



Fair Housing Assessment

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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 III

Assessment of Past Goals, Actions and Strategies

OVERVIEW

In 2011 nine entitlement communities in the Kansas City region worked through the city of Kansas City, Missouri, to contract with a private consultant to complete an “Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice” for CDBG communities in the Kansas City region. The analysis is available online at http://www.marc.org/Regional-Planning/Housing/pdf/KC_Regional_Analysis_of_Impediments_2011.aspx.

This section offers a review of progress on specific goals and action strategies outlined in the 2011 report.

Nine communities in the Kansas City region, including the five cities participating in this AFFH, worked together to prepare the 2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. The executive summary of the [2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice](#) identified four regional action items and three local action items, with specific subtasks for each. These action items are listed on the following pages, followed by a description of progress since the publication of the analysis.

Regional Action Items

1. Improve the coordination of fair housing testing, enforcement and complaint-taking organizations in the region.

Subtask: All organizations involved in fair housing activities should meet regularly to share information, discuss fair housing trends and coordinate on fair housing outreach and education activities.

Progress update

Representatives of the 9 entitlement communities that participated in the 2011 Analysis of Impediments study met quarterly following the completion of that report (2012 through 2014) to discuss possible joint efforts, receive training and education on fair housing matters or identify ways to share information. The city of Kansas City, Missouri, Human Relations convened representatives from the 9 entitlement communities, sharing information on fair housing enforcement and steps to increase coordination with organizations that take fair housing complaints. The 9 entitlement communities included Kansas City, Missouri; Kansas City, Kansas; Leavenworth; Independence; and Blue Springs. The city of Kansas City, Missouri, invited the other 8 entitlement communities and offered outreach and enforcement training following the completion of the AI. Quarterly meetings were held on June 7, 2012; September 18, 2012; and January 29, 2013. Informational materials were mailed to housing and economic development partners.

MARC initiated work in 2012 on the HUD-funded Sustainable Communities Planning grant (Creating Sustainable Places) and invited representatives from the region's 9 entitlement communities and others to participate in the preparation of a regional Fair Housing Equity Assessment and the Regional Housing Element. Both the 2011 AI and 2014 FHEA informed this AFFH.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, embarked on a "Discrimination Report It Don't Ignore It" marketing campaign to respond to issues raised in the AI. The campaign allows the city's office to be more visible throughout the community. In addition, the city developed outreach materials and give-away materials to raise awareness. Materials are available in both English and Spanish. The city has trained some 1,000 persons within the city and outside of Kansas City on the fair housing law since July 2011. This training was initiated in part in response to requests from several landlord organizations, and

the training included both property managers and maintenance staff. Other training opportunities came as a result of settlements and conciliation agreements. The city has offered fair housing training for Community Development Corporations, and partnered with Guadalupe Center to train their staff and take complaints from the Spanish-speaking community. The city developed English and Spanish billboards to promote fair housing, developed public bus advertisements on both the interior and exterior of buses; and developed a mobile App to inform the public.

The city created a position called Analysis of Impediments Coordinator/Fair Housing Specialist located within the Human Relations Department, Civil Rights Division in February 2012. This position was supported through February 13, 2013, and during this year, the specialist assisted in the mitigation of barriers to fair housing that were identified in the AI study. The Human Relations Department established performance measures to implement the AI.

The city trained 50 Neighborhoods and Housing Services Division staff on fair housing, and that division now partners with the Civil Rights Division on outreach and to require CDBG recipients of requiring use of the fair housing logo, to take advantage of the city's fair housing training, and to increase affirmative marketing, including through the use of minority newspapers. The city of Kansas City, Missouri, developed voice messages at several KCATA bus stops and various public service announcements to inform the public about their Civil Rights division's services. The weekly live radio program on Saturdays on 1590 AM discusses issues related to housing segregation, credit, first time home-buying and other topics. The show has a weekly audience of 15,000 – 20,000. The Division has placed fair housing advertisements in various non-traditional magazines and attended community events to reach out to special populations, including the LGBTQ communities.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, met with representatives from MHDC, MARC and the Housing Authority of Kansas City, Missouri.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, hosts an annual Civil Rights Summit, which allows organizations involved in fair housing activities to participate in training and to share information. Between 250 and 300 persons attend annually. The 2016 event was held on April 22 and focused on affirmatively furthering fair housing. Representatives from area communities, including Blue Springs, Independence, Kansas City, Kansas, and Leavenworth were invited to attend.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, has worked with Legal Aid of Western Missouri to analysis the city's standard to bring civil actions against property owners that have restrictions against persons that have a criminal history.

The city of Independence uses community outreach opportunities to distribute fair housing materials, including the city's annual Social Services Summit, Independence Heritage Festival and the Annual International Day of the Child.

The city of Leavenworth added fair housing information to its website and located links for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and Kansas Human Rights Commission on the website.

Subtask: The region should form and fund a regional fair housing education and outreach organization. This could be an existing organization or a new organization formed specifically for this purpose. The activities this recommended organization would engage in include:

Website: The organization should maintain a central regional website with basic fair housing information, training course schedules, fair housing resources and events, transparent information about how each of the jurisdictions investigates and enforces fair housing, local fair housing contacts for each jurisdiction and complaint forms. The website should also be the central point for a housing accessibility registry that provides information about accessible, affordable housing opportunities in the region and allows residents seeking accessible housing to complete an inquiry form. In addition to providing basic information about fair housing the website should answer tricky questions like: Can renters be forced to move when their rental complex is being foreclosed upon? Do their rental agreements have to be honored? The website should also contain a standard lease agreement so that tenants could see what a fair lease agreement looks like when they are apartment hunting. All information should be in English and Spanish.

This organization should also be the lead organization on fair housing activities for the region. It should coordinate fair housing month events, work with local organizations to publicize their free fair housing training opportunities (e.g., those offered by the Kansas City Human Relations Department), offer technical assistance to nonprofits whose clients have fair housing issues, potentially conduct fair housing testing, be the lead body for a regular regional housing summit or conference and coordinate funding of the enhanced SocialServe.com service. Ideas for education and outreach activities that were contributed by attendees at the public forums included:

- Placing public service announcements about fair housing rights and good lending practices in for-rent magazines.
- Holding financial literacy and fair housing training after ESL classes, as part of diversity training classes.
- Improving the fair housing information on 211 and 311 sites (e.g., hotlines available to residents for information and referral services).

The organization should be funded through annual contributions from the jurisdictions from CDBG or General Funds, grants from HUD and potentially contributions by banks to meet their Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) requirements and regional public housing authorities.

Progress update

Although there were efforts by local organizations to secure HUD competitive grants and other funds, due to limited funding, a regional fair housing education

and outreach organization has not been formed. There are six organizations providing housing counseling in the metro area, and four of those organizations provide information about fair housing: Housing Information Center of Greater Kansas City, Legal Aid of Western Missouri, Community Services League, and CHES, Inc. (Credit and Homeownership Empowerment Services, Inc.).

Kansas City, Missouri's Human Relations Department has provided training to a number of groups on fair housing issues and hosts an annual conference. The Kansas City, Missouri, Human Relations Commission conducted training for the Kansas City Regional Association of Realtors (KCRAR), and prepared an article on the Fair Housing Act and responsibilities by realtors under the law for their April 2016 newsletter.

The City of KCMO created a position called, Analysis of Impediments Coordinator/Fair Housing Specialist located within the Human Relations Department, Civil Rights Enforcement Division in February 2012. This contract full-time appointment ended February 13, 2013. This person assisted in the mitigation and coordination of barriers to fair housing that were identified in the Kansas City Region's, "2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice" study. The action was deemed necessary in order to appropriately satisfy the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD's) requirement to "2011 affirmatively further fair housing" requirements as they were identified.

The Human Relations Department, Civil Rights Enforcement Division took immediate action to establish performance measures in a concerted effort with the AI's action plan and AFFH mandate.

The process began with a division staff meeting held on February 15, 2012, at which time performance objectives were determined and a continued commitment to working with area participating jurisdictions. (Blue Springs, MO, Independence, MO, Lee's Summit, MO, Kansas City, KS, Leavenworth, KS Overland Park, Kansas, Shawnee, KS and Johnson County, KS) Representatives from each jurisdiction had committed to meet and discuss housing development initiatives and conditions impacting the region throughout the year.

To raise fair housing awareness, the following tasks were also identified:

- Quarterly meetings held on June 7, 2012, September 18, 2012 and January 29, 2013.
- Community stakeholders outreach and education regarding the AI and AFFH (an educational letter was emailed to 27 housing and economic development partners on March 3, 2012,
- Civil Rights staff provided CDBG and HOME sub-recipients fair housing training and certificates of completion in 2012 and 2014.

- Civil Rights staff scheduled state and federal housing authority affiliate meetings to discuss strategies to mitigate housing impediments, and/or increase mixed use housing development and handicap accessible housing units.
- Civil Rights staff drafted and disseminated a regional “Fair Housing Fact Sheet”. This information was shared with other jurisdictions to ensure uniformity in fair housing educational materials.
- Trained CDBG staff, 3-1-1 operators; city housing inspectors

The Mid-America Regional Council has supported www.kcmetrohousing.org (social serve.com) through the Homelessness Task Force of Greater Kansas City. The task force serves all 5 of the cities participating in this AFFH plan. This website provides information on affordable housing throughout the metro area, and provides housing and social service agency case managers with a “back door” to the information submitted by landlords to access information that helps house hard-to-serve populations, including those with felony convictions, problematic past credit or eviction history.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) established Kansas City Alliance for Economic Inclusion (AEI), which consists of 350 individuals representing 225 organizations in a broad-based coalition of financial institutions, community-based organizations, businesses, schools and other partners in several markets across the Kansas City metro area. AEI focuses on bringing unbanked and underserved populations into the financial mainstream. Kansas City AEI seeks to expand basic retail financial service usage such as savings accounts, affordable remittance products, small-dollar loan programs, targeted financial education programs, alternative delivery channels and other asset-building programs. To further achieve AEI goals of helping the low- and moderate-income community, Kansas City AEI is working to increase banking services for minority and immigrant communities, and rural areas. The 5 cities participating in this AFFH plan have participated or stakeholders within their communities have participated. The most recent event was held on September 20, 2016.

On behalf of AEI, the FDIC’s Kansas City Regional Office of Community Affairs sends monthly e-mails to a large distribution list of employers, teachers, parents, students, community service organizations, government agencies and others that outline the initiatives that serve the Kansas City metropolitan area. The Kansas City AEI currently supports 35 large initiatives and outreach efforts that provide financial education. In 2012, these initiatives provided financial education to over 100,000 individuals in the Kansas City metro area. The FDIC also helps support three year-round community financial education calendars. Since 2007, over 350 AEI members have contributed to the opening of a combined 64,570 new bank accounts and 167,235 individuals receiving financial education.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, sent communications to stakeholders concerning the formation of a CRA coalition. Further dialogue on forming a coalition was sponsored by the Alliance for Economic Inclusion. Additional meetings were held with representatives of the Federal Reserve Bank and FDIC regarding CRA.

2. Disperse affordable housing opportunities regionally

Public housing and HUD subsidized units are heavily concentrated in Kansas City, Missouri. The region needs to work cooperatively to provide more affordable housing opportunities — particularly for very low-income renters — outside of Kansas City, Missouri, and, to a lesser extent, Kansas City, Kansas.

As the housing market gains strength, all jurisdictions should focus on including mixed-income homeownership and affordable rental housing into newly developed housing. Areas where affordable housing is lacking — particularly on the western side of the region — should actively pursue Section 202, Section 108 and Low Income Housing Tax Credit developments. Providing a mix of residential products and building uses is consistent with the jurisdictions' planning visions, as articulated in their Comprehensive Plans.

The region's least affordable cities, including Overland Park, Lee's Summit, Shawnee and Johnson County must provide incentives — fee waivers, streamlined development processes, land acquisition — for developers to integrate affordable units, particularly affordable rental units, into market rate housing. At the time this AI was prepared, none of the jurisdictions had formal programs to incentivize developers to include affordable and mixed-income housing into their developments.

C. Subtask: Incentives should be offered and encouraged in the region's least affordable cities, especially for very affordable rental units, to encourage balanced housing communities in all jurisdictions.

Progress update

Local jurisdictions, including Kansas City, Missouri, Independence and Blue Springs, have reviewed development codes to more effectively accommodate mixed-use and mixed-income development. Model development codes were drafted to assist local communities consider changes. Several suburban cities on the Missouri side of the metro area have worked with nonprofit community development corporations, including the Builders Development Corporation and the Northwest Independence CDC, to address foreclosed properties and build affordable housing. Among those participating was Independence. There are limited Low Income Tax Credit resources available and they are focused in Missouri on veterans and senior housing rather than family units.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, has established a Land Bank to address the need for affordable housing by making vacant buildings and parcels available to nonprofit groups for affordable housing production.

Blue Springs continues to grow, with residents drawn to the community's affordable housing, quality schools and access to employment. Blue Springs established a Human Relations Commission in 2014 to educate and respond to concerns that may be expressed by citizens related to gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or disability. The HRC's mission is to foster the improvement of human relations among and between citizens of all cultural backgrounds, so as to provide all individuals with an equitable opportunity to grow and participate to the best of their ability in economic, educational, political and social systems.

A recent Blue Springs' study shows that the city is competitive with other jurisdictions in the region for two-family and multi-family housing units, most of which are renter-occupied. However, the study has shown that Blue Springs is dominated by two-family and four-family units, but a limited number of five-family and above units, which tend to accommodate a wider range of unit sizes and rents. There are a few designated developments for low-income residents, including families and seniors.

Blue Springs does not provide any formal incentives to encourage affordable and mixed-income housing. However, the 2015 Unified Development Code update may make it easier to develop affordable and mixed income housing. The UDC update permits an increased number of building types to support mixed income and mixed use neighborhoods.

The city of Independence provides annual funding support through its CDBG program to two local housing rehabilitation service providers for emergency and minor home repairs, including accessibility improvements, for low and very low-income homeowners. Both programs prioritize funding assistance for disabled and elderly households. Additionally, the city annually awards HOME Program affordable housing development funding through a competitive RFP process to projects addressing underserved housing needs identified in the city's Consolidated Plan, including housing for disabled and special populations.

The city of Independence has used rezoning, resolutions of support and Unified Development Ordinance approvals to allow for the addition of nearly 200 units of multi-family senior housing city-wide, 86 of which are designated affordable, and substantial renovation of 166 existing multi-family affordable housing units for disabled and senior households. In addition, city support was given through rezoning for development of another 57 units of duplex housing for seniors pending approval of Low Income Housing Tax Credits through MHDC; and corrective zoning of property owned by the Housing Authority of Independence was accomplished, allowing for future development of additional needed public housing units by the IHA.

The Kansas Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program allocates tax credits based on Federal regulations giving preference to proposals that serve the lowest income tenants, serve qualified tenancies for the longest periods, contribute to a concerted Community Revitalization Plan, and area intended for eventual tenant ownership.

The Kansas Legislature took action in the last legislative session (SB622) to restrict the ability of local governments to require affordable units in new developments (inclusionary zoning) but could offer incentives to encourage such development.

3. Educate residents about personal finance and work with lenders to mitigate loan denial disparities.

The region needs to raise its “housing literacy,” to both build better credit for minorities who are denied loans at much higher rates than whites and prevent residents from being taken advantage of by scams.

Subtask: The organization recommended in Action Item No. 1 could be the clearinghouse for fair lending information, including examples of scams and what residents should avoid. It could also coordinate and publicize regional efforts of homeownership counseling and foreclosure assistance.

Progress update

There are six community organizations providing housing counseling services help to educate residents about personal finance according to the HUD website, and some work with lenders to mitigate loan denial disparities (Legal Aid of Western Missouri; CHES, Inc. and Housing Information Center of Greater Kansas City). The city of Leavenworth supports Welcome Central, a social service agency that provides counseling on landlord-tenant rights and responsibilities. In addition, Leavenworth supports Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas which provides personal finance classes for area residents.

The regional office of FDIC has established a new resource, the Money Smart KC, <http://www.moneysmartkc.org/> to help residents in addressing financial literacy.

Blue Springs, with the CDBG program, provides homeownership courses through the First Time Home Buyers Program. The Blue Springs’ Community Services League office also provides assistance to low-income residents to help with finding employment and rightsizing personal finances.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, has worked with the Federal Reserve Bank to discuss the Community Reinvestment Act. The city hosted presentations by St. Louis representatives on ways to encourage greater financial institution action under CRA.

The city of Independence provides regular funding support through its CDBG and HOME programs to multiple nonprofit housing developers and housing service providers who provide ongoing homebuyer education and credit counseling services to prospective homebuyers at risk of experiencing discrimination. In particular, Independence’s Truman Habitat for Humanity is currently providing financial literacy training and homebuyer education, including orientation to fair housing policy and opportunities, to low and moderate income households seeking traditional mortgage loan approvals

through private lenders. To date, 10 families have applied for and been qualified for a traditional mortgage loan. Of those, seven have already closed on their new home. These ten households include seven Caucasian households (20 individuals) and three African-American households.

The city of Leavenworth annually provides CDBG funds for emergency and minor home repair for low and moderate income homeowners. Services include accessibility improvements.

Greater Kansas City LISC and United Way of Greater Kansas City have partnered to bring to Kansas City a network of Financial Opportunity Centers (FOC) to help low-income families stabilize their long-term financial outlook. These programs began operating in 2013. Based on a model developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, FOCs provide individuals and families with services across three areas: employment placement and career improvement; financial education and coaching; and public benefits access.

These core services are integrated and provided to clients in a bundled fashion in order to reinforce one another and to provide a multi-faceted approach to income and wealth building.

- Increases low-income individuals' access to jobs and builds an economically stable, financially literate and employable workforce.
- Empowers people to take control over their financial future through coaching, financial literacy tools, career and job planning, and more.
- Enables individuals to change their behaviors and become financially stable.

The FOC centers include the Prosperity Center at Rockhurst University, the Women's Employment Network, Guadalupe Centers, Inc., and Community Services League. The FOC Network will expand with a fifth site by 2017.

The Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas (CCNEKS) offers financial literacy programs in Leavenworth. The program offers fundamental financial education, budget coaching, debt reduction plan and how to work with a banking institution. CCNEKS also offers Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and a loan program to break the cycle of predatory loans including payday loans. Leavenworth CDBG funds are provided to CCNEKS.

4. Evaluate the demand for and increase accessible housing units.

The jurisdictions in the region should review the adequacy of their current requirements for accessible units. After consulting with service providers and surveying people with disabilities about how well their homes meet their accessibility needs, jurisdictions may want to consider raising the required percentage of accessible units in new construction and reestablishing or developing programs that fund accessibility improvements to residents' homes.

In addition, the region should create and maintain a list of providers of accessible rental units and provide this list to nonprofits like The Whole Person. The jurisdictions may also want to jointly sponsor an event like an “accessibility fair” where residents who have questions about accessibility improvements learn about how these improvements can be made and the reasonable cost range for such repairs, as well as what the repairs should cost.

Progress update

Blue Springs enforces commercial building codes (International Building Code 2012 and ADA laws/regulations) for providing accessible housing units in multi-unit developments. A minimum of 5% of total units must be ADA-accessible for residential (i.e., apartments), and a minimum of 3% of total units must be ADA-accessible for commercial (i.e., assisted living developments that also include other services). Most multi-family developments in recent years have been for seniors, and those are built to meet accessibility requirements. However, persons with disabilities that are not seniors may have more difficulty locating units.

The city of Leavenworth enforces the International Building Code 2006 for multi-family housing development. This code provides for accessible units. There are no regulations in place for single-family units or existing multi-family units that address accessibility.

The city of Independence works through their Council on Persons with Disabilities to review the limited supply of affordable accessible housing and encourage landlords to make accessible units available for rent, or to modify units to increase the supply.

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, addresses issues related to ADA in their pre-planning meetings with developers. The city looks to provide assistance to entities such as CHDOs pursuing development of accessible, affordable housing in its annual planning process. The Human Relations Department participates in pre-development meetings.

Local Action Items

1. Improve and make more uniform fair housing information on jurisdictional websites.

The State of Missouri Commission on Human Rights has an excellent website dedicated to filing a complaint. The website is easily found through a Google search using “housing discrimination Missouri.” All Missouri cities should have a link to the State’s Commission on Human Rights website, http://www.labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights/File_Complaint. All jurisdictions located in Kansas should have links to the Kansas Human Rights Commission website at <http://www.khrc.net/complaint.html>.

In addition, the following changes should be made to the jurisdictions' and state websites:

Blue Springs should add a "What should I do if I feel I have been discriminated against in finding housing?" question with a link to the Missouri Commission on Human Rights to its FAQ on its website of <http://www.bluespringsgov.com/index.aspx?NID=189>. The city does not have any source of fair housing information easily accessible on its website.

Progress update

This information has been added to the city's Community Development page.

Independence has a website about fair housing, "Fair Housing – General Information." It would be useful if the website linked to the State's Commission on Human Rights website (see above), in addition to HUD's website, as the state's website may be easier to understand by residents not familiar with fair housing.

Progress update

The city's Fair Housing website information, online at <http://www.ci.independence.mo.us/comdev/FairHousing> has been updated to link to both the state of Missouri's Commission on Human Rights and HUD's Fair Housing website, and also now includes a link to the 2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing update, and HUD's new Fair Housing Accessibility First initiative.

Kansas City, Missouri has a website dedicated to civil rights and fair housing enforcement, which includes the ability to file a complaint online (<http://www.kcmo.org/CKCMO/Depts/CityManagersOffice/HumanRelationsDivision/CivilRightsEnforcementSection/index.htm>). The process covers violations that fall under the city's ordinance only. The city should also add Fair Housing in its Housing Information list on <http://www.kcmo.org/CKCMO/Residents/index.htm>

Progress update

See the Kansas City website at a new address:
<http://kcmo.gov/humanrelations/civilrights/filing-a-complaint/>

Hosts weekly radio show on discrimination; has prepared and placed Public Service Announcements in both English and Spanish

Missouri's Housing Development Commission has links to both Missouri Commission on Human Rights' website and HUD's website on its homepage. MHDC has been working over the past 15 months to incorporate more policies that improve access to information, placing the logo and corresponding links on our homepage in an easy-to-spot location was one of the first changes implemented. The Fair Housing logo is located on the homepage.

Kansas City, Kansas. We were unable to find information about filing a complaint or a fair housing contact on the following website <http://www.wycokck.org/Internetdept.aspx?id=>

302&menu_id=1452&banner=15284). The city needs to have a webpage dedicated to fair housing information and resources, including how to file a fair housing complaint.

Progress update

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas (UG) has set up a website dedicated to Fair Housing Information. The information can be found easily under the Residents tab on the front page of the website. The page provides links to the Office of Fair Housing for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as well as to the Community Development and Human Services Departments. The page also provides a link to the UG Fair Housing Brochure, as well as info on Contract for Deed Transactions and a tenant information video. The UG will be updating the website to include more information on how to file a fair housing complaint. See the city's web page at http://www.wycokck.org/InternetDept.aspx?id=42239&menu_id=1452&banner=15284

Leavenworth should add a “What should I do if I feel I have been discriminated against in finding housing?” question with a link to the Kansas Human Rights Commission and HUD’s regional fair housing offices to its FAQ on its website. The city does not have any source of fair housing information easily accessible on its website.

Progress update

This information has been added to the city’s website.

2. The statute of limitations for filing fair housing complaints in local ordinances should be extended.

Alleged victims have one year from the date of discrimination to file a fair housing complaint with HUD. In almost all of the jurisdictional ordinances the period is much shorter. AI recommends that the time period for filing a complaint is extended to at least 1 year if not longer.

Progress update

Entitlement communities reviewed this recommendation following adoption of the 2011 AI report, but no changes in local ordinances were authorized. Kansas City, Missouri, refers individuals with a complaint that is more than 180 days to HUD, which can accept the complaints under federal law. The city’s Civil Rights division has evaluated the possibility of changing the Ordinance, but due to the increased potential of cases being filed, has not made changes. The city has limited resources to effectively handout changing the Ordinance at this time.

Blue Springs does not have a time limit for filing fair housing complaints.

The city of Leavenworth has extended the time period for filing a complaint to one year.

3. Jurisdictions need to improve some aspects of their zoning and land use regulations.

Section V of this AI contains a comprehensive review of the participating jurisdictions' land use and housing policies, including those of the public housing authorities. Although the review did not find egregious violations of the Federal Fair Housing Act, it did identify areas that may cause barriers to affordable housing development.

Subtask: To improve their zoning and land use regulations, the jurisdictions should implement the following:

- The region's most expensive jurisdictions, where affordable rental housing is lacking, should provide formal incentives to encourage the development of affordable and mixed-income housing.
- All housing authorities should allow residents to apply for public housing units and/or Section 8 vouchers by mailing in an application or completing an application online. This ensures fair access to publicly provided housing regardless of disability.
- Three public housing authorities have fewer than 5 percent of their public housing units that are accessible and need to work to reach the 5 percent accessibility standard.
- Development fees in Johnson County, and, to a lesser extent, Leavenworth and Blue Springs, are high relative to other jurisdictions. These communities should provide fee waivers for construction of affordable housing. The fee waivers should be based on a sliding scale with rental units affordable to 50 percent of the MFI and less receiving the largest amount of waiver.
- The Consolidated Plans of Overland Park, Shawnee and Kansas City, Missouri, do not contain the cities' anti-displacement and relocation policies, and they should.
- Shawnee requires a special permit for group homes (all of the other jurisdictions permit by right). Shawnee should permit group homes by right.
- In order to be more transparent and forthcoming concerning a jurisdiction's zoning regulations of group homes, it is recommended jurisdictions include their definition of group home, which is similar to their respective state statutes, in an easy-to-find and easy-to-understand manner. A good example of this is to include this type of group home in their definition of "family" or "household," or however the jurisdiction determines who occupies the dwelling units. Both Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri, do a good job of this by including this type of group home in their definitions of family/household.

Progress update

In April 2016, the city of Independence adopted revisions to its Uniform Development Ordinance to improve understanding of allowance related to group homes. Previously the UDO defined group homes in three different categories which had proven to be difficult to citizens viewing the code. To alleviate confusion, the city removed the three categories and now provides one definition for a "group home" that follows 89.020.2 of the Revised

Statutes of Missouri. The city will continue to list common types of group homes individually (foster care home, nursing home, group home for the disabled, domestic violence shelter, substance abuse treatment house, penal halfway house, recovery house), but have added a definition of a homeless shelter. Also, the city had previously used the term “household living” to define what most communities call “family” which had proven to be confusing to ordinance readers. With recent changes, the definition was changed to “family” to match what most zoning ordinances in the area use.