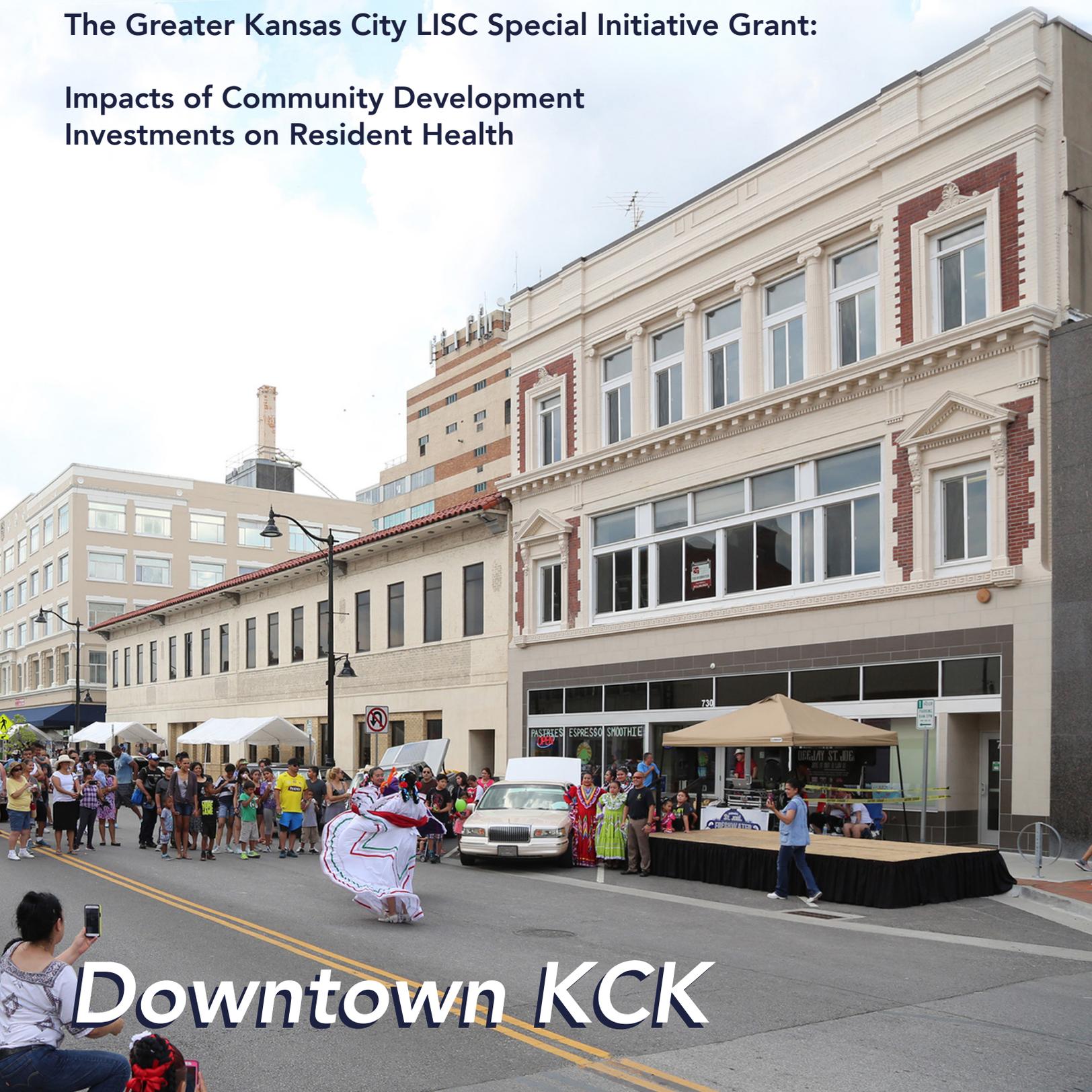


HEALTH HAPPENS IN NEIGHBORHOODS

The Greater Kansas City LISC Special Initiative Grant:

Impacts of Community Development
Investments on Resident Health



Downtown KCK

Contents

p. 4 Forward

Acknowledgments

p. 9 Executive Summary

Priority Health Issues

Health Priority #1: What Level of Certainty is Needed to Catalyze Movements?

Health Priority #2: Engage Community Around Community Assets and Health Outcomes

Health Priority #3: Improve Downtown's Image by Improving Safety and Walkability

Moving Forward

p. 12 Research Approach: Community Engagement Process

Summary

Spatial Mapping

Card Sorting

Validation

p. 16 Downtown KCK Health Priorities

Introduction

What Level of Certainty is Needed to Catalyze Movements?

A Downtown Grocery Store

Affordable Housing Opportunities

Neighbors for Neighborhoods

Engage Community Around Community Assets and Health Outcomes

Asset-Based Community Development

Improve Downtown's Image by Improving Safety and Walkability

Perceptions Matter

Density, Design, and Diversity

Card Sorting: Priority Issue #1

What Level of Certainty is Needed to Catalyze Movements?

Card Sorting: Priority Issue #2

Engage Community Around Community Assets and Health Outcomes

Card Sorting: Priority Issue #3

Improve Downtown's Image by Improving Safety and Walkability

p. 38 Neighborhood Audit Summary

Characterizing Neighborhood Property in Health Research
Moving Forward

Downtown KCK: Safety

Identifying Safety Characteristics in the Built Environment

Downtown KCK: Active Living

Identifying Active Living in Neighborhoods

Downtown KCK: Property

Characterizing Neighborhood Property in Health Research

p. 48 Mapping of Community Development Assets

Purpose and Scope

Methods

Results

p. 50 Appendix A

Neighborhood Pride Evaluation Project Synopsis

Prepared by Success Measures at NeighborWorks America

p. 60 Appendix B

Resident Pride, Social Capital and Community Health:

An analysis and findings by the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department

What predicts overall levels of satisfaction with a neighborhood?

What predicts feelings of safety in a neighborhood?

What are the determinants of cohesion and connectedness?

Conclusion

p. 64 Appendix C

Healthy Community Audit Instrument

p. 66 Appendix D

Community Development Asset Maps



Forward

A growing body of national research supports the premise that geography is a central indicator to the health of a community and the individuals who live there. Neighborhoods with high proportions of low-income individuals and families suffer disproportionately higher rates of health disparities, housing insecurity, lower educational attainment and increased likelihood of being victimized by violent crime.

In 2008, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation convened the Commission to Build a Healthier America. As part of its work, it examined health disparities in cities, including Kansas City, Missouri, and found that a child born in the Armour Hills neighborhood (zip code 64113) will have the average life expectancy of 83 years, while one born only three miles away in the NeighborhoodsNOW focus area of Blue Hills (zip code 64130), will live to only 69. Over the past ten years, things have not gotten better.

In 2012, Greater Kansas City LISC hired researchers from the Office of Community Health Research at the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences to evaluate how our NeighborhoodsNOW program promotes physical activities conducive to improving health indicators. The resulting study, which compared two NeighborhoodsNOW communities with two control groups, found that 47% of the goals identified in the neighborhood's Quality of Life Plans were "pro-physical activity".

NeighborhoodsNOW progress reports indicated that 37.4% of these goals were implemented one year following the development of the Quality of Life Plans. This data confirmed that intentional, place-based revitalization programs can create an environment conducive to healthy behaviors, and therefore have the potential to improve health indicators of residents. It remains mostly unknown whether residents react to this improved infrastructure by actually changing their behavior.

After nearly 40 years in the field, LISC has a deep understanding of the correlation between resident cohesion and efficacy and the resilience of that neighborhood. More and more research is also emerging that clearly extrapolates the relationships between health, resident connectedness and their feelings about their environment. When positive, families walk more, depend on neighbors in emergencies, and advocate for resources like parks, fresh food and safe streets. In Kansas City, we call that Resident Pride, and we invest time and money in it every day.

In 2017, LISC reached a billion dollar milestone for its investments across the country specifically for building the capacity of neighborhood organizations and community development corporations (CDCs) to improve the ways residents and neighborhood leaders work together and ultimately build that pride one feels for their home, their neighbor and their streets.

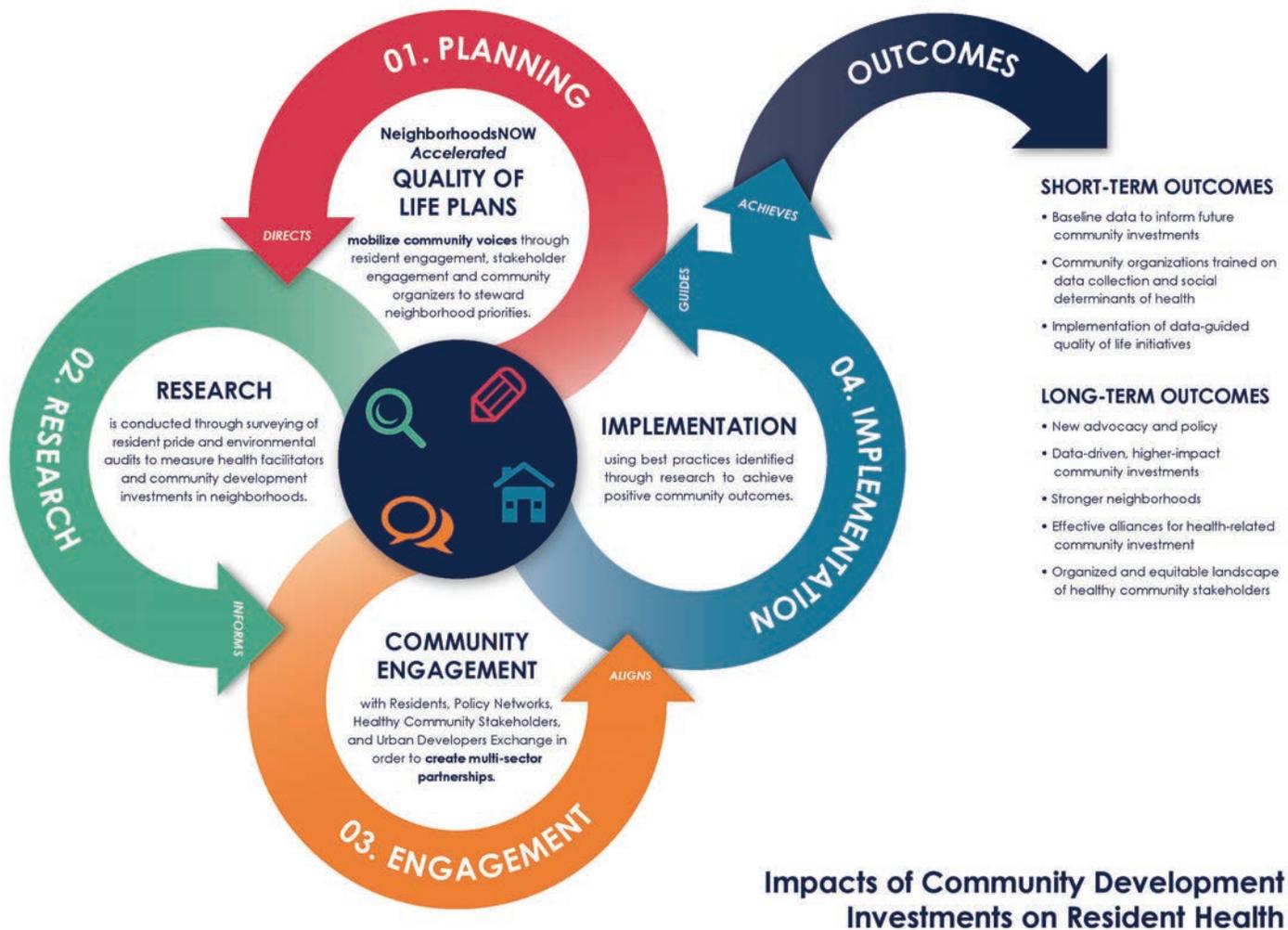


As a result of this previous research and the growing recognition nationwide that improving the social determinants of health has a greater impact on indicators than access to traditional health services, Greater Kansas City LISC embarked upon two years of community engagement and research to reveal more specifically how residents of low-income neighborhoods in Kansas City are feeling about where they live and how they interact with health-related assets.

Funded by the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City and the Hall Family Foundation, we believe that the data and conclusions you read in the subsequent reports are very directional to assist community development practitioners, residents and investors strengthen their commitments in people and places so that lifestyles improve and lifetimes expand.

In addition to our funders, we are grateful for the other partnerships we deepened as a result of this scope of work. Collaborating with the health departments of Kansas City, MO and Wyandotte County was especially inspiring, particularly as a reflection of their own aspirations to find opportunities to co-create on impacting health outcomes.

We learned a lot from our experience with the NeighborWorks Success Measures team who brought a high level of credibility to our primary data collection and navigated the dynamics of managing five different neighborhood organizations in building their capacity to conduct in-person interviews with neighbors.



We are thankful for the time, dedication and energy of the community residents who participated in the research, provided feedback and ensured that the resulting report will be a useful, living document that will guide their future revitalization efforts. Finally, our hats off to the Dotte Agency and their passion for community engagement and commitment to producing not only a compelling report, but providing maps and tools that will enable residents to put the data to use as they move forward in their work to create healthy, livable neighborhoods.

We hope you will read this report and be inspired to action. Each of the neighborhoods engaged in this study have identified priority health issues and impact areas. Now comes the hard work of mobilizing neighbors, investors and policymakers to rally the resources and political will to make change. Together, over time, we can build a 'culture of health' and achieve health equity across our region.

Stephen Samuels, Executive Director

Ina Anderson, Deputy Director

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the great number of residents and neighborhood leaders that have invested their time and shared with us their insights for improving their neighborhoods.

Douglass-Summer Neighborhood Association
Downtown Shareholders
Blue Hills Community Services
Blue Hills Neighborhood Association
Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council
Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Association

We also would like to thank the numerous partners that came together to contribute to this study and development of the report by providing strategic advice, creating the participatory events, developing the maps and the tools, conducting and analyzing research and collecting data.

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Executive Summary

This report reflects the work of over two years of research by Greater Kansas City Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to understand the impact of community development investments, both physical and programmatic, on the quality of life and resident health in the five neighborhoods within LISC's NeighborhoodsNOW geographic focus areas in Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas.

The aim of this research was to gain an understanding of systemic barriers to healthy neighborhoods, to identify neighborhood health assets and their value, and to foster resident voice and collaboration with the long term goal of building stronger, more cohesive neighborhoods with improved access to healthy eating and active living. The subsequent report and tools are intended to be both an accessible resource for neighborhood residents and organizations, as well as a guide for future collaboration between LISC, their partnering neighborhood organizations and investors seeking to achieve long-term outcomes from data-driven, high impact community investments and new advocacy and policy initiatives that result in healthier communities.

The study was conducted in several phases and completed with the support of funding from the Hall Family Foundation and the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City. The research was undertaken in partnership with NeighborWorks America, resident leaders and community volunteers, and the Dotte Agency design studio of the University of Kansas. Technical assistance, advising and research analysis were provided by the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department.

Phase I included primary data collection from a door-to-door community survey utilizing NeighborWorks America's Success Measures Data System to measure resident pride in response to questions related to feelings around home ownership, access to services, safety, neighborhood connections, and a resident's ability to change or improve their community. Between October 2016 and June 2017, 465 surveys were collected across 5 neighborhoods including Blue Hills, Ivanhoe and Scarritt Renaissance in Kansas City, MO and Douglass-Sumner and Downtown Kansas City, KS.

Community members were engaged in defining the survey area, developing survey questions and trained in survey data collection. Despite best efforts, data collection proved challenging due to a variety of factors including survey length, flexibility of data collection systems and an underestimation of the effort required by groups without prior experience with this type of data collection.

Ultimately, 3 of the 5 NeighborhoodsNOW communities collected enough data to make meaningful conclusions regarding the levels of resident pride in their neighborhoods and one, Downtown KCK, was able to obtain a true random sample. The survey results for Ivanhoe, while not representative, along with the data from Downtown Kansas City, Kansas, provide insight into the perceptions of many people in these 3 neighborhoods.

It was discovered that many people feel connected to their neighbors, feel that their community has improved and expressed confidence that it will improve in the future. A majority of respondents in each community expressed a willingness to work with others in the community. People generally feel their neighbors are friendly. The vast majority of respondents indicated they would continue to live in their neighborhood if they have the choice (See Appendix A: Neighborhood Pride Evaluation Project Synopsis).

The Kansas City, Missouri Health Department further analyzed the survey data to examine measures of Social Capital and feelings of safety in order to identify neighborhood-level predictors of cohesiveness and connectedness. They used straightforward multivariate regression techniques to assess the statistical significance of neighborhood services and amenities, as well as respondent demographics, in predicting their outcomes and only present findings with low odds of being a random relationship. While determinants of why people choose to stay or leave a neighborhood, and what they do for that neighborhood while they live in it, are complicated, they found clear patterns across these three neighborhoods that show:

People care about community spaces: parks, playgrounds, community centers, restaurants and coffee shops. Neighborhoods cannot feel integrated without welcoming, safe places to connect.

Looks do matter. Cleanliness, sanitation and infrastructure repair is connected to overall feelings of safety, connection and satisfaction. Healthy, peaceful neighborhoods begin with attention to environmental design, public works and code enforcement. Recent research from the Health Department shows that neighborhoods in KCMO with high Social Capital have fewer code enforcement complaints, even when controlling for median income or age of housing stock.

Engagement needs to evolve: The traditional models of community engagement are being replaced with innovative ways of meeting neighborhoods where they are. When neighborhoods have agency and residents feel as if their time and energy spent on civic participation matters, the payoff in terms of Social Capital can be huge. (Full statistical analysis and findings by Deputy Director Dr. Sarah Martin are included in the Appendix B: Resident Pride, Social Capital and Community Health).

In Phase II, LISC engaged the Dotte Agency- a Wyandotte County community design studio from the University of Kansas, School of Architecture and Design - to conduct outreach to build upon the survey data through direct community engagement and observation. Each neighborhood's Quality of Life Plan – their blueprint for neighborhood revitalization- was reviewed to understand existing neighborhood priorities, assets and previous community development investments.

Dotte Agency researchers then met with multiple residents and stakeholders repeatedly over the course of a year, attending neighborhood association meetings, events, and walking the neighborhoods. Through this engagement they gained input to create maps of community assets that impact resident health, and to prioritize health issues on which to take action. The bulk of this report contains context-specific priority health issues and recommendations for each neighborhood. Recommendations for action are based on a literature review of best and current practices from the field.

Phase III included street level walk audits of specific geographic nodes chosen by community members as areas of focus. The Dotte Agency created an audit tool specifically for this purpose and engaged community members in the audits. Results from the audits provide additional data to support and guide future community action to improve health that may include infrastructure, programmatic or policy approaches. It is likely that this

report will need to adapt as neighborhood circumstances change and new public health research is made available. For this reason, maps and audit tools are provided so that resident leaders can take part in identifying and measuring outcomes in the future. (Full results of walk audits for each neighborhood are provided in the Neighborhood Audit Summary and Appendix C: LISC Neighborhood Audit Tool).

PRIORITY HEALTH ISSUES: DOWNTOWN KCK

This report specifically focuses on the Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood of Kansas City, Missouri. Research was conducted in partnership with the Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Association, a voluntary association of active residents, with research support from the Mattie Rhodes Center. Since 2007, Greater Kansas City LISC has partnered with Scarritt Renaissance by investing over \$1 million to support neighborhood development and programming and to build its capacity to steward its Quality of Life plan.

Scarritt Renaissance residents and stakeholders identified the following Priority Health Issues that are explored in detail within the Scarritt Renaissance Section of this report.

Health Priority #1: What Level of Certainty is Needed to Catalyze Movements?

Recommendations: Neighborhood cohesion can serve as a catalyst that is helpful to community organizations working to bring residents together to solve problems within the neighborhood. Factors that influence social cohesion include: shared values and social norms; neighborhood social support networks; having a sense of belonging or attachment to the neighborhood; collective action through community organizing; feelings of trust and solidarity; neighborhood satisfaction; respect and tolerance from neighbors; and neighborly activities, including visiting one another's homes. This report outlines several studies that recommend potential steps to increase and sustain neighborhood cohesion, including making neighborhood-based resources more accessible, providing opportunities for resident empowerment, promoting multicultural perspectives and cultural competency, increasing feelings of mutual appreciation and reciprocity of residents through group work, and changing the built environment to promote a more supportive and safe neighborhood for residents.

Health Priority #2: Engage Community Around Community Assets and Health Outcomes

Recommendations: Like other urban neighborhoods across the country, Scarritt Renaissance has suffered from a scarcity of community centers and safe, well-maintained gathering spaces. Recent improvements spearheaded by engaged and dedicated residents have occurred, such as those found at Concourse Park. Emphasis is now shifting to investing in traffic infrastructure and amenities, such as new bicycle infrastructure or traffic calming interventions. Scarritt Renaissance should consider continuing to explore creative placemaking, a nationally recognized approach to investing in community spaces through informal arts programming and community development that uses art to promote the livability, diversity, and economic development goals of the community it serves. Open spaces and areas such as community gardens have been linked in public health research to improving neighborhood satisfaction and belonging. There continues to be a need for community services and spaces that can serve the young and diverse population living within Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood, which was prioritized as a need by the community in Resident Pride Surveys and again as a priority health issue in the card-sorting workshop. Strategies for the maintenance and disposition of the abandoned Scarritt Elementary School will be key to addressing the identified lack of either a school, library, or community center at the 'center' of the neighborhood.

Health Priority #3: Improve Downtown's Image by Improving Safety and Walkability

Recommendations: The Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood representatives identified many specific features of the built environment under this priority health issue (vacant lots, street lights, illegal trash dumping, back alley maintenance, zoning, neighborhood cleanups, abandoned houses, alley abatements, and tree trimming and noxious weeds). In order to effectively solve these problems, neighborhoods need to organize and address issues collectively. One way that Scarritt Renaissance may be able to simultaneously arrive at additional insight and organize to their community capacity is to collect and share community stories, possibly as part of a creative placemaking project. Early stories could be told through art and photography, demonstrating areas of opportunity for community

development as identified by resident participants. One possible method for engaging residents in this way is PhotoVoice, which is a public health tool that has been used with various community groups to define their own narratives and identify issues regarding access to health in their environments. Research in public health and community development suggests that cultural norms and social values require a deeper focus on how residents frame their commitment to a place. By developing a creative placemaking project that uses stories to identify an issue that can be addressed by a community art intervention, Scarritt Renaissance and their partnering neighborhood organizations can build up the capacity of the neighborhood to identify and solve neighborhood problems.

Moving Forward

This report was developed to help each neighborhood chart a way forward for improving health outcomes locally. It is worth noting that key decisions regarding what health issues should be included and prioritized came from neighborhood representatives responding to the feedback already received from previously completed neighborhood plans and resident surveys. While other community health issues exist, these issues a focus for the neighborhood now.

This report is intended to serve as a reference for potential projects and programs that each neighborhood can choose to pursue. The expected value of this report is that it will make the supporting evidence more accessible so that as the neighborhood evolves, residents can pursue projects that best fit their needs and provides tools to residents working from the bottom-up with partners to affect change in the health of their neighborhoods. The challenge inherent in creating this report was making sure each neighborhood's report accurately reflected the desires and aspirations of their community. More voices must be a part of the conversation on improving health outcomes in neighborhoods and it is hoped this report can provide value to them as well.

The individual projects and strategies are for each neighborhood to determine, but having supporting evidence can make collaboration between partners more sustainable. Funding sources promoting health in communities is increasing as evidence is building that an individual's neighborhood has a large impact upon their health. It is for this reason that this report exists, to both demonstrate and propose possible ways that Kansas City communities can improve the health of their neighborhoods. Tackling issues in this report will be the



PHOTOGRAPHIC AERIAL MAP

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Community Engagement Research Process

SUMMARY

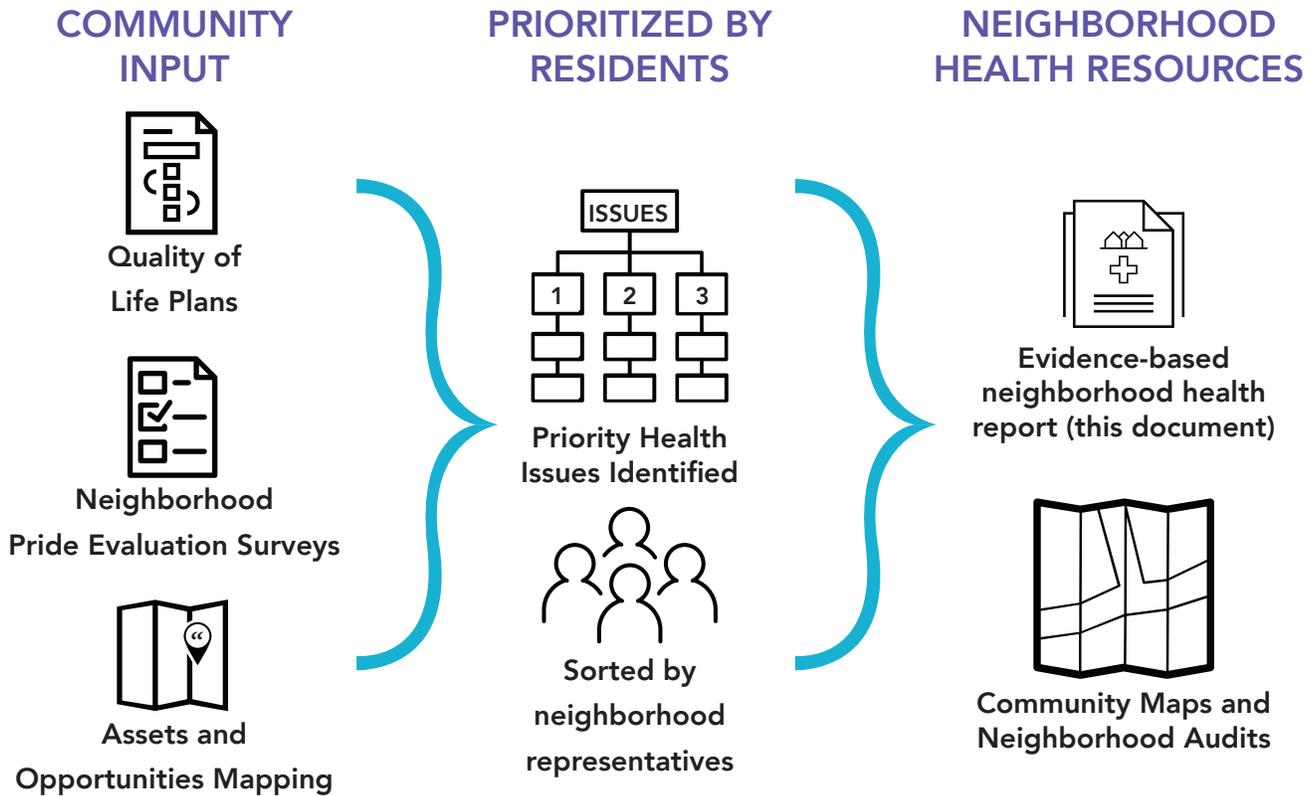
In the summer of 2017, Greater Kansas City Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) contracted with Dotte Agency — a Wyandotte County community design initiative out of the University of Kansas, School of Architecture and Design — to provide research and technical assistance on how community development can have an impact upon public health outcomes. LISC wanted to gain a better understanding of how their investments over time (\$188 million in the form of loans, grants and technical assistance since 1981) contribute to the health of a community and the individuals who live there.

Over the last decade, LISC had engaged with community leaders representing five neighborhoods across the Greater Kansas City Area as part of their NeighborhoodsNOW initiative: Blue Hills, Ivanhoe, Scarritt Renaissance in Kansas City, Missouri and Douglass-Sumner, and Downtown Kansas City, Kansas. LISC tasked Dotte Agency with developing a protocol for how the community could prioritize public health goals locally. This process was designed to include previous community engagement initiatives, including the most recent *Quality of Life Plans* (QLP) developed by LISC with community engagement, and the *Neighborhood Pride Evaluation Surveys* (NPE Surveys), developed by NeighborWorks America for LISC and conducted by partnering neighborhood organizations.

Spatial Mapping

Dotte Agency began by meeting with representatives from the partnering neighborhood organizations to identify where recently completed community development projects, potential community development projects, and perceived barriers to health access existed in the built environment. This was done by mapping neighborhood assets and opportunities, where residents were invited to identify areas of pride or concern on a map, and leave their comments in an open-ended format. Comments received were recorded and helped to indicate where community health priorities existed within the built environment. This process provided a geographic awareness that supplemented the pre-existing data collected by the QLP and NPE Surveys.

A parallel analysis of the collected NPE Survey data was developed by the KCMO Health Department. The goal of their report was to share what, if any, statistical significance existed between questions regarding 'overall satisfaction', 'feelings of safety', and 'social capital' among the residents that answered the surveys. This data gives LISC a deeper understanding of the engagement levels and resident satisfaction within the neighborhoods and how this may alter future approaches to connecting with them.



Card Sorting

The second round of community engagement conducted by Dotte Agency saw neighborhood representatives invited by the partnering neighborhood organizations to participate in 'Card-Sorting Workshops'. The purpose of these workshops was to make the process of validating key public health issues a participatory exercise. To achieve this, Dotte Agency adapted a public health methodology known as *card sorting* — a user-centered design technique that helps to prioritize issues that emerge out of what has been heard.

In the card sorting exercise, attending neighborhood representatives were asked to categorize individual cards, each one printed with information that represented some aspect of either the QLP, NPE Surveys, or the comments from the spatial mapping exercise. Whenever possible, information that was included on the cards was written verbatim, or with minimal changes to the text as it appeared in its original format. The cards themselves were neither positive nor negative in tone, but were instead meant to spark conversations about the issue presented, and allow neighborhood representatives to rely upon their own local-knowledge throughout the categorization process.

Validation

Critical to the card sorting process was that all issues presented were sourced from previous community engagement efforts that had sought to represent the voice of each community at large; the participating neighborhood representatives were asked to build their categories based only upon what was on the table in front of them. An initial card sort typically resulted in six to eight community development categories that had a common theme, such as 'Infrastructure', or 'Youth Engagement'.

After a group discussion, the remaining categories were narrowed down to three 'priority issues', with each issue related to public health outcomes affected by the built environment. The grouping of the individual cards into their initial categories was recorded to better inform which issues the categories were developed to address. The title of each category was co-determined by the neighborhood representatives, and they were instructed to use a verb or an action-word to preface the final three priority issues that they defined.

Photographs of community engagement and the card sorting workshop were taken by Dotte Agency throughout, to both document the process and to ensure accuracy in the categorization of the priority issues as they were sorted.



Downtown KCK Representatives:

From DTS:

Will Anderson
L. Bouman
Ed Caluva
Mary Collins

Nolan Rees
Tim Ryan
Chuck Schlittler

From HNMA:

Rachel Jefferson

LISC:

Amanda Wilson

Dotte Agency:

Shannon Criss
Matt Kleinmann

Priority Health Issues:

1. What Level of Certainty is Needed to Catalyze Movements?
2. Engage Community Around Community Assets and Health Outcomes
3. Improve Downtown KCK's Image by Improving Safety and Walkability

See pages 35-37 for the full list of public health and community development issues that were card sorted.

“This community will improve some if people communicate and participate in activities and improvement projects.”

Downtown KCK Survey Response



Downtown KCK

On December 19, 2017, neighborhood and business leaders from Kansas City, Kansas (KCK) came together in the Downtown Shareholders offices as neighborhood representatives for the Downtown KCK area. Together with LISC staff, Dotte Agency shared that the goal of the meeting was for the neighborhood representatives to examine feedback from resident surveys and previous planning efforts, and then work together to validate three priority issues regarding how community development could best support public health outcomes in Downtown KCK. Dotte Agency explained that it would be their role going forward in utilizing the neighborhood's priority issues as the topics for which they would research peer-reviewed public health journals related to community development. This would then be shared in a report specific to Downtown Shareholders' priority issues. That report is this document, and its purpose is to be both an accessible resource for neighborhood residents and organizations, as well as a guide for future collaboration between LISC and their partnering neighborhood organizations.

1 WHAT LEVEL OF CERTAINTY IS NEEDED TO CATALYZE MOVEMENTS?

The Downtown Shareholders (DTS) is recognized by the Unified Government of Wyandotte County as the Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) organization

tasked with representing the Downtown KCK area. One of the challenges that they face is that within a relatively small geographic area exists a wide range of housing and socioeconomic status. Within the card-sorting workshop — which included neighborhood representatives from DTS and the neighboring Historic Northeast Midtown Association (HNMA) NBR — a common theme that emerged was that both differences in cultural values and a high density of the population living in public housing has made organizing the community more challenging.

The neighborhood representatives discussed the concerns that have been expressed by Downtown KCK residents regarding perceptions of safety, broken promises from the city, and a lack of connectedness; all of which can have a negative health impact upon the residents living within the DTS boundaries. Many of the responses received from the Resident Pride Surveys expressed dissatisfaction with the present state of the built environment. While recent community development projects have been completed (for example, a Complete Streets renovation along portions of Minnesota Avenue), there is nonetheless a perception among residents surveyed that those benefits are not addressing the wider concerns of residents living within Downtown KCK and in the areas surrounding.

Another issue that was identified during the card-sorting workshop was that services designed to meet the needs of low-income residents have resulted in a concentration of low-income services near Downtown KCK. The concern

was that this concentration of services contributes to an unfavorable perception of the area among potential investors, which can make attracting additional services to the area more difficult. An example of this would be a grocery store not wanting to locate in an area where the median household income is considered to be too low to sustain their business. A related concern among residents was that the public image of Downtown KCK is one where the built environment is deteriorated, with references to public intoxication, individuals walking in the street, crime, and a lack of upkeep in public spaces all listed as concerns.

During the card-sorting workshop, DTS members shared their own similar frustrations with a lack of redevelopment in the area, identifying what they saw as “a lack of certainty” as one reason that redevelopment efforts continue to stall. This observation was echoed in the Resident Pride Surveys, where residents shared their perceptions that previous failed attempts to revitalize the built environment contributed to a sense of being forgotten.

Fortunately, there has been a recent shift towards major redevelopment occurring at the intersection of 5th and Minnesota Avenue in Downtown KCK. On the southeast corner, the long-vacant EPA Building has recently been acquired by the KU Medical Center for their Strawberry Hill Campus. Across the street on the southwest corner, a city-owned parking lot and a privately-owned gas station are being considered as the site for a new downtown grocery store to be operated by the Lawrence-based Merc Co+op grocer. North of that site is the Hilton Garden Inn and the Reardon Convention Center, the latter of which has been considered as a potential site for redevelopment into a new Downtown YMCA, which would replace the recently closed 8th Street YMCA. The northeast corner of the site is home to the Children’s Campus of Kansas City, which was incorporated in 2004 to support early childhood health and education programs, and leases space in its building to other early childhood education organizations.

In anticipation of what could be the ‘catalytic certainty’ desired by the neighborhood representatives and necessary for restoring the built environment, this priority health issue explores the potential impact that these developments could have on public health outcomes in Downtown KCK.

A Downtown Grocery Store

A large body of research has linked the proximity of a grocery store to public health outcomes⁴. Some research on food access in low-income communities suggests that the benefits of having a grocery store nearby for a resident without a car is limited to what is within a half-mile of an individual’s home (the furthest distance a person will typically walk)¹. One study found that having a grocery store within a 100 meters of a household was a positive predictor for vegetable intake, and that for each additional meter of shelf space carrying fresh produce there was an increase in 0.35 servings of vegetables a day². This suggests that the closer an individual lives to a grocery store stocked with fresh produce, the more likely they are to eat foods considered to be an essential part of a healthy diet.

Distance alone, however, is not all that determines food access. For example, a different study found that the vast majority of residents living in food deserts still find ways to shop at full-service grocery stores outside their neighborhood, and will travel an average distance of 2.7 miles to get to a preferred grocery store, despite the nearest grocery store being an average of 1.5 miles from their home³. This research suggests that having a new grocery store in Downtown KCK will play an important role in increasing food access for residents dependent upon what is within walking distance. However, other factors - such as the prevalence of specific cultural food items and their perceived quality and affordability - will help determine whether or not the downtown grocery store will adequately serve all of the residents living nearby. With expected size of the downtown grocery store building to be in the range of 10-12,000 square feet — which is about one third the size of a typical big-box grocery store — it is possible that not all of the surrounding community will find what they expect in terms of quality or cost as they shop at the downtown grocery store.

Related to food access issues, the term *food desert* is used to represent areas that have limited access to a nearby grocery store. Within a short drive of Downtown KCK, a few full-service grocery stores already exist, including the Ball’s Sun Fresh on 18th Street, the Save-A-Lot at 29th Street and State Avenue, and the Rio-Bravo at 10th Street and Central Avenue. Additional smaller grocery stores are also present, with most serving the Hispanic or Asian-American communities, such as Bonito



ABOVE: The long-vacant EPA Building will soon be occupied by the University of Kansas Healthy System's Strawberry Hill Campus. The foreground shows the future site of the proposed Downtown Grocery Store at 5th and Minnesota.



LEFT & BELOW: While some investments have been made in the area, having a new full-service grocery store is still considered a top priority among residents.



Quotes from Neighborhood Pride Evaluation Surveys:

"I would like to have a house near KU and near a store, with your help, whoever you are. With my rent \$210 a month. Thank you!"

"What do I need to do to get a sidewalk on our street and for cars to slow down coming and going up our streets?"

Michoacan and the Himalayan Grocery Store. According to the most recent census data, Downtown KCK itself is not considered to be a food desert due to the number of grocery stores in proximity to the area, most of which are west and south of the Downtown KCK. However, many of the Northeast KCK neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown KCK are considered to be food deserts, where census tract data indicates that low-income households with low-access to a grocery store make up somewhere between 33% and 94% of the population per census tract⁴.

A different agricultural economics study on food access found little evidence for the notion that urban areas with a high minority population have less access to fresh food options than other neighborhoods. However, the study also found that the same urban minority areas were in fact over-saturated with unhealthy food options, such as fast-food or dollar/general food stores⁵. Another factor that is important to consider for Downtown KCK residents is the pricing of food items. In areas with an adequate number of available grocery stores, but where food prices are considered to be too high for low-income residents, the term *food mirage* is used⁶. It is typically in those neighborhoods where residents are forced to travel past nearby grocery stores to find more affordable food items outside of their neighborhood.

The benefits of a new grocery store at 5th and Minnesota — located in the 66101 Zip Code, which has 39% of the population living below the federal poverty level⁷ — will be most impactful for those low-income residents living within walking distance (approximately 3,331 people live within a half-mile radius of the proposed site)⁸. Within a half-mile of the proposed grocery store, approximately 22.7% of all families live below the federal poverty level. Within this half-mile radius includes the nearby housing facilities of Gateway Towers, Cross Lines Towers, and Glanville Towers, but not Wyandotte Towers (which is also in the DTS boundary area). The neighborhoods best served by the proposed location of the downtown grocery store are Strawberry Hill to the south, and Chelsea Plaza Homes and Gateway Plaza Homes to the north. Within the same half-mile radius as listed above, approximately 85% of available housing units

are currently lived in, of which 72% are renter-occupied housing units⁹.

There will continue to be a need for affordable fresh food items for the residents living in neighborhoods in, and especially adjacent, to Downtown KCK. Low-income residents that are dependent upon non-vehicular travel will stand to benefit from infrastructure projects that further connect Downtown KCK and its adjacent neighborhoods to the new downtown grocery store. Within Downtown KCK, this could include promoting various forms of non-vehicular transit that cater to potential grocery store customers living nearby, including new public seating, street lights, wider sidewalks with ADA curb cuts, and bus stops that can support the grocery shopping experience. These types of pedestrian-level infrastructure projects could be framed as investments not only in the beautification for the neighborhood, but also as a means of increasing access to fresh food, and therefore health outcomes. For DTS to pursue this strategy would also align their efforts directly with many of the infrastructure issues identified by Downtown KCK residents in the Resident Pride Surveys.

Organizations already engage in the process of increasing food access and infrastructure locally include KC Healthy Kids, which has recently piloted bus transit maps for grocery stops in KCK in collaboration with the KCATA (Kansas City Area Transportation Authority). KC Healthy kids is also located in the DTS area, and a partnership between the two could see more prominent displays notifying residents and visitors to downtown of the connections within the built environment through enhanced wayfinding signage. Another partner locally is the Economic Development Department of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County (UG). Together with the UG Urban Planning Department, Economic Development is working on a Better Block event for the September 28, 2018, in the Strawberry Hill Neighborhood just south of the proposed grocery store site at 6th and Tauomee. This temporary pop-up event will be used to demonstrate the appropriateness of new bike lanes and pedestrian amenities. Future Better Block events in KCK, and in coordination with DTS, could see additional infrastructure improvements piloted along

"I am extremely frustrated. I don't sit on my porch anymore. All I have to view is trash, foliage, people walking in the middle of the street."

"They need to fix the sidewalks for people in wheelchairs. There are no cabs. We need a grocery store."

corridors that will receive an increase in pedestrian traffic to the proposed grocery store site.

Affordable Housing Opportunities

A public health issue related to the development of a new grocery store is the affordability of housing adjacent to the site. A recent agricultural economics study explored the impact that a new grocery store development can have on nearby residential home values. The researchers built upon previous studies to better understand how housing values are impacted by nearby amenities using what's known as hedonic models, which take into consideration both good and bad features of a surrounding neighborhood¹⁰. For example, the price of housing can be affected by the conditions of the surrounding neighborhood, including the quality of clean water and air, available park space, loud noises, and transportation access.

The study looked to see what impact, if any, the opening of a new grocery store had on housing prices in Worcester, MA, between 1998 and 2011. The study found that for homes sold within a quarter-mile of a new grocery store, prices went up 4% on average when compared to homes sold more than a half-mile away from the new grocery store. For homes that were between a quarter-mile and half-mile of the new grocery store, home prices went up 7% compared to similar homes sold. The researchers' theory for why home prices increased the most for homes that were between a quarter-mile and half-mile distance from the new grocery store was that the amenity of having a store nearby increased the value of housing, but being too close to the store created a 'disamenity', where increased traffic and congestion made housing less desirable. The study concluded by suggesting that policymakers should be mindful of the economic impact that a new grocery store can have in a low-income neighborhood.

This concern is particularly relevant for Downtown KCK, where within a half-mile of the proposed grocery store site almost a quarter of residents are living below the poverty level and almost three-quarters of residents are

renters. An increase in housing prices in this area could potentially displace the residents that are vulnerable to a subsequent increase in rent. For DTS, there currently exists a window of opportunity to address this issue of displacement by supporting Downtown KCK reinvestments that can also address the potential health impact that new development might bring. For example, while research suggests that a new grocery would benefit the health of low-income residents, that benefit is lost if the increase in housing prices forces the same residents to move out of the neighborhood.

Recent research on the health impact that mothers face when they are evicted shows that, when compared to non-evicted mothers, they experienced significantly higher rates of economic hardship, parenting stress, rates of depression, and they self-reported their health and the health of their children as poorer¹¹. An urban planning summary on displacement and gentrification research highlighted a study that identified areas where gentrification is expected to occur: 1) in neighborhoods close to downtown; 2) that were initially low-income households; 3) that had experienced disinvestment; 4) which then received an increase in residents with a higher educational attainment; 5) and also received an increase in private investment (including the appreciation of housing prices)¹². By those standards, Downtown KCK and its surrounding neighborhoods may experience conditions that could lead to housing displacement for a majority of its residents.

A popular way for local governments to increase affordable housing rates is through what's known as *inclusionary zoning*, a development tool that allows for local municipalities to either require that a certain rate of newly-constructed housing units be made affordable, or offer incentives to developers that choose to do so¹³. Unfortunately, in 2016 the Kansas House of Representatives voted to approve Senate Bill 366, which included language that preempts local municipalities in Kansas from creating inclusionary zoning laws¹⁴. It is worth noting that Kansas State Senator David Haley — who represents northeast Kansas City, KS, including Downtown KCK — was the only Democratic state senator to vote yes on the preemption bill¹⁵. To ensure that future



policies like inclusionary zoning can remain available as a reinvestment tool, DTS should consider engaging with their state and local elected representatives annually on upcoming legislative agendas that could affect Downtown KCK redevelopment efforts.

An example where the state political process has influence over local redevelopment efforts is in the newly created economic opportunity zones. In the spring of 2018, Kansas Governor Jeff Colyer announced that Downtown KCK would be selected as one of the state's new Economic Opportunity Zones of Kansas¹⁶. These zones were made possible by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, and will offer tax incentives to investors that re-invest their unrealized capital gains into designated census tracts, which now includes Downtown KCK (map shown above).

The intent of this policy is to increase private investment in neighborhoods that have historically received a lack of investment. While an increase in private investment in the area can further catalyze redevelopment efforts, it nonetheless represents one of the previously conditions found in neighborhoods that will experience residential displacement. Without inclusionary zoning available as a

tool to increase affordable housing rates nearby, future reinvestment generated by the economic opportunity zone could further increase housing prices and contribute to the displacement of existing residents.

One way for DTS to reduce the potential impact of residential displacement, and also help to catalyze redevelopment efforts underway in Downtown KCK, would be to help outline an affordable housing strategy that leverages the new economic opportunity zone as an incentive to achieve what is typically desired in inclusionary zoning policies. To do so, DTS should begin conversations with Greater Kansas City LISC as a potential partner to identify how an *economic opportunity fund* might operate as the investment vehicle for the Downtown KCK economic opportunity zone.

Because economic opportunity zones are still new, other potential partners are likely still determining what involvement, if any, they will have in reinvesting in economic opportunity zones. To collaborate most effectively, DTS should consider convening local community development partners to discuss how the economic opportunity zones can be leveraged to support affordable housing strategies that can reduce



LEFT: This map shows the boundaries for the economic opportunity zone that covers most of Downtown KCK. Wyandotte County saw six census tracts be designated as economic opportunity zones, which were pre-selected by the Economic Development Department of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County, and finalized by the State of Kansas.

residential displacement and promote health in the built environment.

Urbanist Bruce Katz, co-author of *The New Localism: How Cities can Thrive in the Age of Populism*, recently provided advice on how cities can best leverage their new economic opportunity zones to support downtown redevelopment efforts while minimizing residential displacement. A few of the recommendations Katz makes and that are relevant to Downtown KCK are listed below:

Increase employment density by relocating anchor company locations to downtown: The more people that are present day-to-day in a downtown area, the more likely it is for other local businesses to open and support those potential customers. A good example of this already underway in Downtown KCK will be the KU Med Strawberry Hill Campus, where the renovation of the old EPA Building has the potential to increase foot traffic in Downtown KCK if there are places for their employees, students, and patients to walk to.

Develop anchor procurement efforts that focus on local businesses: DTS could take on a similar

initiative by providing local businesses with the resources they need to expand or locate within Downtown KCK. Katz points to Philadelphia's Anchor Procurement Initiative, an example that Downtown KCK could follow, where a local economic council partnered with their city and local anchor institutions to grow jobs by increasing purchases made at local businesses. A similar strategy could be adopted in Downtown KCK, where businesses could be attracted by an agreement that major institutions in the area will first seek out Downtown KCK businesses when making procurement purchases.

Develop smart student housing: Katz points to Chattanooga as an example where a downtown revival was sparked by new student housing being built adjacent to the downtown area. A similar model in Downtown KCK could see a mix of student, market-rate, and affordable housing options be developed close to the new development at 5th and Minnesota. With the KU Med Strawberry Hill Campus there will be the potential to provide housing for students looking to live within a short distance of the new Downtown KCK campus.

Attract people by animating public and private spaces: This advice builds upon placemaking initiatives seen across the country, where new farmers' markets, pop-up businesses, and facade improvements can increase the curb appeal of a downtown area, thus attracting more interest in developing nearby. With support from Greater Kansas City LISC, DTS is already engaged on a pop-up business incubator that is being built by Dotte Agency, and which will be placed next door to the EPIC Arts Clay Studio, owned by the CHWC. A future initiative could include a facade improvements study, where DTS could help local businesses identify what improvements could be made and what sources of funding are available.

A way to support this approach was recently announced by the Kresge Foundation in their *Advancing Health Equity Through Housing Funding Opportunity*¹⁷. A partnership could form between DTS and their neighboring NBRs, as well as with the UG and other local community development partners, to lay out strategies for increasing the development of affordable housing in ways that will improve health outcomes in Downtown KCK. The grant funding available includes support for planning grants for up to one year and \$100,000, and general operating support and programmatic grants for up to two years and \$200,000 a year:

The Kresge Foundation seeks to identify and accelerate community-led policy and system changes that reduce displacement, segregation and gentrification, support innovative funding strategies that better connect housing and health sectors and recognize multi-sector partnerships that preserve and increase the supply of stable housing for improved health, well-being and health equity in low-income communities.

Competitive proposals will meet the following criteria:

- Address upstream determinants of health;
- Have a strong community and equity focus;
- Include multi-sector involvement minimally from health and housing fields and optimally partners from additional sectors;
- Community resident-level engagement and power building at the policy and/or practice level focused on solutions to one or more health and housing issue, such as, but not limited to:
 - Physical and emotional trauma emanating from housing instability.
 - Impact of displacement (fair housing, community planning, etc.).

- *Housing design/quality (addressing health conditions such as lead, asthma).*

Another path forward is for DTS to partner with a local *Community Housing Development Organization* (CHDO) to develop affordable housing opportunities in and around Downtown KCK. Through the federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program, offered by Housing and Urban Development, CHDOs can work with Wyandotte County as their participating jurisdiction to allocate a minimum of 15% of the federal funding Wyandotte County receives towards eligible HOME programs. These programs can include new construction for homeowners and rental housing, as well as financial assistance to potential homebuyers. In Wyandotte County, the two current CHDOs are Community Housing of Wyandotte County (CHWC) and the Argentine Neighborhood Development Association (ANDA). City Vision Ministries, Inc. is a former CHDO that served Downtown KCK area, but is no longer operational. One possible strategy for DTS would be to partner with a local nonprofit health organization in their area to bring a CHDO back to Downtown KCK. Two examples of potential health nonprofit partners operating nearby include the Community Health Council of Wyandotte County and Wyandot Inc. A partnership between DTS and a local health nonprofit could use the CHDO to develop affordable housing projects that can leverage HUD funding and directly address public health outcomes.

Neighbors for Neighborhoods

An alternative model for DTS to explore is found in the *Neighbors for Neighborhoods* program. Announced in 2016 as a pilot program by the New York State Attorney General's Office, it is designed to directly support New York residents that want to renovate abandoned buildings within their neighborhoods and develop affordable rental housing properties. The program builds upon the work of existing community land banks, and is being overseen by Enterprise Community Partners, a national affordable housing nonprofit similar to Greater Kansas City LISC.

As a pilot, the program was established with \$4 million in settlements received from Citigroup and Bank of America over their roles in the 2008 housing crash. This grant funding saw Enterprise work with land banks across the state to ensure that they could: 1) Demonstrate their

capacity to rehabilitate properties and enforce long-term affordable rent requirements; and 2) Demonstrate that they were in an area with a concentration of potential rental properties and local community members who had the capacity to own and manage a nearby rental property¹⁸.

Once land banks were selected, they were able to transfer the ownership of properties over to local community members at little to no cost. Community members interested in becoming buyers were first required to be pre-approved by the land bank, live within the same city or within 15 minutes of the property, and demonstrate experience in renovating and maintaining homes. Those that did qualify were eligible to receive a \$50,000 per unit renovation subsidy. Accepted community members were also required to include additional exterior rehabs, which would improve the quality of the neighborhood around the property¹⁹.

A local version of the Neighbors for Neighborhoods model could align directly with Mayor David Alvey's new initiative "From Our Neighborhoods Up", which calls for incremental changes to clean up neighborhoods, build on vacant lots, and increase housing availability²⁰. By aligning with this local municipal initiative, DTS could request that the UG Landbank and UG Economic Development outline a similar strategy for Downtown KCK residents interested in restoring vacant homes and properties locally. With the new development slated for the corner of 5th and Minnesota (new grocery store, YMCA, and KU Med Strawberry Hill Campus), the opportunity exists for DTS to play a leading role in advocating for increased affordable housing that is built by and for the existing community. This approach could also exist in tandem with the previously mentioned strategies that would leverage the Downtown KCK economic opportunity zone and/or see a restored CHDO.

2 ENGAGE COMMUNITY AROUND COMMUNITY ASSETS AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

Asset-Based Community Development

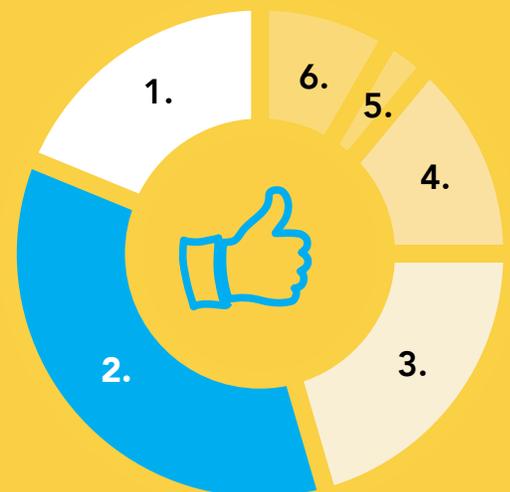
When areas fall behind in wealth, job creation, access to health, access to transportation, and the quality of infrastructure, it can affect the overall well being of an area's residents. This can lead to an outward migration of

How would you rate each of the following aspects of the **NEIGHBORHOOD**?

The percent below reflects residents that answered either "Good" or "Very Good" for each neighborhood aspect:



Overall, how **SATISFIED** would you say you are living in this community?



1. Very satisfied (19%)
2. Satisfied (35%)
3. Somewhat satisfied (21%)
4. Somewhat dissatisfied (13%)
5. Dissatisfied (3%)
6. Very dissatisfied (9%)

BELOW: The annual Latino Arts Festival represents an excellent opportunity to engage with Downtown KCK residents and visitors.



for social interactions to occur. To address this, a recommended approach is to take deliberate steps to create neutral community spaces or forums that are perceived as welcoming to all individuals working and living in an area.

A possible example for where this could occur is at the Downtown KCK Public Library, which is currently exploring renovation options. A community-meeting room that was open and accessible to all residents, and frequently utilized by local institutions such as the KCK Chamber and DTS, might serve a similar role for Downtown KCK.

Make Effective Contact: Community organizations looking for public participation tend to think that by simply declaring a project or program to be open to all that it makes it so. Unfortunately, that is not enough, and effective participation requires deliberate and consistent contact with resident associations, local institutions, and neighborhood leaders. This requires that, for example, fliers promoting community events be hand delivered to invite individuals to participate, and not simply posted on community-frequented bulletin boards.

Evidence of how this has worked for DTS is seen in their response rate to the Resident Pride Surveys: about 12% of available households completed the survey, which was the highest rate of survey completion among all five neighborhoods that LISC is working with. In the card-sorting workshop, it was discussed that Maria Carrillo was effective in her role in connecting with residents in high-rise housing. A strategy that DTS could consider pursuing would be to further invest in resources and ways of making effective contact based upon the experiences of what works for community mobilizers such as Maria.

Design Community Projects: Mapping memories, exhibiting photographs and drawings taken by residents, and sharing oral histories, songs, and poems are just a few examples of asset-based community development projects might look like. These community design projects can bring residents together to interact and build trust between each other and their community. The focus of these community design projects should be to highlight shared experiences, so that differences between groups that are otherwise feel disengaged from each other can begin to feel smaller, rather than focusing on the separation or divisions within the community itself.

A possible collaborator for DTS in this effort is Tiffane Friesen, a local community design artist that uses art to engage communities around issues such as mental health and recovery through her work at Wyandot Center (which is part of Wyandot Inc., an organization mentioned in the card-sorting workshop). She also has experience working with residents in Kansas City, Kansas through the ArtMakers' Place²³. Through art-based grant funding, a community design artist could bring together other community partners – such as the Wilhelmina Gill Center, which was referenced in the card-sorting workshop – to develop a community design project that connects Downtown KCK residents and businesses.

Reach Out To Youth: As part of the overarching goal of creating more social cohesion between residents to reduce health disparities, one of the best methods for doing so is working with local youth to generate asset-based mapping reports. Youth programming also has the added benefit of drawing in parents, adults, and neighborhood leaders to assist. Examples of this could include using youth art programs that can generate public art proposals, such as murals or art billboards that are visible from highly trafficked

areas, such as the 7th and Minnesota bus stop in Downtown KCK.

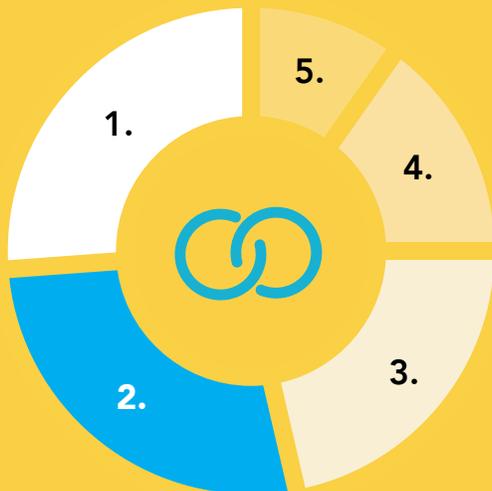
Another model that is similar is MAPSCorps in Chicago, which hires local high school students to be community data scientists. They are trained with mobile technology to canvas neighborhoods and ensure that public-facing businesses are highlighted on maps. This also typically represents the first paid employment experience for participating youth. Dotte Agency and the Historic Northeast Midtown Association (HNMA) are currently engaged in a similar project with the neighborhoods surrounding Parkwood Park and Northwest Middle School. Students, middle schoolers, and neighborhood association members joined together to complete detailed sidewalk audits. The teachers are also using this experience of civic engagement for the youth as way to frame teaching other topics, such as math and history.

An opportunity for DTS to explore would be to coordinate with Sumner Academy and a local community mobilizer to develop a program that employs high school students to engage in a similar mapping project. This could align with efforts to make more effective contact



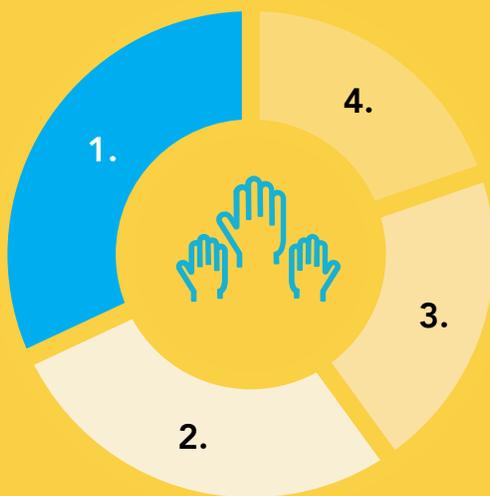
ABOVE: Local artist Tiffane Friesen (center) has experience working with youth on large-scale community projects.

How **CONNECTED** would you say you feel in this neighborhood?



1. Very connected (26%)
2. **Connected (27%)**
3. Somewhat connected (23%)
4. Not very connected (15%)
5. Not at all connected (10%)

How **WILLING** are you to become involved in your neighborhood by working with others to make things happen?



1. **Very willing (32%)**
2. Willing (27%)
3. Somewhat willing (21%)
4. Not that willing (20%)

youth, an increase in poverty, and a lack of employment opportunities. These conditions can compound on one another, make attracting outside investment more difficult. To address this, many communities have begun pursuing 'asset-based community development' as a way of recognizing and celebrating existing assets within their community and expanding on those assets. The basic concept is to identify what makes that community special, and then work to cultivate those unique characteristics of the neighborhood to strengthen both the community and the local economy²¹.

Asset-based community development has its origins in the analysis of over 3,000 stories collected and published in the book *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Towards Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. In the book, authors John McKnight and Jody Kretzman outline the principles of an asset-based community development approach. The principles shared in the book can be summarized as follows: 1) Identify a neighborhood where there is a welcome effort to collaborate among businesses and local sponsors; 2) Find people who are good at connecting with others; 3) Identify what community members care about, desire, are good at, and are interested in; 4) Map out all associations, including schools, churches, businesses, etc.; 5) Meet with those organizations to find out what they are doing, and what they would like to see happen; 6) Identify shared projects that the neighborhood would like to see and that would make the neighborhood a better place to live; 7) Bring people and resources together to achieve these aspirations; 8) Share the successes and encourage other neighborhood groups to get involved. Such an approach can be useful in reducing social isolation, an experience that can lead to negative health outcomes, especially among seniors²².

In areas that have experienced racial and socioeconomic segregation, a lack of cooperation can exist between residents and local institutions tasked with using economic development to support the local community. Experiences in asset-based community development have developed a series of recommendations for bringing together disparate groups to form a more cohesive community:

Create a Neutral Space: Through interviews with residents that have experienced segregated economic opportunities, the perception was that it was not due to hostility that residents were not being engaged, but rather a lack of opportunity

with the residents living in and around the DTS area. It could also extend to partner with local neighborhood associations such as Douglass-Sumner and Strawberry Hill, and local neighborhood business revitalization organizations such as HNMA and the Central Avenue Betterment Association (CABA). Following the MAPSCorps model, DTS could then work with the Unified Government to package and monetize the data collected by youth as a paid resource available to any potential future economic development and use that funding to keep the program economically sustainable.

Recruit Minority Experts: The practice of asset-based community development relies upon the local knowledge of citizen experts that are aware of resources and can build the trust and respect necessary for effective public participation. Without such local leaders, buy-in will be difficult and community development efforts will lack sustainability. One way to do this is to feature local artists that reflect the diversity of the community, and can help to draw additional residents in. Muralist José Faus is an example of that in Kansas City, with projects celebrating local culture and history decorating the walls of Downtown KCK businesses.

Another method for increasing the capacity of DTS to meet the needs of its residents is to be deliberate in increasing the diversity of its leadership. To attract new business leaders to join DTS, they could begin by connecting with Econ Avenue, an entrepreneurship initiative intended to support minority businesses in KCK. Econ Avenue holds monthly meetings at the First Baptist Church at 500 Nebraska Avenue, and is currently facilitated by Dell Gines, the Senior Community Development Advisor for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. They currently in the process of a leadership transition plan, which could be a good opportunity to build new relationships between the organizations.

To increase the diversity of resident leaders, DTS could connect with the KCK Public Housing Authority's Self Sufficiency program. It is coordinated by Sharron Davis-Mays, and regularly invites residents from the DTS take part in monthly public housing board meetings. By working together with Ms. Davis-Mays, DTS could reach out to the residents that are taking an active role in their public housing buildings within the DTS boundary. This would also help DTS with disseminating information and organizing community-based events.

Be Relevant: For DTS initiatives that hope to increase participation and be effective in improving health outcomes, it is essential that their programs be relevant to the community. This requires that community feedback be received so that programs are reflective of the desires and needs of the community.

The goal of this report is an opportunity for DTS to begin to address the health desires and needs within their community. For it to be sustainable, however, DTS must also allow residents to feel ownership over their efforts; "even the best ideas are impotent if they are not connected to, informed, and 'owned' by a larger body of participants"²⁴. To do so might see DTS having their regular meetings in ways that include accessible opportunities for residents to attend and provide direct feedback or preferences on the proposed programming.

As an example, an asset-based community development project in Selma, Alabama found that when community feedback was conducted at programmed art events that celebrated local culture – such as performance poetry and quilting – they received an overwhelming response from their community. Examples where DTS has could engage residents to solicit additional community feedback is at events they are already engaged in, such as the Latino Arts Festival and the DASH KCK 5k. Additional opportunities for feedback could also be considered within the small business incubator that is currently being developed by Dotte Agency for DTS.

Research in the fields of environmental and social psychology suggests that social ties between people are not simply formed based upon who they are, but also are influenced by the environment in which they are in. As an example, one study found that the amount of time residents spent in the same sized common spaces was strongly predicted by the location, the presence, and the number of trees in the space²⁵. Where people are living in overcrowded areas with a fear of crime and a lack of public spaces, social cohesion is found to be lacking.

The study suggested that the beautification of common spaces, with an increase in tree-shade and views towards nature, would see significant positive impacts in neighborhood social interactions. Related to those efforts, the researchers suggested that the planning of those public spaces be done with residents as co-participants alongside community organizers and urban planners. This participatory process could then both

increase social cohesion and potentially decrease the long term maintenance, if residents are engaged as caretakers of enhanced social spaces. Working alongside LISC and neighborhood organizations, DTS could identify local areas where social interactions could benefit from increased

3 IMPROVE DOWNTOWN KCK'S IMAGE BY IMPROVING SAFETY AND WALKABILITY

While public health research has shown that neighborhoods with low *walkability* (a measure of how easily walkable a neighborhood is) have a negative impact upon an individual's health, the field of research is still relatively new when compared to other public health dangers, such as the health impact of smoking. What is known is that there is an association between environments that are not walkable and chronic diseases, such as obesity and diabetes²⁶. Public health and urban transportation research also suggest that physical environments that have features that support walking – such as wheelchair accessible sidewalks, adequate street lighting, and well-maintained landscaping – can increase the perception among residents for how walkable a neighborhood is, which can then lead to increased rates of physical activity²⁷.

Perceptions Matter

The perception of how walkable a neighborhood is among its residents is an important factor to consider. One study surveyed people who lived in a highly-walkable neighborhood on whether or not they thought their neighborhood was walkable, and then tracked for four years their change in BMI (Body Mass-Index, an important measure of health). The study found that people that viewed their walkability in their neighborhood as low saw their BMI increase more than those who perceived the neighborhood as more walkable²⁸. The difference in walking for those with lower perceptions was approximately 79 minutes of less walking a week, which is a significant amount because public health guidelines recommend 150 minutes of physical activity a week. This misperception between residents and the walkability of their neighborhood as an objective concept challenges the “build-it-and-they-will-come” assumptions regarding pedestrian-friendly infrastructure; even if a neighborhood is objectively

walkable, perceptions do matter. A neighborhood with new sidewalks, but the perception that there aren't enough places to walk to, may not change walking behaviors that can improve health.

A similar study from New Zealand surveyed over 8,000 individuals nationally and found that, comparable to the United States, about 51% of the population did not meet the expected physical activity guidelines²⁹. The study reinforced that resident perceptions around walkability can have a major impact on how frequently an individual walks. An important finding highlighted in the study was that a poor perception of sidewalk conditions was found to be a significant factor in individuals not being physically active. For those individuals interested in being more physically active (such as jogging or running), the perceptions of crime and safety, as well as concerns about stray dogs, were perceived to be significant deterrents to exercise.

Related to crime and safety, one study sought to determine whether changes in walkability in low-education neighborhoods could change physical activity levels. The study used the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), which includes responses from across the United States on behaviors that shape public health outcomes, and compared responses from it to 39 communities that received the Communities Putting Prevention to Work Survey (CPPWS), which asked questions about perceived walkability and safety. Responses from over 100,000 adults were included in the study, and they were sorted by education level and how pleasant it was to walk in their neighborhoods. Perhaps not surprisingly, as education levels increased so too did the rate of responses indicating an adequate level of physical activity, with positive responses for perceived walkability and neighborhood safety also increasing. Measuring against the impact that education has on an individual's likelihood to be physically active, the researchers estimated that neighborhood walkability can account for 11.3% of the impact that education has, while perceptions of neighborhood safety accounts for 6.8% of education³⁰. The researchers came to the conclusion that:

Although the mediating effects are relatively small, these results suggest that interventions focused on enhancing walkability and safety in communities that face challenges in these areas might cut into the consistently observed disparity in meeting physical activity guidelines associated with education level. Given the difficulty of directly intervening on the



ABOVE: The annual DASH KCK 5k brings residents and families out to run through the Downtown KCK and Northeast KCK areas.

BELOW & RIGHT: Streetscape improvements have been made along Minnesota Avenue, and the recently renamed Beatrice L. Lee Community Center is located near Wyandotte Towers.



underlying socioeconomic determinants of health (e.g., income, poverty, employment, education), public health strategies focused on improving the environment so that healthy options become more feasible appear promising.

Learning from studies regarding walkability and how perceptions play an important role, DTS could work with local residents and businesses to create and promote social walking clubs or events. Another option for DTS to consider would be developing walking trails using existing Downtown KCK infrastructure, marked with appropriate signage to address perceptions, and guiding residents and visitors to a variety of destinations, an important feature of walkable neighborhoods.

While interventions like this alone will not account for socioeconomic factors, they can directly help to reduce health disparities in Downtown KCK.

The goal of promoting more walkability is that it can be measured, and evidence supports how walkability scores increase health outcomes. One study followed the walking patterns of more than 8,000 neighborhoods over a period of twelve years in Ontario, Canada. The study measured the health outcomes of the neighborhoods versus their *walkability scores*, which are determined by population density and nearby public and retail services. The researchers wanted to see what impact, if any, walkability had upon health outcomes. The study found that for every 5-point increase in a neighborhood's



ABOVE: The sidewalk conditions at the northwest corner of 10th and Armstrong — a previously proposed site for the Mayor's Healthy Campus — indicates a lack of density, design, and diversity of land-use; all of which contributing to a less-than walkable environment.

walkability score, the rate of type-2 diabetes lowered by approximately 4-5%³¹. This suggests that an increase in both residential density and walkable destinations could see a drop in the rates of type-2 diabetes. This evidence could support the investment of public health funding towards increasing walkability and the density of housing in Downtown KCK.

To measure how walkability can best be modified, a summary of over 100 public health studies that focused on physical activity, walkability, and youth behaviors came away with a series of recommendations. The changes in the built environment that were most often linked to an increase in walkability among children included reducing the speed and volume of traffic, increasing access to and the proximity of recreation facilities, having a diversity of land use, and having high residential density³². This suggests that prioritizing pedestrian-oriented street designs, adding walkable public destinations, and increasing the residential density in Downtown KCK can have an impact upon reducing health disparities.

Density, Design, and Diversity

There has been a recent increase in public health studies researching walkability in neighborhoods because, relative to individual behaviors, the built environment is easier to modify. Those modifications have the potential to then address the walking behaviors for many individuals at once. One public health study looking at the link between walkability and BMI found that walkable neighborhoods typically include what the study referred to as “the 3Ds”: population density, pedestrian-friendly design, and a diversity of destinations³³.

Density in a city allows for a critical mass of people that can encourage the development of walking infrastructure and destinations. The more people that live in Downtown KCK, the more businesses will locate there, and the more that the infrastructure will be needed to keep up with the increased demand.

Design refers to how older neighborhoods that were developed around pedestrians, and not cars, must reintroduce pedestrian-friendly designs, such as tree-shaded sidewalks, attractive destinations, and narrower streets where drivers are encouraged to slow down. Evidence suggests that residents living in older neighborhoods report walking more frequently.

Diversity is in reference to land uses, with evidence suggesting that areas with a good mix of zoning see a lower weight on average in their population. The addition of a new downtown grocery store next to public buildings like libraries and commercial buildings like coffee shops is an indicator of a diverse set of uses.

The study concluded by finding that the two strongest variables indicating whether or not someone has a lower BMI are 1) whether an individual walks to work; and 2) the age of housing³⁴. This suggests that the two most important walkability strategies for Downtown KCK to pursue are having places of employment within walking distances to residential areas, and connecting older neighborhoods to Downtown KCK with street designs that are more pedestrian-friendly.

The benefit of having more places for residents to walk to can also increase a neighborhood’s *social capital*, defined as the social networks and interactions that inspire trust among residents. One study found that the more likely a resident felt that they could walk easily in their neighborhood, the more likely they were to be socially engaged with others³⁵. The researchers also pointed out that neighborhood walkability was the only factor that consistently predicted how socially engaged someone was; it was more important a predictor for social capital than whether a resident knew their who their neighbors were, or whether or not they were politically engaged.

This suggests that improving walkability in the built environment can play an important role in improving social capital among residents living in Downtown KCK. This can be especially important for seniors living on fixed incomes in high-rise housing towers, and are dependent upon the public infrastructure to navigate the city. An example of where this can improve the quality of life for Downtown KCK residents can be found in the Resident Pride Surveys, where only 11% of residents said that it was “Very Likely” that a neighbor would be able to offer them a ride somewhere, and 25% of residents felt themselves to be “Not very connected” or “Not at all connected” to their neighborhood. By increasing pedestrian-friendly features and directly addressing residents’ perceptions of walkability, it would be expected that Downtown KCK could see an increase in both health outcomes and social cohesion.

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Card Sorting: Priority Issue #1

WHAT LEVEL OF CERTAINTY IS NEEDED TO CATALYZE MOVEMENTS?

Resident quotes from the survey:

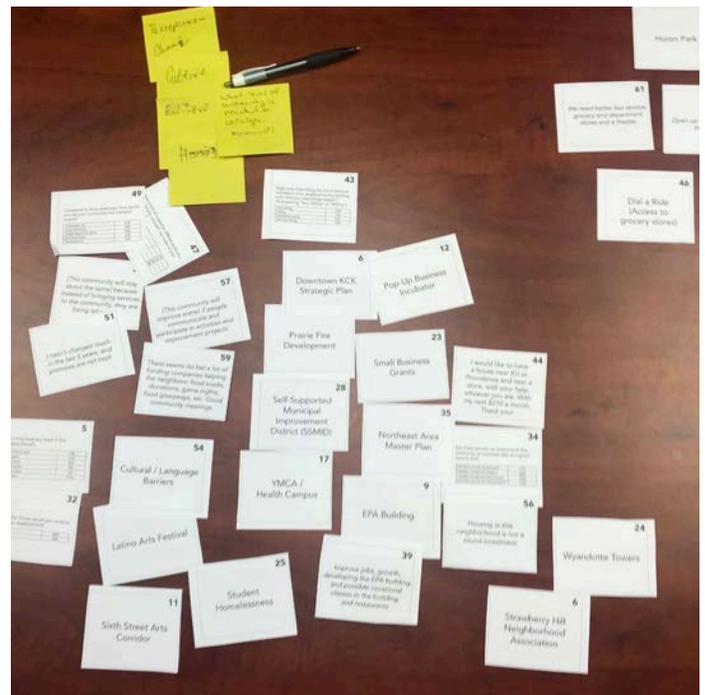
- “Improve jobs, growth, developing the EPA building, and possible vocational classes in the building, and restaurants.”
- “I would like to have a house near KU or Providence and near a store, with your help, whoever you are. With my rent \$210 a month. Thank you!”
- “This community will stay about the same because instead of bringing services to the community, they are being taken away.”
- “It hasn’t changed much in the last 5 years, and promises are not kept.”
- “Housing in this neighborhood is not a sound investment.”
- “This community will improve some if people communicate and participate in activities and improvement projects.”

Survey responses to the following questions:

- How long have you lived in this neighborhood?
- If you had the choice, would you continue to live in this neighborhood?
- How likely are you to recommend this community to someone else as a good place to live?
- How willing are you to become involved in your neighborhood by working with others to make things happen?
- How much of a positive difference do you feel that you yourself can make in your community?
- Compared to three years ago, how would you say your community has changed overall?

Issues identified in previous Quality of Life Plans:

- Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Association
- EPA Building
- Sixth Street Arts Corridor
- Pop-Up Business Incubator
- YMCA / Healthy Campus
- Small Business Grants
- Wyandotte Towers
- Student Homelessness
- Prairie Fire Development
- Northeast Area Master Plan
- Latino Arts Festival
- Cultural / Language Barriers



Card Sorting: Priority Issue #2

ENGAGE COMMUNITY AROUND COMMUNITY ASSETS AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

Resident quotes from the survey:

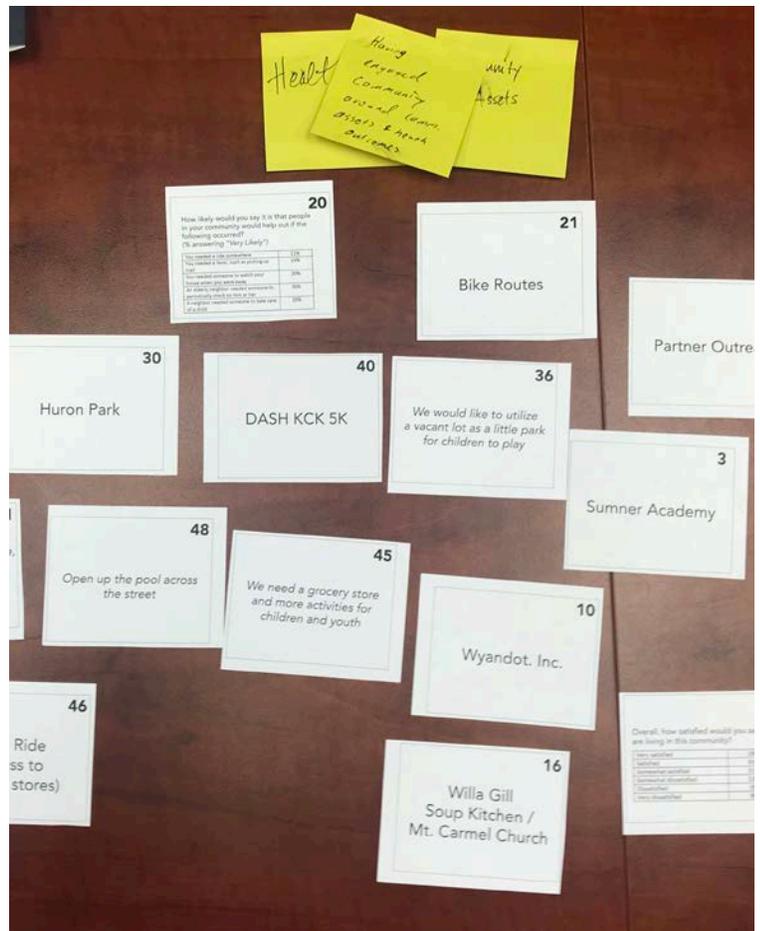
- “We would like to utilize a vacant lot as a little park for children to play.”
- “We need a grocery store and more activities for children and youth.”
- “Open up the pool across the street.”
- “We need better bus service, grocery, and department stores, and a theater.”

Survey responses to the following questions:

- How likely would you say it is that people in your community would help out if the following occurred?
- Overall, how satisfied would you say you are living in this community?

Issues identified in previous Quality of Life Plans:

- Sumner Academy
- Partner Outreach
- Wyandot. Inc.
- Willa Gill Soup Kitchen / Mt. Carmel Church
- Bike Routes
- Huron Park
- Dash KCK 5k
- Dial a ride (access to grocery stores)



Card Sorting: Priority Issue #3

IMPROVE DOWNTOWN’S IMAGE BY IMPROVING SAFETY AND WALKABILITY

Resident quotes from the survey:

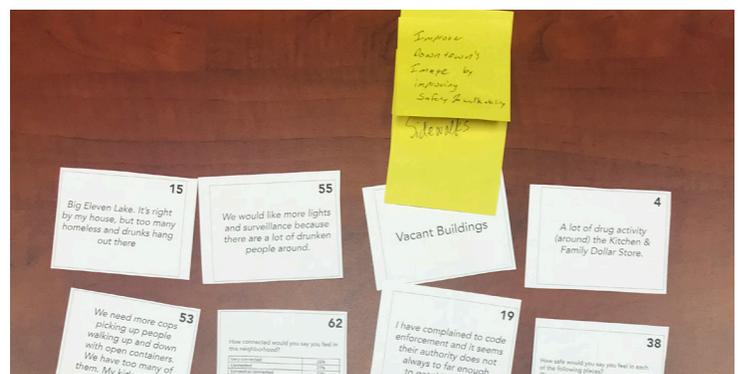
- “Sidewalks are so bad, people walk in the street. Property owners do not fully clean up foliage on fences, houses, clean bushes, etc. Neighbors have remains of eviction papers on windows.”
- “A lot of drug activity around the Kitchen & Family Dollar Store.”
- “Big Eleven Lake. It’s right by my house, but too many homeless and drunks hang out there.”
- “I have complained to code enforcement and it seems their authority does not always go far enough to get things done.”
- “Groups of dogs loose, not aggressive, just scary. Dogs get into our yards and into our trash.”
- “Gunshot activity by neighbors who rent. Declining property upkeep. No sidewalk repair.”
- “I am extremely frustrated. I don’t sit on my porch anymore. All I have to view is trash, foliage, people walking in the middle of the street, neighbors who are transient (renters) and never speak, vacant lots.”
- “I like my neighborhood. We just need sidewalks and speed bumps so everyone can be safe.”
- “They need to fix the sidewalks for people in wheelchairs. There are no cabs. We need a grocery store.”
- “We need more cops picking up people walking up and down with open containers. We have too many of them. My kids can’t ever play in the front yard.”
- “We would like more lights and surveillance because there are a lot of drunken people around.”
- “What do I need to do to get a sidewalk on our street and for cars to slow down coming and going up our streets? Too many accidents happen. We need sidewalks!”

Survey responses to the following questions:

- Thinking about the next three years, how would you say your community is likely to change?
- How would you rate each of the following aspects of this neighborhood?
- How safe would you say you feel in each of the following places?
- Overall, how much do you feel that people in your neighborhood can count on each other when they need help?
- How connected would you say you feel in this neighborhood?

Issues identified in previous Quality of Life Plans:

- Landscaping and maintenance
- Urban Design Guidelines
- Historic District / Resources
- Complete Streets
- Vacant Buildings
- Legal Aid
- Tree Trimming and Noxious Weeds





Neighborhood Audit Summary

INTRODUCTION

Dotte Agency and representative neighborhood stakeholders have developed ‘sample readings’ of the Downtown Shareholders neighborhood in an area selected by residents and leaders. This customized “Healthy Community Audit Instrument” builds upon the information from discussions and surveys through the NeighborWorks Survey and Community Engagement activities. Measures to assess neighborhood environments are needed to better understand the salient features that may enhance outdoor physical attributes of building and land property; active living, such as walking and bicycling for transport or leisure; and to identify cues of safety within the neighborhood.

There are two key standard, well-recognized surveying instruments that have been utilized in this project: the Active Living Research “PIN3 Neighborhood Audit” tool and the *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Toolkit: A Guide for Planning and Designing Safer Streets*. The shorter, customized version that we developed for the Ivanhoe neighborhood can be found in Appendix C: Neighborhood Audit Tool.

Through the Community Engagement process, Downtown Shareholder representative leaders and residents collectively identified a 12-block area between 8th to 11th Streets, and Armstrong to Washington Avenues. A neighborhood leader and resident met with

Dotte Agency, LISC representatives on February 27th and May 16th, 2018, to apply the audit in this area. Recent momentum that we has raised a lot of attention inside and outside of the neighborhood is: 1.) Complete Streets renovation just east of this selected site between 7th and 8th Streets along Minnesota Avenue; 2.) Some small development to the 8th Street Park 3.) Annual KCK Dash / Library in the Park event every fall brings attention to the Big 11 Park; 4.) Recently installed bike lane along 10th Street linking the northernmost part of the HNMA District to Armourdale; 5.) Continued interest to build a new YMCA and grocery store in this area (this area has been a focus among civic leaders for over five years through a study developed by Gould Evans Architects); 6.) Recently (within last five years) re-developed, popular Waterway Park to the southwest of this selected area. This sign of momentum of institutional investment to make healthy changes to the built environment visible — revealing commitment to public school property development that also contributes to public space improvements.

Moving Forward

The neighborhood audit method is best done with a group of leaders, residents and those that have capacity to share stories, identify and prioritize needs, ultimately aiding in bringing partners to invest and influence policy in the neighborhood. To make small and large changes, it is important to visit and revisit the area, a “boots on the



ground” approach, periodically and build others’ interest in being aware of the neighborhood needs. Residents, the DTS leadership, LISC partners, city planning and public works representatives need to be part of the neighborhood audit process for it to effectively translate needs to action. To build upon these efforts, best results occur when the residents and business owners that live and work within the 12-block area become “block captains” to improve a continuous form of communication to understand the daily underlying needs of the residents. The neighborhood audit process provides objective analysis of visible signs of change in the neighborhoods. It is best if the neighborhood audits can be done repeatedly: a couple times of year when the seasons show different levels of resident activity and landscaping features (for example, a winter survey and summer survey) and annually to highlight small and large impact changes that happen from year to year. It has been proven that this sort of attentiveness and inclusiveness will lead to better results.

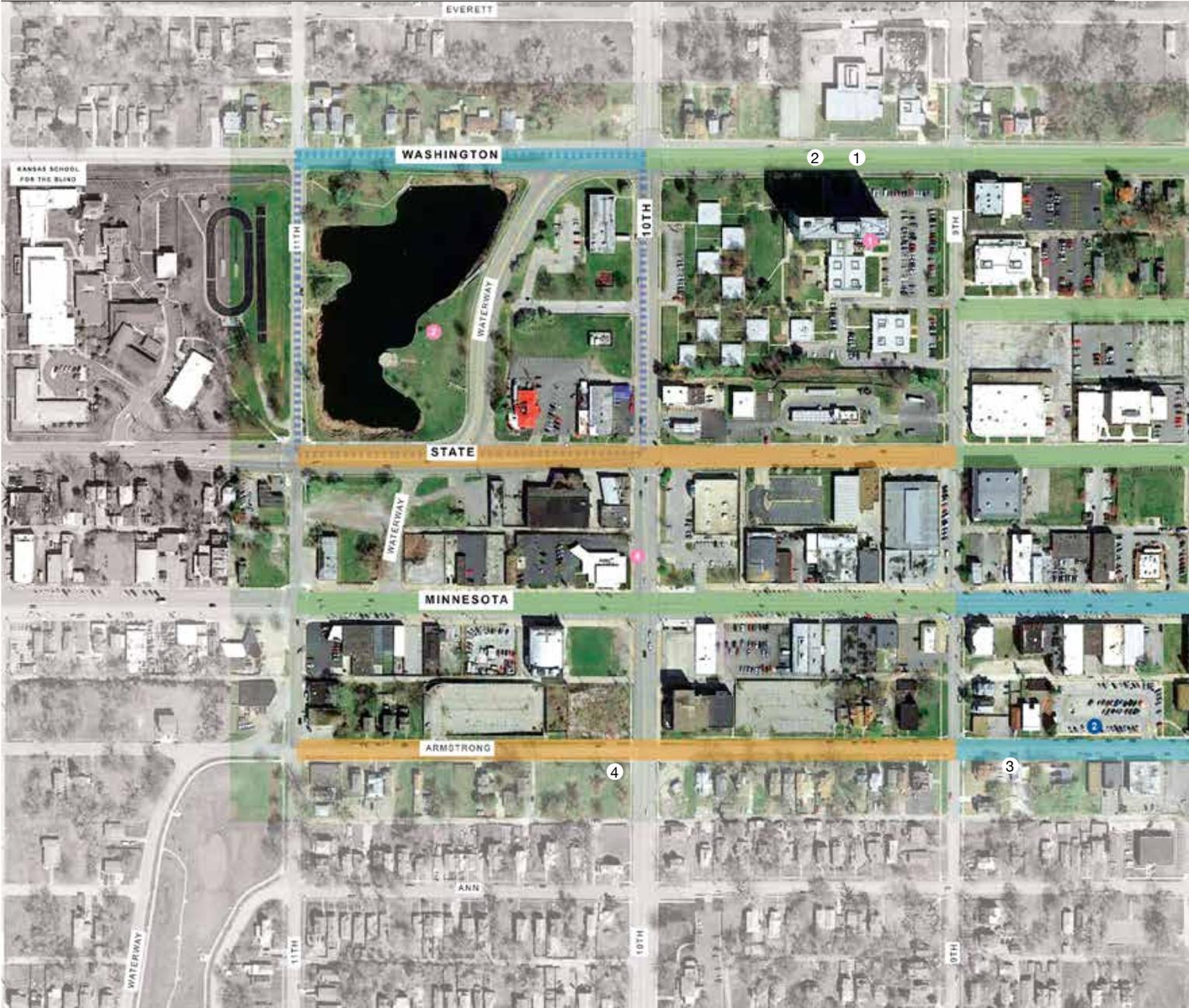
A copy of the Healthy Community Audit Instrument can be found in Appendix C.

RIGHT & BELOW: Sidewalk conditions in the area are frequently auto-oriented and lack continuity for pedestrians when in front of businesses.

OPPOSITE: Long sidewalks with occasional barriers to pedestrian access are visible.

PREVIOUS: Big Eleven Lake is a prominent recreation area on the west edge of Downtown KCK. It is in close proximity to the Beatrice Lee Center and the Wyandotte Towers.





DOWNTOWN KCK: SAFETY

Identifying Safety Characteristics in the Built Environment

February 27th and May 16th, 2018

This neighborhood audit tool assesses crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), which is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design and relies upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts. Altering the physical design of neighborhoods in which humans reside and congregate in order to deter criminal activity is the main goal of CPTED principles. These principles of design affect elements of the built environment ranging from the small-scale (such as the strategic use of shrubbery and other vegetation) to the overarching build form of an entire urban neighborhood and the amount of opportunity for “eyes on the street.”

We analyzed the survey results through “Health Community Audit Instrument” and arrived at a four-point scale system:

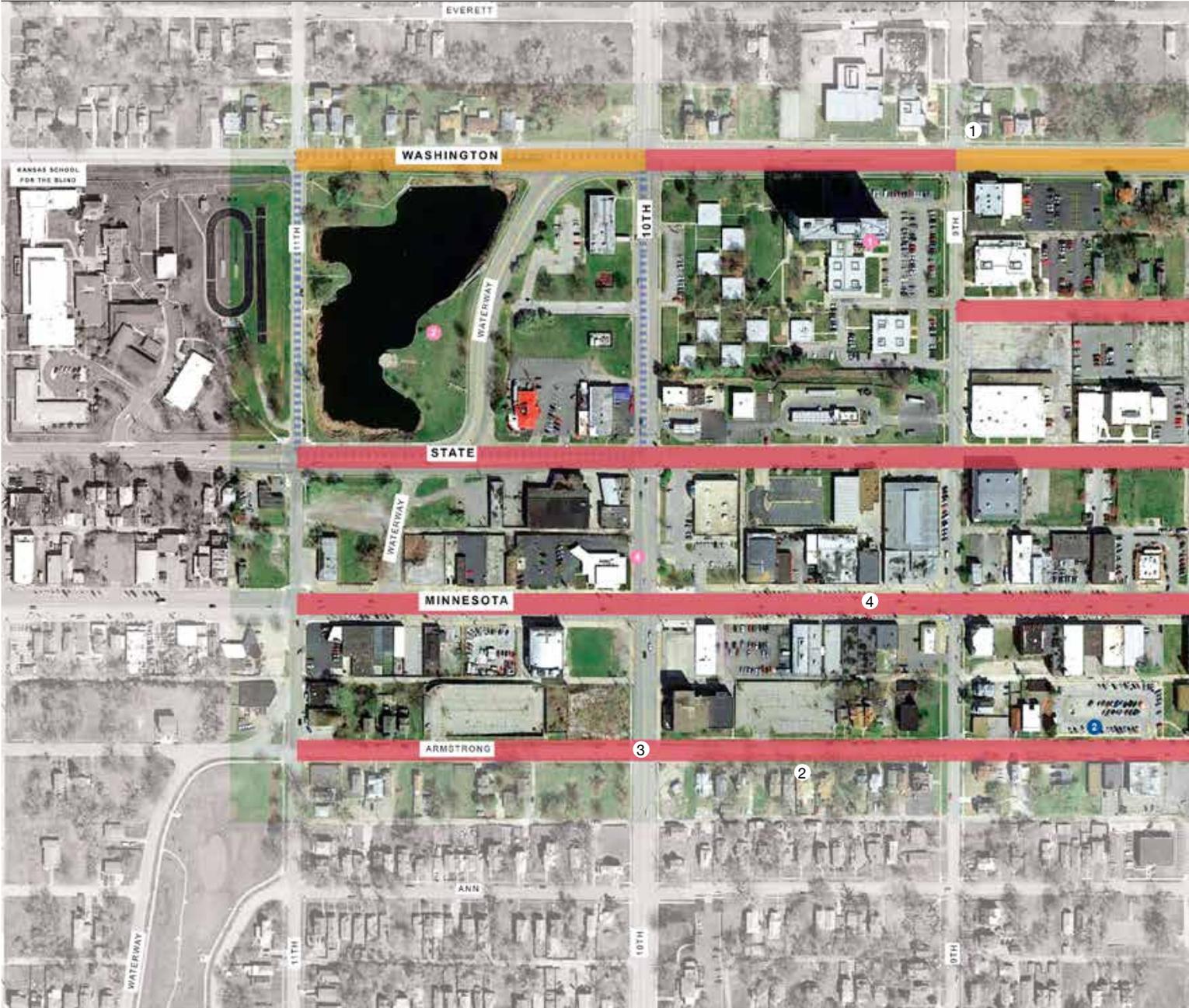


Natural Surveillance: The assessment, block-by-block, evaluated the overall condition of the residential doorways that open to outside and how well they are lit; how visible the front doors are from the street; and whether landscaping creates blind spots or hiding spots. Only 10-20% of the storefronts had lights turned on, and 40% of the storefronts had lit windows, when surveying this area. Lit storefronts are welcoming symbols and this additional lighting source can help to deter crime and enhance the overall appearance of the street. Encourage business owners to turn their storefront lights on from dusk to dawn, and offering grants or shared costs for businesses willing to install new storefront lights will improve this area at night. The majority of the front doors are visible throughout the neighborhood and a minority of the commercial area are protected by awnings. The majority of the blocks, 70% of the blocks, are clear of blind spots or hiding spots within the landscape; the block areas between 9th and 11th along Armstrong and Minnesota Avenues are in need of the greatest attention. Natural surveillance increases the perceived risk of attempting deviant actions by improving visibility of potential offenders to the general public. Natural surveillance occurs by designing the placement of physical features, activities and people in such a way as to maximize visibility of the space and its users, fostering positive social interaction among legitimate users of private and public space. Potential offenders feel increased scrutiny, and thus inherently perceive an increase in risk.

Territorial Reinforcement: The assessment, block-by-block, evaluated the overall condition of how the property lines are defined and encourage interactions with plantings, fences, short walls; and whether the street address is visible from the street with numbers. Empty lots between buildings generally lack definition along the sidewalk edge and in some cases are overgrown. Natural access control could be improved in some of these areas as it limits the opportunity for crime by taking steps to clearly differentiate between public space and private space. By selectively placing entrances and exits, fencing, lighting and landscape to limit access or control flow, natural access control occurs. Pocket park installations, developing attractive spaces and activities while these lots remain undeveloped would improve the aesthetics and activities of the streetscape. With so many parking lots embedded throughout the neighborhood, there are vast spaces of no activity which makes the pedestrian feel vulnerable—many areas behind or on the side of buildings where the pedestrian cannot predict who is there.

Maintenance and Green Space: The assessment, block-by-block, evaluated the overall condition of the structures; the general condition of landscaping and whether old automobiles and other vehicles exist in the empty lots. About 50% of the blocks were evaluated with generally in a ‘fair/good repair’ condition. Maintenance is an expression of ownership of property. Deterioration indicates less control by the intended users of a site and indicate a greater tolerance of disorder.





DOWNTOWN KCK: ACTIVE LIVING

Identifying Active Living in Neighborhoods

February 27th and May 16th, 2018

This neighborhood audit tool assess street-level characteristics that may be related to walking and bicycling. The instrument places emphasis on measuring the walkability of the neighborhood with an understanding of the impact of cars upon that experience. Increasing physical activity is a powerful way to prevent obesity and promote health among children and adults. Across the country, practitioners, advocates and policy-makers are coming together to create healthier communities that support active lifestyles. Children and families are more active when they live in neighborhoods that have sidewalks, parks, bicycle lanes and safe streets.

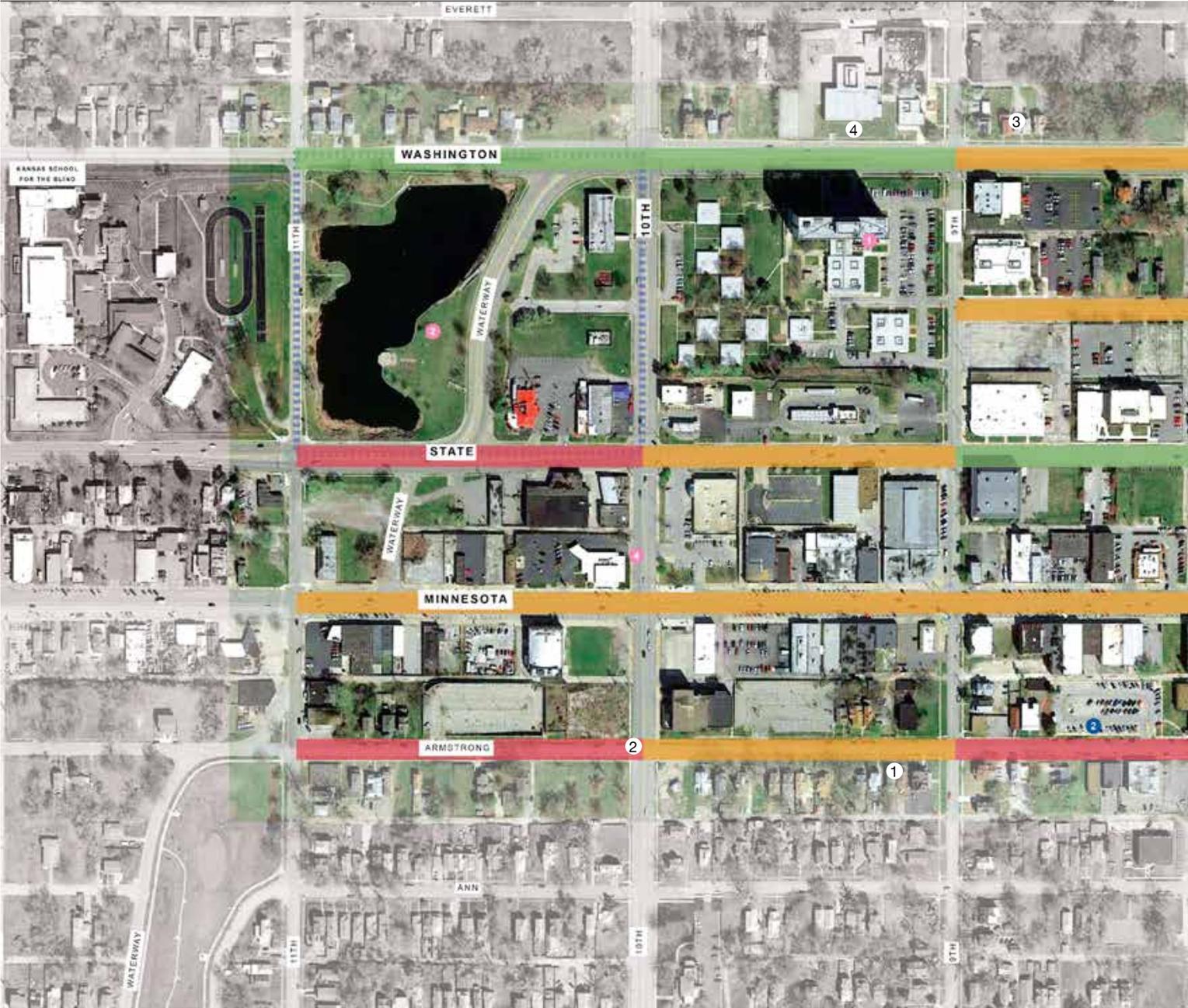
We analyzed the survey results through “Health Community Audit Instrument” and arrived at a four-point scale system:



Walking and Bicycling Amenities: The assessment, block-by-block, evaluated the overall condition of the presence of sidewalks, their buffer space between the street and the sidewalk, the condition of the sidewalks, shade trees and public lighting. The majority of the streets in this area had sidewalks along both sides of the entire streets—while the sidewalks along Armstrong between 9th and 11th Streets are in various stages of disrepair—along with overgrown empty lots on either side of the street exist, making the area feel uninviting. The majority of the streets lack planted buffers along the sidewalks, and rarely were there trees to provide shade for the pedestrian. Shade trees and plant material offer aesthetic, environmental, social and economic benefits to cities. Most importantly, trees create a comfortable pedestrian environment. While 50% of the streets have ‘good/fair’ sidewalk conditions (the ‘Complete Streets’ area has greatly improved the perceived experience of the streetscape, although there are some shrubs and trees that need to be trimmed to maintain good visibility), 50% have ‘poor/dangerous’ sidewalk conditions (and in one case, non-existent along Washington Avenue near Big 11 Park). Sidewalks should be free from cracks, heaving and spalling sidewalks should be replaced. Sidewalks that are in unacceptable condition should be reported to the city. In many cases cracked or heaving sidewalks are present in front of vacant or abandoned properties.

Road Characteristics: The assessment, block-by-block, evaluated the overall condition of the car speed limit, the presence of a shoulder or bike lane and on-street parking. In general, it was unclear what the speed limit for cars was because rarely was there a sign posted on these blocks. Cars traveled at a higher speed along most streets in this 12-block area making pedestrians feel vulnerable. Throughout the study area, there were no bike lanes (except along 10th Street) and on-street parking was allowed on both sides of the street along Minnesota and Armstrong Avenues—not on State nor Washington Avenues). During this audit, we did not see any bicyclists. The majority of the street lighting is currently provided using “cobra head” style street lights mounted on utility poles at 25-30’ height, approximately every 100’ on one side of the road. At this time of this audit 90% of the lights were functioning at night.





DOWNTOWN KCK: PROPERTY

Characterizing Neighborhood Property in Health Research

February 27th and May 16th, 2018

Over the last couple of decades, studies have been developed to explore the impact of community characteristics on the physical and mental health of residents to better understand population health and health disparities. Direct observation of neighborhood characteristics using an audit instrument relies on more objective measurement to capture many of the comprehensive and detailed environmental characteristics relevant for health.

We analyzed the survey results through “Health Community Audit Instrument” and arrived at a four-point scale system:



Residential Land Use: The assessment, block-by-block, evaluated the overall condition of the residential units; presence of porches, borders (fences, shrubs, etc.); boarded, burned or abandoned residential units; and presence of visible security warning signs. There are vacant or abandoned buildings within the selected area where 25% of the blocks had at least one vacant or boarded-up building. In most cases, these properties have been closed and secured and are in various states of disrepair. It has been found in other cities that when several of these properties are clustered together, it tends to attract criminal activity. In the residential blocks, most houses, 90% of the blocks, had porches but lacked defined borders which can positively define property territories that serve to protect private property, while also playing an important role in image and the aesthetic of the street. If used, the most common type of fence used throughout the neighborhood is chain-link fence. Chain-link, while functional and affordable, provides a harsh, uninviting aesthetic. Ornamental fencing that is a maximum of 4-feet in height should be encouraged. In some cases, landscape hedges were used which are a softer, more aesthetic way to define the front yard. Hedges should be kept no taller than 30” in height to maintain clear sight lines and eliminate hiding places. In the commercial areas, there were large parking lot areas throughout the business district that while provided parking to support the buildings also disrupted the continuity of the pedestrian areas—where the car is predominant over the pedestrian—often making the pedestrian feel vulnerable. Better separations and continuity of the urban fabric would improve the quality of the business district.

Public, Residential, Non-Residential Spaces / Aesthetics: The assessment, block-by-block, evaluated the general condition of public spaces; visibly active people; overall conditions of parks and playgrounds; visible dogs, litter and graffiti. There are a fair number of vacant or abandoned properties and vast parking lots, ranging from 50-80% of each block throughout the 12-block area. Most of these blocks had little visible active pedestrians, except on Minnesota Avenue between 8th to midway 9th Street — where the continuity of the storefront buildings provided somewhat predictable, protected space for the pedestrian. Large vast parking lots on each block along Armstrong were mostly empty of cars, in disrepair and disrupted the continuity of the residential fabric. Large empty lots were predominant along Minnesota midway 9th to 11th Streets, all along State Avenue between 8th and 11th, on Nebraska between 8th to 9th and on Washington between 8th and 9th. This scattered, empty pattern of parking lots are disruptive to the urban fabric of downtown KC making it challenging for the pedestrian to enjoy the area. While many empty lots are mowed and seemingly cared for, there are some where trash has collected and overgrowth is happening. Vacant lots can be re-purposed for a variety of community based uses. By allowing community members or groups to adopt these lots, a space that was previously a blight problem could be transformed into a vibrant community asset. Big 11 Lake Park is an asset to this neighborhood but the residential and commercial properties that surround the park are generally in ‘fair/poor’ condition while the institutional buildings (the Beatrice Lee Community Center and the KS School for the Blind) are well maintained. The park is well-maintained and has amenities that make it generally attractive to use. At night, the park is dimly lit. The park seems well-used although pedestrian access to it is very challenging with lack of sidewalks adjacent to it and fences and varied terrain that make it challenging to walk.



Mapping Community Development Assets

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

As part of the Community Engagement process, Dotte Agency worked with neighbors to identify and make visible existing community development investments (physical and programmatic), health assets and ‘problem areas’ through mapping. Large scale maps were then created highlighting areas of previous investment as reported by residents as well as areas for improvement. Priority geographic focus areas were identified and outlined on the map to help direct future change efforts and interventions to improve community health. These maps help to tell the neighborhood’s ‘health story’ and can be a valuable resource in community problem solving. Each map is laminated and includes space for additional comments and data points for future engagement.

In addition, Dotte Agency worked with Assistant Professor Dr. Hui Cai to create ‘cross maps’ to delve deeper into the data and showcase relationships between neighborhood assets.

The goal of mapping is to highlight differences between the needs and the available resources within the community. We have combined key themes such as housing, schools, healthcare, recreation, retails and other community services with the vulnerable populations such as low income households, single-mom, elderly, and poor elderly, family with kids etc. The data we mapped

included but were not limited to:

1. Demographics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, education)
2. Poverty and unemployment
3. Food Resources (e.g., Grocery stores, Corner stores, Farmers’ markets, Cultural food stores)
4. Other retail
5. Recreation (e.g., parks, recreation, fitness center, gyms, Public trails, bikeways)
6. Healthcare (e.g., clinic, hospital, and nursing home)
7. Education (e.g. schools and daycares)
8. Community services (e.g. library, daycare, community center, church)
9. Housing characteristics (e.g., age of houses, house vacancy, rental availability, housing)
10. Land use (e.g., residential zoning, non-residential zoning, land bank, vacant lots)
11. Transportation (e.g., sidewalk, trail, car ownership, bus routes, stops, other public transit)

Methods

The study is developed in three phases (Figure 1):

Phase 1: Acquiring and organizing secondary data. The geospatial data comes from various sources, for instance, Geographical boundary shapes and some demographics

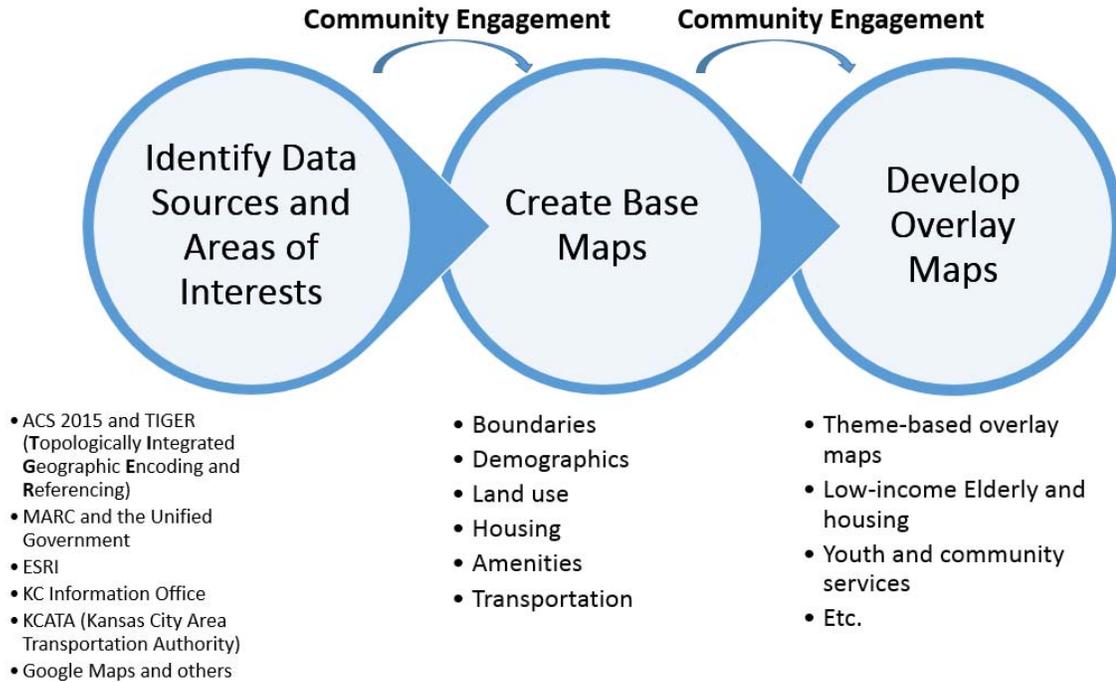


Figure 1: Three-step mapping process

come from American Community Survey/ Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER). The community service resource data is collected from KC Information Office, AIMS, MARC and the Unified Government, ESRI's Community Analyst data, and Google Maps. Multiple data sets have been compiled and filtered to focus on the five neighborhoods that LISC is interested in. The transportation data was provided by AIMS. The demographics information was based on ESRI USA Demographics and Boundaries 2015.

Phase 2: Building original data maps using the secondary data sources. Create consistent mapping standards for all five neighborhoods.

Phase 3: Building overlay and analysis maps to help LISC identify catchment areas and strategies for future investment.

Results

In total, 80 base maps and 75 overlay maps were created. For KCK there are 26 overlay maps, and for the KCMO side, there are 49 overlay maps. These maps help to evaluate whether the distribution of current community amenities and housing resources are consistent with where potentially vulnerable population are, such as seniors, high rates of poverty, single moms, and families with kids.

For instance, the northwest corner of Douglass-Sumner and the south east corner of Downtown KCK have been identified as areas with high rate of low-income households and low availability of available rental units. When we overlay the population density with the concentration of houses that were built before 1939, it again showed the southeast corner of downtown KCK as a targeted area to improve. The third overlay maps showed that area has 45% of vacant housing, which demonstrated the mismatch between the types of houses that are available and the needs of the low-income population.

On the KCMO side, the center of Scarritt Renaissance was shown as an area with higher concentration of low income household and low availability of rentals. It has also high population density and relatively high percentage of houses that were built before 1939. The area on the west side and to the east side of Ivanhoe has demonstrated as area that has relatively high concentration of low income household and older structures, and the vacancy is low, which indicates the needs for additional housing. While the middle of the Blue Hills showed potential for adaptive reuse or renovations as there is a misfit between available houses and people with needs.

Detailed Community Development Asset Maps can be found in Appendix D.

Kansas City LISC
Neighborhood Pride Evaluation
Project Synopsis

Prepared by Success Measures® at NeighborWorks® America

August 2017



INTRODUCTION

Over a period of time, Kansas City (KC) LISC has been investing in five communities with the goal of increasing neighborhood pride. In September 2016, KC LISC began working with Success Measures at NeighborWorks America, to help them and five of their community-based partners plan and implement an outcome evaluation on resident quality of life and community pride in these communities. Success Measures supported LISC and its partners to:

- Design the evaluation process, including selecting data collection tools;
- Create a data collection implementation plan;
- Provide technical assistance to implement the evaluation;
- Prepare baseline evaluation reports;
- Review the evaluation process and plan for next steps.

This report summarizes the planning, implementation, and findings of this evaluation project which ran from September 2016 through June 2017. More details about project activities and timeline can be found at the end of the report on page 11.

PLANNING

The evaluation effort began with an in-person planning session in Kansas City. Success Measures facilitated a conversation for LISC staff to articulate their definition of “neighborhood pride” and the indicators of pride. Sessions with staff from each of the five neighborhood groups were held so they could review and refine those indicators for their specific neighborhood.

The identified indicators of neighborhood pride among residents included the following:

- Satisfaction with the neighborhood;
- Willingness to recommend the neighborhood as a good place to live
- Feeling safe in the neighborhood;
- Strong sense of place, feeling connected to others in neighborhood, and counting on others for help;
- Participation in community initiatives, getting involved, having a voice;
- Positive perception of physical conditions in neighborhood, cleanliness, condition of streets and sidewalks, public spaces and the homes;
- Confidence that the neighborhood is improving
- Access to public services, businesses and services, cultural/art/music events, food choices

The next step was to identify questions from the Success Measures library to serve as a common set used across organizations to measure those indicators. (See the core survey questions starting on page 12.) In addition, each organization had the opportunity to add custom questions of special interest to their particular organization.

Representatives from each of the five neighborhood groups were interviewed to articulate their unique goals. In addition, each group defined the neighborhood boundaries where they would survey the residents and identified the necessary strategies and resources to administer the survey successfully.

LISC and its partners hoped that the baseline data would be used by the neighborhood organizations to build community support for next steps, identify potential areas of focus, develop partnerships and leverage the information to secure additional resources for program implementation. The expectation is that the resident survey will be repeated in three years and will reveal evidence of progress toward increasing neighborhood pride.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted using a random sample of households in each neighborhood; sizes of the neighborhoods ranged from 250 to 3,500 households. Each group hoped to obtain a minimum of 200 completed surveys from selected residents. These factors would ensure that the results were representative of the entire neighborhood. (Using this approach the results would have a 90% confidence level (with 5% +/- interval) of being representative of the perceptions of the entire neighborhood.)

LISC staff secured lists of residential addresses for each neighborhood so that a random sample of addresses for each neighborhood's data collection could be generated.

The groups employed multiple data collection strategies, including going door-to-door to administer the survey in person, sending the survey via email, mailing paper copies of the survey, inviting specific households to a convening to complete the survey, and connecting with selected residents at community events.

Staff received training and technical assistance to conduct the survey, including strategies for recruiting and training data collectors, publicizing the survey effort and steps for entering the responses into the Success Measures Data System (SMDS). The participating groups had access to all of the Success Measures resources available on the Evaluation Learning Center, a repository of evaluation materials, how-to's and templates. In addition, identified leads from each community, as well as the LISC project manager, received ongoing technical assistance and support from Success Measures.

The original timeline, which had targeted December 2016 for data collected completion, was deemed too ambitious and was deferred to May 2017.

IMPLEMENTATION

Neighborhood groups found it very challenging to conduct the survey using a random sampling method and to obtain the required number of completed surveys.

Downtown Shareholders was able to implement the survey following the random sample. They obtained 95 responses. While that did not meet their goal, the information is useful and representative (at a 70% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- 5 %).

Using a variety of methods to obtain responses, Blue Hills Community Services collected 179 survey responses and Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council collected 105 responses. Several of the groups created a hyperlink to the evaluation on SMDS which they posted on their website and/or Facebook page. Several used the email function on SMDS to send the survey to interested neighborhood residents. While the responses are not representative, the information provides both LISC and the organizations with useful information.

Mattie Rhodes Center and Douglas Sumner Neighborhood Association collected 21 and 20 responses respectively, making the information of limited value.

Organization	Household count	Number of surveys collected
Blue Hills Community Services	3093	179
Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council	2711	105
Downtown Shareholders	826	95
Mattie Rhodes Center	1758	21
Douglas Sumner Neighborhood Association	240	20

Conducting a sample was an ambitious undertaking given that none of the groups had prior experience doing this type of evaluation effort. Several of the organizations were in favor of the sample survey approach because they believed their strong connections to residents would make the survey effort less burdensome. However, groups underestimated the effort it would take and, in retrospect, believe it would have been better to select another strategy. It is also possible that not all groups were ready for this approach and that a tailored approach for each organization, rather than a common methodology for all five groups, might have been more successful.

FINDINGS

Three of the neighborhoods secured a sizable number of responses by June 1: Blue Hills, Ivanhoe and Downtown Shareholders. Although none of them secured sufficient number of responses for a 90% confidence level with a 5% margin of error, there is still much that can be observed in the data that indicate possible neighborhood direction on the question of pride and connectivity and can assist the organizations and KC LISC in considering future program actions.

The following are some of the key questions and findings with detailed data from this evaluation.

General Background and Neighborhood Satisfaction

How long have you lived in this neighborhood?

- All three neighborhoods saw a range of answers among respondents to the question of how long they have lived in the neighborhood.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Less than 1 year	11%	10%	12%
1-5 years	26%	18%	35%
6-10 years	11%	11%	26%
11-20 years	16%	11%	9%
21-30 years	10%	9%	1%
>30 years	26%	40%	17%

Overall, considering everything, how satisfied would you say you are living in this community?

- When asked about their level of satisfaction with the neighborhood, a majority of respondents indicated they are either “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”. [Blue Hills=51%, Ivanhoe= 65%, Downtown Shareholders=54%]

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Very satisfied	23%	25%	19%
Satisfied	28%	40%	35%
Somewhat satisfied	31%	22%	21%
Somewhat dissatisfied	12%	7%	13%
Dissatisfied	3%	2%	3%
Very dissatisfied	3%	4%	9%

KC LISC believes that in a neighborhood exhibiting strong pride residents would rate as Good or Very Good the cleanliness, physical conditions, safety and friendliness.

How would you rate each of the following aspects of this neighborhood?

- Of the factors, friendliness received high ratings across the organizations.
- The physical conditions of the neighborhood generally received lower ratings than safety and friendliness. In Blue Hills and Ivanhoe physical conditions and cleanliness received relatively low ratings. Respondents from Downtown Shareholders rated the physical conditions slightly higher.

<i>% indicates those responding "Good" and "Very good"</i>	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Cleanliness of the neighborhood	31%	42%	42%
Physical conditions of the houses	28%	29%	43%
Physical condition of the streets, sidewalks and public spaces	30%	36%	38%
Safety in the neighborhood	40%	55%	41%
Friendliness of their neighborhoods	63%	78%	48%

How likely are you to recommend this community to someone else as a good place to live?

- In all three neighborhoods, most respondents indicated either "Definitely would recommend" or "Probably would recommend" their neighborhood as a good place to live. [Blue Hills=70%, Ivanhoe=81%, Downtown Shareholders=75%]

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Definitely would recommend	28%	29%	27%
Probably would recommend	42%	52%	48%
Probably would not recommend	23%	11%	16%
Definitely would not recommend	6%	8%	10%

If you had the choice, would you continue to live in this neighborhood?

- In all three neighborhoods the vast majority of respondent indicated that they would continue to live in the neighborhood if they had a choice.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Yes	69%	84%	68%
No	31%	16%	32%

Sense of Safety

How safe would you say you feel in each of the following places?

- In all three of the neighborhoods the majority of respondents reported feeling “Very safe” or “Safe” during the day; the percentage of residents feeling safe walking in their neighborhood at night was much lower.

<i>% indicates those responding “Very safe” and “Safe”</i>	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Walking in neighborhood during day	67%	76%	74%
Walking in neighborhood at night	21%	43%	35%

Connection Among Neighbors and Resident Engagement

Another indicator identified by KC LISC for neighborhood pride are strong connections among residents. The survey included questions asking residents whether they feel connected with the neighborhood, whether they believe that residents can count on each other when they need help, and whether they are willing to become involved in the neighborhood working with others. Another question identified five situations and asked residents how likely it would be that others would help in each of the situations.

How likely would you say it is that people in your community would help out if the following occurred?

- The results from this question suggest that neighbors in Blue Hills and Ivanhoe can count on one another. It is noteworthy that more than 50% of Ivanhoe respondents selected “Very likely” in all five situations.

<i>% indicates those responding “Very likely”</i>	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
You needed a ride somewhere	32%	52%	11%
You needed a favor, such as picking up mail	41%	61%	14%
You needed someone to watch your house when you were away	47%	65%	20%
An elderly neighbor needed someone to periodically check on him or her	42%	68%	36%
A neighbor needed someone to take care of a child	30%	53%	20%

Right now, how willing are you to become involved in your neighborhood by working with others to make things happen?

- In each organization the majority (59 % - 66%) of respondents indicated that they were either “Very willing” or “Willing” to work with others to make things happen.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Very willing	25%	23%	32%
Willing	37%	43%	27%
Somewhat willing	29%	27%	21%
Not that willing	9%	7%	20%

How much of a positive difference do you feel that you, yourself, can make in your community?

- Across the organizations respondents reported that they could have a positive different in their community.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
A great deal	25%	34%	37%
A fair amount	42%	38%	27%
Some	26%	23%	18%
A little or none	8%	5%	18%

How connected would you say you feel in this neighborhood?

- Across the organizations, most respondents indicated they felt connected to their neighborhood. 44% of respondents in Blue Hills, 68% of respondents in Ivanhoe and 53% of respondents in Downtown Shareholders indicated they feel “Very Connected” or “Connected”.
- 50% of Ivanhoe respondents reported they feel “Very connected”.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Very connected	21%	50%	26%
Connected	23%	18%	27%
Somewhat connected	34%	21%	23%
Not very connected	14%	6%	15%
Not at all connected	7%	5%	10%

Overall, considering everything, how much do you feel that people in your neighborhood can count on each other when they need help?

- People in these neighborhoods reported they could count on each other for help.
- 56% of respondents from Blue Hills, 78% of respondents from Ivanhoe and 48% of respondents from Downtown Shareholders indicated they could count on each other “A great deal” or “A fair amount”.
- 39% of respondents in Ivanhoe indicated that people could count on their neighbors “A great deal”.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
A great deal	21%	39%	19%
A fair amount	35%	39%	29%
A little	33%	15%	34%
Not at all	11%	8%	18%

Perception of Neighborhood Change

Compared to three years ago, how would you say your community has changed overall?

- 40% of respondents in Blue Hills, 56% of respondents in Ivanhoe and 46% of respondents in Downtown Shareholders reported that their neighborhood had “Improved a lot” or “Improved some” in the past three years. Across the three neighborhoods, 30-39% of respondents indicated “Stayed about the same”.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Improved a lot	11%	22%	11%
Improved some	29%	34%	35%
Stayed about the same	39%	30%	32%
Declined some	10%	8%	13%
Declined a lot	11%	7%	10%

Thinking about the next three years, how would you say your community is likely to change?

- In all three neighborhoods a high percentage of residents expressed confidence that the neighborhood would improve in the next three years.
- 62% of respondents in Blue Hills, 68% of Ivanhoe and 59% of Downtown Shareholders indicated they thought the community would “Improve a lot” or “Improve some”.

	Blue Hills	Ivanhoe	Downtown Shareholders
Improve a lot	16%	29%	13%
Improve some	46%	39%	46%

Stay about the same	30%	28%	31%
Decline some	4%	5%	6%
Decline a lot	5%	0%	5%

CONCLUSION

Kansas City LISC and their partners decided to implement a community survey, which was an ambitious undertaking. A great deal of effort went into the evaluation, which proved more challenging than anticipated. However, after reviewing their individual results at the conclusion of the process, staff from Blue Hills Community Services, Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council and Downtown Shareholders believed that the survey had provided them with useful information about the current level of neighborhood pride and engagement.

Discussions took place with the groups and with LISC program staff about how the organizations can share their results during neighborhood meetings to see if other residents who did not respond to the survey have similar perceptions. By sharing the results of this data collection with their neighborhood, listening further, and showing residents that the organization respects the input of all residents, future data collection will likely be more successful and easier to implement with a broader participation rate across all populations in the neighborhood.

The survey results, while not representative, provide insight into the perceptions of many people in the three neighborhoods. The results suggest that there is a lot to build on in each community.

Although the findings are not representative of the neighborhoods, it is encouraging to know that so many people feel connected to their neighbors, feel that their community has improved and expressed confidence that it will improve in the future. A majority of respondents in each community expressed a willingness to work with other in the community. People generally feel their neighbors are friendly. The vast majority of respondents indicated they would continue to live in their neighborhood if they have the choice. These and others are all aspects of community pride.

The information collected through this evaluation can be built upon through further outreach and conversation to neighborhood residents. The results can be helpful as a starting point for building programs and strategies to strengthen the neighborhoods. The hope is that the organizations will use the results in program planning and find ways to gather more resident input and engage in further conversation.



Resident Pride, Social Capital, and Community Health:

An analysis and findings by the Kansas City, Missouri, Health Department

The following is a letter from Dr. Sarah Martin, Deputy Director at the Kansas City, Missouri, Health Department:

The Kansas City, Missouri Health Department is committed to redefining the city's definition of health — the majority of what predicts a person's length and quality of life is not found in a doctor's exam room or in our DNA. The most powerful predictor of how long someone will live, and what that life will be like, is where they live.

Neighborhoods are shaped by economic and political forces. As a government agency, the Health Department recognizes that it is our responsibility to understand the consequences of both our historical policies and the decades of failure to reverse those policies. This is why our organization believes that measurement of neighborhood level indicators of well-being is critical to defining success.

The city is focusing on the measurement of Social Capital — the foundational aspects that build a community. Social Capital is the glue that holds neighbors together — it is a function of trust, civic participation, and fellowship. A healthy community is one that is connected, where people look out for each other. A healthy community is also cohesive, a place where residents see themselves as a part of something bigger than just their household; it is a feeling of a powerful identification with the neighborhood.

Partnering with LISC and the Dotte Agency, the Health Department analyzed measures of Social Capital and feelings of safety to identify neighborhood-level predictors of cohesiveness and connectedness in multiple neighborhoods on both sides of the state line. We used straightforward multivariate regression techniques to assess the statistical significance of neighborhood services and amenities, as well as respondent demographics, in predicting our outcomes. We only present findings with low odds of being a random relationship — any association with a greater than 5% probability of being due to chance is not included here.

We present the findings for three neighborhoods below: Blue Hills (KCMO), Ivanhoe (KCMO) and Downtown Shareholders (KCK). The findings are a reminder that the way we develop our cities has significant influence on the wellness of our residents.

What predicts overall levels of satisfaction with a neighborhood?

We explored what neighborhood and individual level characteristics related to a respondents general satisfaction with where they live, focusing on potential determinants with implications for public policy. With so much of our public conversation centering on the benefits of home ownership, interestingly enough renters and homeowners expressed similar patterns of satisfaction.

For all types of residents in Ivanhoe, for instance, cleanliness; affordability; parks; grocery shopping and appropriateness for senior citizens were all significant, positive predictors of satisfaction. All of these predictors are in part a function of government policies relating to blight, housing, infrastructure, density and budgeting. We must ask ourselves as policymakers: are our budget priorities reflective of what actually satisfies our residents and improves their quality of life?

In Blue Hills, we found that the most positive predictor of overall satisfaction was a respondents perception of neighbor friendliness. While government intervention on friendliness might seem strange, it does present a policy opportunity to create more spaces for interaction, support community building and ensure that our community anchors (such as playgrounds, community centers, pools and gardens) are safe, clean places to be.

In Downtown KCK, it was more difficult to tease out consistent patterns of attitudes. As in the other neighborhoods, satisfaction and feelings of safety, cohesion and connectedness were positively correlated. However, neighborhood amenities and perceptions of quality services were not predictive of satisfaction among the respondents — the responses from this group were highly variable, and priorities were not consistent. This illuminates the challenge of governing diverse, integrated communities.

What predicts feelings of safety in a neighborhood?

Feelings of safety are a crucial component of a healthy life; chronic stress and anxiety weakens immune responses and increases the risk of poor mental health. Children who don't feel safe have a hard time getting enough sleep and concentrating in the classroom. The health and social implications for neighborhoods experiencing high levels of trauma should drive our policy choices and programmatic goals. The last year in the Kansas City region was a troubling one — in KCMO we experienced one of the most violent years on record. Intimate partner violence and assaults due to arguments are on the rise on both sides of the state line. Across all neighborhoods, female respondents were much less likely to feel safe than male respondents, regardless of age. That safety and gender connection was amplified if the respondent had children in the household.

There were many positive predictors of safety across all three neighborhoods that can inform policy and budgeting priorities. In KCK, the higher a respondent rated the quality of emergency services (the Fire Department and Ambulance), the safer they felt. While this aligns with standard budgeting prioritization of public safety, what is most interesting is that satisfaction with the quality of parks, playgrounds, community centers and restaurants was equally predictive of feelings of safety. This finding should urge policy makers to consider the emphasis on “public safety” more holistically.

While satisfaction with emergency services did not significantly predict feelings of safety in Blue Hills and Ivanhoe, there were findings that should be of interest to local policy makers. Once again, perception of friendliness mattered to respondents in both neighborhoods, as did the perception that the neighborhood was a “good value for the price”. In addition, street cleanliness and quality; satisfaction with parks and playgrounds and access to high quality child care were also positively correlated with the likelihood of feeling safe. This underscores the importance — as we saw with the KCK results — of expanding our conventional definition of public safety to include the neighborhood qualities that enhance a community.

What are the determinants of cohesion and connectedness?

Across our neighborhoods, the idea of cohesion (seeing oneself as part of a larger community identity) was more predictive of feelings of satisfaction and safety than the idea of connectedness (seeing oneself as a part of a network of neighbors). In addition to the recurring themes in the rest of the analysis — satisfaction with parks, neighborhood cleanliness and neighbor friendliness — a powerful concept emerges when focusing on Social Capital: agency. Agency is defined in this analysis as the perception that if something is wrong in a neighborhood, the community will come together to try and fix it. The concept of agency was not predictive of the other outcomes, but was significantly positively associated with both connection and cohesion in Blue Hills and Ivanhoe. This connection stresses the importance of civic engagement in assessing community health. When neighbors work together to affect change in their communities, it not only leads to improvements in that community, it can lead to actual improved health for the residents who participate. Research shows a strong

biological connection between participation in civic or faith based groups and improved mental and physical health. Cities and other organizations need to prioritize meaningful, innovative community engagement.

Cities can also improve Social Capital by providing spaces for communities to connect. In Downtown KCK, respondents overwhelmingly expressed that access to something as simple as a coffee shop or lunch restaurant improved feelings of cohesion. This is a striking lesson for those with influence on development decisions. Even small changes to a neighborhood through the incentivizing of certain businesses can have meaningful effects on Social Capital.

Conclusion

Determinants of why people choose to stay or leave a neighborhood, and what they do for that neighborhood while they live in it, are complicated. And yet, there are clear patterns across these three neighborhoods that show:

People care about community spaces: Parks, playgrounds, community centers, restaurants and coffee shops. Neighborhoods can not feel integrated without welcoming, safe places to connect.

Looks do matter. Cleanliness, sanitation and infrastructure repair is connected to overall feelings of safety, connection and satisfaction. Healthy, peaceful neighborhoods begin with attention to environmental design, public works and code enforcement. Recent research from the Health Department shows that neighborhoods in KCMO with high Social Capital have fewer code enforcement complaints, even when controlling for median income or age of housing stock.

Engagement needs to evolve: The traditional models of community engagement are being replaced with innovative ways of meeting neighborhoods where they are at. When neighborhoods have agency and residents feel as if their time and energy spent on civic participation matters, the payoff in terms of Social Capital can be huge.

The Health Department is proud to partner with government agencies, non-profit organizations, the business community and foundations across the region

to shift the public narrative around health. This short analysis provides a window into what is possible when we collectively define health in broader terms. We look forward to expanding on this research and working alongside our local elected officials to implement a policy platform focused on increasing Social Capital and feelings of safety while contributing to neighborhood stability.

Dr. Sarah Martin, *Deputy Director at the Kansas City, Missouri, Health Department*

LISC Neighborhood Audit

Neighborhood/Block:

Date:

Residential Land Use

- Subjective Assessment: Is the street walkable?
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
 Notes:
- Number of residential units per block? _____
 Notes:
- Types of residential housing?
 Single family Multi-family Mobile homes HUD New-renovation
 Notes:
- Overall condition of most residential units?
 Excellent Good Fair Poor / Deteriorated Cannot see
 Notes:
- Type of most front yards?
 None Traditional lawn Landscaped Heavily wooded Mixed
 Notes:
- Presence of porches?
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
- Presence of borders? (Fences, shrubs, etc.)
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
- Presence of **visible** security warning signs?
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
- Any boarded up, burned, or abandoned residential units?
 Yes No
 Notes:

Public, Residential, Non-Residential Spaces | Aesthetics

- Presence of land is vacant or underdeveloped?
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
- Overall condition of land is vacant or underdeveloped?
 Excellent Good Fair Poor / Deteriorated Cannot see
 Notes:

Public, Residential, Non-Residential Spaces | Aesthetics Cont.

- General condition of public spaces
 Excellent Good Fair Poor / Deteriorated Mixed
 Notes:
- Visible people
 None Children Youth Adults
 Notes:
- People are physically active?
 No Yes, children Yes, youth Yes, adults
 Notes:
- Public neighborhood park or playground in segment?
 No Yes, park Yes, playground Yes, church park and/or playground
 Notes:
- Overall condition of park and/or playground
 Excellent Good Fair Poor / Deteriorated Mixed
 Notes:
- Visible Dogs
 No Yes, dog is leashed Yes, dog is out loose
 Notes:
- Litter | Amount
 None Little amount Moderate amount Considerable amount
 Notes:
- Litter | Type
 Non-alcoholic cans Alcoholic cans Large items | tires, furniture, appliances
 Notes:
- Graffiti | Amount
 None Little amount Moderate amount Considerable amount
 Notes:

Transit | Walking and Bicycling Amenities

- Presence of sidewalk
 None one | entire street one | partial street Both | entire street Both | entire street
 Notes:
- Presence of sidewalk buffer
 None Within 2' of street Between 2'-6' of street Greater than 6' of
 Notes:

LISC Neighborhood Audit

Neighborhood/Block:

Date:

Transit | Walking and Bicycling Amenities Cont.

23. Sidewalk condition
 Excellent Good Fair Poor / Deteriorated Dangerous
 Notes:
24. Trees shading walking area
 No trees Some trees Continuous trees
 Notes:
25. Public Lighting
 None Road oriented Pedestrian oriented Pedestrian and road oriented
 Notes:

Transit | Road Characteristics

26. Speed Limit _____
 Notes:
27. Presence of a shoulder or bike lane
 None Yes | Soft surface Yes | Hard surface Yes | Hard surface bike lane
 Notes:
28. On-street parking
 Not allowed Allowed | Restricted Allowed | No restrictions
 Notes:

Safety | Natural Surveillance

29. All doorways that open to outside are well lit
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
30. Front doors are visible from the street
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
31. Landscaping creates blind spots or hiding spots
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:

Safety | Territorial Reinforcement

32. Property lines are defined with plantings, fences, short walls
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
33. Property encourages interaction with low fences, bushes, landscaping
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
34. Street address is visible from street with numbers (5" High, Min.)
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:

Safety | Maintenance and Greenspace

35. Structures painted and in condition of good repair
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
36. Weeds abate, trim bushes to 36" high and trees up 7' above ground
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
37. Old automobiles, boats, trailers, and other vehicles in the front yard
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:
38. Landscaping maintained in good condition
 None Less than half Half More than half
 Notes:

General Notes:

Neighborhood Maps

Understanding the Impacts of Community Development Investments on Resident Health:

Downtown Kansas City, KS

This work is made possible by a Special Initiative Grant from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City to The Greater Kansas City LISC. Technical assistance was provided by Dotte Agency, with research support from the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department.

In support of LISC's 'Impacts of Community Development Investments on Resident Health' report to the Greater Kansas City Health Care Foundation, Dotte Agency met with the Downtown Neighborhood Association leadership and members to determine the location of priority investment locations in 2017.

The goal of this exercise was to reveal:

- 1) Visible community development opportunities.
- 2) Potential community health improvements.
- 3) Recognized community development opportunities.
- 4) Areas of opportunity. Participant comments were recorded as notes or checked and categorized using colored Post-It notes related to the four domains listed above.

What community development opportunity should be focused on first?

- 1) The Downtown Transit Station and 11th Street Rapid Transit Station being completed and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 2) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 3) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 4) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.

Where has there been a recent project or investment in your neighborhood?

- 1) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 2) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 3) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 4) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.

What are your favorite community improvements? (What negative about?)

- 1) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 2) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 3) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.
- 4) The new 11th Street Rapid Transit Station and connecting downtown to the rest of the city.

ABOVE: Each neighborhood will receive laminated copies of a Large Neighborhood Map, that are approximately 4' wide by 6' long.

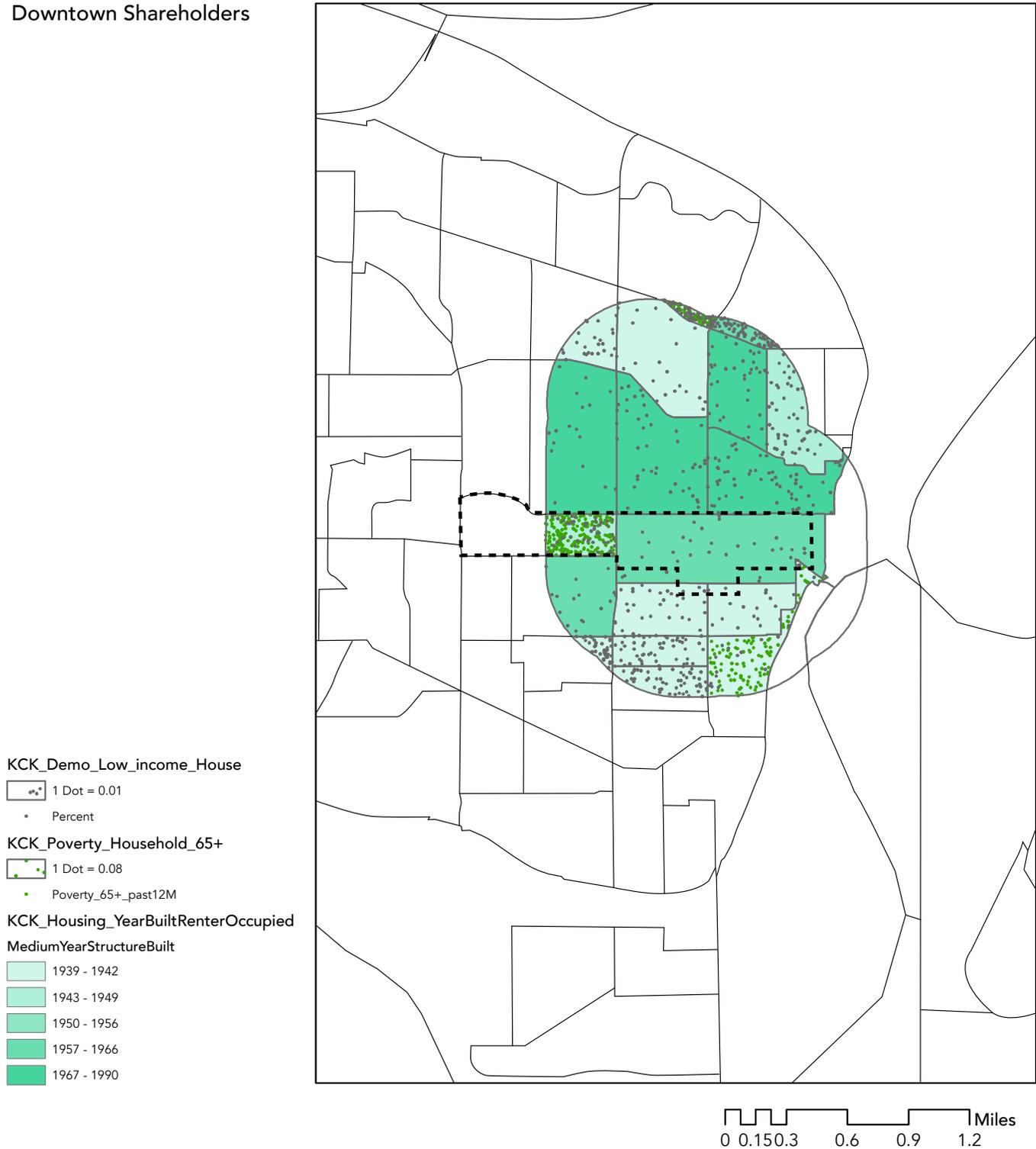
Each Large Neighborhood Map was stitched together using Google Earth images that present the neighborhood in high-resolution.

Notes that are added came from residents during the Spatial Mapping exercise done by Dotte Agency in the Community Engagement process.

The maps are laminated, and are intended to be living tools that neighborhood leaders and community organizers can use together to highlight areas of opportunity and investment.

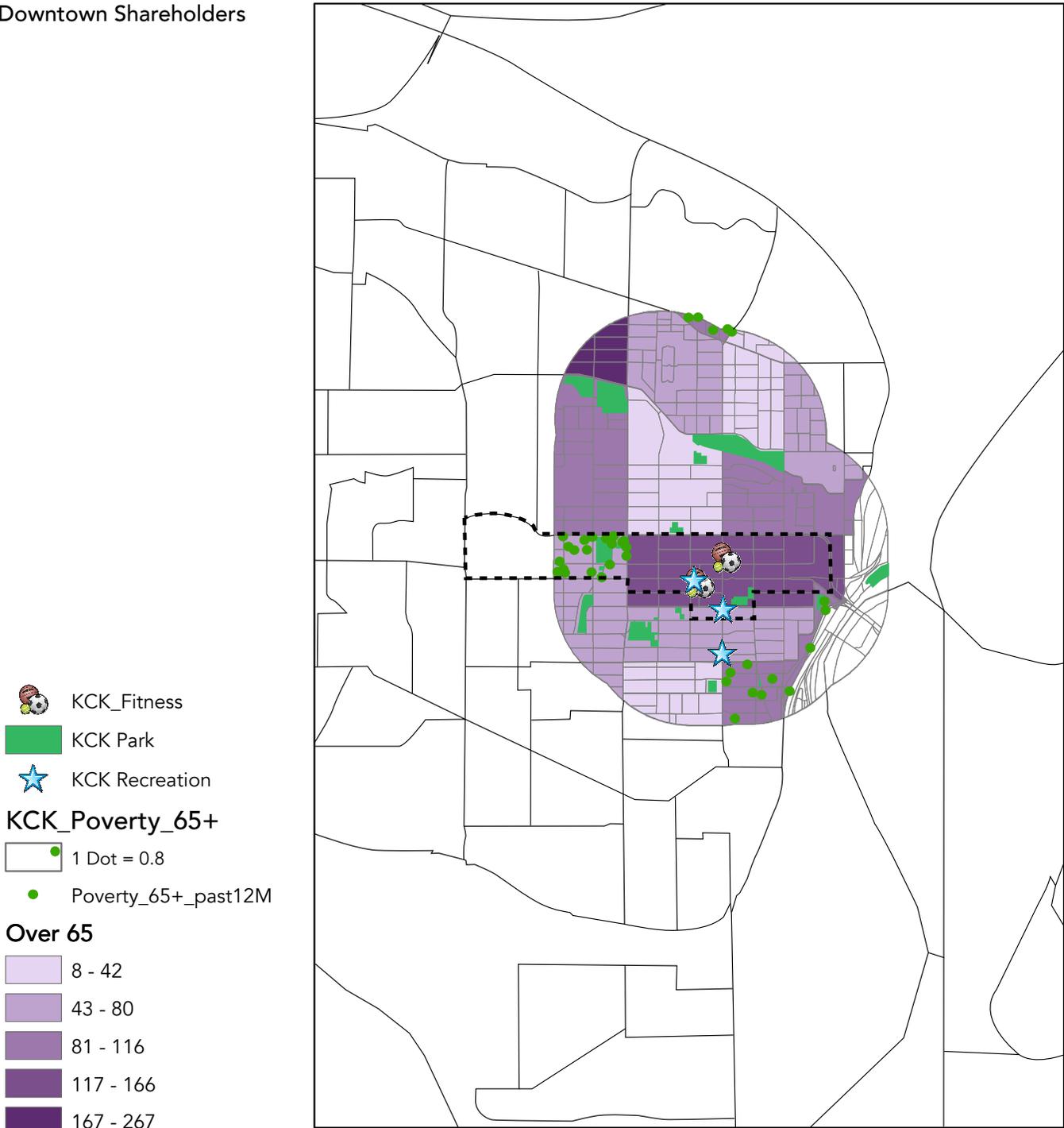
Low-Income Households X Age of Housing

Downtown Shareholders



Seniors X Access to Recreation Spaces

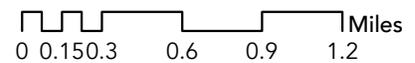
Downtown Shareholders



-  KCK_Fitness
-  KCK Park
-  KCK Recreation
- KCK_Poverty_65+**
-  1 Dot = 0.8
-  Poverty_65+_past12M

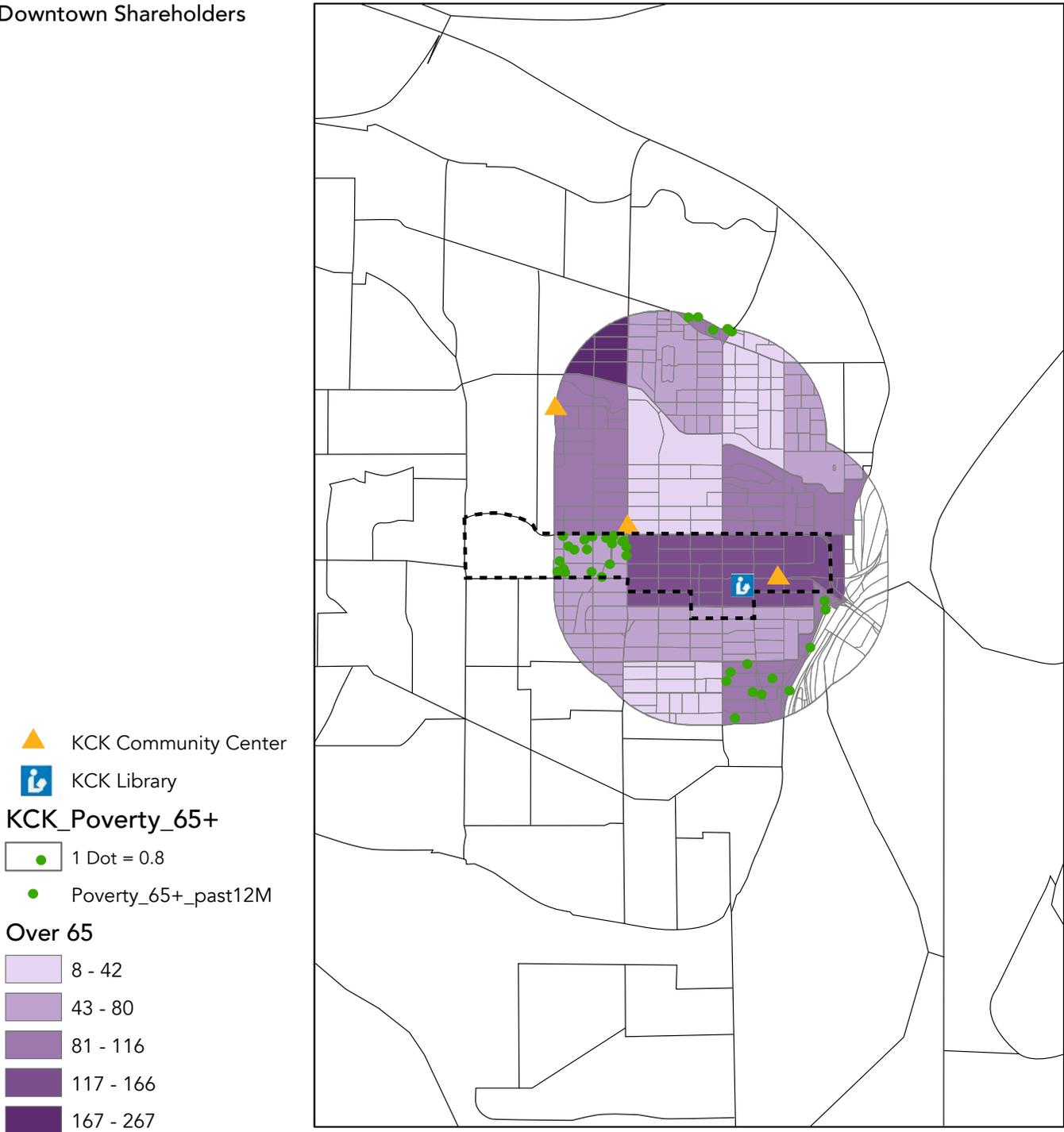
Over 65

-  8 - 42
-  43 - 80
-  81 - 116
-  117 - 166
-  167 - 267



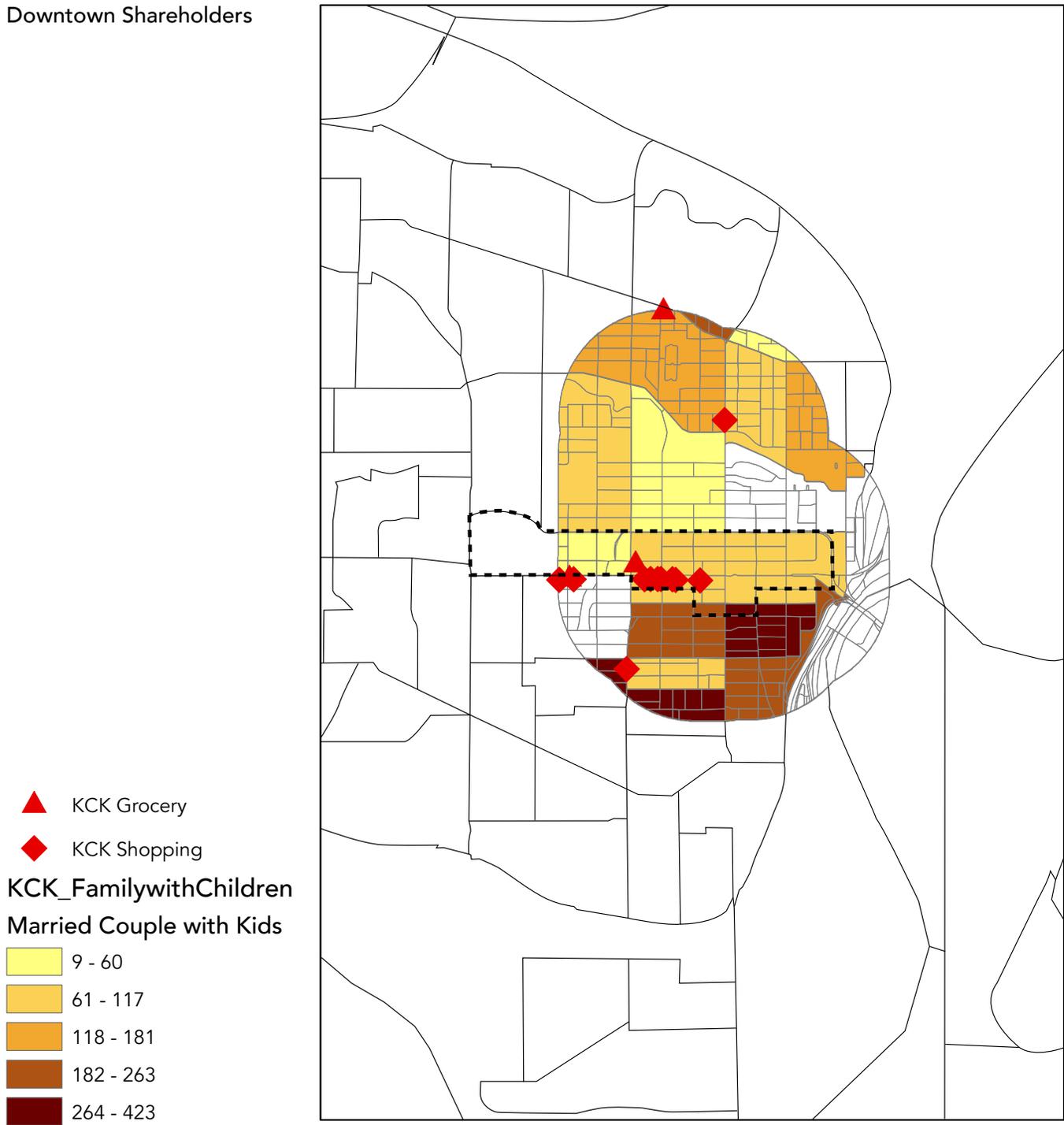
Seniors X Access to Community Spaces

Downtown Shareholders



Families X Access to Retail

Downtown Shareholders



Households in Poverty X Rental Vacancies

