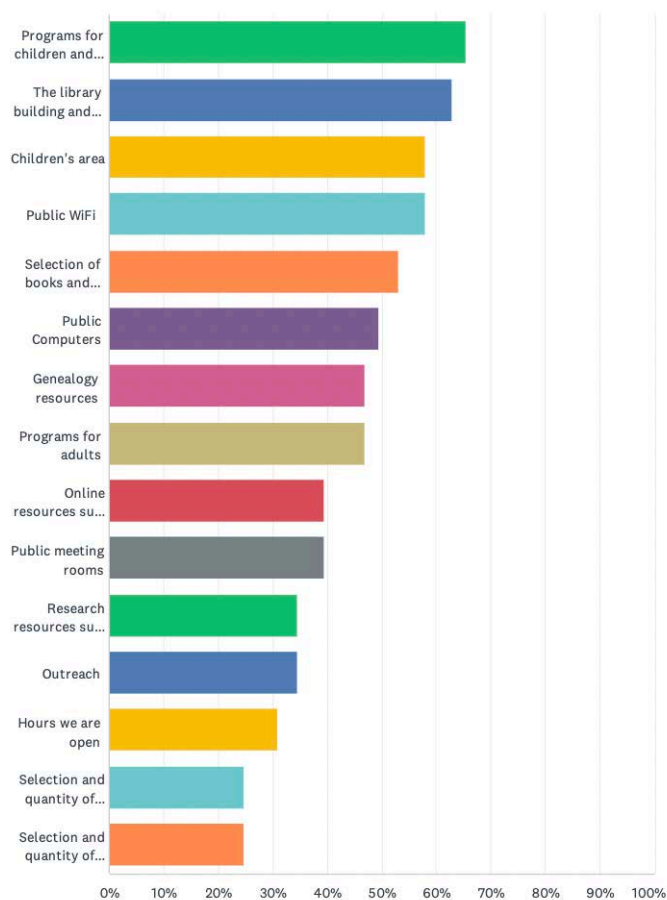
American Library Association. S*tate of America's Libraries Report-2015*. Chicago, IL, USA: American Library Association, 2015. Print.

Verbatim Responses from Patron Survey

Online Survey

Q5 Please tell us what you think we do well. What do you like best about the library? Check all that apply.
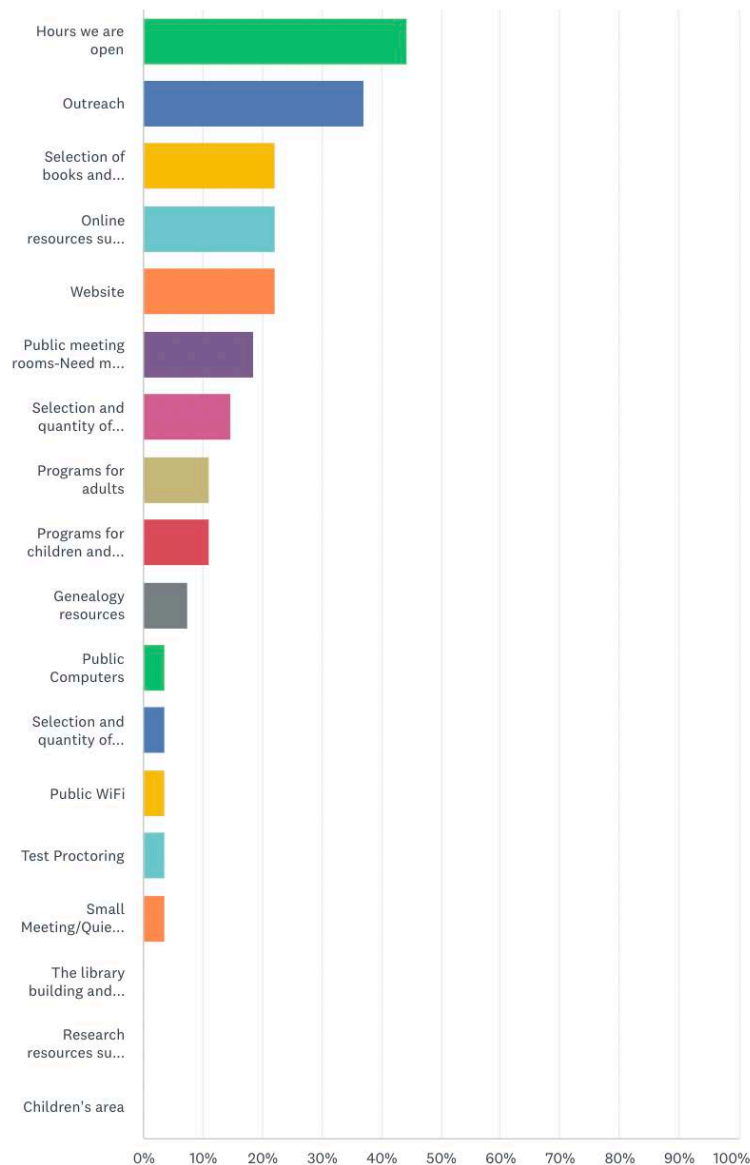
Answered: 81   Skipped: 4

Verbatim Responses from Patron Survey

Online Survey

Please tell us what you think we could improve. Select all that apply.
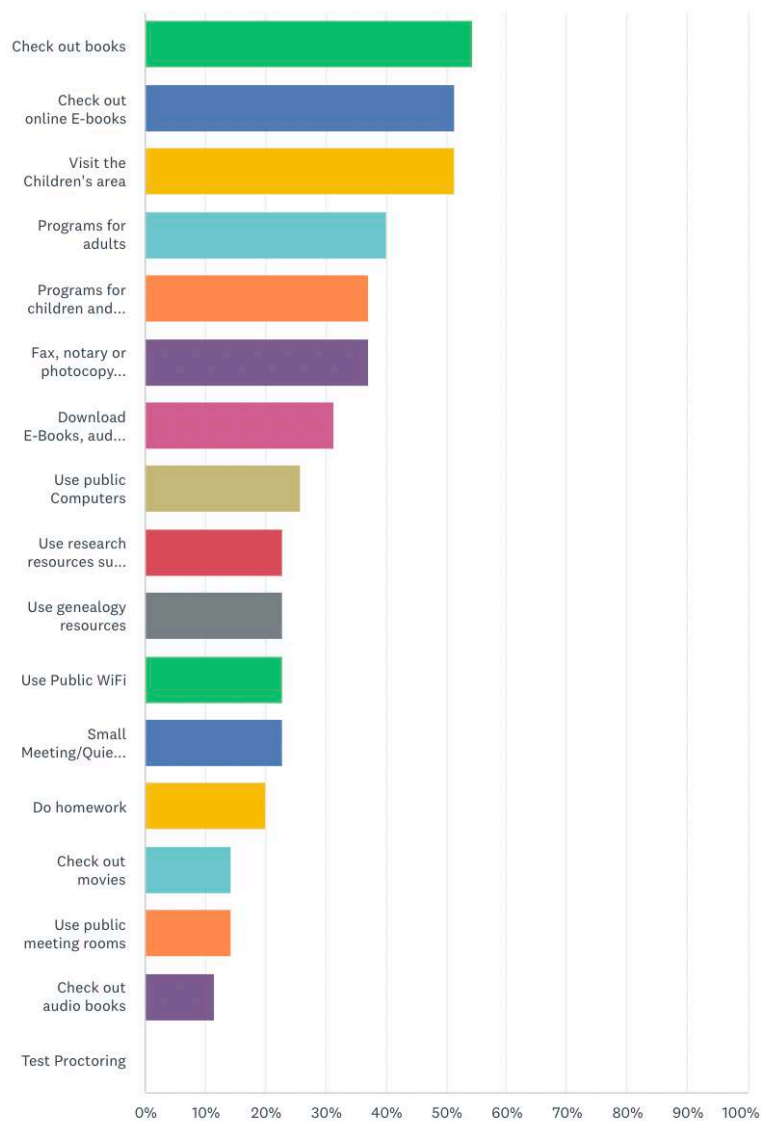
Answered: 27   Skipped: 13

Verbatim Responses from Patron Survey

Online Survey

Please tell us how you use the library. What is the primary purpose of your typical library visit in person? Check all that apply.

Answered: 35   Skipped: 5

Selected Patron Comments

Open on Saturday's.

I would love more audio books and more kids and family activities for summer I feel like when school is out more should be offered.

It's the best place ever for everyone.

More things available online for those who can't get into the physical building for various reasons.

Getting the word out in all Lawrence county communities about services and programs that are available would be great.

More options and programs for the elderly.

I would like to see more Christian Fiction ebooks and audiobooks added.

Later hours at least once a week, like it used to be, would help.

The library has wonderful programming for all ages.

More resources for kids such as online tutors or online guides like ABC mouse or things like that. More

programs for kids with working parents.

Maybe have a bigger presence on social media.

It would be nice to be able to use the library on weekends. My family's work schedule doesn'tallow for us all to go through the week together.
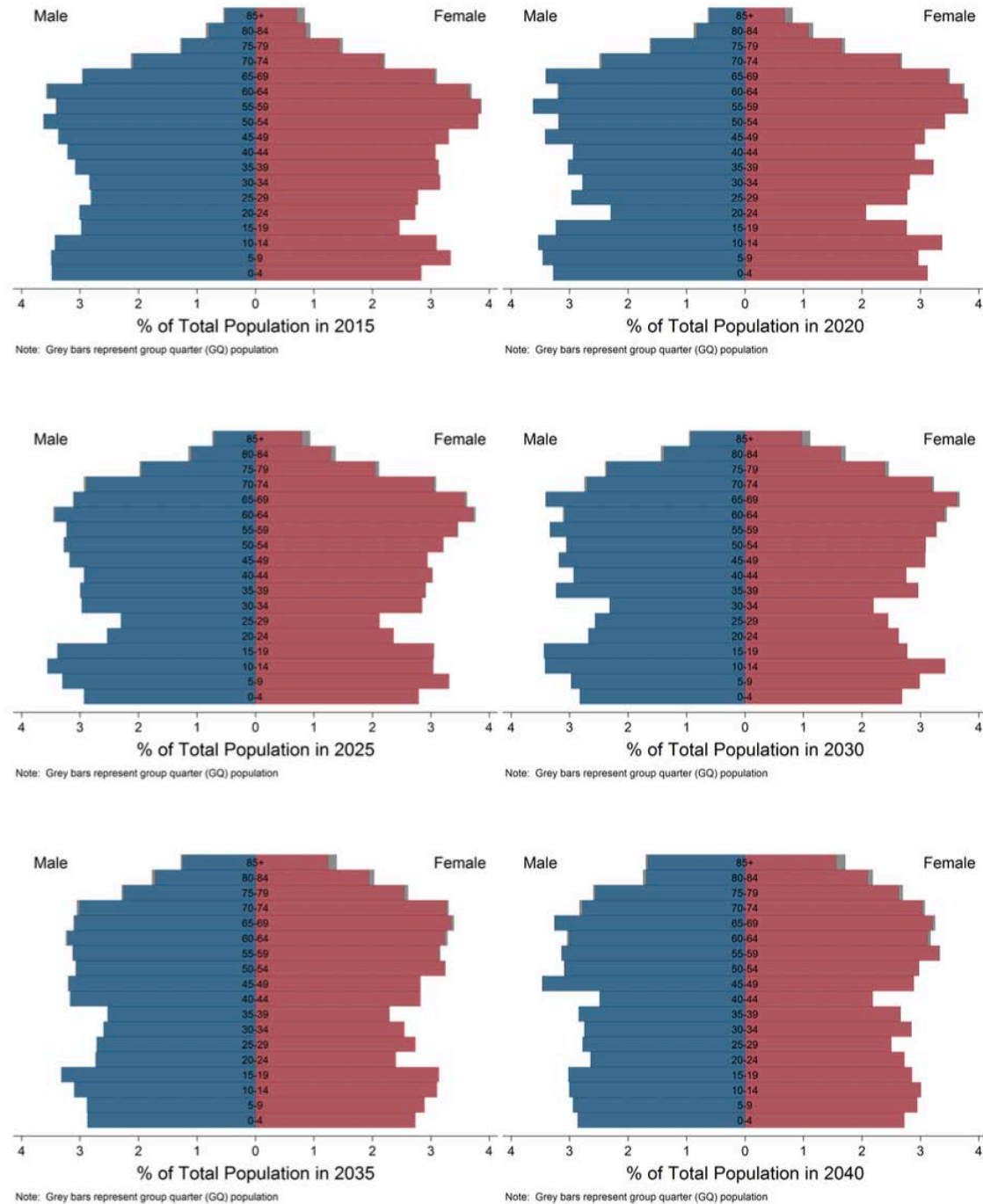
Appendix 1- Population and Census Data

Lawrence County

	2010 Census	2015 Estimate	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	2035 Projection	2040 Projection
Total Population	15,860	15,745	15,668	15,378	14,979	14,515	14,038
Population in Households	15,752	15,637	15,560	15,270	14,871	14,407	13,930
Population in Group Quarters	108	108	108	108	108	108	108
Total Households	6,239	6,291	6,380	6,344	6,287	6,168	6,022
Average Household Size	2.52	2.49	2.44	2.41	2.37	2.34	2.31
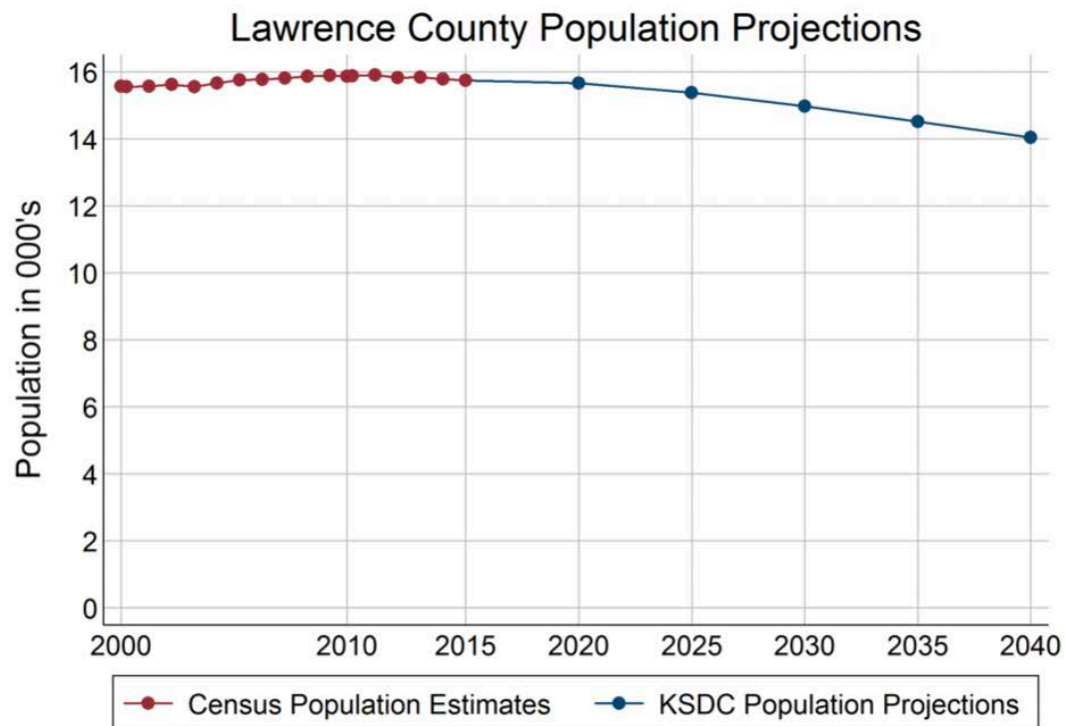
Lawrence County Population Projections

Source- Kentucky State Data Center/2016 Census. 2020 Projections not available as of publication date.

Lawrence County Population Pyramids

Source- Kentucky State Data Center/2016 Census. 2020 Projections not available as of publication date.