



# Fair Housing Assessment

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Community Participation Process
- III. Assessment of Past Goals, Actions and Strategies
- IV. Fair Housing Analysis
  - A. Demographic Summary
  - B. Segregation/Integration
- V. Racially/Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty
- VI. Disparities in Access to Opportunity
  - A. Education
  - B. Employment
  - C. Transportation
  - D. Low Poverty Exposure
  - E. Environmental Health
  - F. Patterns in Disparities to Access Opportunity
- VII. Disproportionate Housing Needs
- VIII. Publicly Supported Housing Analysis
- IX. Disability and Access Analysis
-  **X. Fair Housing Enforcement, Outreach Capacity and Resource Analysis**
- XI. Fair Housing Goals and Strategies

*Produced by the Mid-America Regional Council on behalf of the cities of Blue Springs, Independence and Kansas City, Missouri; the city of Leavenworth, Kansas; and the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas. This assessment is required to meet Community Development Block Grant obligations for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.*

## Section X

# Fair Housing Enforcement, Outreach Capacity and Resource Analysis

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### KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Residents in the Kansas City area, like the nation, are unlikely to report a case of alleged discrimination. Reasons may include fear of retaliation, lack of awareness of one's rights under the fair housing laws, lack of awareness of which agencies may be of assistance, or limited support by private or public agencies.
- Discrimination complaints in the metro area are more likely to be based on issues of race and disability.
- There is a lack of accessible housing units for persons with disabilities throughout the metro area. The need is greatest in older neighborhoods where housing units built prior to 1990 are less likely to accommodate persons with disabilities, particularly those related to mobility.
- A large proportion of the discrimination complaints are related to incidents in Kansas City, Missouri. This may be due, in part, to greater awareness based on efforts by the city's Human Relations Department and presence of more nonprofit agencies to make residents aware of their rights and assist them in filing complaints.
- Diminished resources at the federal, state and local levels limit opportunities for residents facing discrimination to receive supportive services.
- Residents in the Kansas City area have 180 days to file a complaint with the city or state of Missouri, while HUD and the state of Kansas will take cases beyond the 180-day limit. In some cases, the timeframe poses a constraint for residents in exercising their rights.

Various government agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Kansas City region are charged with monitoring, educating, enforcing and supporting fair housing activities in order to counter historical patterns of segregation and ongoing incidents of housing discrimination in the metropolitan area — and to boost access to opportunity and promote economic prosperity.

These organizations act at the local level to promote fair housing. The Federal Fair Housing Act, passed in 1968 and since amended, prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, national origin, religion, gender, familial status and disability. The Fair Housing Act covers most facets of housing, including rental housing, home sales, mortgage and home improvement lending, and land use and zoning practices.

The history of fair housing efforts in the Kansas City metropolitan area predates passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968. By the end of 1966, a growing movement, including People for Fair Housing and the Greater Kansas City Council on Religion and Race, had successfully organized 23 fair housing councils in the region, and helped to introduce fair housing legislation in several cities as well as in the Kansas and Missouri state legislatures. Despite this fair housing legacy, however, patterns of segregation persist in the region. (2014 Fair Housing Equity Assessment for Metropolitan Kansas City)

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The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has the primary authority for enforcing the Fair Housing Act. HUD investigates complaints it receives and determines if there is a reasonable cause to believe that discrimination occurred. If reasonable cause is established, HUD brings the complaint before an administrative law judge. Parties to the action can also elect to have the trial held in a federal court (in which case the Department of Justice brings the claim on behalf of the plaintiff).

HUD publicly recognizes that, historically, it has not adequately fulfilled this obligation. In recent years, however, HUD has demonstrated a renewed commitment to fair housing. HUD and the Department of Justice have increased their efforts and brought landmark cases to court related to mortgage lending, zoning and other issues that get to the heart of the Fair Housing Act. In addition, the creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is expected to provide additional resources to support fair housing and lending. Further, HUD is working to integrate fair housing efforts with local and regional planning. (2014 FHEA).

HUD's Region VII office provided a summary of 623 fair housing discrimination cases filed between October 1, 2010 and September 30, 2015. The majority of cases were regarding discrimination due to race and disability in Kansas City, Missouri. The type of complaint and locations are similar to the previous five years (2011 AI report). None of the cases summarized in the table below are still pending.

**Table 1: Complaints by Jurisdiction and Type**

	Share of Study Area Complaints	Number of Complaints	Race	Disability	Gender	Family Status	Retaliation	Other
<b>Kansas</b>								
Johnson County	16%	88	23%	55%	1%	7%	1%	13%
Overland Park	4%	27	41%	52%	0	7%	0	0
Shawnee	1%	7	29%	57%	0	0	0	14%
Lenexa	2%	10	20%	50%	0	10%	20%	0
Wyandotte County	9%	54	52%	30%	11%	4%	0	4%
Leavenworth Co	2%	10	50%	20%	10%	0	10%	10%
City of Leavenworth	1%	7	43%	20%	14%	0	0	13%
Miami County	>1%	3	34%	33%	0	0	33%	0
<b>Missouri</b>								
City of Kansas City	49%	305	44%	30%	6%	10%	4%	5%
Cass County	3%	16	19%	44%	0	19%	0	18%
Clay County	8%	48	42%	40%	4%	21%	6%	6%
Kansas City (part)	4%	23	35%	39%	9%	4%	9%	9%
Jackson County	61%	382	43%	30%	5%	13%	4%	5%
Independence	10%	55	26%	47%	5%	14%	2%	2%
Blue Springs	2%	8	42%	17%	0	8%	0	0
Lee's Summit	2%	21	76%	14%	0	5%	0	5%
Kansas City (part)	43%	270	43%	29%	4%	10%	4%	6%
Platte County	3%	18	39%	33%	11%	11%	6%	5%
Kansas City (part)	2%	12	50%	25%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Ray County	1%	4	25%	75%	0	0	0	0
<b>Kansas City Metro</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>6%</b>

Source: HUD Kansas City, Kan., Regional Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

The complaints related to disability were generally regarding terms, conditions, privileges, services or facilities related to the rental of units. The complaints alleged that landlords refused to rent to disabled individuals or to make reasonable accommodations. In Johnson County in 2014, complaints alleged the use of ordinances to discriminate in zoning and land use. (Due to the date and city where violations were alleged, all complaints regarding this issue may have been filed for a single housing development). Of the cases filed, 41.7 percent were in Kansas City, Missouri; 22.9 percent in Johnson County; 12.5 percent in Independence; and 8.3 percent in Wyandotte County.

The complaints related to familial status were generally regarding terms, conditions, privileges, services or facilities related to the rental of units. Of these, 45.2 percent were in Kansas City, Missouri. The complaints regarding national origin were generally regarding terms, conditions, privileges, services or facilities related to the rental of units. The complaints regarding race were generally regarding refusal to rent and terms, conditions, privileges, services or facilities related to the rental of units. Over half of all complaints were in Kansas City, Missouri (53.6 percent).

The 2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing prepared for the metro Kansas City area found a total of 577 complaints between August 2005 and October 2010. Similar to more recent complaints, most were filed on the basis of race and disability discrimination. The majority of complaints originated from Kansas City, Missouri, followed by Wyandotte County.

## **Significant Resolution of Recent Complaints and Compliance Issues in the Kansas City area**

### **1. Ensuring accessibility to affordable housing for persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency.**

In April 2015, HUD FHEO reached two Voluntary Compliance Agreements (VCAs) with the Housing Authority of Independence (HAI), Missouri, resolving HUD findings which showed that the agency failed to provide persons with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency meaningful access to its HUD-funded housing programs. HAI owns and operates 522 public housing units and administers more than 1,600 Housing Choice Vouchers. The two agreements are the result of a HUD compliance review of the housing authority's operations, which found that the agency was not fulfilling its obligation to provide access to services for persons with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency, as required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/2015/HUDNo\\_15-042](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2015/HUDNo_15-042)

### **2. Familial status — halting oppressive rules against children.**

In March 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) entered into a consent decree in the case of *Ghilardi v. Brisben*. DOJ filed the lawsuit in federal district court in Kansas based on an investigation conducted by the Kansas City Regional FHEO Office. FHEO found that woman and her then-young child moved into an apartment community in Lenexa, Kansas. The respondents renewed the woman's lease for 10 consecutive years between 2002 and 2012. In 2012, the respondents decided not to renew her lease, following her complaints to the respondents about their oppressive policies regarding the activities and supervision of children living at the property. Her complaints to the respondents centered on a notice that the management company distributed to all tenants, stating in part: "You are hereby issued a lease violation if: You allow your children out of your home unsupervised. All children under the age of 16 must have an ADULT (over the age of 18) with them at all times." FHEO's investigation resulted in a charge of discrimination for a discriminatory statement, intimidation and retaliation. In the consent decree, the defendants agreed to pay \$170,000 in total to settle a lawsuit, including \$60,000 to the woman, \$100,000 into a Victims Fund to compensate other aggrieved families, and \$10,000 to the United States as a civil penalty. The results are set out in a DOJ press release at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-settles-lawsuit-alleging-discrimination-against-families-children-0>.

### **3. Pregnant or on maternity leave.**

In FY 2015, based on Region VII FHEO's investigation and conciliation efforts, HUD reached a \$5 million nationwide settlement with Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, the nation's largest provider of home mortgage loans. The settlement resolved allegations that Wells

Fargo discriminated against women who were pregnant, or had recently given birth and were on maternity leave. Under the terms of the agreement, Well Fargo distributed a total of \$165,000 among six affected families who filed complaints with HUD; and created a \$5 million Victims' Fund to compensate other Wells Fargo applicants who experienced discrimination because they were pregnant or on maternity leave when they applied for a loan. Wells Fargo identified additional victims across the nation and will distribute prorated shares of \$5 million soon. Wells Fargo also changed its underwriting guidelines when it comes to evaluating mortgage loan applications from those on maternity leave, ensuring they are not discriminatory. [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/2014/HUDNo\\_14-124](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2014/HUDNo_14-124)

#### **4. Resolution of allegations of redlining based on race.**

On February 29, 2016, HUD announced a conciliation agreement with First Federal Bank of Kansas City to resolve allegations of 'redlining' against African-American mortgage applicants. First Federal Bank of Kansas City conducts residential mortgage lending on both sides of the state line in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Two fair housing organizations claimed the lender's designated service area effectively excluded African American neighborhoods, limiting residential mortgage lending to persons based upon their race. [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/2016/HUDNo\\_16-028](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2016/HUDNo_16-028)

#### **5. Ensuring reasonable accommodations and modifications for persons with disabilities.**

In 2015, the Kansas City Regional FHEO office successfully conciliated a complaint filed by a complainant with a disability, alleging the respondents discriminated against her by failing to permit reasonable modifications and reasonable accommodations at the complainant's home in Lenexa. Respondents agreed to conciliate a resolution and, subsequently, made over \$32,000 in modifications to the multifamily apartment complex where the complainant lives. Modifications included construction of an accessible concrete sidewalk to complainant's building, her apartment, and all connected apartments. Respondents additionally constructed an accessible curb cut, parking space, access aisle, and signage in front of the complainant's apartment building, numerous modifications to her apartment, including grab bars and door handles compliant with the Fair Housing Act's design and construction requirements for accessibility. The modifications provided through the terms of the conciliation agreement increased accessibility for an additional 48 residents living in the complainant's building.

## **Unresolved Cases**

There are two unresolved cases being investigated at the time of this analysis:

- **Sexual harassment of women**

The Kansas City Regional FHEO office investigated two cases filed against the Housing Authority of Kansas City, Kansas (HAKCK). Two women filed complaints against a then-employee of HAKCK, and one complaint against the HAKCK. Two women, who either applied for housing assistance or discussed repaying maintenance fees at the HAKCK, filed complaints with HUD alleging that the now-former Administrative Hearing Officer

for HAKCK and HAKCK sexually harassed them. Following investigations of the allegations, HUD charged the cases and the parties elected to Federal district court. USDOJ filed against both respondents in October 2015 and the case remains in litigation. <http://www.justice.gov/opa/file/788316/download>

A study by HUD on public awareness of the nation's fair housing laws found that most persons who believe they have experienced discrimination do nothing (83 percent). Only 1 percent file with the government; another 1 percent file a lawsuit. The other 15 percent contact a nonprofit counseling agency, confront the landlord or take other actions (HUD, "How much do we know? Public Awareness of the Nation's Fair Housing Laws, April 2002).

A study by Zillow in 2015 using 2013 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data found that black and Hispanic households in the Kansas City real estate market were turned down for conventional mortgage loans at roughly three times the rate for white households. The online residential research company said that federal housing data show the conventional mortgage denial rate for Hispanic households in Kansas City is 19.8 percent. For black households, 19 percent of applications for conventional mortgages are denied. These rates compare with a denial rate of 6.5 percent for white applicants. The Kansas City area rates for all races were lower than national rates, and that black and Hispanic applicants tended to be poorer than white mortgage applicants. (Kansas City Business Journal, February 9, 2015).

The National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) conducted an investigation in 2014 on bank or lender-owned properties (referred to as Real Estate Owned Properties, or REOs). The NFHA study included data from the Kansas City market along with other communities, and found that REO properties in areas with high concentrations of persons of color were 3.6 times more likely to have an unsecured, broken or boarded window than REO properties in predominately white neighborhoods. REO properties in minority neighborhoods were 2.8 times more likely to have trash or debris on the property's premises, and 1.6 times more likely to have trespassing or warning signs displayed. Using evidence from the Kansas City area, NFHA filed complaints against Cyprexx property management company, Bank of America, US Bank and Fannie Mae <http://www.nationalfairhousing.org/REO/tabid/4265/Default.aspx>.

NFHA recommends that communities monitor REO marketing and maintenance, particularly in areas with high REO rates; maintain and enforce property maintenance requirements for banks and servicers, and make data public for monitoring; work with banks to donate REOs to the local community or responsible nonprofits with money for rehab or demolition; and encourage banks to sell properties to those more likely to be owner occupants.

## **State and Local Fair Housing Laws**

Kansas City area residents who believe they have experienced discrimination in violation of the Federal Fair Housing Act or state fair housing laws may report their complaints to one of the following:

- **HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) in Kansas City, Kansas**
- **The State of Kansas Human Rights Commission**

Kansas law provides that any person who claims to be aggrieved by an unlawful practice in the areas of employment, housing or public accommodations and who can articulate a prima facie case pursuant to a recognized legal theory of discrimination (based on race, religion, color, sex, disability, ancestry, national origin, age in the area of employment only, familial status in the area of housing only, and retaliation) may file with the KHRC. Housing complaints must be filed within one year of the alleged incident.

- **The Missouri Commission on Human Rights**

The Missouri Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in housing, employment and places of public accommodations based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, disability, age (in employment only) and familial status (in housing only). The Act also makes it unlawful to retaliate against an individual for filing a complaint of discrimination, testifying or assisting in an investigation, or proceeding under the Act. Additionally, the Act protects individuals against discrimination on the basis of their association with a person in a protected category. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against for any of those reasons can [file a complaint](#) with the Missouri Commission on Human Rights (MCHR). Complaints must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

- **Kansas City, Missouri Civil Rights Division**

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, is authorized to receive and investigate fair housing complaints. The Civil Rights Division enforces the fair housing provisions of the City ordinance, #130041. The ordinance prohibits discrimination in housing based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity. The Division receives cases based on its outreach activities, as well as through referrals from HUD. The city's website under the Human Relations Department includes the following information:

“If you believe you have been discriminated against in employment, housing or public accommodations based on your race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation or gender identity you may file a claim with the Kansas City Human Relations Department.

The Human Relations Department offers citizens the opportunity to file an employment ([English](#) | [Spanish](#)), housing ([English](#) | [Spanish](#)) or public accommodations ([English](#) | [Spanish](#)) discrimination claim online. Using these forms, you may file a claim alleging discrimination in employment, housing, or public accommodations. It is important that you fill out the claim forms completely and accurately so that as much information as possible may be obtained. This will allow the department to process your claim as quickly as possible.



Before filing a claim, consider the following:

- The alleged discriminatory act must have occurred within the last 180 days
- The employer or business establishment you are filing against must be located within the city limits of Kansas City, Missouri
- For employment discrimination cases, the employer must have six or more employees
- For fair housing complaints, the property at issue must be located within the city limits of Kansas City, Missouri
- Please do not file a claim with the Department if you have filed the same claim with another agency, i.e. EEOC, HUD, Missouri Commission on Human Rights.

You must be 18 years old or older to file a complaint. If you are under 18, a parent or guardian must file on your behalf.

The Civil Rights Division continues to have an aggressive education and outreach campaign designed to provide citizens with information on fair housing. The city hosts a weekly radio program on discrimination. The Civil Rights Division produces “Discrimination — Report It, Don’t Ignore It,” a 30-minute radio show airing Saturdays at 11 a.m. on KPRT 1590 AM. The programs are also posted on the city’s website. The Division has had articles and ads published in local papers; advertised on billboards in various parts of the city; commissioned and distributed T-shirts printed with information on how to contact the Division; sent out fair housing inserts in the local water bills; participated in numerous expos, fairs and other public events; conducted numerous training sessions for tenants, housing providers, community groups and others; and aired television ads on network television as well as on the city’s local government channel.

During the 2014 program year, the Division fielded over 300 inquiries regarding possible discriminatory conduct. The increase in inquiries was due to the expanded outreach campaign conducted by the Division. The Division performed 57 formal investigations of discrimination. Of the 57 formal complaints filed, 33 were resolved through successful conciliation either prior to or after a Reasonable Cause determination had been rendered. Complainants received over \$57,000 in settlements.

- **Wyandotte County Human Relations Commission**

The Human Relations Commission was created in 1964, and consists of 13 members who meet monthly. The Commission functions in an advisory role to the Unified Government board of commissioners on human relations and can mediate disputes in order to address prejudice, intolerance, bigotry, disorder or discrimination and in order to promote good will in the community. The Human Services Department has the authority to receive and investigate complaints. Residents must sign a complaint and file it within 180 days after the alleged discriminatory practice has occurred. The complaint must include the date, place and circumstances of the alleged discriminatory practice.

- **City of Leavenworth**

The City had a Human Relations Commission that went inactive. The City plans to designate a city department to oversee the city's non-discrimination and fair housing issues. Residents have one year from the date of the alleged violation to file a complaint.

- **City of Blue Springs**

The city passed a fair housing ordinance in 1991, with similar provisions to the Federal Fair Housing Act. The city attorney has the authority to enforce the ordinance.

**City of Independence:**

The Human Relations Department is responsible for receiving and managing fair housing complaints. The city refers complaints to HUD.

### **Agencies Providing Fair Housing Information, Outreach and Enforcement**

According to the HUD website, there are six non-governmental organizations providing fair housing information, outreach and counseling services:

- Community Housing of Wyandotte County — serves Wyandotte County, Kansas; focus on homeownership counseling.
- Community Services League — serves Eastern Jackson County; HUD-certified housing counseling.
- Housing Information Center of Greater Kansas City — serves metro Kansas City area; HUD-certified housing counseling.
- Credit and Homeownership Empowerment Services — located in Kansas City, MO; focus on homeownership counseling.
- Legal Aid of Western Missouri — serves the Missouri side of the Kansas City metro area; serves low-income residents with housing issues.
- Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America (NACA) — located in Kansas City, MO; focus on homeownership.

## Contributing Factors

Contributing Factors Provided by HUD	Analysis for Kansas City Metro
<p><b><u>Lack of local private fair housing outreach and enforcement</u></b></p> <p>Outreach and enforcement actions by private individuals and organizations, including such actions as fair housing education, conducting testing, bring lawsuits, arranging and implementing settlement agreements. A lack of private enforcement is often the result of a lack of resources or a lack of awareness about rights under fair housing and civil rights laws, which can lead to under-reporting of discrimination, failure to take advantage of remedies under the law, and the continuation of discriminatory practices. Activities to raise awareness may include technical training for housing industry representatives and organizations, education and outreach activities geared to the general public, advocacy campaigns, fair housing testing and enforcement.</p>	<p>There are six private organizations identified by HUD as providing fair housing outreach and enforcement. Of those, two focus on fair housing education (Housing Information Center and Community Services League). One organization, Legal Aid of Western Missouri, focuses on helping low-income residents facing fair housing discrimination with lawsuits or settlements. The other three organizations focus on homeownership education.</p> <p>Due to cutbacks in HUD housing counseling funds and funds from local governments, the capacity of these private organizations has been diminished. Private organizations such as the Kansas City Regional Association of Realtors and Landlords Association provide training for their members on federal, state and local fair housing laws. The Kansas City region, unlike other major metropolitan areas, does not have a nonprofit fair housing enforcement agency capable of conducting testing, analytic capacities to review Home Mortgage Disclosure or other data, compliance processing or effective education to help lenders, landlords and others in the housing and real estate industries to carry out their work in ways that meet the fair housing laws. Local communities and existing private organizations should pursue HUD funds to supplement existing funds for fair housing counseling, testing and enforcement support.</p>
<p><b><u>Lack of local public fair housing enforcement</u></b></p> <p>The enforcement actions by state and local agencies or nonprofits charged with enforcing fair housing laws, including testing, lawsuits, settlements and fair housing audits. A lack of enforcement is a failure to enforce existing requirements under state or local fair housing laws. This may be assessed by reference to the nature, extent, and disposition of housing discrimination complaints filed in the jurisdiction.</p>	<p>To our knowledge, local and state agencies charged with enforcement of existing fair housing laws are addressing the need, although limited funding does not often allow for testing, audits or other investigations unless a formal complaint is filed.</p>

<p><b><u>Lack of resources for fair housing agencies and organizations</u></b></p> <p>Insufficient resources for public or private organizations to conduct fair housing activities including testing, enforcement, coordination, advocacy, and awareness-raising. Fair housing testing has been particularly effective in advancing fair housing, but is rarely used today because of costs. Testing refers to the use of individuals who, without any bona fide intent to rent or purchase a home, apartment, or other dwelling, pose as prospective buyers or renters of real estate for the purpose of gathering information which may indicate whether a housing provider is complying with fair housing laws. “Resources” as used in this factor can be either public or private funding or other resources. Consider also coordination mechanisms between different enforcement actors.</p>	<p>There are insufficient resources for public and private organizations to conduct fair housing activities as described above.</p>
<p><b><u>Lack of state or local fair housing laws</u></b></p> <p>State and local fair housing laws are important to fair housing outcomes. Consider laws that are comparable or “substantially equivalent” to the Fair Housing Act or other relevant federal laws affecting fair housing laws, as well as those that include additional protections. Examples of state and local laws affecting fair housing include legislation banning source of income discrimination, protections for individuals based on sexual orientation, age, survivors of domestic violence, or other characteristics, mandates to construct affordable housing, and site selection policies. Also consider changes to existing State or local fair housing laws, including the proposed repeal or dilution of such legislation.</p>	<p>The states of Missouri and Kansas and the city of Kansas City, Missouri, have fair housing laws equivalent to the federal Fair Housing Act.</p>
<p><b><u>Unresolved violations of fair housing or civil rights law</u></b></p> <p>Determinations or adjudications of a violation or relevant laws that have not been settled or remedied. This includes determinations of housing discrimination by an agency, court, or Administrative Law Judge; findings of noncompliance by HUD or state or local agencies;</p>	<p>There are two unresolved cases currently open with HUD Region VII alleging sexual harassment by the Kansas City, Kansas, Housing Authority staff. There continue to be concerns about discrimination against disabled persons, by race and national origin, and against persons with a criminal history.</p>

<p>and noncompliance with fair housing settlement agreements.</p>	
<p><b><u>Location of accessible housing</u></b></p> <p>The location of accessible housing can limit fair housing choice for individuals with disabilities. For purposes of this assessment, accessible housing refers to housing opportunities in which individuals with disabilities have equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. Characteristics that affect accessibility may include physical accessibility of units and public and common use areas of housing, as well as application procedures, such as first come first serve waitlists, inaccessible websites or other technology, denial of access to individuals with assistance animals, or lack of information about affordable accessible housing. Federal, state, and local laws apply different accessibility requirements to housing. Generally speaking, multifamily housing built in 1991 or later must have accessibility features in units and in public and common use areas for persons with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of the Fair Housing Act. Housing built by recipients of Federal financial assistance or by, on behalf of, or through programs of public entities must have accessibility features in units and in public and common use areas, but the level of accessibility required may differ depending on when the Federal law, except accessibility requirements typically apply to housing constructed or operated by a recipient of Federal financial assistance or a public entity. State and local laws differ regarding accessibility requirements. An approximation that may be useful in this assessment is that buildings built before 1992 tend not to be accessible.</p>	<p>Seventy percent of the region’s housing stock was built prior to 1990, although the proportion of newer housing varies by city and county. Wyandotte County has the oldest housing stock, with 86.8 percent built prior to 1990, and Lee’s Summit has the newest housing stock with 47.4 percent, or less than half built prior to 1990.</p>
<p><b><u>Quality of affordable housing information programs</u></b></p> <p>The provision of information related to affordable housing to potential tenants and organizations that serve potential tenants, including the maintenance, updating, and distribution of the information. This information includes but is not limited to, listings of affordable housing opportunities or local landlords who accept Housing Choice Vouchers; mobility counseling programs; and community outreach to</p>	<p>At one time, the Kansas City area was served by a number of organizations providing housing information and counseling services. Due to decreases in federal and local funding, there are only a few such organizations serving the metro area.</p> <p>United Way of Greater Kansas City offers the 2-1-1 service, helping to refer callers to housing and supportive services.</p>

<p>potential beneficiaries. The quality of such information relates to, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How comprehensive the information is (e.g., that the information provided includes a variety of neighborhoods, including those with access to opportunity indicators)</li> <li>• How up-to-date the information is (e.g., that the publicly supported housing entity is taking active steps to maintain, update and improve the information).</li> <li>• Proactive outreach to widen the pool of participating rental housing providers, including both owners of individual residences and larger rental management companies.</li> </ul>	<p>The Mid-America Regional Council worked with a national nonprofit, socialserve.com, to launch a website with affordable housing information, <a href="http://www.kcmetrohousing.org">www.kcmetrohousing.org</a> .</p> <p>The Missouri Housing Development Commission has an online listing of affordable housing properties financed by that agency.</p> <p>Through the Homelessness Task Force of Greater Kansas City and the three Continuum of Care organizations serving the metro area (Jackson County, Johnson County and Wyandotte County Continuums of Cares), regular meetings are held with area landlords to encourage their participation in meeting the housing needs of households with housing challenges.</p>
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