



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.

Disparities in Access to Opportunity — Patterns in Disparities

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- The pattern of development in the metropolitan area has caused a distinct split between large segments of the poor and people of color, who are concentrated in the urban cores of Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas, and the opportunities (jobs, education, services) that are concentrated in the suburbs.
- This pattern is also prevalent for the disabled and recent immigrants of Mexican heritage.
- This disparity due to distance is exacerbated by a public transit system that does a poor job of connecting efficiently with job opportunities in the region.
- Distance, however, is not the only barrier to connecting opportunity to those who most need it. Lack of quality education and training for the poor and people of color and lack of investment in urban core neighborhoods also contribute to disparities in access to opportunity.

Overarching Patterns of Disparities in Access to Opportunity

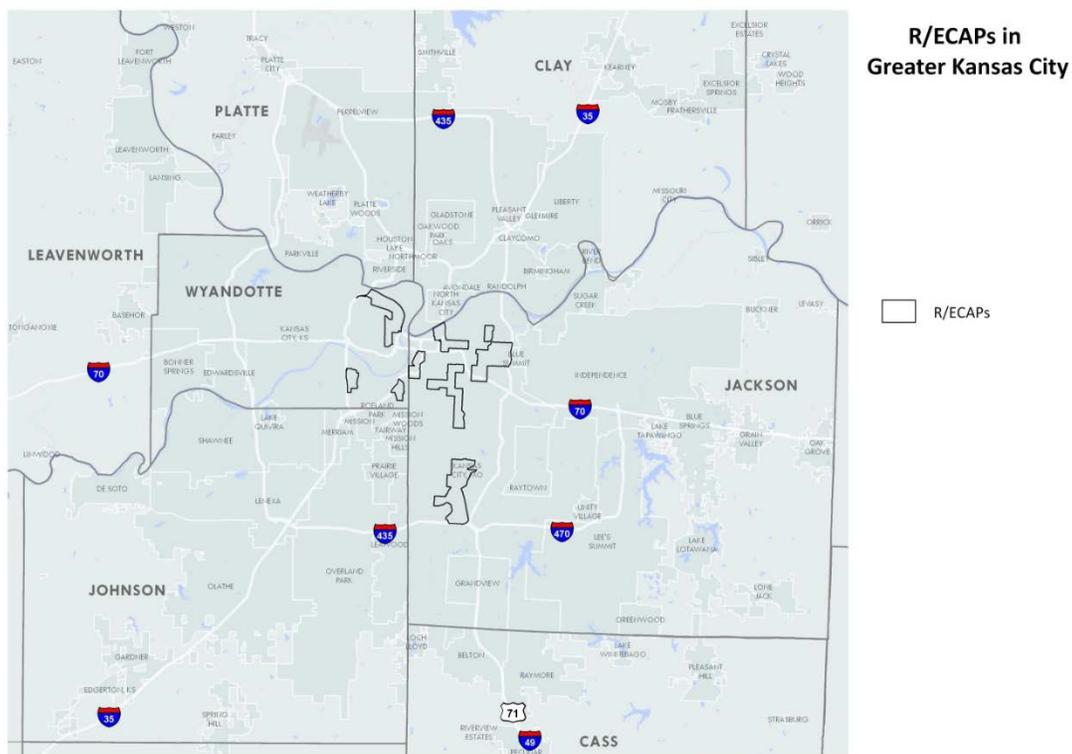
Regional Context

There is both a geographic pattern of disparities in access to opportunity and a human pattern of disparities. These two dimensions are, of course, closely linked and overlap extensively.

In terms of geographic disparities there are a number of elements that demonstrate a strong concentration of poverty and people of color in the urban cores of Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas. These areas are significantly separated from areas of opportunities, which are concentrated in the suburbs as people and jobs have continued to move farther out.

Map 1 shows the current distribution of Racially and Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty (R/ECAPs). While the R/ECAPs are concentrated in the urban core, a major change that has occurred over the last 20 years is the expansion of the R/ECAPs into the southern part Kansas City, Missouri and a slow move to the east.

Map 1: Racially/Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty

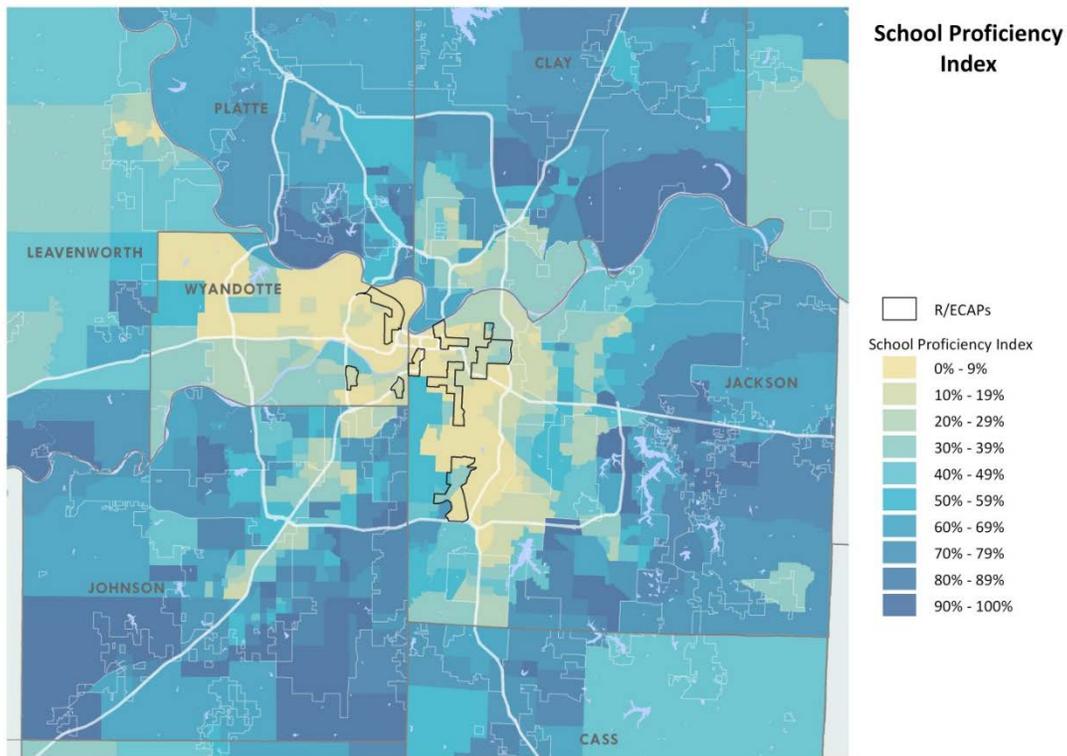


The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a Racially or Ethnically Concentrated Area of Poverty (R/ECAP) as a census tract where: (1) the non-white population comprises 50 percent or more of the total population and (2), the percentage of individuals living in households with incomes below the poverty level is either (a) 40 percent or (b) three times the average poverty rate for the metropolitan area, whichever is lower.

The analysis provided elsewhere in this Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing plan shows that many of the measures of disparities provided by HUD closely overlap the R/ECAPs and adjacent neighborhoods.

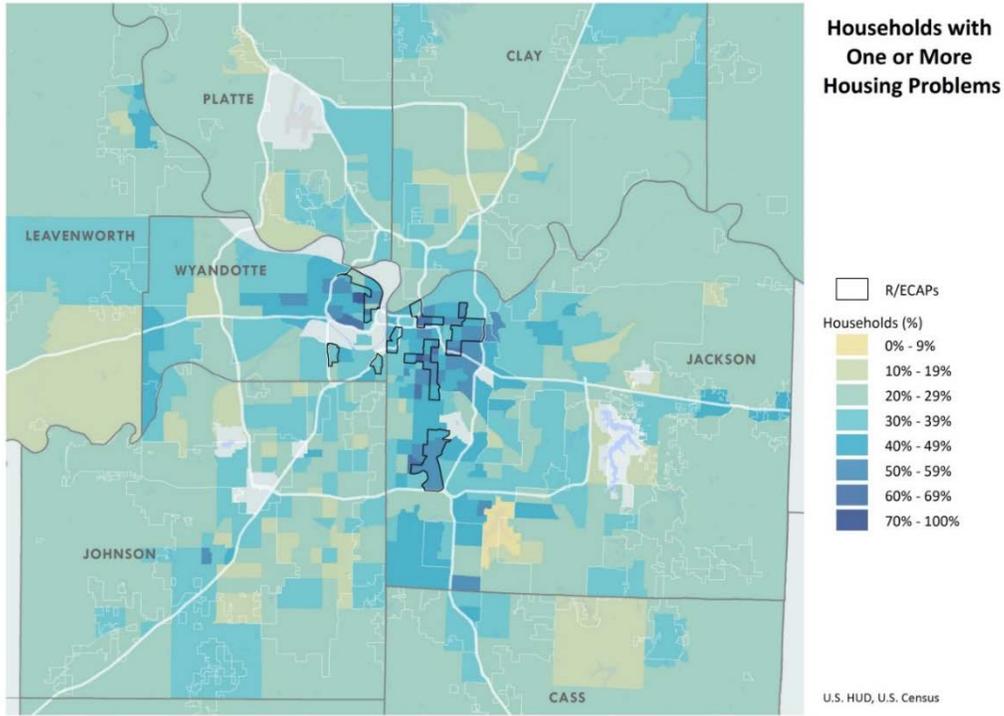
For example, Map 2 shows the close correlation between low fourth grade proficiency (math and reading scores) and R/ECAPs and the urban core.

Map 2: School Proficiency Index and R/ECAPs



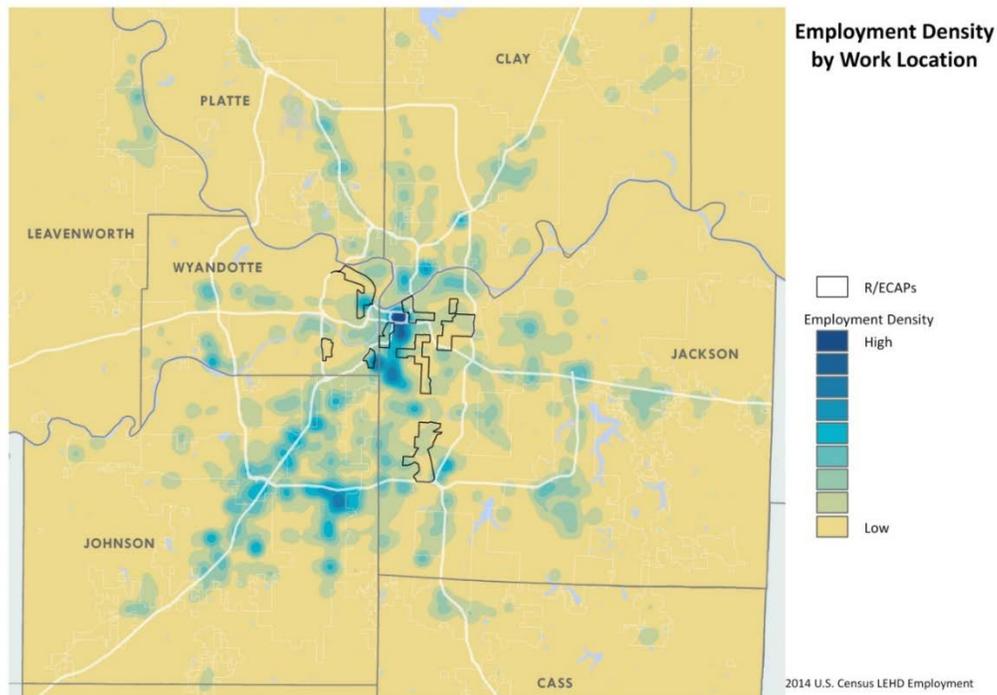
Map 3 shows the close correlation between households with one or more housing problems and R/ECAPs and the urban core. Households in the R/ECAP areas are much more likely to experience housing burdens, including severe cost burdens.

Map 3: Housing Problems and R/ECAPs



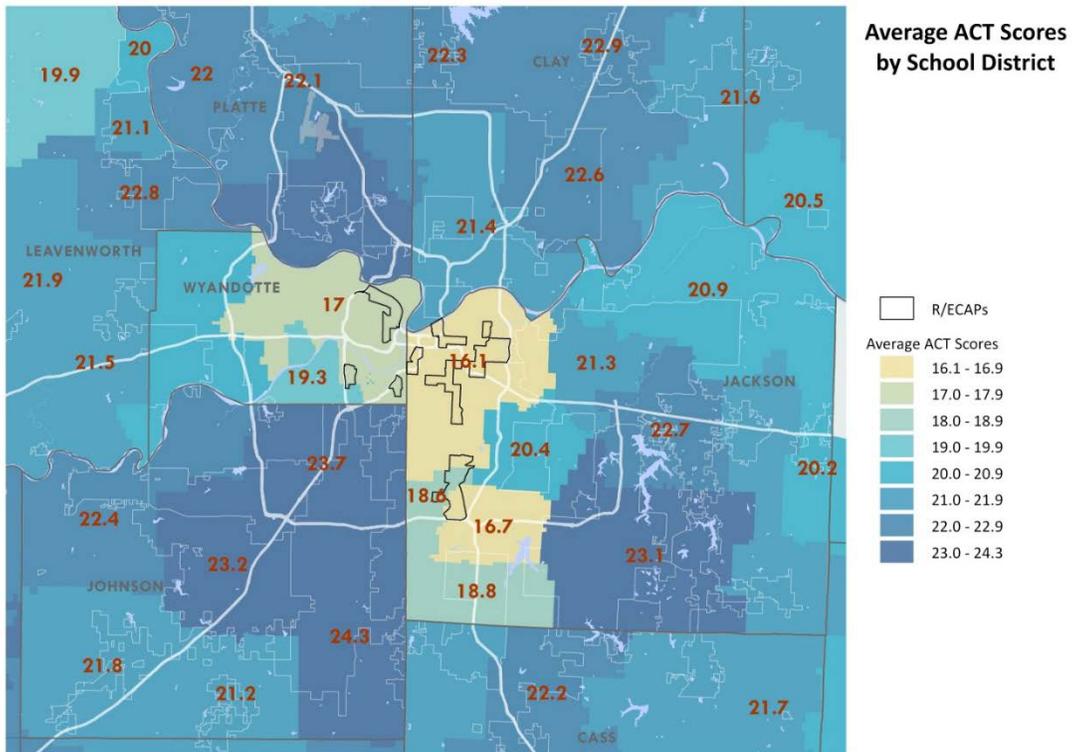
Opportunities tend to be concentrated in the suburbs. Map 4 shows the concentration of employment across the region. Although a number of jobs exist in the downtown area and Plaza, the majority of metro jobs are in the suburbs, particularly Johnson County, Kansas.

Map 4: Job Density and R/ECAPs



This also holds true for education opportunities, as measured by ACT scores, which, as seen in Map 5, tend to concentrate in the suburban communities.

Map 5: ACT Scores and R/ECAPs



The human dimension of disparities as they relate to opportunity are illustrated by several HUD indexes, summarized in Table 1, used to measure access to opportunity.

Table 1: Access to Opportunity Indexes
Kansas City Region (CBSA)

Race/Ethnicity	Low Poverty Index	School Proficiency Index	Labor Market Index
White, Non-Hispanic	66.73	55.87	68.40
Black, Non-Hispanic	36.74	27.52	39.88
Hispanic	41.50	34.89	49.21

The higher the indexes, the better the access to opportunity. The table demonstrates that indexes for poverty, school proficiency, and access to jobs are twice as high for whites as they are for blacks and Hispanics. This is similarly reflected in the impact on those households living below the federal poverty level presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Access to Opportunity Indexes (Population below Federal Poverty Line)
Kansas City Region (CBSA)

Race/Ethnicity	Low Poverty Index	School Proficiency Index	Labor Market Index
White, Non-Hispanic	49.61	44.75	54.55
Black, Non-Hispanic	21.85	20.13	27.81
Hispanic	23.12	23.14	34.73

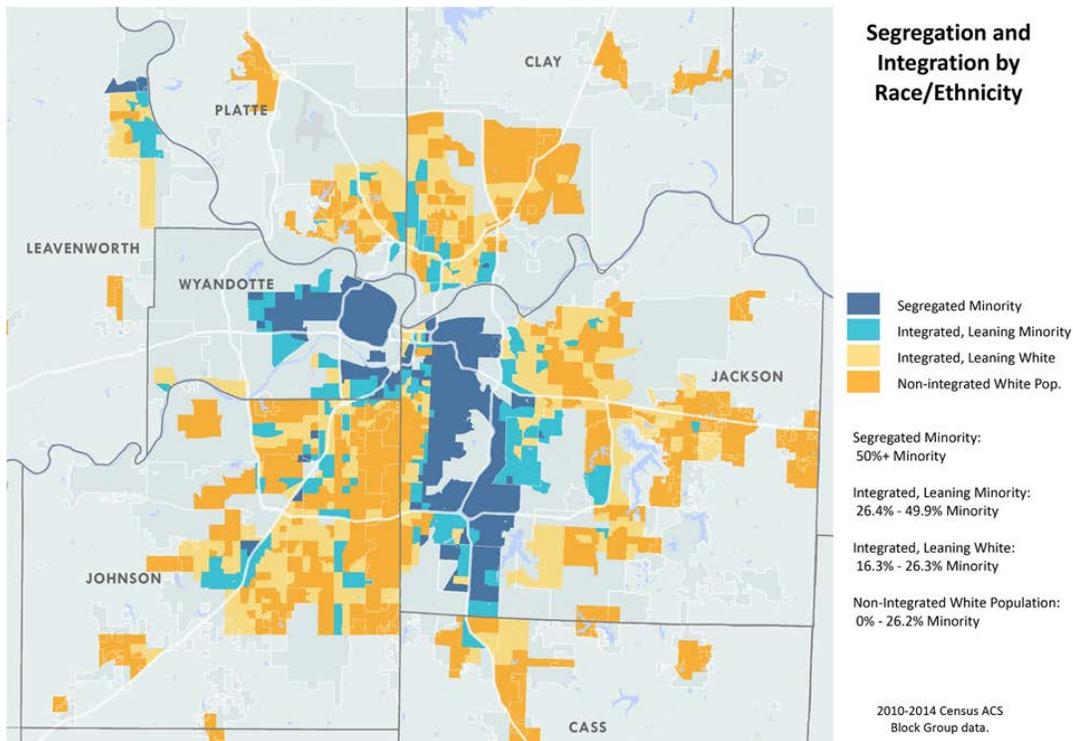
Similar disparities exist when looking at households living with housing problems (housing cost or housing condition). Table 3 shows that blacks and Hispanics are almost twice as likely as whites to live in a housing unit with problems, including housing that is too expensive.

Table 3: Households Experiencing Housing Problems by Race/Ethnicity
Kansas City Region (CBSA)

Race/Ethnicity	Percent with Problems
White, Non-Hispanic	26.70%
Black, Non-Hispanic	46.01%
Hispanic	42.21%

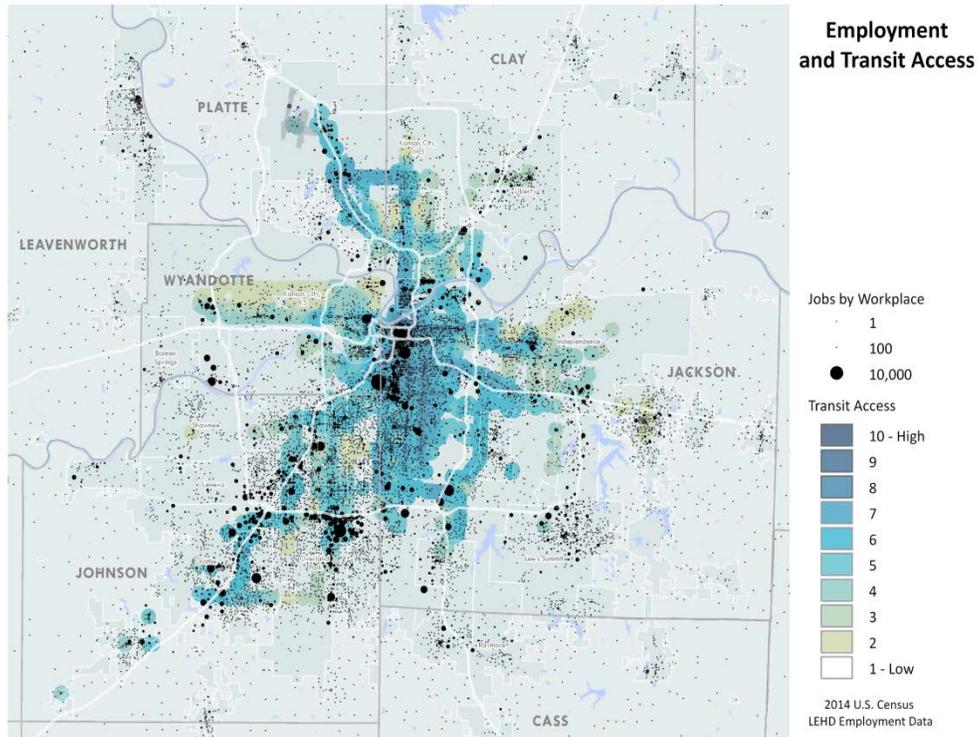
As stated above, the dimensions of geography, race/ethnicity and poverty overlap and reinforce each other. Map 6 shows how concentrated people of color are in urban core neighborhoods.

Map 6: Segregated Populations by Race/Ethnicity



Map 7 shows that people of color, concentrated as they are in urban core neighborhoods, have excellent access to public transit, but public transit routes do not reach 60 percent of the metropolitan area’s jobs.

Map 7: Employment and Transit Access



Local Context

The following summaries are based primarily on data illustrated in Map 6.

Kansas City, Missouri — The city has a high concentration of poverty, people of color, and R/ECAPs. However, it also has areas of opportunities, at least in terms of employment, housing, and services, and its transit service is far superior to other cities. It is here, in particular, that the data illustrates that what separates the poor and people of color from opportunity is not just distance, but also training, education and other socioeconomic factors.

Kansas City, Kansas — Like its neighbor on the Missouri side of the region, Kansas City, Kansas, has a high concentration of poverty and people of color, but it does not have the compensating proximity of opportunity areas and does not have as robust a transit system as Kansas City, Missouri.

Independence — The city of Independence has some concentration of people of color in its western reaches, and becomes increasingly white to the east where there are more job opportunities and services. However, because it is served by a single school district, children across the city have access to better educational opportunities.

Leavenworth — A smaller city both in population and area, the city Leavenworth has pockets of more segregated areas, but also integrated areas. Access to opportunities in Leavenworth are fairly high, given the small geographic size of the city, but because of its outlying location, low-income and minority households have a more difficult time accessing opportunities in the rest of the region.

Blue Springs — The city of Blue Springs is clearly a suburban community, mostly consisting of non-integrated, predominantly white census tracts. In general, residents have greater opportunities in terms of services, some jobs and education. A lack of public transportation and small number of jobs are limiting elements for residents.

Conclusions

- Areas with high concentrations of people of color and poverty are located in the urban cores of Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas.
- Opportunities tend to be concentrated in the suburbs, physically far away from the urban core, with the exception of the corridor between downtown and the Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri.
- While transit is accessible in these core areas, transit routes do not connect with the majority of jobs in the metropolitan area.
- Even when the areas of concentrated minority and poverty are close to opportunity areas, such as in parts of Kansas City, Missouri, there may be other barriers to access these opportunities such as a lack of education and training.

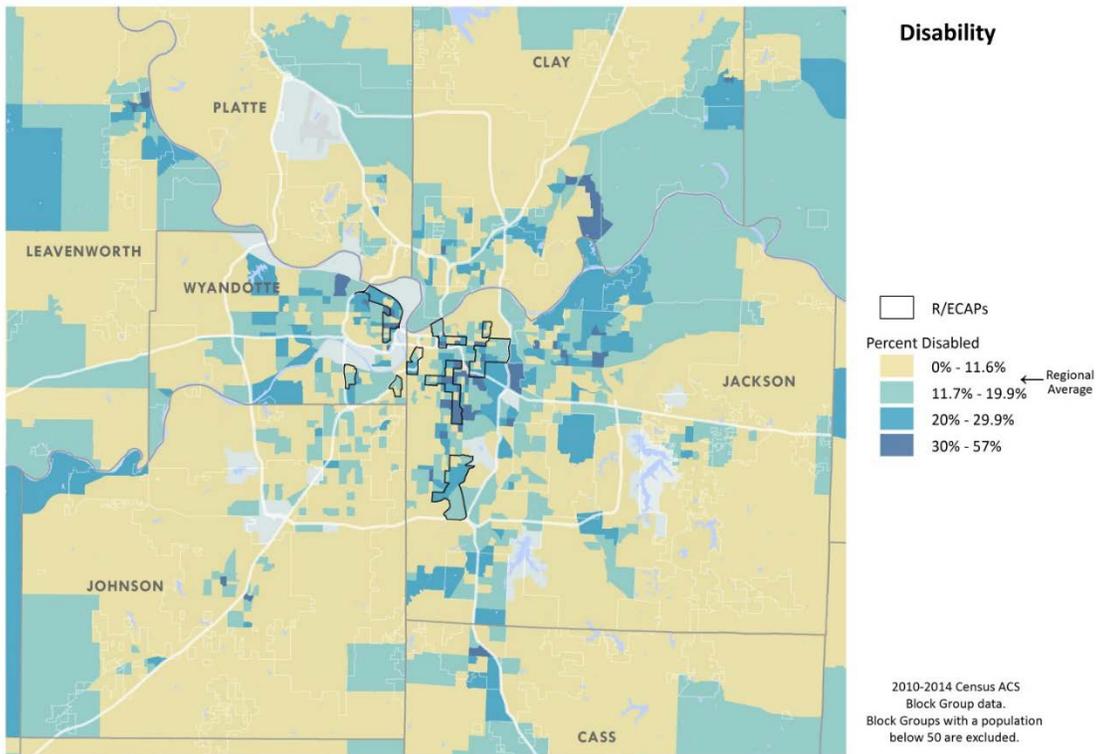
Additional Disparity Information

Regional Context

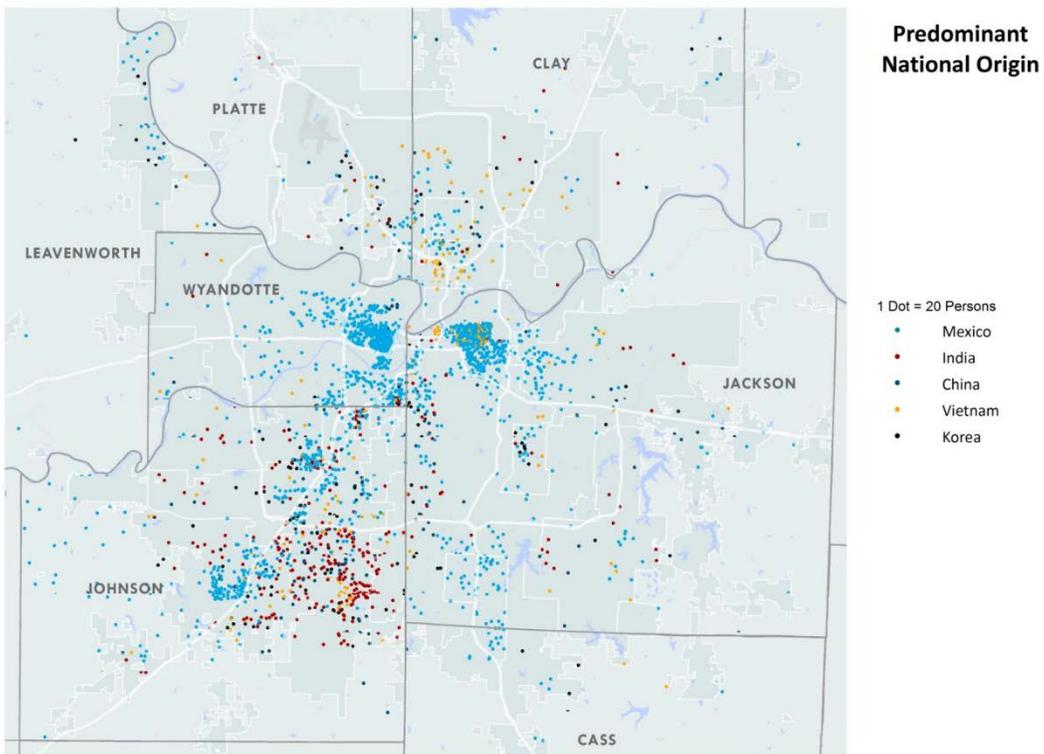
People with disabilities exhibit a similar geographic pattern of concentration as do people of color and those in poverty. Map 8 shows the distribution of people with disabilities.

Although more widely distributed than people of color or poverty, there is still a clear concentration in the urban core areas of Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas. This probably reflects the low-income status of many of those with disabilities. Again, while they may have good access to public transportation, the transit system does not provide service to many of the region's jobs and other amenities.

Map 8: Disability and R/ECAPs



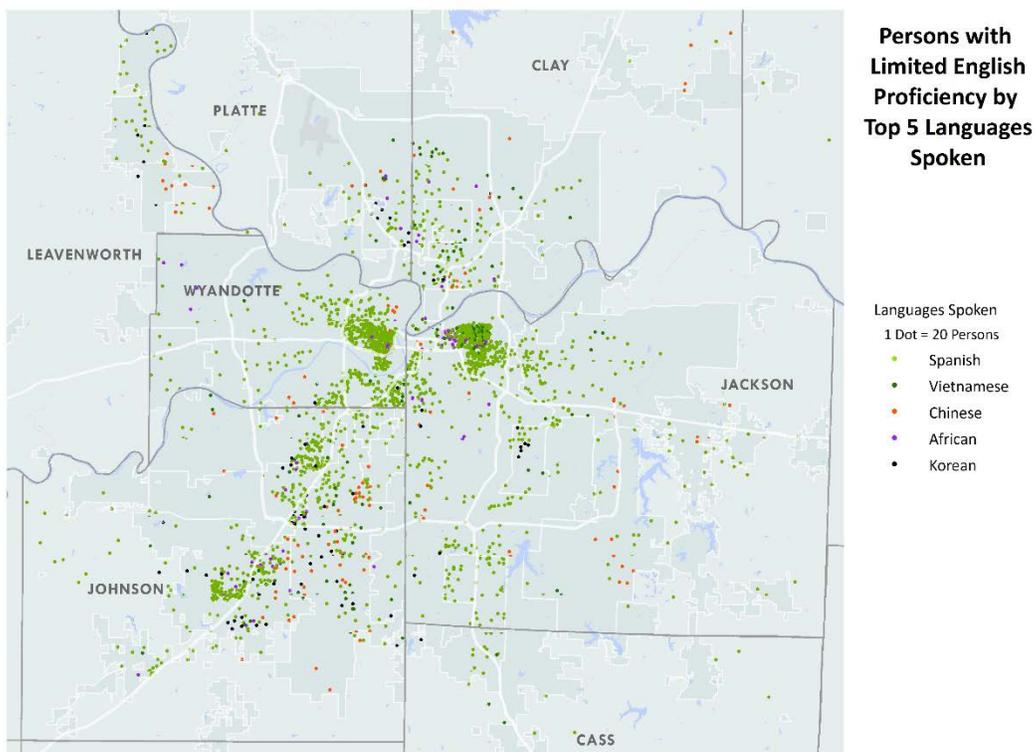
Map 9: Distribution of Recent Immigrants by National Origin



Map 9 above shows the distribution of recent immigrants. The largest group is those with a Mexican nationality. The next largest group of foreign-born are from several southeast Asian countries. People of Mexican heritage are clustered in the two urban cores in or adjacent to the R/ECAPs in eastern Kansas City, Kansas, and northeastern Kansas City, Missouri. As such, they face similar issues in terms of access to opportunities as those living in the R/ECAPs. There are also a number of households with Mexican heritage living along the I-35 corridor in Johnson County, especially in the city of Olathe. While these households are closer to opportunities, transportation and language barriers can be an issue.

Those of Southeast Asian heritage are more scattered across the metropolitan area, especially in southern Johnson County. This pattern is reinforced by the distribution of those with limited English proficiency, as illustrated in Map 10.

Map 10: Distribution of Persons with Limited English Proficiency



Local Context

People with disabilities are found in all communities, but somewhat more concentrated in Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas. People with disabilities in Leavenworth, Independence and Blue Springs are closer to opportunities; however public transit services are not as robust. These communities have some public and private services available for the disabled, including transportation.

Concentrations of new immigrants are primarily in Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas.

Conclusions

- People with disabilities face many of the same issues of segregation from and difficulty accessing opportunities as do people of color and those in poverty. However, this can be compounded by their disability.
- Recent immigrants of Mexican heritage are concentrated in or near R/ECAPs and tend to be isolated from areas of opportunity. This is often further complicated by language barriers.

Initiatives to Connect People to Opportunities

Regional Context

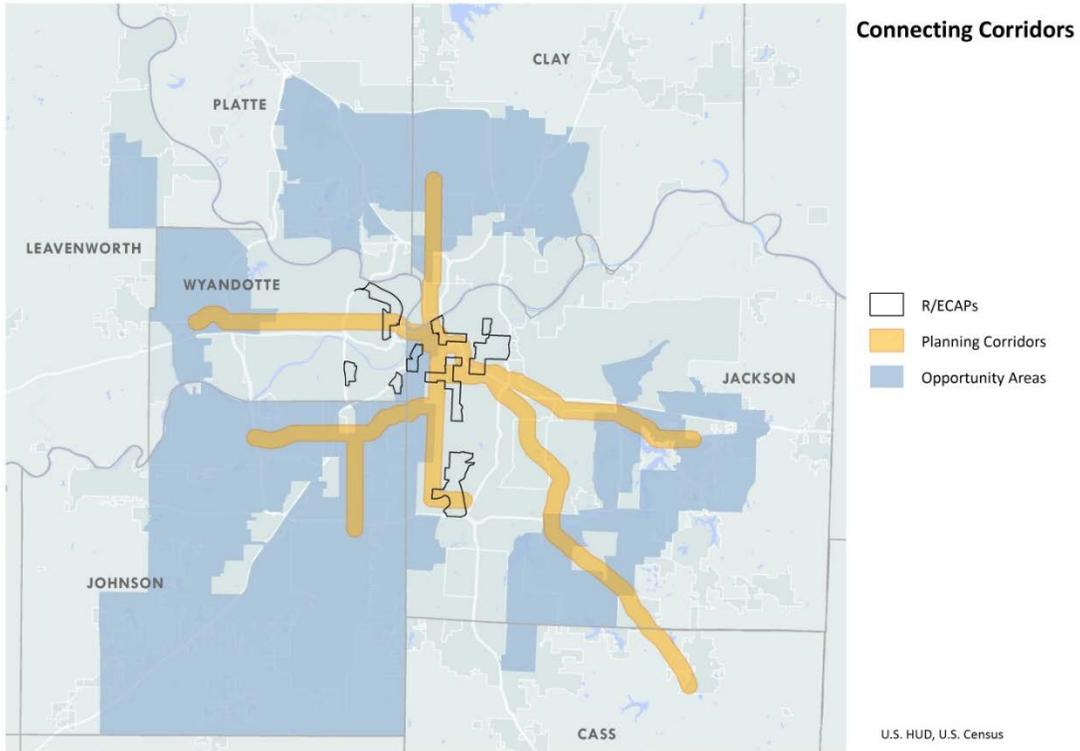
There are a number of community initiatives aimed at increasing access to opportunity for persons of color and those in poverty, although the scale and resources for many of these initiatives are not sufficient to fully address current needs.

Education — Head Start programs are currently able to serve less than 15 percent of eligible children. Some school districts, such as the Hickman Mills School District in Kansas City, Missouri, and Independence School District, are working to help low-income working households gain access quality early education through universal pre-Kindergarten programs. The Local Investment Commission (LINC) offers before and after school services and supports for families in Kansas City, Missouri, Independence, Center, Grandview, Hickman Mills, North Kansas City and Fort Osage school districts, serving hundreds of children and their families. PREP-KC is working in high schools in five urban core school districts to help disadvantaged students learn about careers, take advantage of career academies and otherwise support furthering their education.

Transportation — MARC has led a coalition of cities seeking to redevelop key transportation corridors and enhance public transit on these corridors. This has been supported by a series of TIGER grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The first TIGER grant awarded to the region helped cities develop bus rapid transit infrastructure in these key corridors and strengthen connections between the urban core and suburban opportunities. (See Map 11.)

A more recent TIGER Planning grant, awarded to MARC on behalf of a coalition of regional partners, is supporting efforts to improve connectivity between those in concentrated areas of poverty and employment centers across the metro area. The goal is to double the number of jobs that can be reached by public transportation in 10 years.

Map 11: Corridors Connecting Concentrated Areas of Poverty with Opportunity Areas



Local Context

Each of the five cities is engaged in a variety of initiatives focused on turning concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity and revitalizing older parts of their communities. The most significant is taking place in the urban core of Kansas City, Missouri, where a city partnership with LISC, the Urban Neighborhood Initiative (a program of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce), the Urban Land Institute, MARC and others is undertaking a project to build the capacity of the region to implement urban revitalization plans. The Catalytic Urban Revitalization project is in the midst of a \$200,000 initiative to develop a revitalization implementation plan for a large chunk of the urban core, develop a new entity with the capacity to do catalytic revitalization, and raise \$25 to \$50 million in a patient capital fund.

Conclusions

- There are several regional initiatives underway to both better connect R/ECAPs to opportunity areas and to transform concentrated areas of poverty into opportunity areas.
- Local communities are actively participating in the regional efforts and have active revitalization initiatives of their own.

Contributing Factors to Disparity in Access to Opportunity

Contributing Factor	Regional Analysis
<p><u>Lack of public transit connectivity between concentrated areas of poverty and persons of color and opportunities, particularly jobs.</u></p> <p>One way to increase access to opportunities is to improve public transit connections between areas with high concentrations of people of color and poverty and few nearby opportunities with areas that have more abundant opportunities. This is especially critical when speaking of access to jobs.</p>	<p>Regional transit systems do not do a good job of connecting the poor and people of color with job opportunities.</p> <p>The metropolitan area, with no natural boundaries, is characterized as a low-density region with the classic donut hole development pattern with a disinvested core and an ever-increasing suburban ring. It is in this suburban ring where the most job opportunities exist.</p> <p>The region’s transit system, because of fragmentation of transit jurisdictions across cities and the state line, has not been robust. The most developed portion of the regional transit system is in Kansas City, Missouri, which has a dedicated sales tax for the service. The city has also recently invested in a starter streetcar line. No other part of the metro area has a dedicated revenue source for public transit.</p> <p>While residents in the urban core of Kansas City, Missouri, urban core have good access to public transit, the fragmented transit service either does not connect at all with jobs (60 percent of jobs are not served by public transit) or connections are so convoluted that it takes an inordinate amount of time to get to and from a job. A recent Brookings Institution study estimated that only 18 percent of the jobs in the metro area are accessible by a 90-minute transit ride.</p> <p>MARC is currently leading a TIGER Planning grant focused on doubling the number of jobs connected to transit in 10 years.</p>
<p><u>Lack of private investment in specific neighborhoods</u></p> <p>This includes investment by non-governmental entities, such as corporations, financial institutions, individuals, philanthropies, and nonprofits, in housing and community development infrastructure.</p> <p>Private investment can be used as a tool to advance fair housing, through innovative strategies such as mixed-use developments, targeted investment and public-private partnerships. Private</p>	<p>Lack of resources and coordinated strategies to redevelop R/ECAPs and adjacent areas. R/ECAPs are concentrated in Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas, with none occurring outside of these two cities. This concentration in neighborhoods with high housing abandonment, higher crime rates and lower job opportunities is widely recognized, not only in these two cities, but in the region as a whole. However, it has been difficult for the two cities, even with access to federal resources such as those available through HUD, to amass enough targeted resources to change the economic, development and social dynamics in these communities. While the region recognizes the</p>

investments may include, but are not limited to: housing construction or rehabilitation; investment in businesses; the creation of community amenities, such as recreational facilities and social services; and economic development of the neighborhoods that creates jobs and increase access to amenities such as grocery stores, pharmacies and banks.

It should be noted that investment solely in housing construction or rehabilitation in areas that lack other types of investment may perpetuate fair housing issues. While private investment may include many types of investment, to achieve fair housing outcomes such investments should be strategic and part of a comprehensive community development strategy.

importance of the redevelopment of these areas, many consider the problem one for the two cities to address.

Investments that are made within the R/ECAPs are frequently not coordinated and often do not maximize impact for the community. There are many different agencies working in these neighborhoods, from the federal government to state government, cities, neighborhoods, foundations, nonprofit development agencies and for-profit developers. However, there is no one entity that has the responsibility to bring these diverse players together to develop a coordinated strategy that maximizes their investments.

- Within Kansas City, Missouri, there are new efforts underway to coordinate activities between the city, foundations, the Local Initiatives Support Commission (LISC), and the Mid-America Regional Council, not only to enhance coordination, but also to establish new capital resources.
- In April 2016, LISC announced the establishment of the Catalytic Urban Predevelopment Fund to assist developers with predevelopment costs.
- The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce's Urban Neighborhood Initiative (UNI), now in its third year, focuses resources on east-side R/ECAPs, with special emphasis on housing and education in partnership with Purpose Built Communities. LISC is working with Kansas City, Kansas, to spur reinvestment in portions of that city.
- The Unified Government has announced a major Healthy Campus initiative in Kansas City, Kansas, northeast of downtown, with a grocery store, community center and housing options.

The need for one or more high-capacity, nonprofit housing development entities. Not only are housing redevelopment efforts fragmented, as mentioned above, but this fragmentation occurs primarily among a high number of rather small organizations. The region does not have a high-capacity development entity with the capacity to pull together disparate resources into catalytic redevelopment.

A partnership of the city of Kansas City, Missouri, LISC, MARC, the Urban Neighborhood Initiative, the Urban Land Institute, and the American Institute of Architects, with financial support from local foundations and businesses, has assembled \$250,000 and hired a

	<p>consulting team to do three things in the east-side R/ECAPs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coordinated, catalytic regional strategy. • Bring together the framework and parties for a catalytic redevelopment nonprofit developer. • Assemble a \$25 million patient capital redevelopment fund.
<p><u>Land-use and zoning laws</u></p> <p>This includes regulation by local government of the use of land and buildings, such as regulation of the types of activities that may be conducted, the density at which those activities may be performed, and the size, shape and location of buildings and other structures or amenities. Zoning and land-use laws affect housing choice by determining where housing is built, what type of housing is built, who can live in that housing, and the cost and accessibility of the housing. Examples of such laws and policies include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits on multi-unit developments, which may include outright bans on multi-unit developments or indirect limits such as height limits and minimum parking requirements. • Minimum lot sizes, which require residences to be located on a certain minimum sized area. • Occupancy restrictions, which regulate how many persons may occupy a property and, sometimes, the relationship between those persons (refer also to occupancy codes and restrictions for further information). • Inclusionary zoning practices that mandate or incentivize the creation of affordable units. • Requirements for special use permits for all multifamily properties or multifamily properties serving individuals with disabilities. • Growth management ordinances. 	<p>Kansas City, Independence, Blue Springs, Unified Government and Leavenworth did not use racial zoning ordinances to exclude minorities explicitly. However, land-use planning and zoning policies have shaped segregation. A lack of diverse housing options throughout the region, particularly outside of Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas, limits the options of minorities with limited incomes.</p>

<p><u>Other Barriers to Access to Opportunity Besides Proximity.</u></p> <p>Even though persons of color or who are impoverished may have physical access to opportunities, they may experience other barriers, such as a lack of education and training, that prevent them from accessing the opportunities. These barriers can be every bit as difficult to overcome as the physical barrier of distance.</p>	<p>Distance is not the only barrier to accessing opportunity. When examining the areas of concentrated poverty and minority populations and opportunity areas, a considerable amount of the disconnect between these is caused by distance, with the poor and people of color clustered in the urban cores and opportunities found scattered around the suburbs and metro edge. However, there is one exception to this. The corridor from Downtown Kansas City, Missouri, south to the Plaza has a considerable number of jobs. These jobs are in near proximity to a number of R/ECAPs and public transportation is abundant in the area. But these jobs are often not available to residents of R/ECAPs.</p> <p>First, many of these jobs are white collar jobs requiring extensive education and or training. Residents of R/ECAPs typically do not have the advanced degrees or certifications that the jobs require. A number of nonprofit organizations are trying to bridge this gap, but efforts are hindered by an underperforming school district and lack of family resources.</p> <p>Second, many of the people who occupy these professional jobs seek to live in neighborhoods and housing that cannot be found in the core. They have the resources to choose where they live and are willing to devote more income and time to living in homes farther away from their jobs.</p>
<p><u>Difficulty in Accessing Quality Education.</u></p> <p>A key opportunity that people of color and poverty have difficulty in accessing is quality education. Lack of a quality education can significantly contribute to a person not being prepared or qualified to take advantage of job opportunities in an economy that more and more puts a premium on education and certification.</p>	<p><u>Lack of a quality school system and the ability to access quality schools in other parts of the region contribute to poor educational outcomes for those in areas of concentrated poverty and people of color.</u></p> <p>The Kansas City, Missouri, school district, which serves the urban core of the city, has been in turmoil for many years. There are a number of factors that drive this, including poor management in the past, the many issues facing the district, such as the poverty of its students, and a lack of resources. Charter schools have popped up throughout the core, but it is still unclear whether this strategy is succeeding and it often draws high-achieving students (and their motivated parents) away from the public school district, leaving it with even more problems. It is also difficult for a student in the urban core to transfer to a suburban school that may perform better. Districts are generally allowed to prohibit or limit such transfers and the state line adds to this problem. In addition, transferring to a suburban</p>

	<p>school means a family will have to overcome transportation issues.</p>
<p><u>There is a lack of affordable, accessible housing for the disabled.</u></p> <p>The disabled often have no choice but to live in concentrated areas of poverty and therefore face some of the same disparities in accessing opportunities that those who are poor or people of color do.</p>	<p>Disabled persons are more concentrated in the urban core than is the population as a whole thus separating them from job and other opportunities.</p> <p>The disabled tend to reside in concentrated areas of poverty for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disabled have a harder time accessing quality employment and therefore have lower incomes in general, thus limiting their housing choices. • There is a dearth of quality, affordable, accessible housing throughout the metropolitan area, further limiting choices for the disabled. • Residents of RECAPs and adjacent areas, because of lower incomes and lack of access to health insurance, may have become disabled because lack of ability to treat conditions such as diabetes. • Being concentrated in the urban core separates them from opportunity. This lack of access is compounded by their disability.