

Connectivity and Revitalization Plan

Kansas City, Missouri
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Prepared for:

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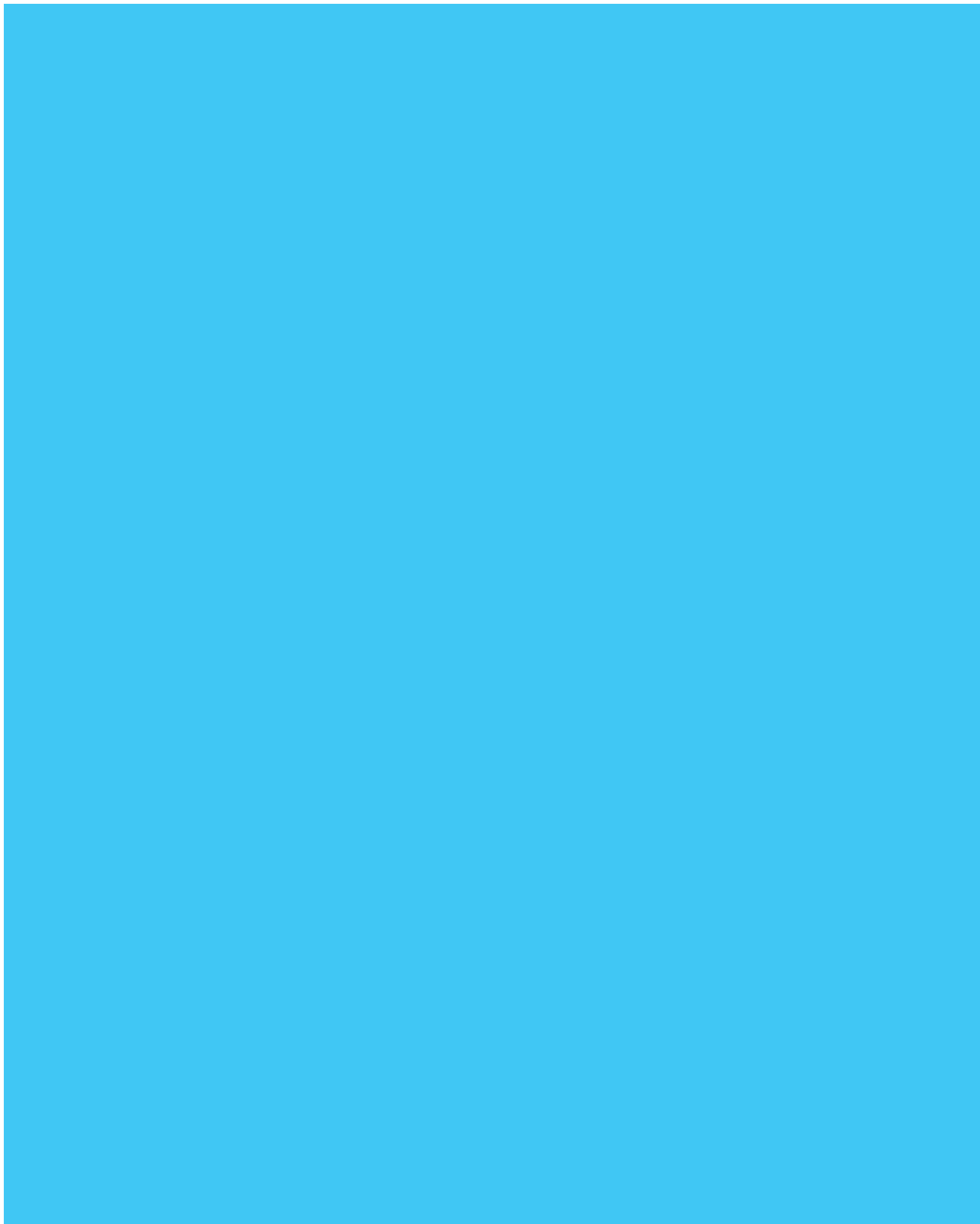
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PART I: LISTENING & LOOKING

The Westside neighborhood is growing. This growth brings with it many opportunities and also new challenges. Reconnect Westside aims to improve the Westside neighborhood for existing and future residents and begins with listening to neighborhood residents' priorities and looking at existing plans and information.

What is Reconnect Westside?

Westside is in the midst of rapid revitalization, reversing the decades-long trend of population loss and housing demolition. However, the neighborhood is still disconnected from surrounding neighborhoods by major barriers including the highway and topography. Internal connections are also weak due to poor sidewalks, vacant lots, and a disconnected street grid. Social connections have been challenged by the influx of new people to the neighborhood. *Reconnect Westside: Connectivity and Revitalization Plan* identifies strategies to increase diversity of housing, promote multi-modal transportation, build community, improve health, and benefit the natural environment.

The Reconnect Westside plan focuses on the north side of the Westside neighborhood, particularly the area around the West High Switzer School because that is where the development pressure is the greatest. Construction of infill housing has accelerated in this area, and the West High Switzer School is positioned to be redeveloped, which will bring more residents to the neighborhood, increase demand for neighborhood services, and could place strain on public facilities.

Reconnect Westside is driven by the community. The plan was guided from the beginning by the neighborhood's ideas and concerns. The neighborhood goals and strategies emerged directly from ideas shared at neighborhood meetings, in online surveys, and during stakeholder interviews. Quotes from neighborhood residents appear throughout the plan to demonstrate how plan recommendations were generated from community ideas.

The plan builds upon past planning work and ongoing initiatives in the neighborhood. From FOCUS and the Kansas City Greater Downtown Area Plan to the streetscapes plans for West Pennway, 17th Street, and 20th street, and the KCMO Neighborhood and Housing Services Action Plan, Reconnect Westside incorporates and coordinates with these existing plans' recommendations. The plan also considers ongoing initiatives such as the expansion of bike share into the Westside neighborhood and the expansion of Kansas City's streetcar system.

The Reconnect Westside project aims to accomplish three outcomes:

1. Neighborhood Priorities

Document the neighborhood's priorities for future development and infrastructure improvements

2. Build on Existing Work

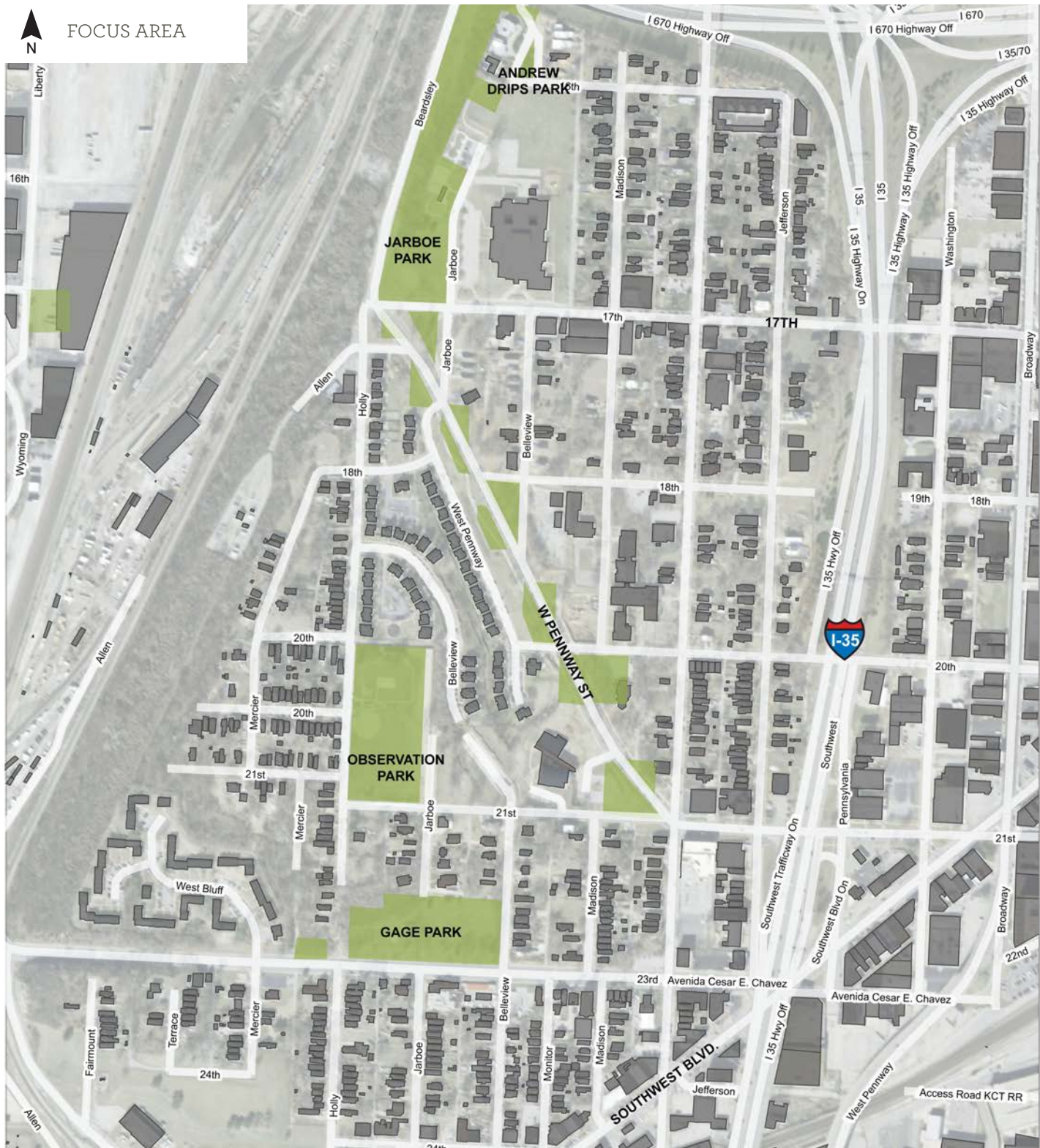
Build on existing plans and coordinate with ongoing initiatives

3. Implementation Focused Strategies

Create implementation focused strategies that address specific issues that affect the Westside Neighborhood

Time is of the essence for the Westside neighborhood; development pressure is quickly transforming the neighborhood, and issues related to gentrification and displacement require immediate action. The plan focuses on implementable strategies that can be accomplished in the short term. The plan includes a collection of strategies and documents approximate time frames, costs, first steps, and responsible entities for advancing the proposed strategy. This plan organizes strategies around the community's priorities and will be a launchpad for implementable projects. Whether you are a resident, own a business in the neighborhood, are part of a organization that works in the neighborhood, or are interested in developing in the neighborhood, this plan contains ideas that you can help advance!

“This plan is a launchpad for implementable projects.”



Planning Approach

Reconnect Westside documents near-term implementation-focused strategies to advance neighborhood goals. The planning process began with listening to the neighborhood through a variety of outreach methods including community meetings, events, web surveys, and stakeholder groups. The goals emerged from what we heard, and the strategies were also informed by the neighborhood's priorities.

WHAT WE HEARD >> GOALS >> STRATEGIES

Reconnect Westside followed a five phase process:

Discover

During the discover phase, the stakeholders and the public defined the issues facing the Westside neighborhood, and the planning team gathered data and reviewed existing plans.

Analyze

The planning team analyzed the data and feedback to determine the biggest opportunities for the Westside neighborhood's future based on the issues determined in the discover phase.

Plan

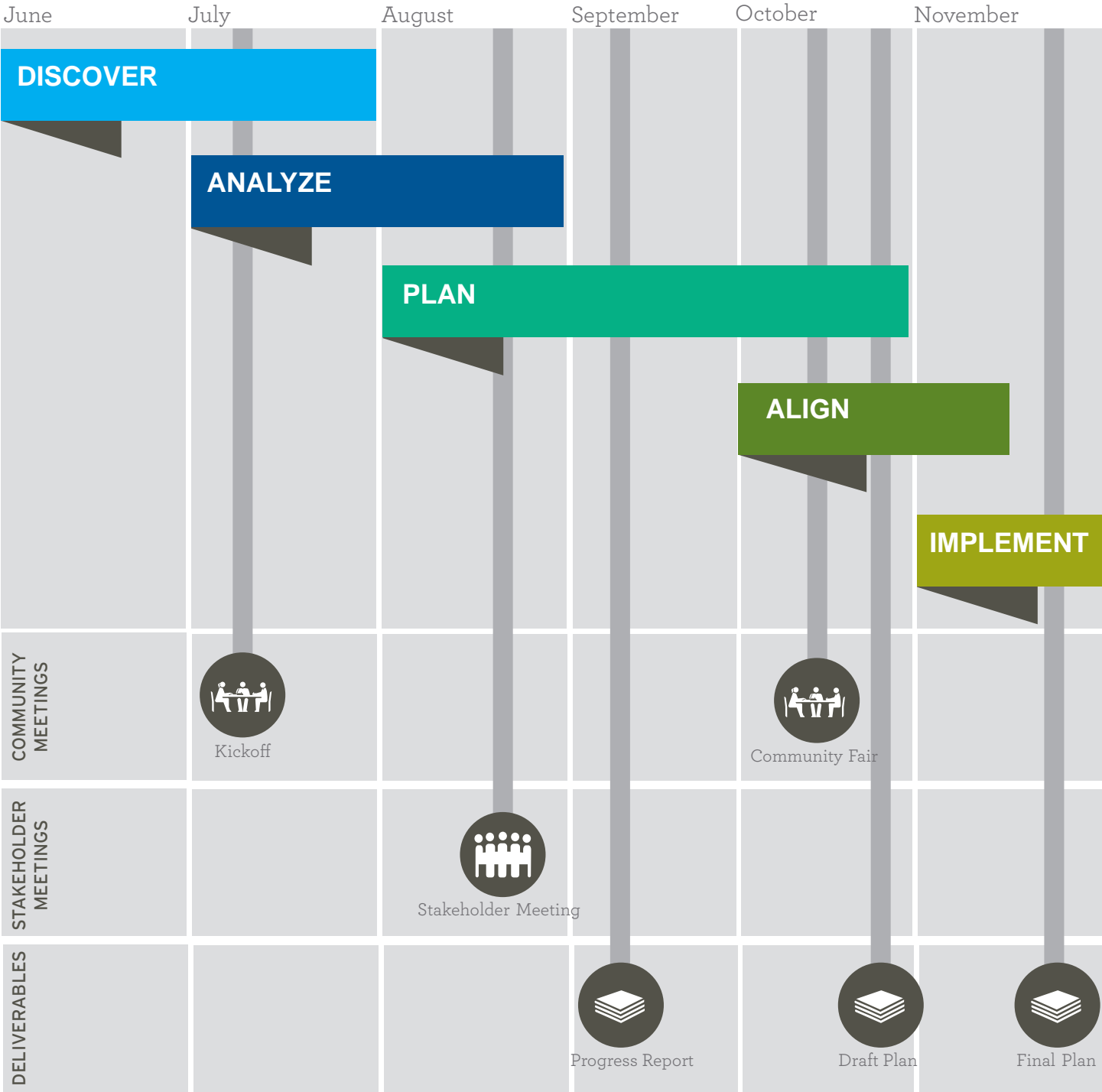
Working collaboratively with the community through meetings, a website, and other events, the planning team created the plan recommendations.

Align

During the align phase, the planning team worked with stakeholders to achieve consensus on the final plan.

Implement

The planning team documented tasks and responsibilities, priorities, time frames, and conceptual costs for the strategies during the implementation phase. Neighborhood leaders and organizations will be able to use this document to guide future implementation projects and strategies.



Community Engagement

This plan represents the neighborhood's goals and priorities for the future of the North Westside neighborhood. The planning team used a variety of methods to reach out to the community, spread awareness about the plan, and to facilitate a dialogue within the community. The issue areas, goals, and strategies emerged directly from the ideas and feedback shared by community members.



This word cloud was created with the responses to the Survey Monkey online survey. The larger the word, the more often it was used.
Credit: Wordle.net

COMMUNITY MEETING

The planning process kicked off with a community meeting on July 2, 2013 to discuss neighborhood opportunities and needs. During this community meeting, community members worked to define issues that affect the neighborhood. Attendees responded to questions and drew on maps to document their ideas. This meeting led to the issue areas and goals.

ONLINE SURVEY

The planning team distributed an online survey using Survey Monkey in order to gain further feedback on the issues affecting the neighborhood. Over 40 respondents submitted detailed answers to the open ended questions, providing the planning team with a strong base of knowledge about the neighborhood's priorities. The goals and strategies are based on this feedback.

RECONNECT WESTSIDE ONLINE FORUM

The Reconnect Westside forum served as an online tool to facilitate a neighborhood conversation. Community members submitted their ideas for the future of the neighborhood. This website worked as a 24 hour a day public forum. The goals and strategies were further refined based on this additional feedback.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

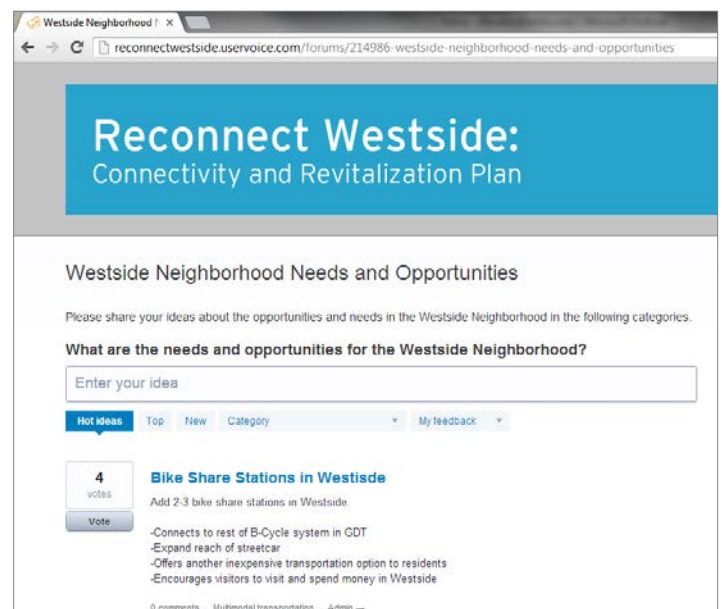
Stakeholders included leaders of neighborhood organizations, elected officials, city staff, business owners, and other community leaders. The planning team convened a group of stakeholders to discuss issues and potential strategies facing the neighborhood. After this initial meeting, the planning team conducted interviews with individual stakeholders. These meetings allowed the planning team to add crucial details and vet strategies.

WESTSIDE FALL FESTIVAL

Reconnect Westside partnered with the Westside CAN Center to host an information fair at the Old-Fashioned Family Fall Festival. This event included several interactive activities to further prioritize the goals and gain additional support and detail for the strategies. Neighborhood residents voted for the goals they most supported by placing marbles in mason jars labeled with the plan goals. Participants also shared ideas about how to accomplish the goals. An interactive mapping exercise with stickers highlighting needed improvements allowed residents to share their ideas about how to improve the neighborhood. A story booth invited residents to share their history in the neighborhood and hope for the future. Art activities allowed children to share what they liked about their neighborhood. Representatives from organizations working in the neighborhood helped staff the event including MARC, Kansas City EDC, local businesses, BikeWalkKC, KCP&L, and Westside Housing Organization. The planning team used this feedback to direct their research and analysis.



The planning process kicked off with a community workshop to discuss the issues related to development in the Westside neighborhood



The Reconnect Westside online forum allows community members to share their ideas and concerns for the future of the Westside neighborhood.





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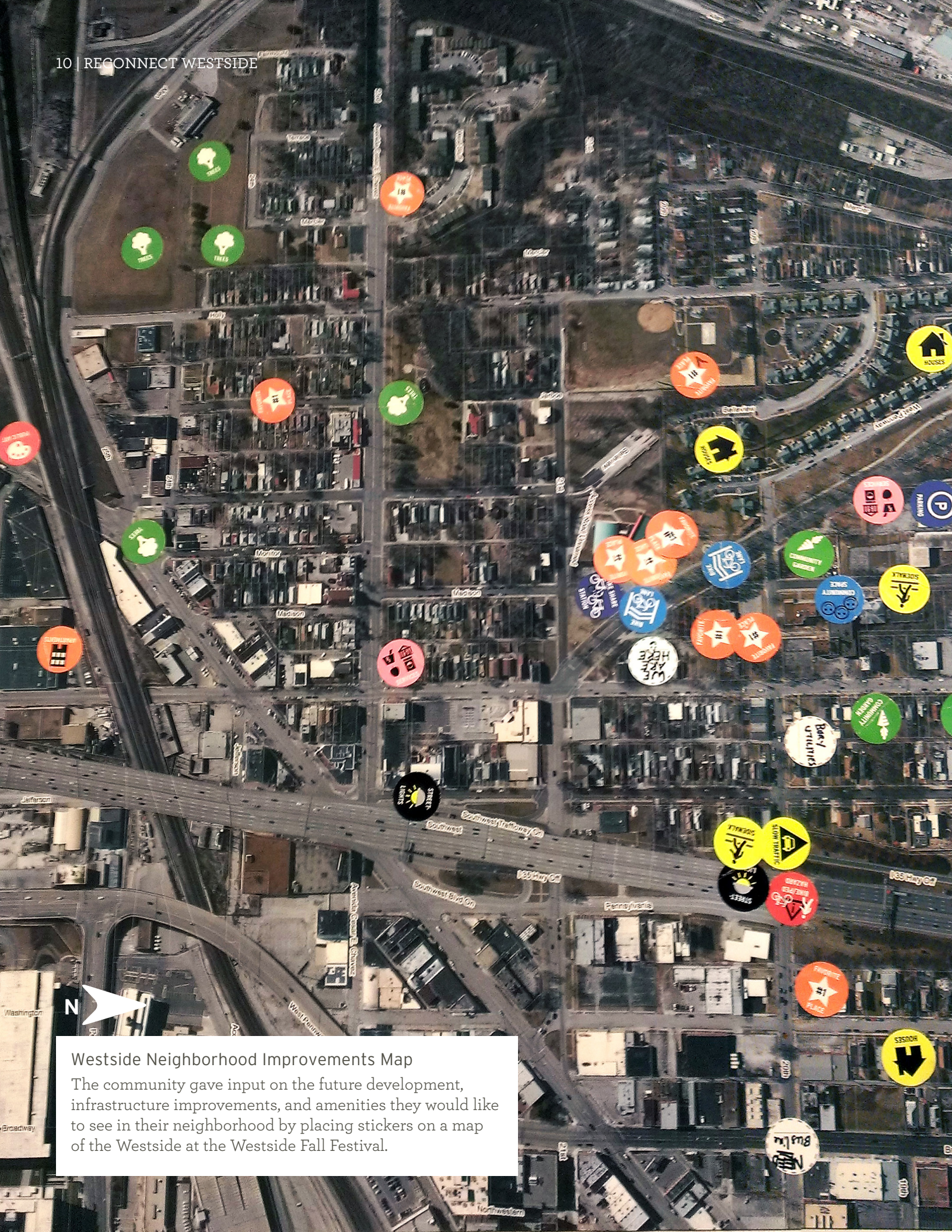


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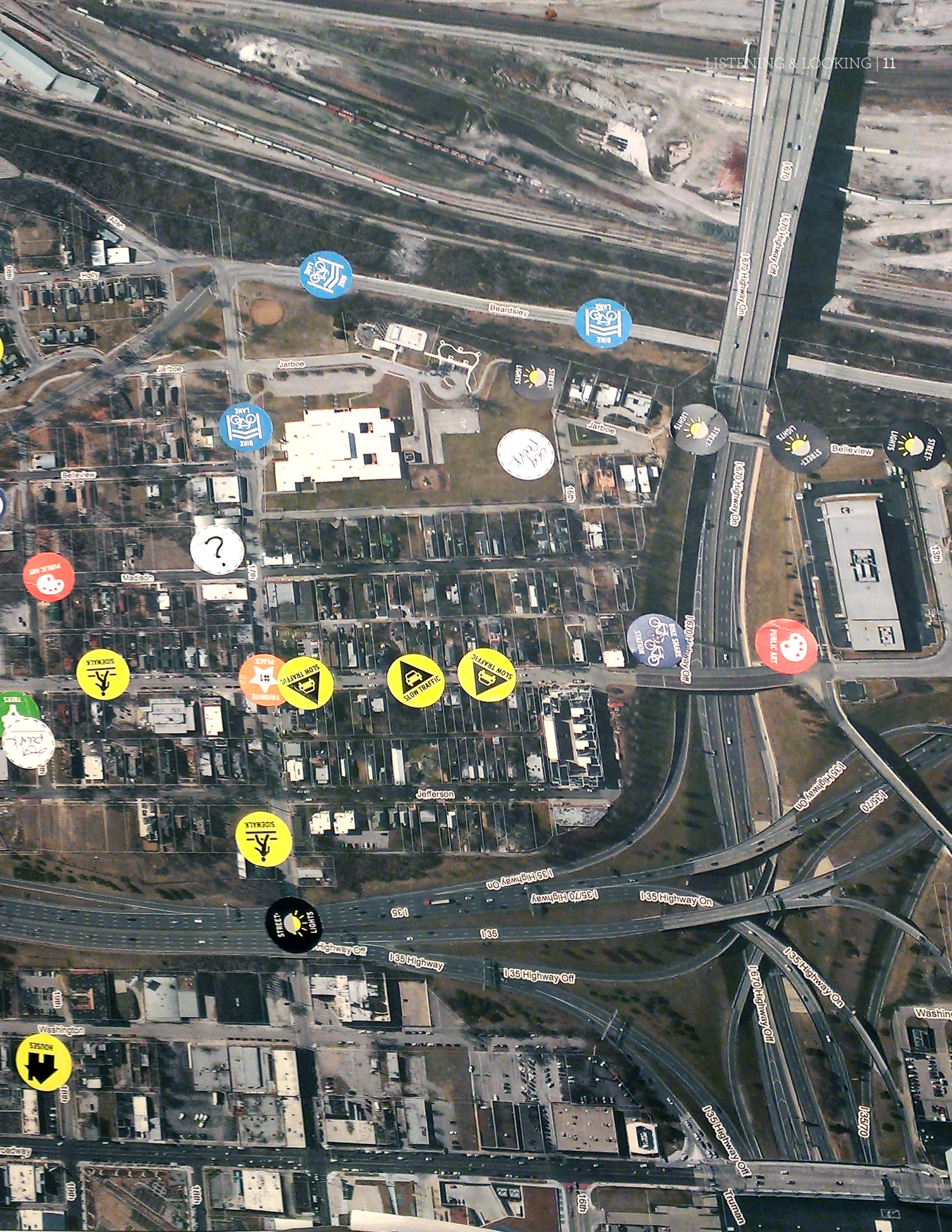
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Neighborhood residents shared their ideas for the future of the neighborhood at the Westside Fall Festival through a story booth (1), children's art activities (2), an interactive mapping exercise (3 & 6), voting on goals (4), and learning about initiatives such as bike share and existing businesses (5).



Westside Neighborhood Improvements Map

The community gave input on the future development, infrastructure improvements, and amenities they would like to see in their neighborhood by placing stickers on a map of the Westside at the Westside Fall Festival.



Neighborhood Profile

In addition to listening to neighborhood residents, the planning team looked at information about the neighborhood. Gaining a deeper understanding of the people, housing trends, economy, and transportation system in the Westside neighborhood leads to more informed decisions regarding infrastructure investment and development policies in the neighborhood. The demographics and housing trends data are for Jackson County Census Tract 153, which is bounded by 31st Street in the south, Southwest Trafficway and Broadway to the east, I-670 to the north, and the bluffs and the state line to the west.

DEMOGRAPHICS

One of the defining aspects of the Westside neighborhood is its Hispanic heritage. Over the past few decades the percent of Hispanic/Latino has remained fairly stable. In 1990 68% of the neighborhood (Including North and South Westside, defined by the census tract) was Hispanic or Latino. This rose to 70% in the 2000 census and dropped to 63% in 2010. The most recent 2011 American Community Survey put the range between 56.9-75.3%. Anecdotally, it appears that gentrification is occurring, especially north of 17th Street, as wealthier, non-Hispanic residents move into the neighborhood.

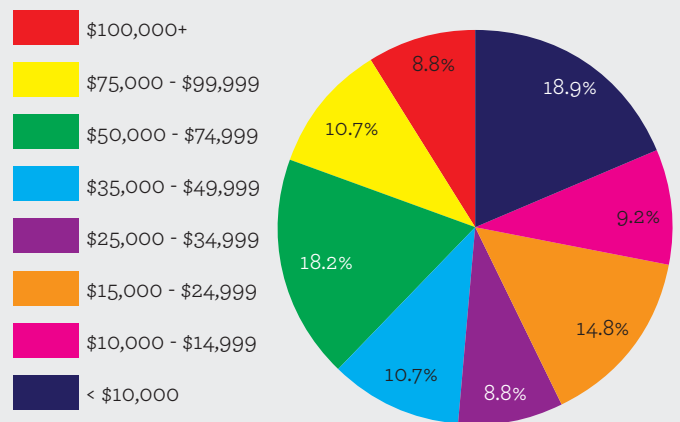
Westside is a mixed income neighborhood with a significant low income population. The majority of households are below Kansas City's household median income of \$45,246, although there are a significant number of residents in the \$100,000+ income category. Approximately 33%, or a third, of the neighborhood lives below the poverty line according to the 2011 American Community Survey.

Westside also has a mix of age groups living in the neighborhood. The median age of Westside residents is 37.2, which is slightly older than Kansas City's median age of 34.2 and the metropolitan area median of 36.8. The largest age groups are between 25 and 54, and there are significant number of young people and older people living in the neighborhood. There is also over 300 elementary students and over 150 high school students living in the neighborhood.

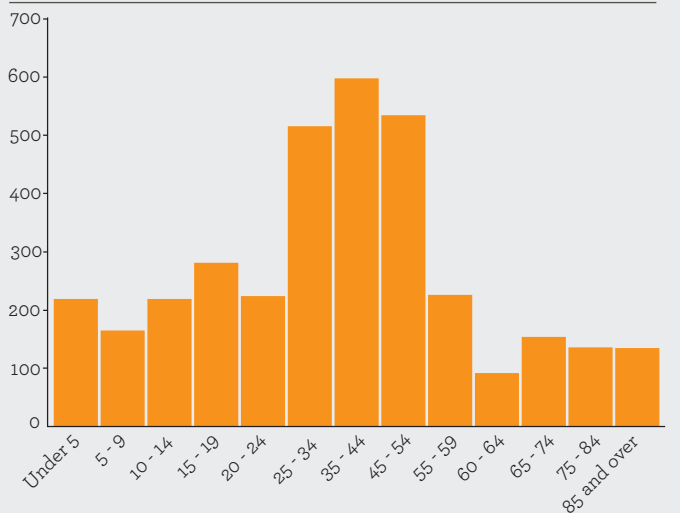
Demographics

PERCENT HISPANIC/LATINO: 63%

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

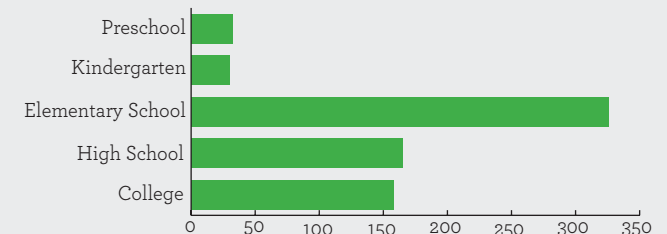


AGE



MEDIAN AGE: 37.2

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



HOUSING TRENDS

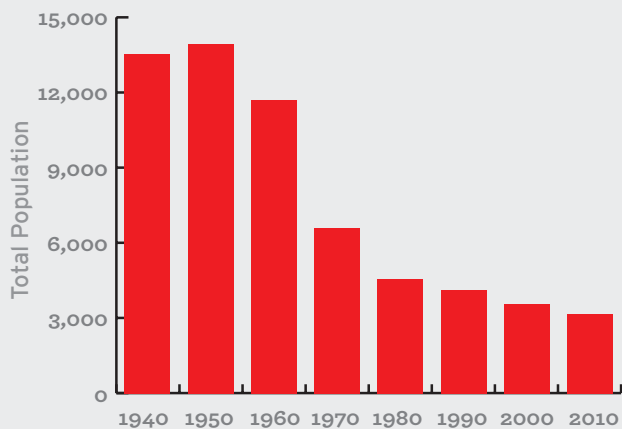
Over the last half century, the Westside neighborhood has experienced population loss and demolition of housing stock. After hitting a peak population of 13,915 people in 1950, the population fell to 11,660 in 1960 and 6,574 in 1970. The construction of I-35 Highway had a large impact on this population loss. Between 1960 and 1970, the neighborhood lost over 2,000 housing units. This negative population trend continued in the

latest census; between 2000 and 2010, Westside lost 431 residents. However, in recent years there is evidence that this trend is reversing itself with more new infill housing being constructed.

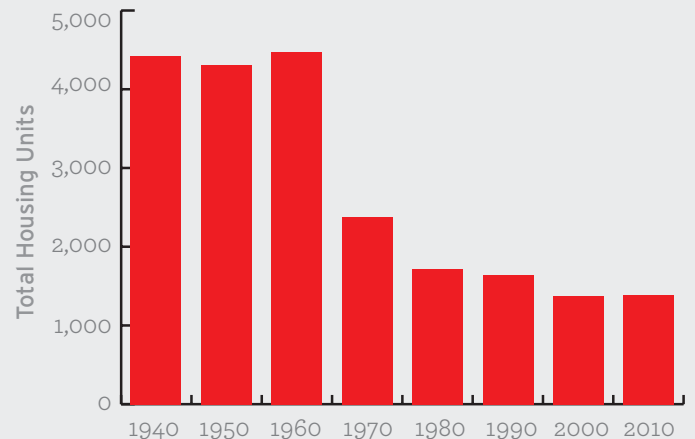
There are slightly more renters than owners in the neighborhood. As of 2010, 47% of residents owned their home, and 53% rented.

Housing Trends

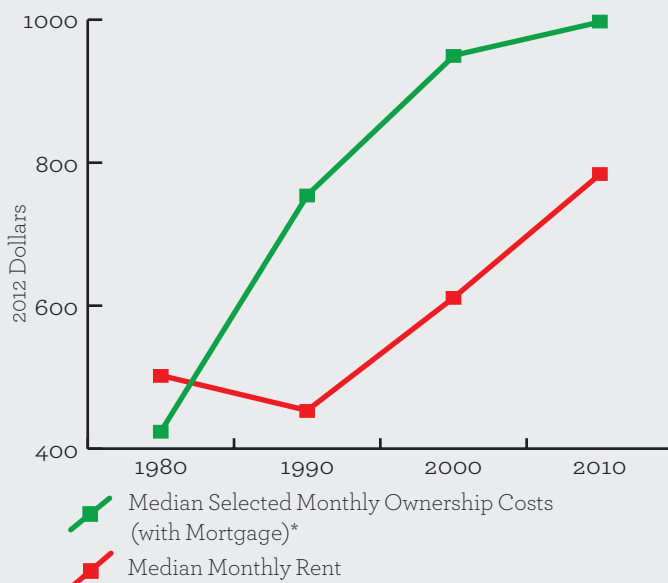
WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD POPULATION TREND



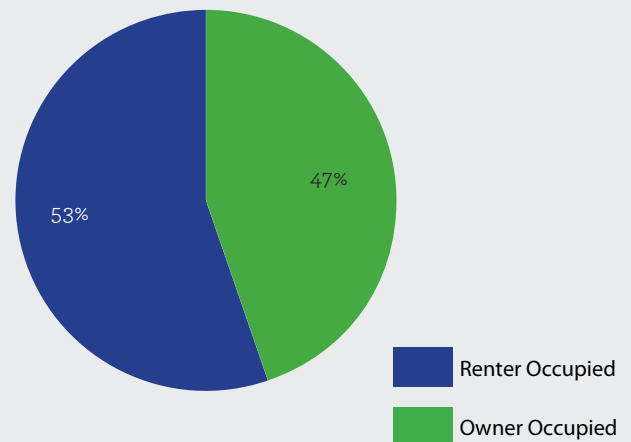
WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING TREND



MEDIAN HOUSING COSTS (INFLATION-ADJUSTED)



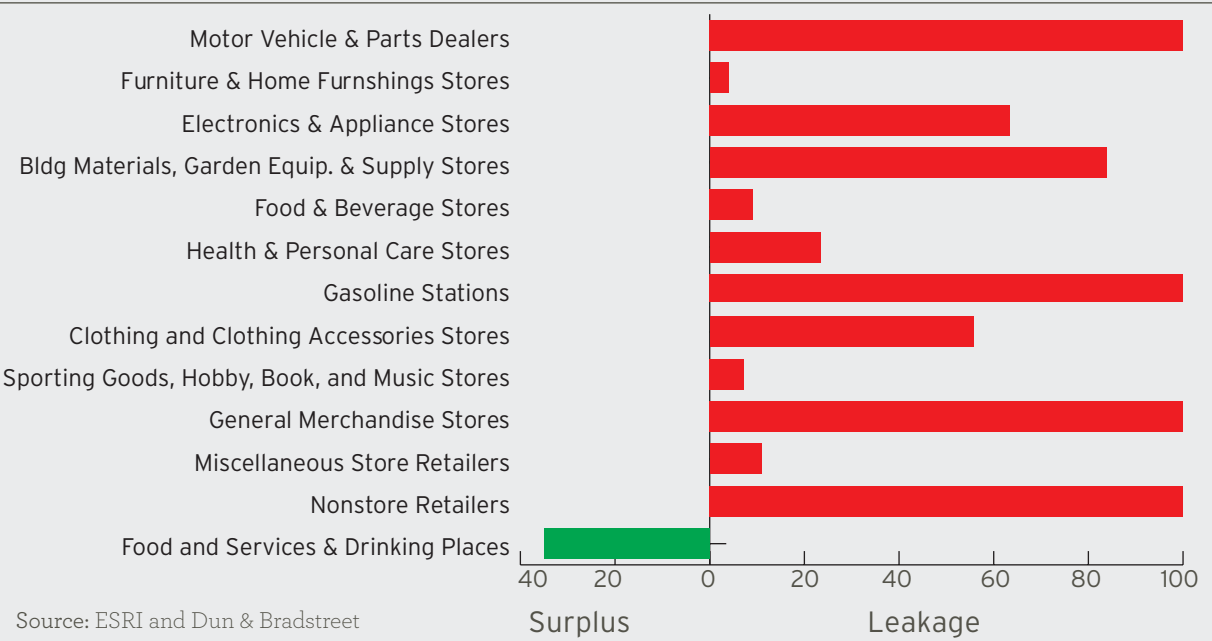
HOUSING OCCUPANCY



*sum of payments for mortgages, real estate taxes; fire, hazard, and flood insurance; utilities; and fuels

Neighborhood Economy

RETAIL SUPPLY AND DEMAND



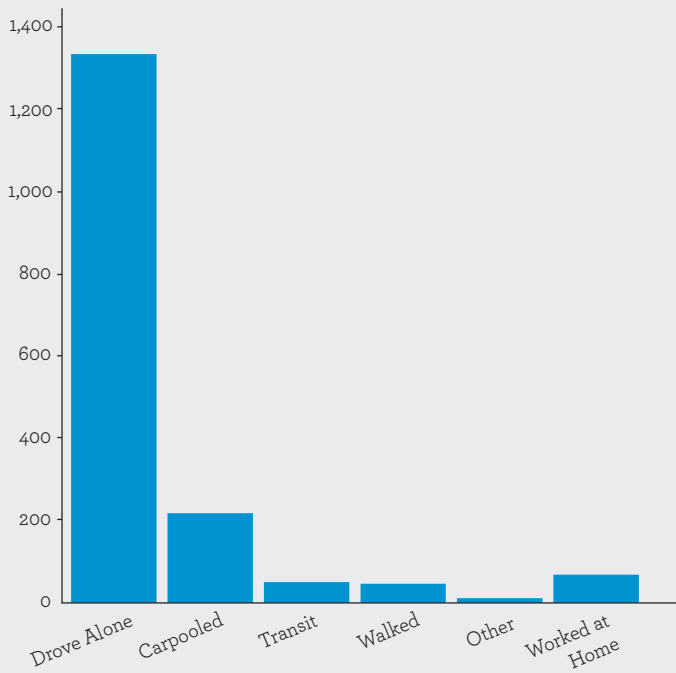
NEIGHBORHOOD ECONOMY

Westside is a residential neighborhood with several commercial and mixed used streets. When looking at the neighborhood economy, the planning team considered the kinds of businesses that exist in the neighborhood compared to kinds of good and services neighborhood residents purchase. The above graph illustrates this comparison for the area north of Southwest Boulevard, west of Broadway, south of I-670, and east of the bluffs. Retail categories in red mean that a majority of neighborhood residents go outside of the neighborhood boundaries for this kind of good or service. Categories in green mean that people from outside of the neighborhood travel to Westside to purchase these goods or services. The data show that Westside residents leave the neighborhood for nearly every category of good or service. This is also evidence that there is demand for these kinds of stores within the neighborhood that is not currently being met. Westside has several restaurant districts on Southwest Boulevard

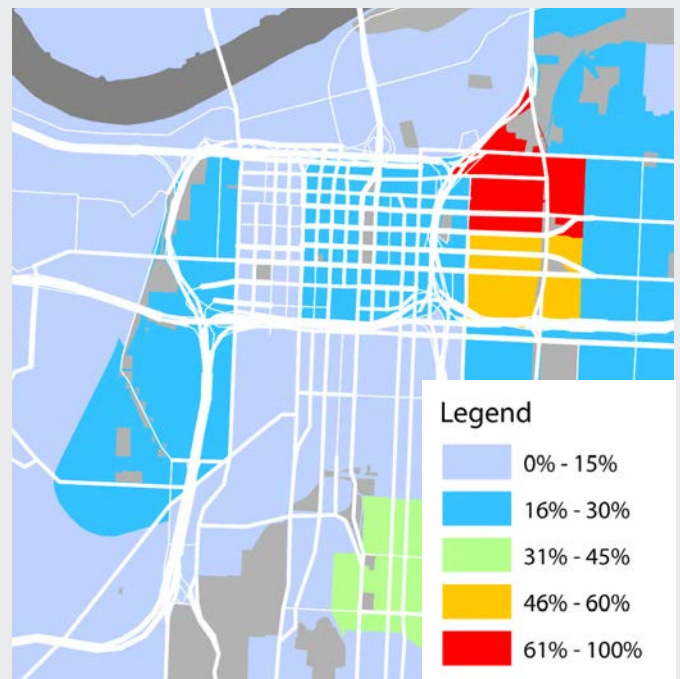
and 17th and Summit Streets, which show up in the data; people from outside of the neighborhood come to Westside to dine out.

Transportation

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK (2011)



ZERO CAR HOUSEHOLDS

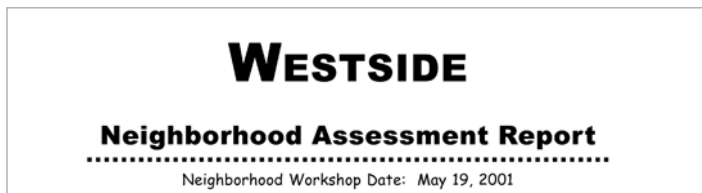


TRANSPORTATION

Residents in the Westside neighborhood use a variety of methods to get around the city. A high majority of workers in the Westside neighborhood drive alone to work, but there are a non-trivial number of walkers and transit users. There are also 16-30% of households that do not have a car. The Westside neighborhood has a higher percentage of households without a car than the Crossroads neighborhood, the Rivermarket neighborhood, or parts of the downtown loop.

Existing Plans and Initiatives

Reconnect Westside builds on existing plans. The following pages highlight the existing plans and initiatives in the neighborhood and their current status. Many of the recommendations in this plan reinforce recommendations in these earlier plans, thus giving them additional support and validation.

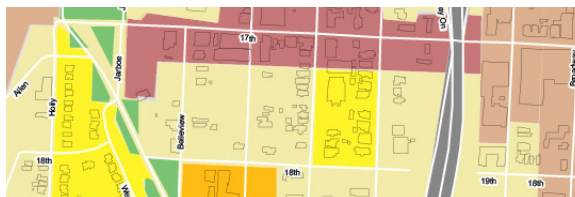


FOCUS WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The FOCUS Westside Neighborhood Plan was developed in 2001 to identify the unique character of the Westside neighborhood. The public participation process identified the needs and concerns for Westside residents and suggested potential areas of improvement.

CURRENT STATUS:

The FOCUS plan is still used by the city to guide decision making, but the more recent Kansas City Greater Downtown Area Plan, which built on the existing plans in the area, takes precedence.



KANSAS CITY GREATER DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN

The Greater Downtown Area Plan includes the Westside neighborhood and is the City's official plan for this area. Land use, development, and infrastructure decisions are guided by this plan. It builds on past plans, such as the FOCUS neighborhood assessment report for Westside.

CURRENT STATUS:

This plan guides planning and development decisions within City Hall for this area.



KCMO NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOUSING SERVICES: SUMMIT STREET ACTION PLAN

The Summit Street Action Plan focuses on housing rehabilitation in areas of most need as determined by the neighborhood. Those homes deemed most in need of funds can apply for municipal grants.

CURRENT STATUS:

Funding is available for home repair in the planning area: Summit Street between 20th Street and West Pennway.



WEST HIGH SWITZER REDEVELOPMENT

The West High Switzer Schools has been largely vacant for several decades. Past development plans that relied on low income housing tax credits have failed to be approved. Kansas City Public Schools has initiated a fresh round of development proposals in August of 2013.

CURRENT STATUS:

Kansas City Public Schools is currently reviewing proposals.



17TH STREET STREETSCAPE PLAN

The 17th Street Streetscape plan includes enhanced sidewalks and lighting underneath the I-35 underpass to increase connectivity across this major barrier in the neighborhood.

CURRENT STATUS:

The 17th Street Streetscape plan is also seeking PIAC funds for additional planning and engineering.

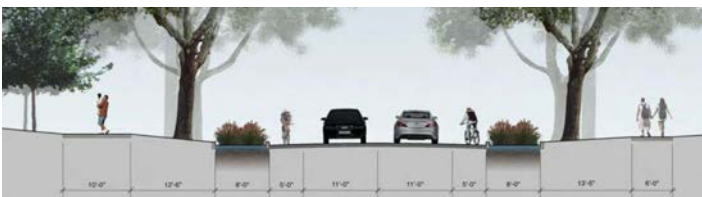


20TH STREET STREETSCAPE PLAN

The 20th Street Streetscape plan is being done in phases; the first phase from McGee to Central has been designed and includes bike lanes, an expanded public realm, and enhanced streetscape.

CURRENT STATUS:

A bid solicitation is scheduled for late winter of 2013 and construction beginning as early as spring of 2014 for Phase I. The City is seeking PIAC funds to start the design of the second phase from Central to West Pennway.



WEST PENNWAY STREETSCAPE PLAN

The West Pennway Streetscape plan is a guiding document for Kansas City Parks and Recreation to make improvements to West Pennway. It includes bike lanes, green infrastructure, and streetscape enhancements.

CURRENT STATUS:

Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department is currently seeking funding through PIAC (Public Improvement Advisory Committee).



PHASE II STREETCAR: SOUTHWEST BOULEVARD

The City of Kansas City, Missouri is seeking to expand its downtown starter line into a full streetcar system. Southwest Boulevard was identified as a route for initial study.

CURRENT STATUS:

The Southwest Corridor was not one of the four recommended routes for Phase II implementation, though the analysis is still under consideration by the City Council.



BIKESHARE EXPANSION

BikeShare has announced an aggressive plan to roll out as many as three dozen more docking stations around the city. Plans include putting one bike station at Hospital Hill, one in the Jazz District, four at the University of Kansas Medical Center, two at South Plaza, four at UMKC, three at Union Hill, two on the Westside, four at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, five in Westport and another five on the Plaza.

CURRENT STATUS:

Currently seeking funding and sponsors for expansion.

PART II: GOALS

The plan goals emerged from community ideas and feedback and are informed by the background research and existing plans.

Goals Overview

The neighborhood goals are organized into five major categories: Housing and Development, Multi-Modal Transportation, Community Building, Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities, and Natural Environment.



Housing and Development

The Westside neighborhood has ample opportunities for infill development. This issue area explores how housing and commercial development can enhance the neighborhood. Related issues include rehabilitation of existing houses and structures, provision of affordable housing, and guarding against displacement.

GOALS:

- Promote diverse housing options and guard against displacement
- Encourage well-designed infill development and renovation of existing buildings
- Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts
- Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair



Multi-Modal Transportation

Multi-modal transportation includes pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and automobiles. This issue looks at enhancing pedestrian safety and comfort and strengthening important connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

GOALS:

- Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars
- Slow and reduce traffic on neighborhood streets
- Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods
- Implement existing streetscape plans
- Improve parking in the neighborhood



Community Building

Community building considers how to increase connections between people. This issue area includes public facilities in the neighborhood, such as parks and trails, public art, libraries, and schools. This issue also considers access to arts and cultural activities for neighborhood residents.

GOALS:

- Improve access to technology
- Provide more indoor and outdoor gathering space
- Strengthen neighborhood identity & tourism
- Support existing community institutions
- Improve safety in the neighborhood



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities

Access to healthy food and neighborhood amenities, such as a pharmacy, hardware store, bank, or salon is critical for a vibrant, walkable neighborhood. This issue explores how additional development can increase access to healthy food and other neighborhood amenities.

GOALS:

- Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs
- Increase healthy food options in the neighborhood
- Support existing local businesses
- Increase neighborhood services



Natural Environment

This issue area addresses air, soil, and water quality as well as the conservation of materials and natural resources. This topic introduces multi-benefit strategies related to land, water, energy, and material stewardship within the unique topography and urban character of the Westside neighborhood.

GOALS:

- Steward land and materials as resources rather than commodities
- Steward water as a precious resource
- Improve air quality

Prioritized Goals

Each issue area has a set of goals that were created based on ideas and feedback from the community. Westside residents prioritized the plan goals during the Fall Festival by voting with marbles in mason jars. The following pages illustrate the results of this exercise. After the festival, the planning team consolidated some goals and added new goals based on the voting and feedback. The parking goal in the multi-modal transportation issue area and the safety goal in the community building issue area were added after the festival.



Westside residents prioritized the plan goals during the Fall Festival.

Housing and Development



Promote diverse housing options and guard against displacement

Continue to develop affordable and market rate housing in Westside. Provide protection from property tax increases for long term homeowners.



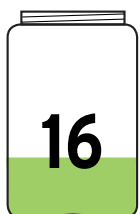
Encourage well-designed infill development and renovation of existing buildings

Encourage owners of vacant land to develop infill housing and commercial uses. Explore strategies to mitigate vacant lots, such as gardens or fences.



Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts

Encourage neighborhood commercial districts and mixed use corridors in the Westside neighborhood.



Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair

Encourage residential property maintenance and give homeowners support to repair their homes.

Multi-Modal Transportation



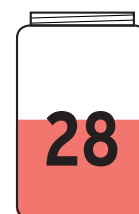
Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars

Invest in bicycle facilities to increase the safety and convenience of bicycling in the Westside neighborhood, invest in pedestrian infrastructure to encourage walking in the Westside neighborhood, and increase transit coverage.



Slow and reduce traffic on neighborhood streets

Use traffic calming and circulation changes to reduce traffic on neighborhood streets and direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity.



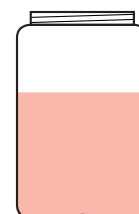
Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods

Enhance sidewalks, lighting, and signage on streets that connect to surrounding neighborhoods. Improve connections within the neighborhood.



Implement existing streetscape plans

Implement the existing streetscape plans, such as the West Pennway, 17th Street, and 20th Street plans.



Improve parking in the neighborhood

Provide parking for new residents while maintaining green, pedestrian oriented environment.

Community Building



Provide more indoor and outdoor gathering space

Create a centralized plaza for activities such as large community events. Create more indoor gathering spaces for community events.



Improve access to technology

Improve access to computers and high speed internet connectivity.



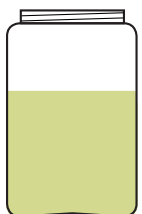
Strengthen neighborhood identity & tourism

Promote Westside neighborhood identity and Hispanic/Latino heritage.



Support existing community institutions

Support existing social, educational, and cultural organizations in the neighborhood.



Improve safety in the neighborhood

Improve real and perceived safety in the neighborhood.

Healthy Food & Neighborhood Services



Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs

Increase effectiveness of health and wellness programs and fill gaps where they exist.



Increase healthy food options in the neighborhood

Improve residents' ability to buy healthy food in the neighborhood.



Support existing local businesses

Help local businesses provide neighborhood needs.



Increase neighborhood services

Promote neighborhood services, such as a pharmacy, hardware store, and bank in the neighborhood.

Natural Environment



Steward land and materials as resources rather than commodities

Reduce use, reuse resources when possible, and recycle products to live lightly on the land.



Steward water as a precious resource

Promote sustainable water usage and low impact development that inspires people and reduces the burden on municipal infrastructure.



Improve air quality

Improve air quality and reduce health problems, such as asthma, associated with air pollution.



Housing and Development Goals

Development of infill housing and commercial uses can create a more cohesive neighborhood and provide desired services, but it can also have negative impacts such as displacement, increased traffic, and parking issues. The following goals aim to balance these impacts. Each goal is advanced by several strategies in multiple categories, as listed below. The strategies are explained in more detail in Part III: Strategies.

Promote diverse housing options and guard against displacement

Continue to develop affordable and market rate housing in Westside. Provide protection from property tax increases for long term homeowners.

STRATEGIES

Housing and Development

- 01 Protect long term homeowners from rapid property tax increases
- 02 Repurpose West High Switzer Complex
- 03 Develop additional affordable housing
- 04 Create incentives to develop vacant lots

Encourage well-designed infill development and renovation of existing buildings

Encourage owners of vacant land to develop infill housing and commercial uses. Explore strategies to mitigate vacant lots, such as gardens or fences.

STRATEGIES

Housing and Development

- 02 Repurpose West High Switzer Complex
- 03 Develop additional affordable housing
- 04 Create incentives to develop vacant lots

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 18 Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities

Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts

Encourage neighborhood commercial districts and mixed use corridors in the Westside neighborhood.

STRATEGIES

Housing and Development

- 04 Create incentives to develop vacant lots

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 06 Direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity
- 07 Invest in bicycle facilities
- 08 Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard

Community Building

- 15 Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 17 Provide business owners access to marketing resources, financing, and retail consultation
- 18 Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities

Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair

Encourage residential property maintenance and give homeowners support to repair their homes.

STRATEGIES

Housing and Development

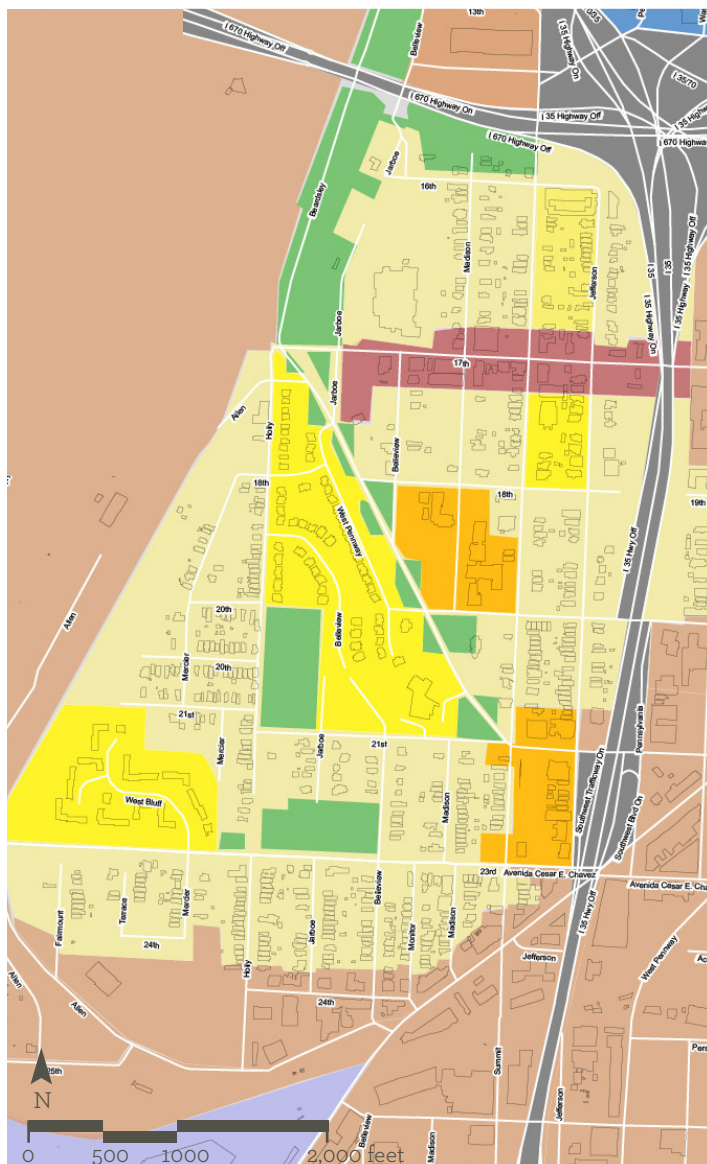
- 01 Protect long term homeowners from rapid property tax increases
- 05 Connect residents to existing resources

Community Building

- 11 Establish Westside Neighborhood Association

Natural Environment

- 22 Encourage water efficiency and stormwater management for homeowners and businesses
- 25 Encourage energy efficiency



Future Land Use Map

LEGEND:

- Residential Low
- Residential Med.
- Residential Med. High
- Downtown Residential
- Downtown Mixed Use
- Mixed Use Neighborhood
- Downtown Core
- Industrial
- Parks
- Open Space
- R.O.W.

Source: Greater Downtown
Area Plan

Performance Measures

NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS

1,507

Source: ACS 2011

Westside should aim to increase housing units in order to increase density and population. At its peak, Westside had over 4,000 housing units.

NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS

781

Source: ACS 2011

Number of units affordable for a family of four. Westside should aim to increase affordable housing units as it develops. (Defined as 30% of household income spent on housing where household income is 80% of the HUD Area Median Income).

PERCENT HISPANIC/LATINO

66%

Source: ACS 2011

A changing ethnicity mix may be associated with gentrification. Westside should aim to keep a stable mix of ethnicities in the neighborhood in order to maintain the diversity that neighborhood residents value.



Multi-Modal Transportation Goals

Multi-modal transportation considers pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and automobiles. The adjacent map illustrates existing bike facilities, transit stops and lines, important connections, and trail connections. Each goal is advanced by several strategies in multiple categories, as listed below. The strategies are explained in more detail in Part III: Strategies.

Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars

Invest in bicycle facilities to increase the safety and convenience of bicycling in the Westside neighborhood, invest in pedestrian infrastructure to encourage walking in the Westside neighborhood, and increase transit coverage in the neighborhood.

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 07 Invest in bicycle facilities
- 08 Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard
- 09 Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections

Community Building

- 15 Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities

Natural Environment

- 23 Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm

Slow and reduce traffic on neighborhood streets

Use traffic calming and circulation changes to reduce traffic on neighborhood streets and direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity such as 17th Street, 20th Street, Cesar Chavez, and West Pennway.

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 06 Direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity

Natural Environment

- 23 Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm

Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods

Enhance sidewalks, lighting, and signage on streets that connect to surrounding neighborhoods, such as Beardsley, 17th street, 20th street, Cesar Chavez, and Southwest Boulevard. Improve connections within the neighborhood by improving sidewalks, converting one ways, and reconnecting the street grid

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 07 Invest in bicycle facilities
- 08 Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard
- 09 Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections
- 10 Improve connections between West Bluffs and the rest of the neighborhood

Implement existing streetscape plans

Implement the existing streetscape plans, such as the West Pennway, 17th Street, and 20th Street plans.

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 07 Invest in bicycle facilities and pedestrian infrastructure
- 09 Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections

Natural Environment

- 23 Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm

Improve parking in the neighborhood

Provide parking for new residents while maintaining green, pedestrian oriented environment.

STRATEGIES

Housing and Development

02 Repurpose West High Switzer Complex

Multi-Modal Transportation

06 Direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity

Performance Measures

TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

130

Source: KCATA

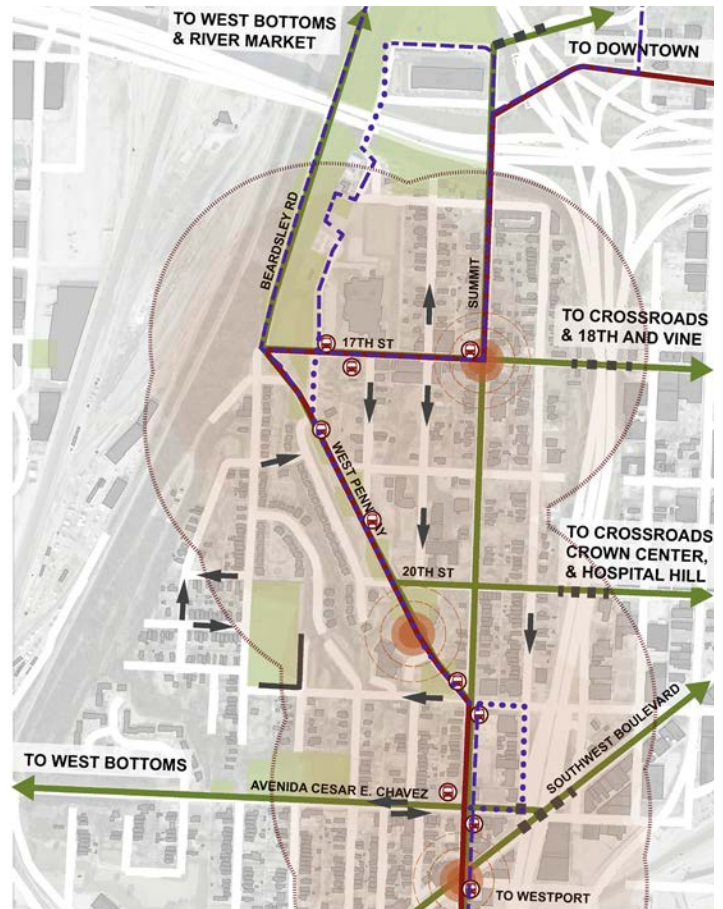
Total average daily weekday boardings for transit stops from Summit and Southwest Boulevard to Summit and 17th Street. (Data from 2013, third quarter)

TRANSIT, BIKE, WALK, WORKING FROM HOME

10.2%




Source: ACS 2011

As the neighborhood continues to make walking, biking, and transit investments, the percentage of residents getting to work in modes other than a car should increase.



Connectivity Map

LEGEND:

-  Bus Stops
-  Bus Route
-  5 Min Walk from Bus Stops
-  One Way Streets
-  Steep Slopes
-  Pedestrian Barrier
-  Signed Bike Route
-  Pedestrian/Bike Trail
-  Primary Connection Streets
-  Neighborhood Activity Centers
-  Parks



Community Building Goals

As development occurs and more people move to the neighborhood, it is important to consider the impact on public facilities, such as parks, trails, libraries, and schools. Some facilities, such as parks, may improve with more residents. Parks become safer as more people use them and provide passive surveillance. Other facilities, such as the library, may become overcrowded. This issue area also considers public art and access to art and cultural events and activities. The adjacent map highlights existing public facilities and neighborhood amenities. Each goal is advanced by several strategies in multiple categories, as listed below. The strategies are explained in more detail in Part III: Strategies.

Provide more indoor and outdoor gathering space

Create a centralized plaza for activities such as large community events. Create more indoor gathering spaces for community events.

STRATEGIES

Community Building

- 13 Expand access to computers and digital literacy classes
- 16 Large outdoor space for neighborhood-wide events

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 19 Promote urban gardening

Natural Environment

- 23 Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm

Strengthen neighborhood identity & tourism

Promote Westside neighborhood identity and Hispanic/Latino heritage.

STRATEGIES

Community Building

- 11 Establish Westside Neighborhood Association
- 12 Establish Westside Stakeholder Alliance
- 15 Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities
- 16 Large outdoor space for neighborhood-wide events

Improve access to technology

Improve access to computers and high speed internet connectivity.

STRATEGIES

Community Building

- 13 Expand access to computers and digital literacy classes
- 14 Work with non-profits to get low-cost internet into homes

Support existing community institutions

Support existing social, educational, and cultural organizations in the neighborhood.

STRATEGIES

Community Building

- 12 Establish Westside Stakeholder Alliance
- 13 Expand access to computers and digital literacy classes
- 15 Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities
- 16 Large outdoor space for neighborhood-wide events

Improve safety in the neighborhood

Improve real and perceived safety in the neighborhood.

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 09 Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections

Community Building

- 11 Establish Westside Neighborhood Association

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 18 Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities

Performance Measures

VIOLENT CRIME RATE

(CRIMES PER 1,000 RESIDENTS)

16.71

Source: neighborhoodscout.com

Violent crimes are committed per 1,000 people in the Westside neighborhood, compared to 11.95 in Kansas City and 4.47 in Missouri. As density increases, violent crime should decrease due to more eyes on the street.

PROPERTY CRIME RATE

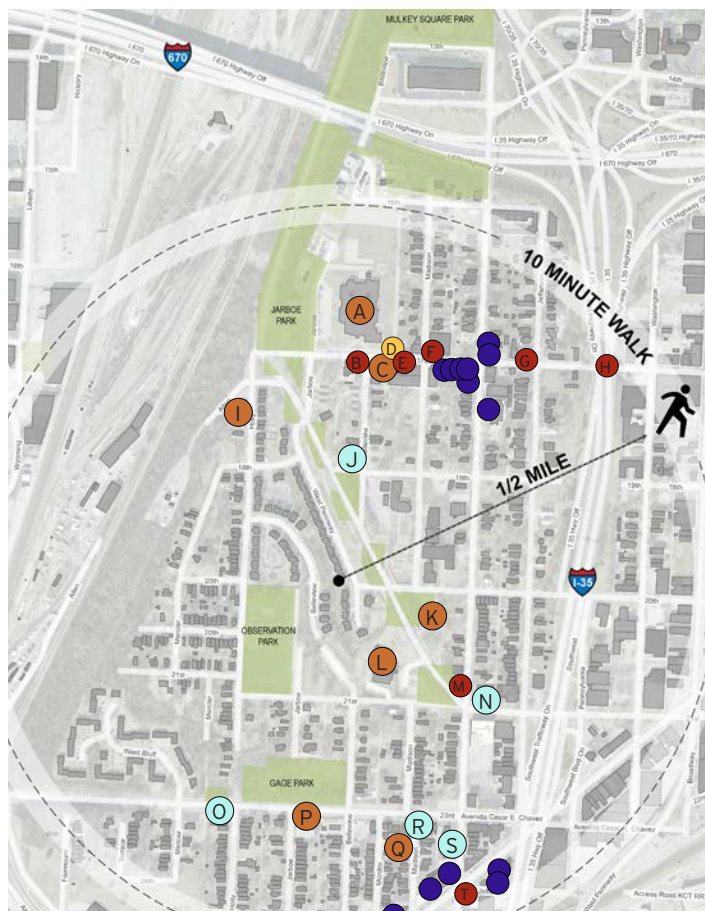
(CRIMES PER 1,000 RESIDENTS)

84.49

Source: neighborhoodscout.com

Property crimes committed per 1,000 people in the Westside neighborhood, compared to 55.51 in Kansas City and 33.09 in Missouri. As density increases, property crime should decrease due to more eyes on the street.

Community Amenity Map



LEGEND:

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Parks |  Restaurants |
|  Community Facilities |  Art installations |
|  Churches |  Community events |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| A. Primitivo Garcia Elementary | L. Tony Aguirre Community Center |
| B. Art: Garden Sculpture | M. Art: Bus Stop |
| C. Mattie Rhodes Art Center | N. Rime Buddhist Center & Tibetan Institute |
| D. Day of the Dead Community Festival | O. Alta Vista Christian Church |
| E. Art: Alley Murals | P. Guadalupe Center |
| F. Art: "The Calico Beard" Wall Mural | Q. Our Lady Guadalupe School |
| G. Art: Garden Sculpture | R. OLG Shrine Association |
| H. Art: Hwy. Underpass Mural | S. Primera Iglesia Bautista Westside |
| I. Alta Vista High School | T. Westside Fountain |
| J. Greenwood Baptist Church | |
| K. Ruiz Public Library | |



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities Goals

Access to neighborhood amenities is a critical component of neighborhood livability. Walkable access to a supermarket, farmers' market, hardware store, pharmacy, bank, childcare, laundry, gym/exercise, and hair care/salon will increase the vitality of the Westside neighborhood. Access to healthy food is of particular importance as our cities deal with the obesity crisis and other health issues related to food deserts. Each goal is advanced by several strategies in multiple categories, as listed below. The strategies are explained in more detail in Part III: Strategies.

Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs

Increase effectiveness of health and wellness programs and fill gaps where they exist.

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 10 Improve connections between West Bluffs and the rest of the neighborhood

Community Building

- 15 Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 19 Promote urban gardening
- 20 Increase availability of healthy food to those in need
- 21 Provide shuttle service to River Market on weekends

Support existing local businesses

Help local businesses provide neighborhood needs.

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 07 Invest in bicycle facilities
- 08 Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard

Community Building

- 12 Establish Westside Stakeholder Alliance

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 17 Provide business owners access to marketing resources, financing, and retail consultation

Increase healthy food options in the neighborhood

Improve residents' ability to buy healthy food in the neighborhood.

STRATEGIES

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 17 Provide business owners access to marketing resources, financing, and retail consultation
- 18 Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities
- 19 Promote urban gardening
- 20 Increase availability of healthy food to those in need
- 21 Provide shuttle service to River Market on weekends

Increase neighborhood services

Promote neighborhood services, such as a pharmacy, hardware store, and bank in the neighborhood.

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 08 Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard

Community Building

- 13 Expand access to computers and digital literacy classes

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 17 Provide business owners access to marketing resources, financing, and retail consultation
- 18 Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities
- 20 Increase availability of healthy food to those in need

Regional Grocery Options



Performance Measures

NUMBER OF GROCERY STORES IN 64108 ZIP CODE

4

Source: Census Zip Code
Business Patterns

The 64108 zip code, which includes Westside and the Crossroads, includes three grocery stores with less than 10 employees and one grocery store with 20-49 employees.

NUMBER OF PHARMACIES IN 64108 ZIP CODE

4

Source: Census Zip Code
Business Patterns

The 64108 zip code includes four pharmacies and drug stores.

Existing Neighborhood Services



NUMBER OF BANKS IN 64108 ZIP CODE

7

Source: Census Zip Code
Business Patterns

The 64108 zip code includes seven banks (including commercial banking and credit unions).

NUMBER OF HARDWARE STORES IN 64108 ZIP CODE

2

Source: Census Zip Code
Business Patterns

The 64108 zip code includes two hardware stores.



Natural Environment

This issue area addresses air, soil, and water quality as well as the conservation of materials and natural resources. Water, soil, and air are natural systems that work together to support life. The goals presented in this section aim at improving the vitality of these natural systems and the quality of life within the neighborhood. Each goal is advanced by several strategies in multiple categories, as listed below. The strategies are explained in more detail in Part III: Strategies.

Steward land and materials as resources rather than a commodity

Reduce, reuse resources when possible, and recycle products to live lightly on the land.

STRATEGIES

Natural Environment

- 24 Improve local recycling and material reuse programs

Improve air quality

Improve air quality and reduce health problems, such as asthma, associated with air pollution

STRATEGIES

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 07 Invest in bicycle facilities
- 08 Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard
- 09 Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections

Natural Environment

- 25 Encourage energy efficiency

Steward water as a precious resource

Promote sustainable water usage and low impact development that inspires people and enhances the human condition

STRATEGIES

Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services

- 19 Promote urban gardening

Natural Environment

- 22 Encourage water efficiency and stormwater management for homeowners and businesses
- 23 Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm

Performance Measures

NUMBER OF 8 HOUR PERIODS WHERE OZONE CONCENTRATIONS EXCEED 75 PPB (3 YEAR AVERAGE)

15

Source: MARC AIRQ

Although a regional measure, the Westside neighborhood can do its part to reduce the number of ozone days in the city.

PERCENT OF WATERWAYS IN THE TEMPERATE PLAINS ECOREGION IN POOR HEALTH

54.5%

Source: EPA

The health of our waterways is another regional measure that Westside can help improve. According to the EPA, “Biological condition is the most comprehensive indicator of water body health: when the biology of a stream is healthy, the chemical and physical components of the stream are also typically in good condition.”

Source: http://water.epa.gov/type/rs/monitoring/riverssurvey/upload/NRSA0809_Report_Final_508Compliant_130228.pdf

PART III: STRATEGIES

The plan strategies are designed to advance the goals and focus on near term, implementable strategies. The strategies are driven by community ideas and stakeholder feedback.

Strategies Overview

The following sections include strategies to advance the neighborhood goals. The strategies are organized by the five issue areas, but many of the strategies advance goals in multiple issues areas. Each strategy sheet includes a description of the strategy, the approximate time frame for implementation, relative costs, and other information, such as champions, resource opportunities, and demonstrated public support.

TIME FRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The time frame for implementation section estimates the relative time frame before a certain strategy could be completed. The categories include near term (1-2 years), mid term (3-4 years), and long term (5+ years).

COSTS

The strategies include a cost sign from one to four dollar signs (\$ - \$\$\$\$) to compare approximate costs of implementing the strategy. A policy change is inexpensive to implement and would receive a single dollar sign (\$), a new program might receive two dollar signs (\$\$), a development project three dollar signs (\$\$\$), and an infrastructure project would likely receive four dollar signs (\$\$\$\$)

CHAMPIONS

The champions section highlights the responsible partners for implementing the strategy and their role.

LOCATION(S)

If a solution is implemented in a specific location or locations, it is indicated in this section.

PUBLIC SUPPORT

This section includes quotes that demonstrate public support for the strategy.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Funding opportunities highlight any financial resources to implement the strategy

QUICK WINS

The quick wins section highlights any low hanging fruit or first steps the champions can take to implement the strategy.

Strategies

			Time Frame	Costs
Housing and Development	01	Protect long term homeowners from rapid property tax increases	Near	\$
	02	Repurpose West High Switzer complex	Near	\$\$\$
	03	Develop additional affordable housing	On-going	\$\$\$
	04	Creative incentives to develop vacant lots	Mid	\$
	05	Connect residents to existing resources	Near	\$
Multi-Modal Transportation	06	Direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity	Mid	\$\$\$
	07	Invest in bicycle facilities	Near-Long	\$-\$\$\$\$
	08	Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard	Long	\$\$\$\$
	09	Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections	Mid	\$\$\$
	10	Improve connections between West Bluffs and the rest of the neighborhood	Long	\$\$\$
Community Building	11	Establish Westside Neighborhood Association	Near	\$
	12	Establish Westside Stakeholder Alliance	Near	\$
	13	Expand access to computers and digital literacy classes	Near	\$\$\$
	14	Work with non-profits to get low-cost internet into homes	Near	\$
	15	Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities	Near	\$
	16	Large outdoor space for neighborhood-wide events	Mid	\$\$\$\$
Healthy Food and Neighborhood Services	17	Provide business owners access to marketing resources, financing, and retail consultation	Near	\$
	18	Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities	Long	\$
	19	Promote urban gardening	Near	\$
	20	Increase availability of healthy food to those in need	Near	\$
	21	Provide shuttle service to River Market on weekends	Near	\$
Natural Environment	22	Encourage water efficiency and stormwater management for homeowners and businesses	Mid	\$
	23	Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm	Mid	\$\$\$\$
	24	Improve local recycling and material reuse programs	Near	\$
	25	Encourage energy efficiency	Near	\$

Goals

[illegible]



Housing and Development

Strategies

- 01 Protect long term homeowners from rapid property tax increases
- 02 Repurpose West High Switzer complex
- 03 Develop additional affordable housing
- 04 Create incentives to develop vacant lots
- 05 Connect homeowners with resources for home repair and retrofits

STRATEGY 01

Protect long term homeowners from rapid property tax increases

Description

Displacement is a major concern for many Westside residents. As newcomers move to the neighborhood and new development continues to raise property values, there is a concern that existing homeowners will not be able to afford the increased property taxes, and will be priced out of the neighborhood. This would harm the neighborhood by reducing diversity, disrupting the social fabric of the neighborhood, and cause hardship to long term residents. It is in the City's and the neighborhood's best interests to protect the homeowners most vulnerable to displacement.

One solution is to create a tax abatement plan that protects long term homeowners from rapid increases in property taxes. There are a number of policies that could protect homeowners for a period of 10 to 25 years. Missouri Statute 353 allows the creation of a long term tax abatement plan that would freeze property taxes for 25 years and would be eligible for single family houses. The eligibility could be limited to long term homeowners (for example, those who have lived in their house 10+ years) that live in their house as a primary residence. Missouri Statute 353 also enables the use of eminent domain, which should be explicitly forbidden in this program. If Westside Housing Organization leads the program, they will need to set up an urban redevelopment corporation. Alternatively, the Kansas City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) already has an operational urban redevelopment corporation that could fulfill this requirement. Next, a blight study would have to be performed in the neighborhood. Finally, Westside Housing Organization or the EDC would work with eligible property owners to apply the tax abatement to their property. The property owner would need to make a \$5,000 improvement to the property in order to qualify for the tax abatement. If the use of the property changes (for example, if the owner decides to sell his or her house) then the tax abatement would be lost. The tax abatement would last for 25 years.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Housing and Development:

- Promote diverse housing options and guard against displacement
- Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair



The Westside neighborhood is characterized by an abundance of single family homes, many of which have been owned for generations by a single family.

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



- Blight Assessment Study ~ \$30,000
- Establishment of Urban Redevelopment Corp.
- Creation of Tax Abatement Plan
- Staff Capacity to Manage Program

Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: lead effort, potentially become Urban Redevelopment Corp.
- Kansas City Economic Development Commission
Role: Technical support
- City of Kansas City, MO
Role: Support and coordination
- Kansas City Public Schools
Role: Support

CASE STUDY: PHILADELPHIA GENTRIFICATION PROTECTION PLAN

In 2013, Philadelphia city council passed two major bills designed to protect residents city wide from rapid increase in property taxes. (120340-AAAA06 and 130417-A02) Under this program long term owner occupants who are under a certain income threshold and who have a property tax assessment that is over 3 times what it was the previous year qualify to have their property taxes frozen at 300% of their previous rate for 10 years.

Public Support

"As a Westside homeowner I would fear the effects that would come with ... increased value, leading to increased taxes, which have already risen thanks to the gentrification in the area."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"We really need to guard against displacement."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"We need to address the housing needs of long time residents."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"How are current homeowners assured of not losing their homes due to tax increase or other?"

SURVEY RESPONSE

CASE STUDY: CROSSROAD ARTS PIEA TAX ABATEMENT PLAN

In 2007, Kansas City's Planned Industrial Expansion Authority approved a 10 year tax abatement for buildings in the Crossroads where half the space is used for art-related uses. This is an example of the City using use-specific tax abatement to protect a use that is in the public interest: art. Likewise, the Westside neighborhood tax abatement plan would protect a vulnerable use that advances the public good: diversity.

STRATEGY 02

Repurpose West High Switzer complex

Description

The West High Switzer School complex has been underutilized for decades and is blighting the neighborhood. Redeveloping this property is a high priority of the neighborhood. The buildings were constructed between 1899 and 1962 and finally closed in 1981. There have been several proposals to redevelop the school with affordable housing, most notably in 2010 and 2012, but both proposals were abandoned after Missouri Housing Development Commission denied the low income housing tax credits. In August 2013, Kansas City Public Schools began evaluating another round of proposals for redeveloping the schools.

The community expressed desire to see this building redeveloped with a variety of uses. There was support for both affordable and market rate housing units. Residents support creating community space within the building, such as more library space, more computer access, fitness facilities, and services such as a small grocery. There was also support for the development being a “green,” energy efficient building. Parking and traffic congestion were concerns for some residents.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Housing and Development:

- Promote diverse housing options and guard against displacement
- Encourage well-designed infill development and renovation of existing buildings



Multi-Modal Transportation:

- Improve parking in the neighborhood



Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- Kansas City Public Schools
Role: Select developer
- Private Development Team
Role: Lead redevelopment of school with community input

Funding Opportunities

- Historic Tax Credits
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits (Based on the high cost of redeveloping this building, this option is not likely to be feasible)
- Private Financing

CASE STUDY: BANCROFT SCHOOL REPURPOSING

The Make It Right Foundation, Dalmark, and BNIM repurposed a school in the Manheim Park neighborhood of Kansas City Missouri. The school had been vacant since 1999. The development team held several public meetings in order to understand the community's priorities for the building, and incorporated community uses on the site and the building. The project included renovation of the historic school building plus new construction.



BEFORE: Interior of Bancroft School before renovation (Credit: K. Cadena)



AFTER: Interior of apartment after renovation (Credit: C. Jackson)

Community Ideas for Repurposing of West High Switzer Complex

"We need a bigger library with more computer access. We need an affordable green grocer. We need a bigger fitness center."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Parking could be accommodated, but I would really love to see us keep the community garden that some have worked very hard to create at West Pennway and 20th. The school itself could be used for market rate housing with some single family units along Bellevue."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"I find that the use of the facility for art and cultural events/space would be beneficial to the neighborhood."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Need for upscale multi-family apartment housing to attract both empty nesters and families that prefer apartment living."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Renovating the space into a high tech location for emerging businesses and entrepreneurs that desire access to this cutting edge resource could very well create a financially and socially viable use for the property."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Would be a great place for business incubators."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Could this complex be used for a charter school? Could this site be used as an incubator of sorts, to rent out space to artists or to create community space for studios such as woodworking, screen printing, etc.?"

SURVEY RESPONSE

"A community proscenium theatre with a Hispanic base (courtesy of Mattie Rhodes) to start from, bilingual theatre based on Latin American entertainment customs but branching out from that to be a real community center, not private but with the intention from the get go of being a sizeable, roomy place for many kinds of community activities and meetings."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"The complex is a great opportunity to get a mixed-use development in the area, with apartments, some retail, and maybe room for a charter school."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"I know there's a big pool somewhere in there - perhaps it could be spiffed up?"

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Mixed use commercial, residential, nonprofit, whatever seems like a good fit!"

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Grocery store, dry cleaners, additional restaurants, cultural arts district and affordable housing."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Efficient and enviro, Mixed-income, various sized apartments and condos (renters and owners), stormwater remediation-detention. Plus, a few more trees."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Mixed income condos and apartments."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Senior housing, market rate, high end, folks would could walk, bike to work Downtown, Union Hill."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Meeting space for non profit groups might be a possibility."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Park area and mixed-use development: affordable housing and some retail space."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"The traffic pattern needs to flow around, not down, Madison. In fact, a cul-de-sac, or some other option that would force traffic to enter on West Pennway is something I would be very interested in."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Grocery store, coffee shop, retail outlet. Condos/Lofts about them."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Do spacious living units with community amenities (library, swimming, auditorium) in the buildings East of Madison. Do assisted living in Switzer Annex. Subdivide the dirt to the West of Switzer Annex to create single family parcels for sale (or single family homes for sale)."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Mattie Rhodes could move their Jefferson offices over and expand with some classrooms. KCAI South campus & resource center, with studio spaces?, A spot for Communiversity-type classes."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Use the facility for classroom training for education of young and older adults."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"the exercise club for both young and old. GED program available for any westsiders, this program is not offered anywhere in the westside."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Quality, middle-priced housing would work well. It would provide a welcome boost to the population downtown. A convenience store would also meet needs. A few small retail storefronts would be nice too. A community "living room" like a well designed library would be fantastic."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Housing could be a use particularly if there was retail or other businesses on the lower levels."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Large open spaces are hard to come by in the city and if we pave over them all for parking lots there will be nothing to drive to and park... Please turn the asphalt area into a playground or something that benefits the community."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Grocery store of some sort, coffee shop/bakery with ample meeting/gathering space, affordable multi-family housing, condos, fitness facility (offering cultural and affordable dance, yoga, martial arts, etc.), rentable event space, office space for non-profit organizations that could offer direct services to the community."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Bigger community center for kids, not a work out facility for teenagers and adults. Charter school."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"A nice mix of housing for seniors, people wanting to give up the responsibilities of a house for an affordable apartment, and a section for young adults."

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 03

Develop additional affordable housing

Description

There are two community concerns related to gentrification in the Westside neighborhood: that existing homeowners will be displaced from their houses due to property tax increases and that moderate and low income people will not be able to find a place to live in the Westside neighborhood in the future. While a tax abatement program is a potential solution to the displacement issue, continuing to develop affordable housing is a potential solution to the second concern. Continuing to develop affordable housing will ensure that the Westside neighborhood remains a mixed income neighborhood.

This solution supports the continued operation of Community Development Corporations (CDC) and the use of Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) to develop additional for-sale and rental affordable housing in the Westside neighborhood. Westside Housing Organization (WHO) is a nonprofit, community based organization that develops both for-sale and rental affordable housing in the neighborhood. As a Community Development Corporation, WHO is able to construct and rehab housing units and sell at an affordable price. As property values increase in the neighborhood, it will become more difficult for WHO to develop for-sale housing, and Low Income Housing Tax Credits may become the best solution for providing affordable housing units in the neighborhood.

The majority of rental affordable housing in the United States is developed using Low Income Housing Tax Credits. These credits provide developers with up-front money to cover a portion of the development costs in exchange for setting aside a percentage of the housing units for low income renters. These units must remain affordable units for a minimum of 15 years and usually remain affordable for 30 years. People who make up

to 60% of the median income in the area qualify for the units. For Kansas City in 2013, this is \$39,900 for an individual, \$45,600 for a two member household, \$51,300 for a three member household, and \$56,950 for a four member household. Low Income Housing Tax Credits are awarded by the Missouri Housing and Development Commission on a state-wide competitive basis.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Housing and Development:

- Promote diverse housing options and guard against displacement
- Encourage well-designed infill development and renovation of existing buildings

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



- Acquiring land
- Construction
- Management of rental units

Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Lead developer
- Private Developers
Role: Incorporate affordable units into developments

Funding Opportunities

- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Rent
- Profit from sale of property
- Grants & Below Market Rate Interest loans
- Private Financing



In addition to rental housing, Westside Housing Organization develops for-sale affordable housing by constructing new infill houses and rehabbing existing houses.

Public Support

"We need good quality housing and affordable for older individuals, young couples, and singles looking to start out in an established neighborhood."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"We need more affordable housing for families."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"More variety of income housing that attracts young families and allows families to stay in the area, not high income properties with prospectors trying to change the face and ethnicity of the area."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"The more different kinds of housing, culture, race, and income we can build into the neighborhood, the more integrated the community becomes."

SURVEY RESPONSE



Villa Del Sol Apartments is an example of affordable rental housing developed with Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

STRATEGY 04

Create incentives to develop vacant lots

Description

The Westside neighborhood has an abundance of vacant residential lots. This harms the neighborhood fabric, creates challenges for walkability, safety, and results in a lower neighborhood population. Some landowners are speculating and holding their lots until more of the neighborhood develops. This is slowing the revitalization of the neighborhood.

One potential mechanism to encourage development of lots is to create a higher tax rate for vacant lots. This could be accomplished by establishing a neighborhood improvement district (NID) or community improvement district (CID) and establishing tax rates by land use. It would be possible to create a higher tax rate for vacant lots and then use the revenue to landscape the public realm around the vacant lots and fund improvements of streets, sidewalks, crosswalks, and other public realm infrastructure. A NID can be used for public physical improvements only, whereas a CID can also pay for services, such as security personnel and trash collection. These kinds of districts would improve the neighborhood while providing an incentive for landowners to develop their property rather than allow it to sit vacant.

Another solution is for Westside Housing Organization or other entity to purchase tax delinquent lots in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of speculators. This will help ensure vacant and underutilized lots are managed in a way that benefits the neighborhood.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Housing and Development:

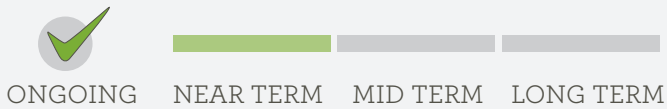
- Promote diverse housing options and guard against displacement
- Encourage well-designed infill development and renovation of existing buildings
- Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts



Redevelopment and Infill Opportunities Map

The Westside neighborhood has an abundance of vacant property that could be redeveloped. This map highlights redevelopment and infill opportunities in orange.

Time Frame for Implementation



Costs



- Study to create NID/CID

Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Lead effort
- Homeowners and Private Land Owners
Role: Support effort

Public Support

"I would like to see the housing stock continue the trend of general improvement via renovation and replacement."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"To have the retail everyone says they want, we have to have the density."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"The more people the better - it means we would have a larger catchment to get more daily needs stores in, instead of just boutiquey stuff."

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 05

Connect homeowners with resources for home repair and retrofits

Description

The prevalence of poorly maintained homes is a concern of many living in the Westside neighborhood. Residents do not wish to call code enforcement on their neighbors because they do not want to create a burden for neighbors who may be struggling. There is support for providing support and resources to these neighbors to enable them to better maintain their homes. Often, the owners of these homes are eligible for some kind of home repair program. This strategy is about better informing residents of these resources and overcoming barriers that may prevent residents from utilizing these resources.

LOCAL NONPROFITS MANAGE HOME REPAIR FUNDS

Two of the most commonly cited barriers are language and trust. City officials may not have the capacity to communicate opportunities in multiple languages, and residents may not trust an official at City Hall that is not seen as part of the neighborhood community. Local nonprofits can overcome these barriers by being part of the neighborhood, cultivating personal relationships, and understanding the language barriers that exist. For example, Westside Housing Organization manages home repair funds, and they have an office in the neighborhood where residents can walk in and speak to someone who understands their needs.

RESOURCE WEBSITE

Organizations active in the neighborhood often have websites and list their own programs on the website, causing a resident looking for resources to visit multiple websites in order to find their information they are looking for. A website with a comprehensive list of programs and services in both English and Spanish would help mitigate this program.

SUPPORT WESTSIDE CAN CENTER RESOURCE AND EDUCATION CENTER

Westside CAN Center operates as a resource and education center. They distribute information about programs available to people who live and work in the Westside neighborhood. They provide a valuable service that should be supported.

Goals



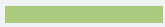
Housing and Development:

- Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair

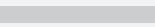
Time Frame for Implementation



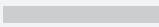
ONGOING



NEAR TERM



MID TERM



LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
- Westside CAN Center
- Guadalupe Center
- City of Kansas City, Missouri: Neighborhood and Housing Services

Funding Opportunities

- Minor Home Repair Funds
- Home improvement assistance through Westside Housing Organization: <http://www.westsidehousing.org/homeimprovement.htm>



Multi-Modal Transportation

Strategies

- 06 Direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity
- 07 Invest in bicycle facilities
- 08 Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard
- 09 Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections
- 10 Improve connections between West Bluffs and the rest of the neighborhood

STRATEGY 06

Direct traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity

Description

As the population continues to increase in the Westside neighborhood, traffic will also increase. Westside residents value their quiet, neighborhood streets. This solution is about directing traffic to mixed use streets and streets with greater capacity such as West Pennway, 17th Streets, 20th Street and Cesar Chavez by traffic calming measures on neighborhood streets, intersection and signage improvements, thoughtful reconsideration of one way streets, and other strategies. 17th Street and Cesar Chavez are two east-west connectors with businesses that would benefit from increased traffic. West Pennway is a Boulevard with the capacity to handle increased traffic. The West High Switzer Complex should be configured to direct the majority of its traffic onto West Pennway.

All streets within the Westside neighborhood should be designed as complete streets; the goal is not to divert all traffic onto collectors and establish a suburban traffic hierarchy. Rather, the purpose of this solution is to slow traffic on smaller residential neighborhood streets and direct traffic to commercial and high capacity areas where retailers and other businesses will benefit from the traffic. All streets in Westside should accommodate cars, pedestrians, and cyclists.

TRAFFIC CALMING

The neighborhood identified speeding traffic on Summit Street as a major concern. Traffic calming strategies can slow traffic and encourage traffic to redirect to other streets, such as West Pennway. Potential traffic calming measures on Summit include speed humps, speed tables, raised crosswalks, traffic circles, neckdowns, center island narrowing, curb extensions/bumpouts.

RECONSIDER ONE WAYS

The Westside neighborhood has many one way streets. The advantages of one ways are that there is more space for resident parking and it can prevent traffic from taking a shortcut through the neighborhood. On the other

hand, one way streets can be confusing, frustrating, and inconvenient for visitors and residents. As West High Switzer is redeveloped, the current configuration of one way streets should be reconsidered. Madison in particular may work better as a two way street between 20th and 18th to allow future residents of West High Switzer to access parking. Keeping Madison a one way between 17th and 18th would protect the neighborhood character of this street and prevent West High Switzer residents from using it to access parking.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Multi-Modal Transportation:

- Slow and reduce traffic on neighborhood streets
- Improve parking in the neighborhood



Housing and Development:

- Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- City of Kansas City, Missouri: Planning and Development Department, Public Works Department
- Private Developers

Funding Opportunities

- Public Private Partnership with West High Switzer Developer and the City of KCMO
- Capital Improvement Program
- PIAC

Public Support

"the school sits partially on a one way street, which will not be able to sustain the type of traffic generated by that many residents, visitors, children and parents going to any school area, etc. The traffic pattern needs to flow around, not down, Madison."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"We have long blocks and lots of speeding traffic."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Ensuring the future use of the Switzer property is cognizant of maintaining traffic patterns that residential-friendly is important."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Leveraging Pennway as the thoroughfare and keeping 20th and Summit vehicular traffic flowing is important."

SURVEY RESPONSE



This kind of curb bumpout prevents traffic generated from a high traffic use from entering a residential street.

STRATEGY 07

Invest in bicycle facilities

Description

Encouraging increased bicycling in the Westside neighborhood benefits the health and financial wellbeing of Westside residents. Increasing the share of cyclists and pedestrians is also a benefit to businesses in the area. Replacing car trips with bicycle trips also improves the regional air quality. The following improvements would create a more bicycle friendly environment in the Westside neighborhood.

- Implement West Pennway Plan and Phase II 20th Street Plan
- Add Bike Facilities to Neighborhood Connectors
- Increase Bike Parking
- Expand Bike Share
- Offer Bike Share Passes for Low Income Residents
- Align Riverfront Trail with Bike Route

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Multi-Modal Transportation:

- Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars
- Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods
- Implement existing streetscape plans



Housing and Development:

- Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts



Healthy Foods and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Support Local Businesses



Natural Environment:

- Improve air quality

Public Support

“Bike lanes on west pennway, southwest blvd, and a north-south street towards the river market (not Broadway). Bike racks scattered around business areas.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“Bike racks to lock bikes at places like the playground/pool and in the business section of the West Side, signs telling drivers that children are at play in this neighborhood, IMPROVED SIDEWALKS for families to walk, ride bikes, and to push strollers!!! - Especially under the I-35 bridge.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“Add 2-3 bike share stations in Westside.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“We seem to have a lot of cyclists in the neighborhood, so better way finding and bike lanes for them would be cool.”

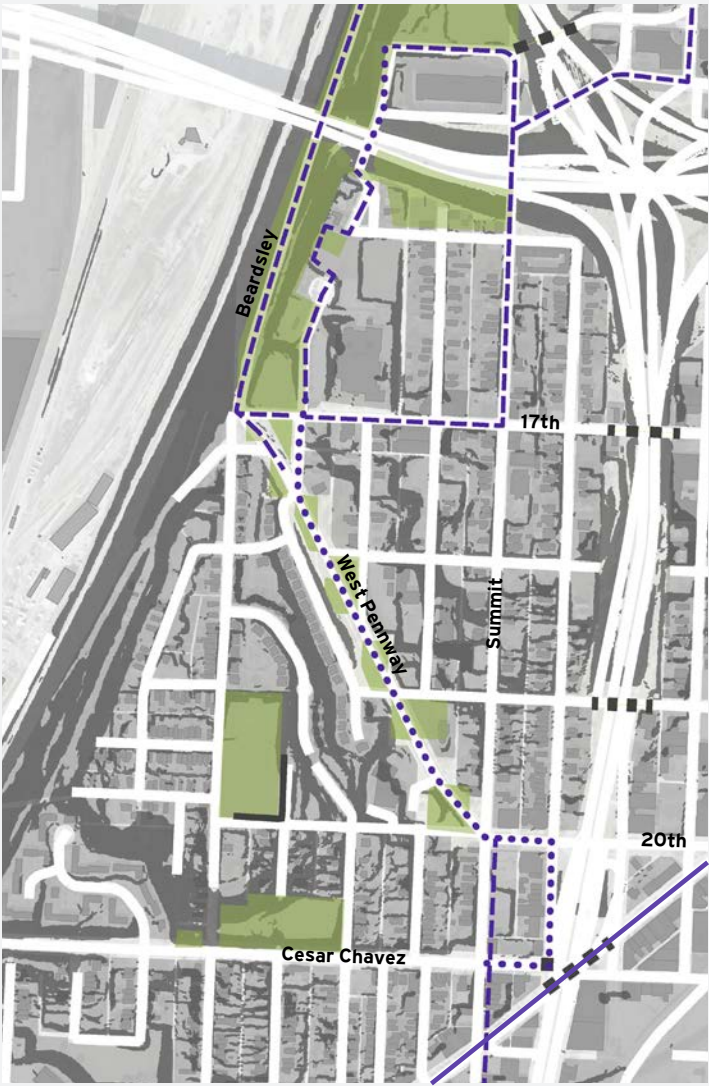
SURVEY RESPONSE

“More bike accessibility would be good.”

SURVEY RESPONSE





“There needs to be more bicycle racks.”

SURVEY RESPONSE



Existing Bike Facilities

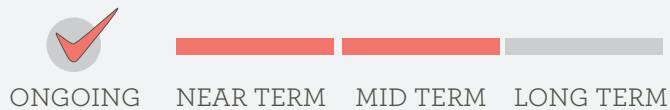
LEGEND:

-  Pedestrian Barrier
-  Bike Lanes/Sharrows
-  Signed Bike Route
-  Trail

Implement West Pennway Plan and Phase II 20th Street Plan

Bike lanes are included in the West Pennway Plan and Phase I of the 20th Street Plan. Implementing the West Pennway Plan and extending bike lanes west on 20th will help extend a complete bicycle network.

Time Frame for Implementation



Costs

\$\$\$\$

- Both West Pennway and 20th Street Streetscape plans require additional planning, design, and engineering study. Implementation will also involve construction costs.

Champions

- Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department
Role: Primary lead for implementing plan. As a boulevard, West Pennway falls under the Parks Department's responsibility.

Funding Opportunities

- West Pennway: Requested \$240,000 from PIAC to complete the planning & design costs. No construction funds requested for 2014.
- 20th Street Phase II: The City is seeking PIAC funds to start Phase II: Central to West Pennway.

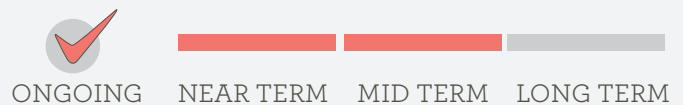
Quick Wins

- Coordinate West Pennway implementation with the Redevelopment of West High Switzer. This is an opportunity for a public/private partnership.

Add Bike Facilities to Neighborhood Connectors

Add bike lanes to streets that connect Westside to other neighborhoods in order to advance the citywide bike network. In addition to West Pennway and 20th Street, which are discussed above, improving bike facilities along the full length of Beardsley, which leads to the West Bottoms and the River Market, 17th Street, and Cesar Chavez would advance this network.

Time Frame for Implementation



Costs

\$\$\$\$

- Both West Pennway and 20th Street Streetscape plans require additional planning, design, and engineering study. Implementation will also involve construction costs.

Champions

- Kansas City Planning and Development, Public Works

Funding Opportunities

- PIAC
- Capital Improvement Program

Increase Bike Parking

Increase the amount of bike parking available at local businesses and institutions.

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- 17th and Summit Merchant Association
The 17th and Summit Merchant Association can coordinate businesses to fund bike parking at the most convenient locations.
- Local Business Owners
Local business owners on 17th Street, Southwest Boulevard, and other places should consider installing bike parking in front of their businesses.

Funding Opportunities

- Businesses can view bike parking as an investment that will attract more cyclists and foot traffic to their businesses.

Quick Wins

- Ensure that all new development includes bike parking. New nonresidential and multifamily construction is required to incorporate bike parking under Kansas City's updated development ordinance. (88-420-09 Bicycle Parking)

Expand Bike Share

Kansas City's bike share system has been successfully implemented in Rivermarket, Downtown Loop, and Crossroads neighborhoods with plans to expand into the Westside Neighborhood. Potential locations include the KC Library Ruiz Branch, Tony Aguirre Center, West High Switzer Complex, the Shops at 17th and summit, and Southwest Boulevard between Summit and 25th. This will increase mobility options for residents of the Westside neighborhood and mitigate the lack of east-west transit connections by providing residents an easier way to reach the MAX and other north/south transit lines.

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- Kansas City Bicycle, BikeWalkKC
Role: Implement and manage bike share expansion
- Local Business Owners and Institutions
Local business and institutions can sponsor bike share stations near their locations.

Funding Opportunities

- BikeWalkKC is currently seeking sponsorships for 2 bike share stations in the Westside Neighborhood.

Bike Share Passes for Low Income Residents

Bike share could potentially be a great resource for low income residents. One of the barriers to wider use by low income residents is the cost and the requirement to have a credit or debit card to use the system. Westside Housing Organization could create a program for low income residents to apply for bike share cards that are connected to their ID. The cards would prevent theft because they are still tied to an individual's ID. The program could have a shared pool of resources to cover any potential theft.

CASE STUDY: BANK ON DC BIKE SHARE DISCOUNTS

Bank on DC is a public-private partnership with the purpose of serving unbanked and underbanked households. Bank on DC has a program that makes it easier for low income residents and those who don't currently have a credit card to join the Capital Bikeshare system by setting up a bank account and receive a discounted Capital Bikeshare annual membership. More information at: <http://www.capitalbikeshare.com/bankondc>

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Manage this program
- BikeWalkKC
Role: Coordinate with Westside Housing Organization

Funding Opportunities

- Enabling more bike share users will generate revenue.

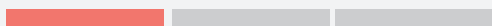
Quick Wins

- Meeting between Westside Housing Organization and BikeWalkKC to explore feasibility of this program.

Align Riverfront Heritage Trail with Bike Route

The area between the Summit and West Pennway intersection and Southwest Boulevard is confusing for cyclists because the Riverfront Heritage Trail and the signed bike route diverge. Aligning the Riverfront Trail signage and infrastructure with the bike route will create a clear path for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- Kansas City River Trails, Inc.
Role: Kansas City River Trails, Inc. manages the Riverfront Heritage Trail
- Kansas City Public Works and Planning and Development
Role: Coordinate with Kansas City River Trails, Inc.

STRATEGY 08

Promote streetcar on Southwest Boulevard

Description

The City of Kansas City Missouri is expanding its streetcar system beyond the downtown starter line, and Southwest Boulevard is one of the routes identified for initial study.

Fixed rail transit also provides a higher level of transit service than buses. Modern streetcar systems employ state of the art vehicles and amenities for a quiet, clean, and efficient ride. In Kansas City, level boarding will be utilized so riders can walk straight from the station platform onto the vehicle without stepping up or down. Fixed rail transit also attracts a broader pool of potential riders than buses, which means transit will work for more people.

The Southwest Boulevard route would give the neighborhood better east-west transit connectivity. The route would connect to the Main Street streetcar line and potentially continue east to 18th and Vine. This route is a historic streetcar line and would provide a strong transit connection where none currently exists.

A wide range of studies and experience in other cities demonstrate that fixed rail investments like a streetcar spur new investment and development along the route in a way that bus transit can and does not. For the Westside neighborhood, this could mean additional density and services could develop along the streetcar line providing residents walking access to services that are currently lacking in the neighborhood.

Extending the streetcar system down Southwest Boulevard advances the neighborhood's goal of supporting complete streets and improving connections to other surrounding neighborhoods by enhancing transit on Southwest Boulevard and connecting into a city-wide streetcar network. In addition to transportation goals, a Southwest Boulevard streetcar route advances the goals of encouraging infill, improving neighborhood commercial districts, supporting existing local businesses and increasing neighborhood services.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Multi-Modal Transportation:

- Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars
- Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods



Housing and Development:

- Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts



Healthy Foods and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Support local businesses
- Increase neighborhood services



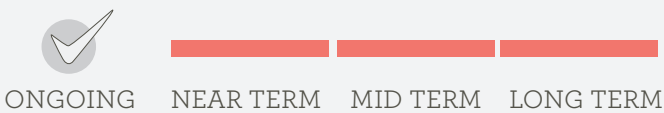
Natural Environment:

- Improve air quality



Kansas City, Missouri is studying ways to expand its streetcar network. This rendering depicts how streetcar would look on Main Street.

Time Frame for Implementation



Costs



Champions

- Kansas City Planning and Development, Public Works
Role: Lead the planning and construction of this route
- Kansas City Streetcar Authority
Role: Manage the streetcar expansion
- Westside Neighborhood
Role: Organizations, businesses, and residents can contract their city council representative to demonstrate their support for a streetcar route on Southwest Boulevard.

Public Support

"The streetcar spur down Southwest Blvd. will help spur density, retail etc."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"[consider] possible connections with other venues such as new downtown rail line or Trolley."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"[consider] Bus or rail shuttle to Crossroads and downtown."

SURVEY RESPONSE

SOLUTION 09

Enhance sidewalks and lighting on neighborhood connections

Description

Poorly maintained sidewalks, missing sidewalks, non-ADA compliance, and a lack of street lighting hinder walkability in many areas of the Westside neighborhood and decrease connectivity between Westside and adjacent neighborhoods. The following emerged as priority areas for pedestrian infrastructure improvements based on past planning work, public feedback, and additional planning study.

17TH STREET LIGHTING AND SIDEWALKS

Installing sidewalks and pedestrian lighting on 17th Street underneath the I-35 crossing would enhance pedestrian connectivity in this area of the neighborhood. This investment would also encourage visitors in the Crossroads during First Fridays to wander over to the galleries on 17th Street. The 17th Street Streetscape Plan includes these improvements.

20TH STREET LIGHTING AND SIDEWALKS

The 20th Street crossing underneath I-35 is another area that would benefit from better sidewalks and pedestrian lighting. Pedestrian infrastructure should also aim to slow traffic coming off the highway ramp in this area. Phase II of the 20th Street Streetscape Plan should consider these issues.

21ST STREET & OBSERVATION PARK

21st Street south of Observation Park also lacks sidewalks. There is a potential opportunity for a pedestrian path to climb the hill from the Tony Aguirre Community Center to Observation Park through the orchard using switchbacks to make the topography easier to navigate.

NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

The sidewalks on many of the neighborhood streets are in poor condition. Many intersections do not have ADA compliant ramps. Systematic improvement of the neighborhood sidewalks would help walkability in this area.

BEARDSLEY ROAD SIDEWALKS

Beardsley Road north of the Westside neighborhood has a stretch of new sidewalks, but these sidewalks terminate before reaching the 12th Street viaduct. Neighborhood residents commented that this route would be a helpful pedestrian path to the West Bottoms and the Rivermarket, but the lack of sidewalks makes it unsafe.

PEDESTRIAN LIGHTS ON RIVERFRONT HERITAGE I-670

Residents commented that lighting on the segment of the Riverfront Heritage trail that goes through Jarboe Park and over I-670 would increase pedestrian access to downtown.

MIDBLOCK CROSSINGS ON SUMMIT

Midblock crossings on Summit would help pedestrians cross this often busy street with long blocks, particularly between 18th and 17th Streets where pedestrian traffic is high due to commercial and multifamily residential uses.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Multi-Modal Transportation:

- Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars
- Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods
- Implement existing streetscape plans



Community Building:

- Improve safety in the neighborhood



Natural Environment:

- Improve air quality

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- City of Kansas City, Missouri: Planning and Development, Public Works, Parks and Recreation
- A Community or Neighborhood Improvement District could also implement this recommendation
- Mid-America Regional Council

Funding Opportunities

- Capital Improvement Program
- PIAC
- Federal Surface Transportation Funds
- KCMO Housing Action Plan Implementation

Quick Wins

- Use KCMO Housing Department Action Plan funds to repair Summit Street sidewalks.

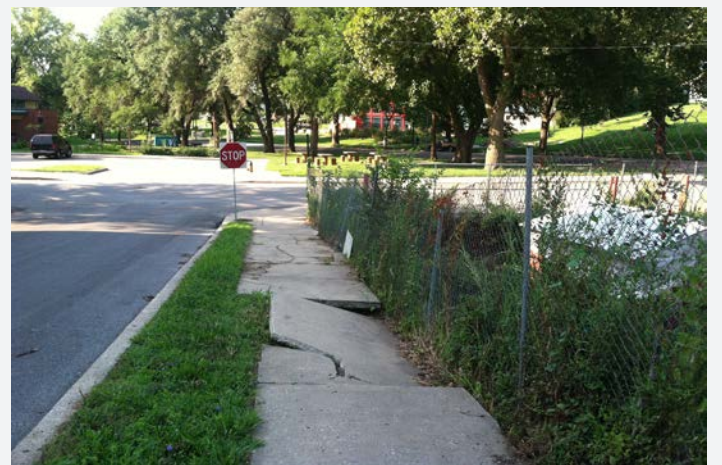
Public Support

"Pedestrian needs that require focus include improvements (replacement) of sidewalks along Summit. Taking the opportunity to engage in Kansas City's 20th street improvement program to extend the project from the Crossroads into the Westside (carrying it through to Pennway) would be a significant benefit for the community, especially in terms of providing pedestrian-friendly access to the forthcoming street car line."

SURVEY RESPONSE



20th Street lacks sidewalk connectivity under I-35.



Poorly maintained sidewalks on neighborhood streets hinder walkability.



Lack of lighting under 17th Street creates an unsafe pedestrian environment.

STRATEGY 10

Improve connections between West Bluffs and the rest of the neighborhood

Description

West Bluffs is a public housing project that is disconnected from the rest of the Westside neighborhood. The development is a series of cul-de-sacs with a single entrance off of Cesar Chavez. The severe topography causes the street grid to become discontinuous. This lack of street grid hurts walkability because pedestrians cannot take a direct route and have to take the long way around through the entrance on Cesar Chavez. The development is outside of the quarter mile walking radius of any transit stops.

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN WEST BLUFF DRIVE AND 21ST STREET

Building pedestrian paths that connect the grid between West Bluff Drive and 21st Street would increase connectivity and provide residents of West Bluff access to Observation Park, Tony Aguirre Center, Ruiz Library, better access to transit, and a more direct route to existing services in the neighborhood.

EXTEND TRANSIT TO WEST BLUFFS

Another strategy to connect the West Bluffs is to expand transit service west on Cesar Chavez in order to bring these residents transit service within a quarter mile walk.

SUPPORT MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT AT CESAR CHAVEZ AND SUMMIT AND SOUTHWEST BOULEVARD

The area around the intersection of Cesar Chavez and Summit and Cesar Chavez and Southwest Boulevard can support redevelopment and infill development. With public realm improvements and a catalyst project to bring people to this area, development could support a wide variety of services. This would increase walkability for West Bluffs residents by bringing more critical neighborhood services to them.

LANE NARROWING ON CESAR CHAVEZ

The Kansas City Greater Downtown Area Plan recommends lane narrowing on Cesar Chavez. This would expand the usable public realm and increase the walkability of this street and make walking to transit stops a safer and more comfortable experience for West Bluffs residents.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Multi-Modal Transportation:

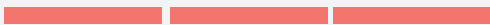
- Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- City of Kansas City, Missouri: Planning and Development, Public Works
- Housing Authority of Kansas City, MO
- Kansas City Area Transit Authority

Funding Opportunities

- Capital Improvement Program
- PIAC
- Federal Surface Transportation Funds



Community Building

Strategies:

- 11 Establish Westside Neighborhood Association
- 12 Establish Westside Stakeholder Alliance
- 13 Expand access to computers and digital literacy classes
- 14 Work with non-profits to get low-cost internet into homes
- 15 Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities
- 16 Large outdoor space for neighborhood-wide events

STRATEGY 11

Establish Westside Neighborhood Association

Description

The purpose of a neighborhood association is to represent the neighborhood's interests. Neighborhood associations are typically incorporated as nonprofit organizations and may or may not require dues from members. Neighborhood associations are different from homeowner associations (HOAs), which typically are created by developers and include covenants, conditions, and restrictions that are tied to the deed.

Westside does not currently have a neighborhood association to represent the residents of the neighborhood. Several nonprofits function as neighborhood organizers and represent the neighborhood in planning efforts, and there are ad hoc neighborhood meetings, but no organized neighborhood association. This weakens the voice of neighborhood residents in planning affairs.

Establishing a Westside Neighborhood Association would create a single entity that is focused on representing the interests of neighborhood residents. A neighborhood association would give residents a stronger voice regarding issues affecting the neighborhood. By formalizing roles and procedures, this organization would carry more weight with the City when making decisions that affect the neighborhood. This organization could help the spread of information by having regular meetings and newsletters and help create social connections within the neighborhood.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Housing and Development:

- Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair



Community Building:

- Support neighborhood identity and tourism
- Improve neighborhood safety

CASE STUDY: DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

The Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) includes residents of the downtown loop and the Rivermarket neighborhood. Membership is free. DNA holds monthly meetings and is very effective at educating and mobilizing neighborhood residents to support initiatives that benefit the neighborhood. According to their website, "There are a number of issues impacting the quality of life downtown. DNA is an organization dedicated to advocating for the needs of those living downtown above anyone else. From taking strong positions on resident-impacting issues to being at the table for important planning meetings and community committees, DNA ensures that the residents of downtown are represented and heard."

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



- Incorporating as a nonprofit with the Missouri Secretary of State requires a \$25 filing fee.

Champions

- Neighborhood residents

Quick Wins

- Hold a meeting with a core group of involved neighbors to determine neighborhood association structure, agenda, and outreach strategy

CASE STUDY: VOLKER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Volker Neighborhood Association (VNA) is an active neighborhood association to the south of Westside. VNA does charge membership dues in order to support their activities. Fees range from \$10 for seniors to \$25 for businesses. Volker has been active for over 20 years representing the neighborhood residents' needs. According to their website, "The Volker Neighborhood Association was started approximately twenty years ago as the result of urging by then-councilman Joseph Shaughnessey. Shaughnessey saw that the city government was ignoring the issues of decline in the older central city neighborhoods while extending preferential treatment to a burgeoning suburban growth. He urged neighborhoods to organize and unite behind a common purpose, and Volker responded with zeal."

"The association focused initially upon the needs of the neighborhood's deteriorating infrastructure, and successfully lobbied the City for improvements to its curbs, gutters, sidewalks, lighting and park facilities. Financing for early improvements came in part from the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The association also took a leading role in encouraging the City to strictly enforce housing and property code violations. Through these and other efforts, the neighborhood earned a reputation, or "name" at City Hall for its pro-active approach."

STRATEGY 12

Establish Westside Stakeholder Alliance

Description

The Westside neighborhood has several nonprofit organizations, public institutions, and private businesses that work with neighborhood issues. Examples include Westside Housing Organization, Westside CAN Center, Guadalupe Center, Inc., Mattie Rhodes Center, Hispanic Economic Development Corporation, Ruiz Branch Library, Tony Aguirre Community Center, Primitivo Garcia Elementary School, 17th and Summit Merchants Association, and Southwest Boulevard Merchants Association. The Westside Neighborhood Association, if established, could also be a member of this alliance. A Westside Stakeholder Alliance would provide these organizations a common platform to coordinate their actions and work together to have an even larger impact on the Westside neighborhood and more effectively advance their missions.

The Westside Stakeholder Alliance would differ from other coalitions, such as the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) because it will focus on a specific geographic area and will consider a comprehensive set of issues affecting the neighborhood.

It would be beneficial for these organizations to coordinate with each other in order to prioritize issues, rally around causes, and make the best use of limited resources. A unified voice would help the neighborhood compete for PIAC and other funds, and focused attention on single priority at a time would speed momentum for positive change in the Westside neighborhood.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Community Building:

- Support existing community institutions
- Support neighborhood identity and tourism



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Support existing local businesses

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
- Westside CAN Center
- Mattie Rhodes
- Guadalupe Center, Inc.
- Hispanic Economic Development Corporation
- Neighborhood residents

Quick Wins

- Hold a meeting with a core group of neighborhood organizations to determine stakeholder alliance structure, agenda, and outreach strategy

CASE STUDY: NORTH EAST ALLIANCE TOGETHER (NEAT)

The Northeast Alliance Together (NEAT) is an organization that brings together neighborhood associations, businesses, and other organizations that work in the Northeast area. NEAT provides a forum for these organizations to have dialogue and build consensus. Neat fulfills the role of policy direction and advocacy for priority projects for the whole area. By combining the voices of its member organizations, NEAT is able to more effectively advocate for action in areas that benefit neighbors, businesses, and organizations.

STRATEGY 13

Expand access to computers and digital literacy classes

Description

“Improve access to technology” was one of the highest ranked goals. Several organizations and institutions are hard at work expanding access to technology in the Westside neighborhood, and this strategy supports these ongoing initiatives.

EXPAND COMPUTER LAB ACCESS AND CLASSES AT HISPANIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Hispanic Economic Development Corporation (HEDC) manages a computer lab for community members and classes to help residents master office software and other digital skills. This computer lab is supported by funding from the Broadband Technology Opportunity Program through the US Department of Commerce. HEDC recently teamed with Westside Housing Organization, and Connecting for Good to win a digital inclusion grant from the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. With this grant, HEDC can expand the services and hours of the computer lab and invest in a mobile lab that will allow them to bring computers and teach skills in different locations. This will also allow Connecting for Good to translate their classes into Spanish. The long term goals include having a full time computer lab for residents to use at any time.

EXPAND COMPUTER LAB AT RUIZ BRANCH LIBRARY

The library could be a key player in administering additional public lab space. The number of workstations in the library currently is at capacity in order to serve current demand. If neighborhood density grows with upcoming development, the library will be overwhelmed with the need for computer access. Controlling noise level is also a challenge. Separation of quiet areas from other areas is difficult to achieve in the limited space of the current facility and requires additional monitoring by librarians to enforce strict “quiet” rules. The current meeting room also does not accommodate the quantity or frequency of patrons needing the facility.

Expanding the existing library could resolve these needs, but construction costs would be significant. Alternatively, if the current library and classroom spaces in the West Switzer Complex could be renovated as part of the development plan, this would also serve to meet the library’s programmatic needs. The Ruiz Branch, just across the street, could administer those spaces in addition to the existing facility. The West-Switzer space could serve as a teen area allowing for more computer space, separation from other age groups, and more social activities. Its hours could be based on the library’s staffing capabilities and may only operate for a few hours after-school. Providing an additional meeting space in the West High Switzer development could allow for larger neighborhood meetings and educational classes.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Community Building:

- Improve access to technology
- Provide more indoor and outdoor gathering space
- Support existing community institutions



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Increase neighborhood services

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



- Cost for renovating the existing public spaces as part of the West High Switzer development will depend on which spaces are utilized. Once the developer acquires the West High Switzer site, the library can communicate their program needs to the developer and work together to develop a cost analysis.

Champions

- Hispanic Economic Development Corporation, Westside Housing Organization, and Connecting for Good
Role: Continue expanding computer literacy and access in both English and Spanish
- Kansas City Public Library, Ruiz Branch
Role: Partner with West High Switzer development to administer community spaces within the complex
- Selected Developer for the West High Switzer Complex
Role: Partner with the Kansas City Public Library to renovate existing community spaces within the complex to accommodate the library's programmatic needs.

Public Support

"Use the West High building for these two functions [library & community center] along with the auditorium for cultural events."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Use the facility [West Switzer] for classroom training for education of young and older adults."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Providing additional computers to Ruiz library could be fantastic."

SURVEY RESPONSE

Quick Wins

- After Kansas City Public Schools selects a developer for the West High Switzer complex, plan a meeting between library administration and the developer to discover opportunities for collaboration.
- Direct residents interested in additional computer classes to the Hispanic Economic Development Council's computer center providing English-Spanish computer training.



STRATEGY 14

Work with non-profits to get low-cost internet into homes

Description

Connecting for Good is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing affordable internet access to underserved areas of Kansas City. Their challenge is to overcome a digital divide which limits opportunities to many Kansas City residents. The statistics below define the current connectivity of our city. (As provided by Connecting for Good)

- 25% of Kansas City area residents don't have broadband Internet access at home. (3-5 Mb)
- 42% of those who don't use the Internet have annual household incomes of under \$25,000, most of whom live in low income housing.
- 46% of nonusers are minorities.
- 70% of Kansas City Public Schools students do not have the Internet in their homes.

Many low-income residents, especially renters, cannot afford the current internet options available and frequently do not own a computer. The organization offers a 3-pronged solution to overcoming the digital divide: free and affordable internet connectivity, inexpensive computer equipment, and digital life skills training. Public Access Computer Centers are another method to supplement access until all homes have the connection and equipment remotely. Connecting for Good is already working in the Westside neighborhood with the recent installation of a Wi-Fi network for Posada Del Sol Senior housing and the Nottingham Housing Complex. Partnering with Westside Housing Organization, Connecting for Good aspires to create a Wi-Fi network throughout the Westside.

POTENTIAL TOWER SITES

Posada Del Sol, the Tony Aguirre Community Center, Observation Park, and Guadalupe Center are potential tower sites. Each tower would be 4 sector antennas and 2 directional dishes with a fully redundant mesh network. There would be an option of two service providers.

COVERAGE

There may be pockets that will have difficulty connecting. Additional infrastructure would be needed for the West Bluff complex and Villa del Sol.

IMPLEMENTATION

Once the tower sites are selected and secured, building towers and getting cross connections working will take approximately 2 weeks. Connecting individual properties is quick, but will be an ongoing process.

Goals

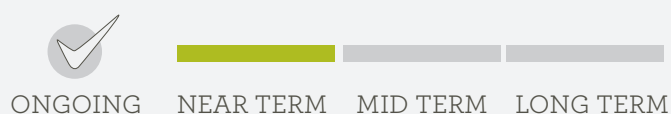
This strategy advances the following goals:



Community Building:

- Improve access to technology

Time Frame for Implementation



Costs



The infrastructure cost is approximately \$35,000 with each property starting at \$350. These numbers are conservative and are very preliminary estimates. The numbers must be verified through a feasibility and engineering study by Connecting for Good. This study will take 90 days to complete and cost \$5,000 to produce.

Champions

- Connecting for Good
Role: Lead installation of network and manage internet connections to residents.
- Guadalupe Center:
Role: Work with Connecting for Good to provide tower sites.
- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Work with Connecting for Good to find tower sites.

Funding Opportunities

- Hispanic Economic Development Council shares similar goals of connectivity. Currently housing a computer lab as well as teaching computer education classes, HEDC could serve as a valuable partner.
- Connecting for Good is open to student assistance to conduct the engineering study or other logistics related to a technology-based non-profit. William Jewell or other local universities could incorporate into their curriculum.

Quick Wins

- Conduct the engineering study (\$5,000) to determine accurate costs and feasibility.
- Discuss partnership opportunities with HEDC and local universities.

STRATEGY 15

Enrich neighborhood identity through signage, art, and cultural activities

Description

The Greater Downtown is made up of 14 neighborhoods each with their own history and unique demographic. As the city strives to create vibrant and thriving environments to draw in population growth, it is important that each of these neighborhoods keep their individual character. This is one of the five primary goals of the Greater Downtown Area Plan. The economic viability of a city lies in its ability to cater to several different audiences. Creating a unique experience in the Westside allows it to compete with the businesses and events surrounding West Bottoms, Crossroads or Downtown loop. The Westside, with over a 66% Hispanic population and esteemed institutions like the Guadalupe Center and Mattie Rhodes, cares a great deal about preserving its Latino culture. The benefits of preserving this culture are two-fold: it instills a sense of pride for many residents of the neighborhood and serves as a tourist destination for cultural events and unique food experiences.

Currently the Greater Downtown Area Plan identifies eight “activity centers” in the Greater Downtown (e.g. City Market, Library District, Crossroads Arts District, 18th & Vine Jazz District). The Westside neighborhood has the potential to serve as an additional activity center. The corridor of Mexican eateries along Southwest Boulevard, art around the neighborhood, and current cultural festivities build on this idea, but they need additional support.

In the past, murals were created throughout the neighborhood memorializing historic figures of the neighborhood as well as taking influence from indigenous Latin-American painting techniques. The mural on the underpass at 17th Street is particularly remarkable in its color and detail. Providing a “gateway” to visitors entering the Westside, it conveyed the flavor of the neighborhood. Unfortunately due to lack of funding and highway construction, this mural and others have faded and need to be repaired or replaced. Mattie Rhodes recently created murals along Independence Avenue and expressed interest in painting on the Westside. Recognized by city officials as a deterrent for graffiti and a creative outlet for troubled youth, murals have a

strong return on their investment. Their talented team is equipped to create great works of art if adequate funds became available.

Many residents also expressed an interest in monumental signage welcoming visitors to the Westside. This would be an opportunity to create a landmark designed with the flavor of the neighborhood. A potential location could be at the base of Summit and Southwest Boulevard and could complement the existing fountain.

By coordinating events and programming to occur concurrently with First Fridays, it could introduce unknowing visitors to the Westside. Street fairs and culinary events held by local restaurants and Guadalupe Center’s Culinary School could get people out on the streets supporting Westside’s local businesses. Street fairs allow for a broad range of performances to occur simultaneously presenting the full range of cultural offerings of the neighborhood. Possible locations could be along West Pennway or along Southwest Boulevard.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Housing and Development:

- Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts



Multi-Modal Transportation:

- Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars.
- Improve connections within the neighborhood and to surrounding neighborhoods



Community Building:

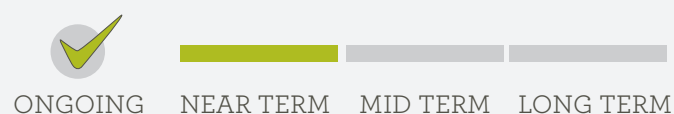
- Support existing community institutions
- Strengthen neighborhood identity and tourism



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs

Time Frame for Implementation



Costs



- Murals: \$10,000 for labor (professional artist's supervision), paint and supplies
- Monument Signage: Depending on scale and material, cost could range from \$15,000 to \$30,000 including labor and design.
- Street Fair: Cost for advertising and permit fees. Expenses for fair could be offset by booth fees for vendors.

Champions

- Local Westside Restaurants and Businesses
Role: Work together to create events that could draw large crowds to the neighborhood to sample Westside's unique cuisine and shopping.
- Guadalupe Center
Role: Participate in design charrettes for upcoming art and signage projects intended to enrich Westside's "neighborhood identity". Support local performers and artists for street festivals. Look for opportunities for Culinary School to showcase their talents at larger neighborhood events.
- Mattie Rhodes
Role: Participate in design charrettes for upcoming art and signage projects intended to enrich Westside's "neighborhood identity". Support local performers and artists for street festivals. Advocate for and develop design for murals in the Westside neighborhood. Work with residents to find their ideal location.

Funding Opportunities

- Local Initiatives Support Corporation provided donations for mural art along Independence Avenue. Their mission is to "connect community leaders with resources to revitalize neighborhoods and improve quality of life" through private and public funds.

Quick Wins

- Mattie Rhodes could plan a meeting with local city officials or Economic Development Council to establish a mural program on the Westside.
- Westside Neighborhood Association and Westside Stakeholder Alliance brainstorm ways of adding cultural identity into the neighborhood streetscape.

Public Support

"There are several murals on the Westside that need to be restored, however it would be nice to see some sort of artwork go up on the staircase at 18th and Madison."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Guadalupe Center preserves what it can of the Mexican culture."

SURVEY RESPONSE

Wish Mattie Rhodes could do more of what they do for kids. Wish the Mexican culture of our neighborhood was celebrated more widely."

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 16

Large outdoor space for neighborhood-wide events

Description

The Westside neighborhood is historically known for bringing together diverse groups of people looking to be close to Downtown Kansas City. Westside, becoming an ever more popular destination, has brought a new wave of homeowners to the neighborhood. Many neighbors would like to see an inclusive event that would bring together Westsiders from all ethnic and economic backgrounds to build community unity and cohesiveness. Though neighbors are quick to point out that Westside has a wealth of park space, the parks do not adequately cater to neighborhood-wide events or performances.

The event, or series of events, should involve all organizations in the Westside including Westside Housing, Guadalupe Center, Mattie Rhodes, Westside CAN Center, and local business owners. Each organization has their own skill set to contribute to the success of the event and could market it to the audiences they serve. The Westside neighborhood has several annual events that could be expanded to fulfill this role. For example, Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) currently has a wide draw in the neighborhood.

The gathering space would require an area that could hold hundreds of people and have a stage for music, theater, or dance performances. Acting as the neighborhood “square”, it could cater to large events, but also encourage everyday social interactions and spontaneous gatherings to occur. Similar to historic plazas throughout Latin America and Europe, its events and art displays would be a forum for local art and culture. The green spaces along West Pennway would be a good candidate because of their central location. Adjacent to the Riverfront Heritage Trail, Villa del Sol and the West High Switzer development, the green space is surrounded by high pedestrian and

cyclist circulation. A centralized plaza could also create a bridge between Guadalupe Center, the library, and Mattie Rhodes, luring visitors to travel throughout the neighborhood to attend multiple simultaneous events.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Community Building:

- Provide more indoor and outdoor gathering space
- Support existing community institutions
- Support neighborhood identity and tourism



Natural Environment:

- Steward water as a precious resource



Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs

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- Overall cost for the design and construction of the plaza would be approximately \$300-500,000 depending on its incorporation of water features, seating, and other hardscape. In lieu of adequate funding, a neighborhood event could still be programmed for less than \$10,000 using an existing park or street. Building popularity for the event would encourage incremental improvements towards a more formal event space.

Champions

- Westside Housing Organization, Guadalupe Center, Mattie Rhodes, and Westside CAN Center
Role: Partner in programming a neighborhood-wide event as well as year-round activities for the plaza.

Quick Wins

- Hold a meeting with the “Champions” of this solution to brainstorm ideas for an all-inclusive event. Examine existing events for possibilities of expanding to a larger audience. Look for events or holiday celebrations that could occur simultaneously encouraging residents to travel through the neighborhood to learn about existing businesses and institutions. (E.g. the “First Fridays” model allows for mass marketing)

Public Support

“It would be nice to have an outdoor public space set up specifically for cultural events.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“Art and cultural events are a great way for the community to invest themselves in a place.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“We need to organize an annual arts and culture-related event that brings the entire community together in a centrally located area in the Westside, i.e. Christmas Tree lighting and decorations made by the community stakeholders.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“People need to be invested in making community - that means participating in neighborhood events and activities, interaction with neighbors- not just the ones that look/act just like you.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“[Related to West High Switzer Complex Site] An outdoor fountain and additional raised stage-type platform to accommodate about 200 people for summer concerts.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“The emphasis here is community because it has become very divided.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“More green space for families to play, picnic and

SURVEY RESPONSE



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities

Strategies:

- 17 Provide business owners access to marketing resources, financing, and retail consultation
- 18 Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities
- 19 Promote urban gardening
- 20 Increase availability of healthy food to those in need
- 21 Provide shuttle service to River Market on weekends

STRATEGY 17

Provide business owners access to marketing resources, financing, and retail consultation

Description

Numerous Westside residents expressed a desire for better access to groceries and health and wellness products. Upon examining the Westside neighborhood's current density, a full-service grocery store would have insufficient demand to serve an amenity of such size. Providing better access to healthy foods is best solved through the use of smaller corner stores. The Westside neighborhood is fortunate to have two corner stores located within walking distance for several residents: Abarrotes Y Tortilleria Mexico along Southwest Boulevard and Los Alamos Market y Cocina at 17th and Summit Street. Both stores also have a small restaurant and cater to Hispanic food products.

This solution is about supporting these stores and providing them with the resources and expertise to more effectively market their goods and expand healthy food items. MARC manages a grant to support "Healthy Corner Stores" and is currently seeking nominations for neighborhood-based organizations to participate in the program. The grant includes retail consultation for increasing the performance of the business and increasing healthy food offerings. By nominating these stores for the Healthy Corner Stores grant program, Westside Housing could help support existing local businesses while increasing neighborhood residents' access to healthy food.

The Urban Growth Initiative is another program that could help businesses in the Westside Neighborhood succeed. This program brings together the UMKC Small Business and Technology Development Center, the Women's Business Center, the Missouri Procurement Technical Assistance Center, Justine PETERSEN microloan program and the City of Kansas City, Mo. This program provides technical assistance and micro financing to entrepreneurs to start businesses in the urban core.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



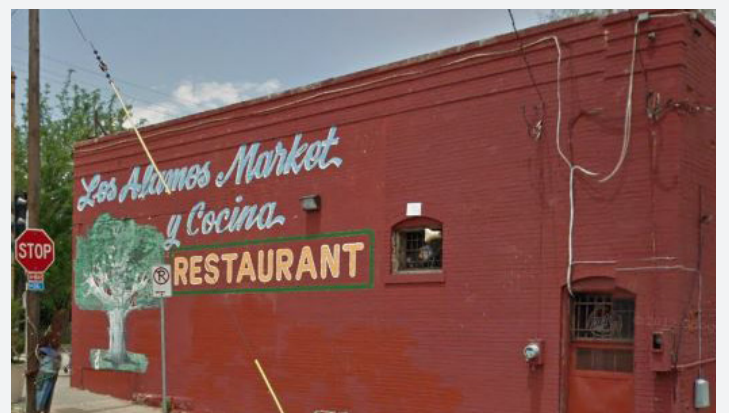
Healthy Foods and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Increase healthy food options
- Support local businesses
- Increase neighborhood services



Housing and Development:

- Support and Improve neighborhood commercial districts



Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM

Costs



- Approximate Costs: Consultation services provided by the Jackson County Healthy Corner Store Initiative are covered through the grant. Store improvements for accommodating healthy foods would be based on a profit-driven business model.

Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Nominate Local Stores
- Mid-America Regional Council
Role: Select Stores for Program, Grant Administration
- Abarrotes Mexico
Role: Participate in Program
- Los Alamos
Role: Participate in Program

Funding Opportunities

- MARC “Healthy Corner Stores” Grant Program [<http://www.marc.org/community/public-health/building-a-healthier-jackson-county/healthy-corner-stores>]
- The Food Trust, a Philadelphia-based nationally-recognized nonprofit works with neighborhoods, schools, grocers, farmers and policymakers in the city and across the country to develop a comprehensive approach to improved food access.

Quick Wins

- Westside Housing submit nominations to participate in MARC grant program by January 2014.

Public Support

“We need an affordable green grocer!”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“Los Alamos [is] good about carrying staples, but would be nice for a little fuller grocery selection.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 18

Increase neighborhood density to support the demand for amenities

Description

Currently the Westside neighborhood lacks several amenities such as a full-service grocery, pharmacy, or hardware store within its boundaries. Residents expressed a desire for these amenities to be close-by, even within walking distance. For many residents without reliable transportation, walkable amenities close an equity gap within the neighborhood. With its current density, however, retailers do not see sufficient demand within in the neighborhood to ensure profitability.

A rule of thumb for meeting density requirements for a full-service grocery store would be 6,000-8-000 residential units within the trade area. A full-service grocery store would include a wide variety of brands, a bakery, a butcher, etc. and would be around 30-50,000 SF. Incorporating a smaller neighborhood store (20-30,000 SF) would require less density, which could be a better option for accommodating Westside's population growth in the next 5 years. It is important to look beyond density because the viability of the store depends on a number of additional factors.

Retailers analyze a host of factors including type of household (age, lifestyle, family makeup), median income levels, traffic patterns, analysis of surrounding competition, and presence of existing retail within the given trade area. The trade area, or the radius in which the grocery store anticipates serving, will be determined by customer travel distance. If most customers will be driving, this distance could be approximately a mile whereas if they are walking, the store must be within a ¼ mile radius.

As new development increases the density of the Westside, it increases the likelihood of these amenities, but it is important that potential sites are conducive to customer traffic and could accommodate additional

retail development to build a strong customer base and traffic flow. For larger grocery stores, this may be better served close to Southwest Boulevard so as not to disturb residential traffic patterns on the narrower streets within the neighborhood.

The Greater Downtown Area Plan supports the type of higher density development that could accommodate the needed retail demand. Supporting Westside's future land use plan's density patterns, particularly the areas of medium high and downtown residential land uses, will allow for better access to food, health & wellness products, and other household goods.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Healthy Foods and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Increase healthy food options in the neighborhood
- Increase neighborhood services



Housing and Development:

- Encourage well-designed infill development and renovation of existing buildings
- Support and improve neighborhood commercial districts



Community Building:

- Improve safety in the neighborhood

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM

Costs



Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Advocate for higher-density housing solutions on the Westside and inform existing residents of the benefits to increased density in the neighborhood.

Quick Wins

- Examine the development plan for the West Switzer complex to determine whether its density encourages the development of grocery and neighborhood amenities. Consider amenities that could be incorporated into the development itself that encourage pedestrian access.

Public Support

"The greater downtown area could use a store such as Target or K-Mart that includes a pharmacy. However, they must have an urban sensibility and scale - not a 3 acre parking lot in front. Delicatessen/convenience store or small urban corner grocery store. No more liquor stores. With the density will come the other retail, services and commercial."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"If you have market rate housing/density then [access to healthy food] will follow."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"For sustainability there must be density."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"To have the retail everyone says they want, we have to have the density. The density needs to have a majority of folks with discretionary income to support the retail - restaurants, deli's, clothing, dentists, etc. Currently, we do not have the density nor density of folks with incomes to support many of those small service oriented businesses or retail for that matter."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"We need more people living in the area so that we can support more every day services, like regular-sized grocery stores."

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 19

Promote urban gardening

Description

Urban farming and gardening has become increasingly popular on the Westside. With several plots of underutilized land, local residents have taken to creating small plots throughout the neighborhood used for their personal use or to sell to other residents or restaurants. The residents in the apartments at 1748 Washington and 1647 Jefferson, lacking private green space, created community garden plots for use by the residents in the building.

The Westside community garden, located at 20th Street and West Pennway was originated in 2010 as a collaboration between the KCMO Police Department and Westside CAN Director Lynda Callon. Creating an environment that would allow local children to volunteer in the garden would deter criminal activity and teach them valuable lessons on gardening and healthy food. The garden features 30 plots claimed by community members as well as a butterfly garden, chicken coop, and a beehive. Marcella Morales-Goana manages the garden and leads workshops for residents. It is a source for nutritious food as well as a community gathering space.

With the desire to increase density in the downtown area, The Greater Downtown Area Plan has designated the West High Switzer complex as Downtown Residential. The developer of the West High Switzer complex should consider how to relocate this garden to an appropriate site if the current site is not able to be retained. The garden could also be improved by adding a water source.

Despite offering free access to fresh produce, the garden struggles to get an adequate number of volunteers to maintain the gardens. Mattie Rhodes currently maintains the “Jubilee Garden” in the Northeast neighborhood, which is used in local elementary school curriculum. Partnering with Mattie Rhodes to incorporate the community garden into local schools’

curriculum could provide the extra volunteers needed. The newly planted orchard located on the hill west of the Tony Aguirre Center, also in need of volunteers, could participate in the program.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Increase healthy food options in the neighborhood
- Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs



Community Building:

- Provide more outdoor gathering space
- Support existing community institutions



Natural Environment:

- Steward water as a precious resource



Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM

Costs



- Cost associated with incorporating the garden in local elementary curriculum would be coordinated with Kansas City Public Schools or an interested charter school. Relocating the garden to an alternative site would depend on the condition of the future site, cost of new planting beds, fence, and possibly water hookup.

Champions

- Westside CAN Center
Role: Participate in future development discussions surrounding the Westside Garden. As a stakeholder, speak on behalf of the community garden for its relocation as is deemed appropriate for its future sustainability.
- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Advocate for appropriate relocation of Westside garden relative to West High Switzer Development Plan.
- Mattie Rhodes
Role: Study the feasibility of incorporating the Jubilee Garden curriculum model into the Westside Community Garden.

Quick Wins

- Westside CAN Center could meet with Mattie Rhodes to discuss the Jubilee Garden program and its possible application in the Westside neighborhood.

Public Support

"Urban garden could fill some space in or on top of the building. Would help to eliminate the food desert in the area, and would complement the actions that organizations like Westside CAN have already taken up."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"More green space for gardens would be great."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"[In reference to the West Switzer Development] Parking could be accommodated, but I would really love to see us keep the community garden that some have worked very hard to create at West Pennway and 20th."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"We have a community garden where they could earn fresh grown vegetables free, but no one volunteers. We have an orchard that will soon bear fruit that folks can pick for free - but no one wants to volunteer to maintain it."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"[In reference to the West Switzer Development] My concern is that the already incredible garden will be destroyed."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"I like the community garden and would like to see it expand."

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 20

Increase availability of healthy food to those in need

Description

With more than a third of Westside residents living below the poverty line (according to the 2011 American Community Survey), many residents are at risk of going hungry or not receiving adequate nutrition. Community leaders expressed a concern for the many neighborhood children who depend on after-school snack programs for meals. Based on their observations, it seems that many such programs, while effective, are not able to reach all the children needed. According to Harvesters, one in five children in Missouri and Kansas do not have dependable access to enough nutritious food to be healthy. Below are a few options that could supplement the diets of both adults and children in the neighborhood.

MAKING RESTAURANTS AND EATERIES MORE AFFORDABLE TO WESTSIDER'S

Though The Westside prides itself on its eclectic mix of restaurants and eateries, many menu items are not affordable for a majority of its residents. In an effort to feed the “locals”, eateries could offer an affordable menu option or neighborhood coupons for Westside residents. The Hispanic Economic Development Council, skilled in managing the interests of many Westside businesses, could assist in implementing this initiative.

BROADENING THE INFLUENCE OF HARVESTERS

The Westside neighborhood is currently served by Harvesters BackSnack program, which provides backpacks of food to low-income children to combat a lack of food over the weekend. The neighborhood has also participated in Harvester's Kids Café, which provides nutritious after-school and summer meals and teaches children about good eating habits. The Ruiz Branch library has participated in the program but has limited resources to reach the large need of local children. The Kids Café program requires adequate space, refrigeration, and staff to monitor sanitation and distribution. Both of these programs should be further supported to fill the current childhood hunger gap in the neighborhood. By investigating surrounding

neighborhood facilities, there may be undetected opportunities to expand these programs. It is also important to plan these programs around the schedules and locations of low-income children to ensure that food is within walking distance of their school or home.

PROVIDE NUTRITION CLASSES FOCUSED ON COOKING AFFORDABLY

Project STRENGTH, a Harvesters program, offers educational classes to low-income individuals covering important nutrition basics, food safety and hands-on cooking. Harvesters offers one-time classes for free, but is also willing to train local institutional staff to lead these classes for future use. The Tony Aguirre Center currently runs an 8-week Project STRENGTH class. Researching the popularity of the class could determine if enhanced marketing would help it reach all of its target audience.

Guadalupe Center currently addresses healthy food access by housing the Blue Cross Blue Shield Mobile Market and hosts many affordable food events each year. Guadalupe Center's Culinary School provides job-training for students who aspire to be in the food service industry. A comprehensive program, the school is equipped to educate students on all aspects of food preparation. The Guadalupe Center, having the skillset and the facilities, could be a potential partner with Harvesters or similar programs to administer subsidized food programs.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Increase healthy food options in the neighborhood
- Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs
- Increase neighborhood services

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM

Costs



- Offering coupons or affordable menu options, if launched effectively, could be a great marketing opportunity for many local businesses and potentially expand their customer base. Expanding subsidized food programs and educational classes should be studied with the assistance of Harvesters to determine additional food and staffing costs.

Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Engage with existing institutions to establish partnerships.

Funding Opportunities

MARC and three local public health departments in Jackson County, MO have teamed up to create “Building a Healthier Jackson County”. A multi-pronged approach to health and wellness, it looks to expand healthy eating and active living wellness policies in area school districts. It also administers the “Healthy Corner Store” program and looks to expand the number of community gardens.

Public Support

“I am very much in favor of healthy eating. I love the idea of community gardens. This is a great way to encourage and educate children & families about their healthy eating habits.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“Provide healthy meals to the homeless and under income.”

SURVEY RESPONSE

“More regular access to local produce would be nice. I love it when the farmers on Summit sell their greens. Maybe a regular farmer's market day or well-publicized neighborhood CSA on a sliding scale based on income so some of the wealthier residents can subsidize those with less to spend on fresh food?”

SURVEY RESPONSE

Quick Wins

- Examine the hunger gap in the neighborhood. Determine what barriers exist for low-income adults and children in order to access healthy food.
- Create a comprehensive study of current and past healthy-eating programs in the neighborhood. Investigate their target audience and their limitations to reaching their goals.

STRATEGY 21

Provide shuttle service to City Market on weekends

Description

Many residents expressed a desire for a farmer's market within the Westside neighborhood. In contrast, there were a few residents who felt the proximity to the City Market was adequate. The difference in opinion could be a difference in mode of transportation. Many Westside residents cannot afford a car and depend on public transportation. For these lower-income residents, a trip to the City Market in the Rivermarket neighborhood on a public bus takes approximately 30 minutes, and they may not live within walking distance to the bus stop. This can deter them from accessing the City Market's broad assortment of affordable healthy food.

Despite not being within walking distance, the proximity of the City Market, Bad Seed, and Rosedale Farmers' Market limits the demand for an additional market within the Westside neighborhood. Adding a shuttle service on Saturdays could close the equity gap and increase lower income individuals' access to healthy foods. The shuttle could circulate the Westside neighborhood minimizing resident's walking distance to transportation. Heading directly to and from the market, it will create a quick and efficient ride and would cut down the distance riders would need to carry groceries home. Limiting its hours of operation could help limit its cost initially and test interest among residents.

Working with the Friends of the City Market, a not-for-profit that promotes and maintains the Market, Westside neighbors could advocate for a pilot shuttle program. It could potentially be supported by the Friends of the City Market as a method of marketing and increasing their customer base. Other potential partners could include the KCATA and the Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition, which strives to increase the availability and affordability of healthy food.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Healthy Food and Neighborhood Amenities:

- Increase healthy food options in the neighborhood
- Reach more neighbors in need of health and wellness programs

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM

Costs



Champions

- Westside Housing Organization
Role: Connect with passionate neighbors who can establish a task force to advocate for the creation and maintenance of the shuttle program.

Quick Wins

- Establish a group of neighbors interested in launching the shuttle pilot program. The organization can develop a list of potential partnerships and establish a radius for transportation relative to cost and demand.

Public Support

"There already is a grocery store, an urban farmers market and the city market within 2 miles of my house."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"If you don't have a vehicle - it is difficult to lug groceries on a bus and it's miserable lugging kids and groceries and then have to transfer buses or wait 30+ minutes for a bus and there's no place to sit or be out of the weather."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Other than CAN Center's garden, closest is City Market."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"Healthy and reasonable priced would be great, perhaps a city market kind of venue. Farm products to help the farmers out too."

SURVEY RESPONSE

CASE STUDY: THE GROCERY BUS, AUSTIN, TEXAS

A publicly-run line intended to give residents in a low income, primarily Latino community direct food access to neighboring supermarkets. Collaborating between the local transit authority, the Food Policy Council, community members, and the supermarkets, Grocery Bus determined its route based on 200 community interviews. Marketing included innovative outreach efforts including professional graphic design of 50,000 flyers in both Spanish and English.



Natural Environment

Strategies

- 22 Encourage water efficiency and stormwater management for homeowners and businesses
- 23 Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm
- 24 Improve local recycling and material reuse programs
- 25 Encourage energy efficiency

STRATEGY 22

Encourage water efficiency and stormwater management for homeowners and businesses

Description

Because water efficiency is critical to water and energy conservation as well as air quality, it is important to encourage homeowners and businesses to adopt the simple water saving strategies that can have a tremendous impact on their own water bills at the same time they reduce the impacts of processing water within the region. Kansas City residents are already experiencing rising water rates and it is likely that they will continue to rise.

“Water and sanitary sewer rates are increasing to reflect rising costs, expanded investment in new facilities, the replacement of aging pipes and equipment in compliance with federal government mandates for upgrades to our sewer and stormwater system.”

- KCMO Water Services Frequently Asked Questions

Simple strategies such as limiting the use of City water for irrigation, using water efficient toilet fixtures, showers, faucet and appliances will have a tremendous impact. There are already programs in place in Kansas City to educate and assist homeowners in implementing water strategies. It is important to connect these programs to the Westside neighborhood, to find the early adopters of these programs and to share and celebrate their results.

To help the City reduce its overall demand on stormwater infrastructure, to keep our rivers clean, and to keep the rain where it falls, it is necessary to encourage a distributed network of green stormwater solutions throughout the neighborhood. This network will reduce the demand on the centralized storm sewer infrastructure and keep stormwater clean. There are many reasons to do this. Most compelling is to help reduce the intergenerational cost of converting Kansas City’s combined sewer system into a dual pipe system. Anything that can be done to slow water down and capture it in place at a neighborhood scale will reduce the long-term demand on stormwater infrastructure for

everyone. Another reason is to collect the rain water on-site and to use it for irrigation, reducing individual water bills as rates rise. A third reason is that plants in a rain garden or on a green roof clean the water and the air, reduce the heat on a summer day and make the neighborhood more attractive and inviting. Gardening is a physical and inspirational activity for children and adults to enjoy together and brings neighbors out of their homes to connect and share.

Some of the stormwater management practices that will be most effective in the Westside’s dense urban condition are:

- Converting gradual sloping roofs to vegetated, green roofs
- Disconnecting downspouts from French-style drains and collecting water first in rain barrels for reuse for irrigation, then to over flow into rain gardens
- Encourage native landscapes, vegetable and flower gardens, and edible landscapes (e.g. apple trees, sunflowers, and blueberry bushes)
- Encouraging backyard compost systems that will help to build soil on-site, encourage organic gardening practices (reducing the chemical used and the cost of gardening).
- Disposing of chemicals and hazardous waste in authorized facilities and never in the storm sewers
- Picking up pet waste
- Avoiding pouring oils, harsh detergents and pharmaceuticals down the drain.

To encourage water efficiency and stormwater management best practice, there are three primary ways to get materials and information in the working hands of Westside residents willing to take on this challenge. One is to connect residents and business owners to educational resources that already exist within the metro area. Two is to attract residents to an annual

neighborhood festival where they can share their passion for water saving hobbies with their neighbors. Third is to develop an ongoing welcome service that will encourage new residents and help existing residents to connect to the local resource they need to support an ecological lifestyle within the neighborhood.

CASE STUDY: BRIDGING THE GAP'S WATERWORKS! AND HOUSEWARMINGS PROGRAMS

Bridging the Gap administers programs called WaterWorks! and Housewarmings that in 2013 included the Westside as a targeted neighborhood. WaterWorks! includes free in-home water-efficiency kits with free installation, high-efficiency toilet rebates, free downspout disconnections, rain barrel installations, and the installation of two demonstration rain gardens within target neighborhoods. Housewarmings is a residential weatherization program based on the idea of encouraging neighbors to help neighbors accomplish energy efficiency improvements to their homes. These program funds may or may not be renewing in future years but it would be beneficial to leverage this initial investment and recruit more neighborhood participants. It would be possible to work with Bridging the Gap to understand how the implementation process in the Westside was successful and where there is more work to be completed. It may be possible to discover who the early adopters were, what their experience has been, and to celebrate their results. Anything that can be done to encourage those who have already participated to inspire new participants to adopt these water saving strategies would be beneficial. An informative partnership with Bridging the Gap will help neighborhood champions to understand how much work has been done, how much more remains, and the cost and effectiveness of the program in reaching residents and businesses on the Westside.

CASE STUDY: THE CITY OF KANSAS CITY MISSOURI'S 10,000 RAIN GARDENS PROGRAM

A rain garden is a shallow depression filled with native plants that captures, holds, and filters water during storm events. Kansas City's 10,000 Rain Gardens Program educates and encourages residents and businesses to install and register voluntary rain gardens. Residents can register their rain gardens, a rain barrel/cistern, or a green roof to help the city to quantify the impact of these voluntary efforts. In exchange, residents and businesses receive a sign that celebrates their achievement in reducing the City's runoff and improving water quality. Working with the City to understand where there are registered gardens on the Westside and encouraging a competition to have more registered gardens than any other neighborhood could build community pride and identity.



WESTSIDE SPRING GREENING FESTIVAL

Spring is a great time to celebrate new possibilities, and the Westside residents like to celebrate. A Spring Greening Festival is an opportunity to bring residents together around an activity they enjoy to learn and share local and educational resources that support a more sustainable lifestyle and hobbies.

It is possible to invite many of the larger Kansas City metropolitan resources to the neighborhood for this special festival that might include booths and events that:

- Utilize the City of Kansas City's Water Services program called "Overflow Control Plan Road Show"
- Invite Bridging the Gap's WaterWorks educational programs and materials as well as their rain barrel workshops
- Prepare a demonstration garden to illustrate the City of KCMO's 10,000 Rain Garden Program
- Invite urban gardening groups like Cultivate KC to sell plants and provide growing advice
- Encourage local nurseries and community gardens to sell plants, especially heirloom vegetables and natives from the Missouri Prairie Foundation's Grow Native program
- Invite the Missouri Department of Conservation or the Lakeside Nature Center to have a booth distributing information about butterfly gardens, native plants and wildlife habitat.
- Organize neighborhood garden tours
- Sponsor a butterfly garden competition
- Host a guided bird watching walk
- Recognize residents who have implemented water saving strategies

WELCOME SERVICE

In the coming years new residents will be coming to the Westside with new development. One way to build upon the education efforts taking place within the neighborhood, about ecological lifestyle choices and practices, would be to provide new homeowners with a welcoming package or service. This package could include the best of the educational materials from festivals and programs over time, free samples and gifts that encourage water and energy saving practices in the home. Tips and tricks for taking advantage of local programs and neighborhood resources that make ecological lifestyle choices easy to implement.

A kit encouraging water saving and stormwater management for new homeowners might include:

- WaterWorks' in-home water-efficiency kits (or reproduction) including low-flow aerators and coupons for waterwise fixtures and fittings
- Information about Bridging the Gap's Housewarming program (<https://www.bridgingthegap.org/housewarmings/>)
- A coupon for a local nursery supporting the Grow Native program
- Guide to planting rain and butterfly gardens from the Department of Natural Resources
- A calendar of the Bridging the Gaps programs for homeowners
- Instructions for the 10,000 rain garden registration process
- An invitation and details to participate in a community garden
- Invitations to the annual Spring Greening Festival
- Coupons from local businesses and vendors who supply water saving fixtures and fittings, or rent/loan gardening equipment

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Natural Environment:

- Steward water as a precious resource



Housing and Development:

- Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



- Work with Bridging the Gap to carry forward the benefits of the 2013 Waterworks program
- Work with the 10,000 Rain Garden program
- Administration costs for a festival
- Administration costs to maintain Welcome Service materials and outreach, the resources, and a website
- Individual homeowners might work over a period of five years to implement changes to their property for water saving fixtures, fitting or appliances, soil, plants, rain barrels, gutter changes, etc. It is possible to use found materials, make one's own compost, and share plants with friends to reduce this cost.
- Building owners might invest in converting an existing roof to a vegetated roof with a long-term pay back in energy savings.

Champions

- Homeowners
- Neighborhood groups
- Westside Housing Organization
- Westside CAN Center

Funding Opportunities

- Continued funding for the WaterWorks! program
- Local business sponsors/vendors for a festival
- Local businesses donating materials for the welcome service kit in exchange for advertising

Quick Wins

- Connect a local champion with Bridging the Gap and 10,000 Rain Gardens Programs
- Recruit champions and partners for a festival and the Welcome Service program
- Event planning for a festival
- Reach out to potential local program sponsors

Public Support

"I wish there were more free things for our children to participate in."

FALL FESTIVAL

STRATEGY 23

Install green stormwater infrastructure in the public realm

Description

The City is mandated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to repair and replace the single-pipe, combined sanitary and storm sewer system with a dual-pipe, separated system. At the same time, deferred maintenance has left sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and leaks in disrepair across the city for far too long. The cost to make repairs and comply with regulations is projected to be \$4.5-\$5 billion dollars over 25 years, the largest infrastructure project in Kansas City history. It is the primary reason that water rates are beginning to increase to adjust to the real cost of maintaining infrastructure (2012, OCP Roadshow). This is both a significant challenge for the city as well as a historic opportunity to improve the situation for coming generations.

The City's Overflow Control Plan (OCP) emphasizes first reducing the problem before solving it, facilitating green infrastructure development, measuring performance and adjusting the plan to build only what is needed over time. The voluntary programs such as rain gardens cannot be included in the early calculations to reduce infrastructure because there is no guarantee that they will be maintained, however they will absolutely help to improve the performance of the system as it is measured and the plan is adjusted. Green infrastructure in the public realm maintained by the City can be included in the early calculations to reduce infrastructure and this will help to reduce the initial cost and scope of the repair work. Aside from reducing the cost, surface level solutions are less disruptive to install and are far more attractive when complete because they include trees, gardens and landscapes that improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood.

ADVOCACY

Because so much repair work is required in the Westside, there is an opportunity for the neighborhood to advocate for and support green solutions as changes are made by the city. The Westside could advocate with the City to become the next green infrastructure demonstration

project. Blocks could organize to reimagine their block and work together with the city to implement the changes. Existing organizations like the Westside Housing Organization or the Community Action Network could create and development guidelines that raise awareness and hope to influence development as it comes. The Westside residents and businesses could also petition and vote to designate a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) tax for green solutions in the public realm, or a Community Improvement District (CID) legal entity could be formed to help finance improvements in the public realm through fees and assessments. Development guidelines or improvement districts could advocate for:

- Whole-block streetscape solutions in the public right-of-way that include curb cuts, bioswales, tree, or native plant boxes to filter and slow stormwater before it overflows into the storm sewer system (e.g. Main & 12th Streetscapes)
- Parks that include stormwater capture features that appear to be natural amenities (e.g. rain gardens, trees, native plants, bird and butterfly habitat, etc.)
- Symbols painted on storm inlets that say "no dumping, flows to river" in two languages
- Dog waste bag stations in parks and on trails to help keep pet waste out of stormwater
- Review and overlay stormwater solutions as needed on existing neighborhood plans (e.g. FOCUS neighborhood plan, Downtown Area Plan, Summit Street Action Plan, West High Switzer Redevelopment, West Pennway, and 17th and 20th streetscape plans)

COMMUNITY GARDENS

In the Community Building section of this plan, recommendations for a new community garden site can be supported and enhanced by influencing site selection to take advantage of surplus stormwater. If curb cuts and bioswales in an uphill location could capture and filter stormwater before it floods downhill intersections, the water could be stored in underground cisterns for

use by a community garden or terrace. A pump and hose station could be provided for the garden. There is an excellent example of this already happening nearby Broadway for the DST community garden.

Community gardens have so many benefits to community life as a recreational, educational, and nutritional source of vitality. In addition they provide the benefit of keeping nutrients local and enhancing the nutrient balance of the local soil, if sustainable gardening practices are encouraged. Incorporating on-site composting solutions is an inexpensive way to improve soil health. It is also possible to develop a synergy with regional composters such as Missouri Organic Recycling that have programs to collect compostable waste from local restaurants, and turn it back into compost, soil, and mulch that could be used in the community gardens. This keeps valuable nutrients out of the landfill and waterways and keep the nutrient cycle closed regionally.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Natural Environment:

- Steward water as a precious resource



Multi-Modal Transportation:

- Support complete streets that accommodate biking, walking, transit, and cars.
- Implement existing streetscape plans



Community Building:

- Support existing community institutions

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



- Costs for green stormwater solutions in the public realm should be incorporated into the Overflow Control Plan as it is implemented
- A plan and image for a block-wide green solution
- Below ground cisterns

Champions

- City of Kansas City Missouri Water Services & Public Works
- Organized and passionate residents and businesses
- Westside Housing Organization
- Westside Community Action Network

Funding Opportunities

- Private, adjacent developer contributions
- Cooperative funding and maintenance agreements with adjacent property owners
- Capital Improvement Programs (CIP)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, (CMAQ) grants
- H.U.D. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Surface Transportation Program (STP) grants

Public Support

"Would be nice to have a dog park area, given the large concentration of dogs in the area."

SURVEY RESPONSE

"The infrastructure needs to be worked on. Sidewalks are crumbling, water pipes break, storm water runoff is dangerous."

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 24

Improve local recycling and material reuse programs

Description

The landfills across the country and in our own community are nearly full and are actively pursuing diversion strategies to divert materials and prolong their life. In the entire Kansas City region, projections show we have 15-30 years of landfill left and only with aggressive material diversion can we reverse the rising waste rate projections. Many think it is easy to open a new landfill in a place with so much land, but in fact it can take expensive decades to establish a new landfill and comply with regulations and permitting requirements. Furthermore, no one really wants to use their land in this way. There is no “away”. Landfills are always in someone’s back yard, someone’s habitat, or on arable land that has higher value for food production or development. Landfills produce methane gas that if not captured and reused contribute to regional air pollution. Landfills, despite regulations and precautions, contribute to water pollution. Landfills are also a goldmine of useful materials, valuable nutrients, and embodied energy. The truth is that 80% of our typical trash contains recycling value, soil nutrient value, and heat/energy value. For all these reasons, it is important to promote a culture of recycling and material reuse.

To encourage the best use and reuse of materials, there are three primary ways to make materials and information available to Westside residents. One is to connect residents and business owners to educational resources that already exist within the metro area. Two is to attract residents to an annual neighborhood festival where they can share their interest in the environment and recycling with their neighbors. Third is to develop an ongoing welcome service that will encourage new residents and help existing residents to connect to the local resource they need to support an ecological lifestyle within the neighborhood.

The Westside Spring Greening Festival and Welcome Service ideas presented in Strategy 22: Encourage water efficiency and stormwater management for homeowners and businesses is also relevant for this strategy. The following resources could expand these strategies:

- Habitat for Humanity and Habitat for Humanity ReStore materials for historic homes in the

neighborhood

- Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)’s RecycleSpot.org program that centralizes all recycling opportunities within the community and explains what to do with household hazardous waste (HHW)
- Host a mobile HHW and recycling collection event on-site
- Bridging the Gap’s KC By-Product Synergy program and Midwest Materials Exchange
- Bridging the Gap’s “Lose the Bottle” program to give away free reusable water bottles and discourages the use of disposable water bottles
- Utilize Bridging the Gaps Green and Litter Free Event program resources

IMPROVE RECEPTACLES

As new trails and public spaces are realized, there are opportunities to incorporate the proper receptacles throughout neighborhood to encourage recycling and pet waste disposal. New multifamily housing and commercial development can also be encouraged to consider recycling infrastructure. There is an opportunity to reach out to the Ripple Glass program and negotiate for a glass collection bin to be strategically placed for convenient local glass recycling.

NEIGHBORHOOD MATERIAL SWAPS

Instead of always buying new things and disposing of still useful things, it is ideal to encourage a culture of sharing and trading unwanted but still useful goods. There is a two stage process that can make it easier for residents to routinely purge their extra stuff. First, the Westside neighborhood sidewalk sale attracts folks from outside the neighborhood and helps residents to recapture a small fraction of the value of their goods. This event should continue to be supported and expanded. Secondly, immediately follow the neighborhood garage sale with an advertised “freecycle” day or arrange for local charities to come pick up left-over garage sale items that are still useful. This will allow residents to claim a donation on their taxes and provide an opportunity to for local residents in need

to benefit from useful materials. By creating a culture of materials exchange within the neighborhood and a regular opportunity, less stuff accumulates and it may reduce the need to always buy new or disposable things.

KEEP KANSAS CITY BEAUTIFUL NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP DAY

The mission of the Keep Kansas City Beautiful program is to create a cleaner more beautiful Kansas City region. There are many organizational strategies and tools developed by Bridging the Gap since 2000 to make it easier for volunteers to participate in fun and well managed clean-up event. An annual or more frequent regular date can be selected and advertised to recruit volunteers to clean litter, maintain public gardens and recycle in critical places throughout the neighborhood. This is a great opportunity for youth to participate and receive mentorship. It builds pride of place and strengthens social connections while it keeps the neighborhood clean and beautiful. And a well maintained area that is cared for is also less likely to attract graffiti, vandalism, and crime.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Natural Environment:

- Steward land and materials as resources rather than a commodity

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Funding Opportunities

- Partner with Bridging the Gap
- MARC Solid Waste Management District/ Department of Natural Resources grants
- Volunteerism

Champions

- Homeowners and residents
- Neighborhood Associations/Neighborhood groups
- West Side Housing
- The Westside Community Action Network
- Local contractors or business owners who choose to provide the community with materials and expertise
- Partners from some of the organizations listed who provide information and assistance programs

Quick Wins

- Connect a local champion with the potential partners listed above
- Recruit champions and partners for a Spring Greening Festival and the Welcome Service program
- Event planning for a festival
- Reach out to potential local program sponsors
- Gather educational materials and resources
- Maintain the website resources and links as well as any physical kit materials
- Strategize outreach opportunities that connect people with information and supplies

Public Support

"Community trash pick-up days - we get a lot of trash from people coming off of I-35. Went to a formal trash pick up day for community members a couple of years ago, and I not only got to help clean up our area, but I also got to meet more community members."

SURVEY RESPONSE

STRATEGY 25

Encourage energy efficiency

Description

There are several lifestyle choices that make a significant positive impact on air quality in the region and in the neighborhood. Eating locally and sustainably grown foods (mostly plants), walking, biking and using public transportation, buying only what you need and then recycling or composting, saving water and avoiding polluting substances are all lifestyle choices that improve air quality. Most of these topics have been woven into other issue areas and goals throughout this plan because they have other benefits as well. The single most significant positive impact homeowners and businesses can make for air quality, especially in a coal-fired power region, is saving energy. This strategy discusses opportunities to inspire energy efficiency in the Westside.

The historic nature of the buildings, the density of an urban neighborhood, and the average income level of residents on the Westside all pose unique challenges and opportunities for saving energy. Retrofitting aging homes is always a challenge and an expense, yet there are many programs available for all incomes to make it easier for homeowners and businesses to make significant improvements. Improvements generally start with an energy audit that allows home owners to prioritize the specific needs of each home to improve equipment, weatherization, insulation, lighting, or windows and doors in the order of impact and payback.

To encourage energy efficiency best practices, there are three primary ways to make materials and information available to Westside residents. One is to connect residents and business owners to educational resources that already exist within the metro area. Two is to attract residents to an annual neighborhood festival where they can share their interest in saving energy and their experiences with their neighbors. Third is to develop an ongoing welcome service that will encourage new residents and help existing residents to connect to the local resource they need to support an ecological lifestyle within the neighborhood.

The Westside Spring Greening Festival and Welcome Service ideas presented in Strategy 22: Encourage water efficiency and stormwater management for homeowners and businesses is also relevant for this strategy. The following resources could expand these strategies:

- Kansas City Home Performance with Energy Start Program (HPWES) administered by the Metropolitan Energy Center (MEC)
- A drawing/raffle for a free energy audit from MEC
- The Home Weatherization program from the City of Kansas City Missouri and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) The First Suburbs Coalition, Idea Book and Home Equity Loan program (through Community America) for home improvements and energy efficiency measures in the city's first suburbs
- Energy Works rebate program administered by the City of Kansas City
- The Home Repair Program administered by the City of Kansas City Missouri (A Community Development Block Grant established by HUD funds this program)
- The Home Weatherization Program administered by the City of Kansas City Missouri and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Booths for local businesses who supply things like compact florescent and LED light bulbs and weatherization tools and equipment
- Celebration of early adopters of these programs and sharing their results

HOST A RETROFIT BLOCK PARTY

Neighborhoods can support each other in working through retrofits by organizing a retrofit block party. This is a long weekend when materials and expert advice are prearranged to be on hand while a cluster of homeowners work together to help each other install at least one weatherization strategy in each of the participating homes. They all receive some training and materials at a wholesale/bulk price and they share

labor and company during the work. This also provides caring neighbors an opportunity to help those in the neighborhood who may require more assistance. This program improves the value of the whole block and improves the connection neighbors feel for their place and one another. The participating residents become a resource for others who wish to follow their example.

ARRANGE A SAFE “LIGHTS OUT” PARTY

Observation Park is one of the highest points in the city and would be absolutely phenomenal for star gazing if it weren't for the light pollution of the city all around. On a crisp winter Solstice night, or a warm Summer Solstice evening, the residents could prearrange a time to turn off their porch and house lights and gather at Observation Park for a night of community and star gazing. Residents could invite the Astronomical Society of Kansas City to bring telescopes and experts to assist star gazers. While neighbors will only be saving energy for a couple of hours, they will be connecting to each other and to the wonder of the night sky. Making these connections is important to fostering a spirit of conservation.

Goals

This strategy advances the following goals:



Natural Environment:

- Improve air quality



Housing and Development:

- Encourage residential property maintenance, renovation, and home repair

Time Frame for Implementation



ONGOING NEAR TERM MID TERM LONG TERM

Costs



Funding Opportunities

- Cool Homes (Missouri KCP&L) www.lkcplsave.com
- Energy Star Federal Tax Credits www.energystar.gov
- EnergyWorks KC www.kcmo.org/ewkc
- Home Performance with Energy Star (HPWES) rebate program funded by KCP&L and Missouri Gas Energy www.hpwes.net
- Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program www.dnr.mo.gov/weatherization/wxmap.htm
- Heating and Water heater rebates through MGD www.betterheatingnow.com
- MARC Green Idea Book <http://marc.org/Environment/Energy/pdf/green-idea-book.aspx>
- MARC Resource page for homeowners <http://marc.org/Environment/Energy/Resources/For-Residents>

Quick Wins

- Connect a local champion with the potential partners listed above
- Recruit champions and partners for a Spring Greening Festival and the Welcome Service program
- Event planning for a festival
- Reach out to potential local program sponsors
- Gather educational materials and resources
- Maintain the website resources and links as well as any physical kit materials
- Strategize outreach opportunities that connect people with information and supplies

Champions

- Homeowners
- Neighborhood Associations/Neighborhood groups
- Westside Housing Organization
- Westside CAN Center
- Local contractors or business owners who choose to provide the community with materials and expertise
- Engage partners from some of the organizations listed who provide information and assistance programs

Reconnect Westside

reconnectwestside.net

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BNIM

DRAW
architecture + urban design