

Central Area

MASTER PLAN

Adopted: October 29, 2020

PREPARED FOR:



**Unified Government of
Wyandotte County
Kansas City, Kansas**

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Central Area

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Chapter

01

Introduction

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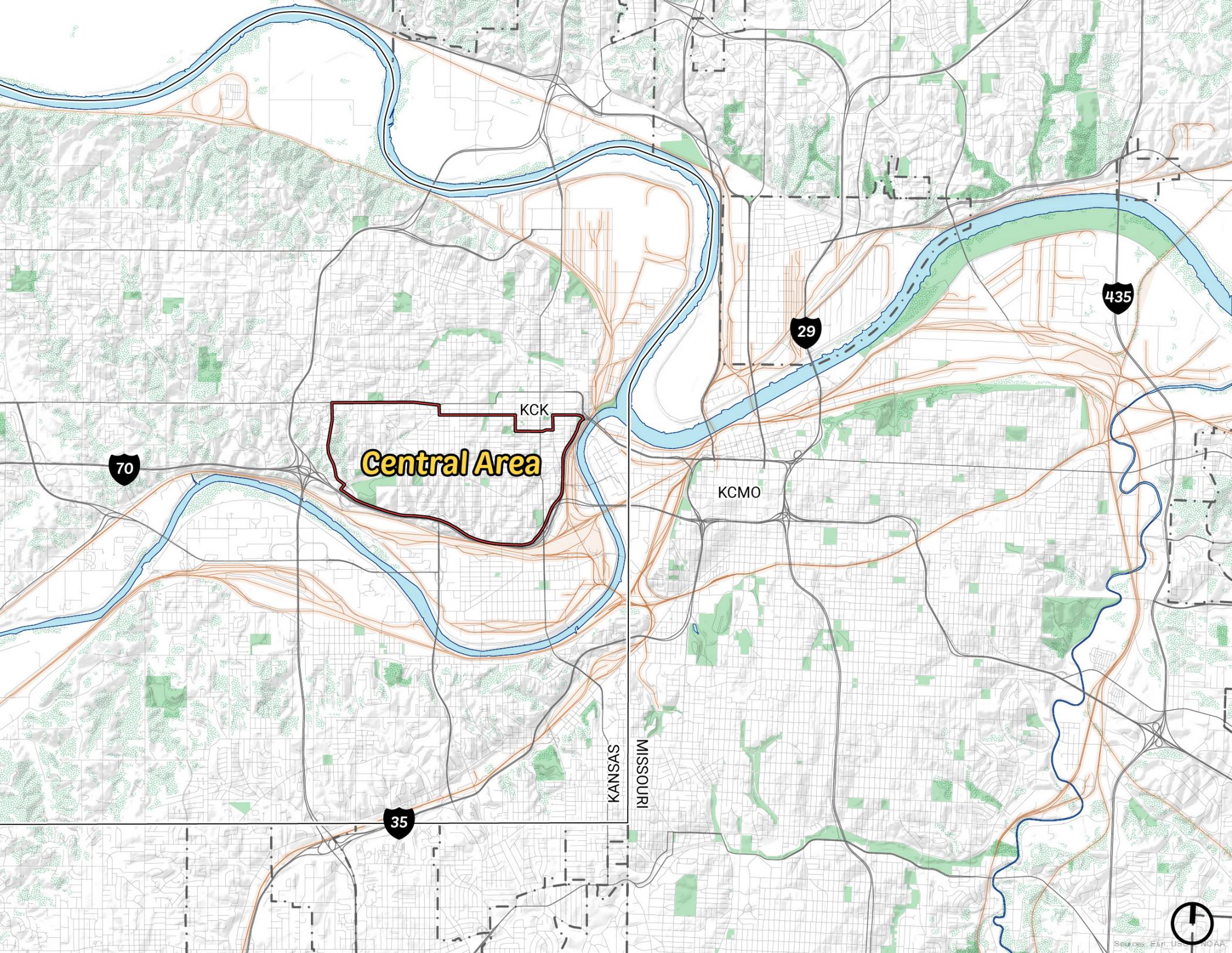
Project Overview

Planning Process & Timeline

Study Area Description

Neighborhood Character

Demographic Profile



Central Area

KCK

KCMO

KANSAS

MISSOURI

435

29

70

35



Project Overview

The Central Area is a neighborhood with a lot to offer:

TOP: Amazing views of Kansas City, MO

MIDDLE: Commercial corridors

BOTTOM: Residential neighborhoods.

The Central Area Master Plan is the culmination of a year-long planning process to create a shared vision for Central Area neighborhoods. Through a community driven process, residents, business owners, community advocates, and numerous other stakeholders offered their perspective on the current state of the neighborhood as well as their dreams for the future. One clear insight that came to light was how much residents valued their community and are invested in its success. Ultimately this plan will serve as a roadmap over the course of the next decade to help achieve their collective vision.

The planning process comes at a critical time for the Central Area. After decades of decline there is a palpable sense of momentum in the neighborhood. New residents and businesses are adding energy to the area that hasn't been felt in a long time. One only needs to walk along Central Avenue and see the diversity of businesses and new investments to see how the neighborhood is changing. There are significant challenges, however, that residents face on a day-to-day basis that should not be overlooked. Things like public health, housing affordability, and access to jobs are all issues

that came to light out of the planning process. Recent events around the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic racial injustices have made these issues even more pronounced. When asked specifically how residents were impacted by the pandemic, half said their housing situation had been impacted and 20% said they have difficulty paying for utilities.

Things we have long taken for granted are now valued in a new light. The importance of having a healthy place to call home, new ways to move around the neighborhood, the value of open space, and how to create community in a socially distanced world. All of these issues were already being discussed in the planning process before recent events took place, and are only now more pronounced because of them.

The planning process sees these events as an opportunity to rethink how to make equitable improvements to communities. The greatest challenge for the Central Area becomes how to support already existing momentum that helps existing residents, while at the same time welcoming new residents who can continue to contribute to the community in a positive way.



Planning Process & Timeline

#

Public Engagement Events:

- 34 individuals interviewed from 11 organizations
- 2 Community Listening Sessions
- 2 Public Open Houses
- 9 Neighborhood Meetings
- Central Avenue Parade Tent
- 4 Focus Groups
- 4 Steering Committee Meetings
- Online website
- Online Survey

The public was continuously engaged throughout the planning process



The Central Area Master Plan process started in earnest in August 2019 and was broken down into four phases:

1. STARTING POINT

This phase laid the groundwork for the process with the planning team meeting relevant stakeholders and touring the neighborhood.

2. ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

This phase allowed the planning team to hear from residents and stakeholders through interviews and public events. It also included a detailed analysis of the neighborhood using readily available data or data acquired through field work.

3. VISION & RECOMMENDATIONS

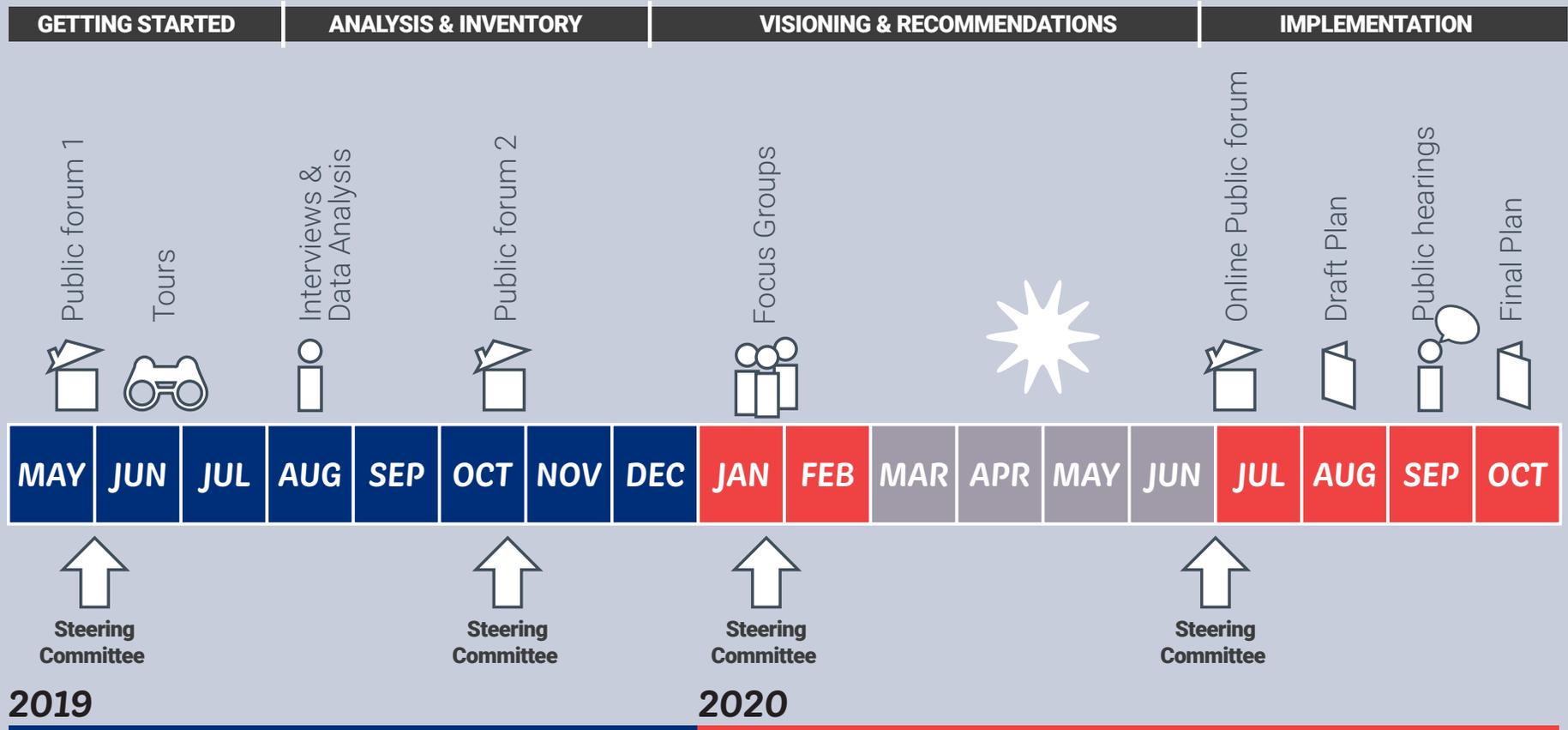
The vision & recommendations were determined through accumulated knowledge from Phase 1 & 2.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Conversations continued around implementing various recommendations, project partners, and potential financing opportunities. This stage will continue after the official Central Area Master Plan process has concluded.



Please note there was a four-month gap in the planning process due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In that time frame, the planning team moved the public engagement process online to ensure maximum safety for neighborhood residents.



Study Area

#

Key Statistics:

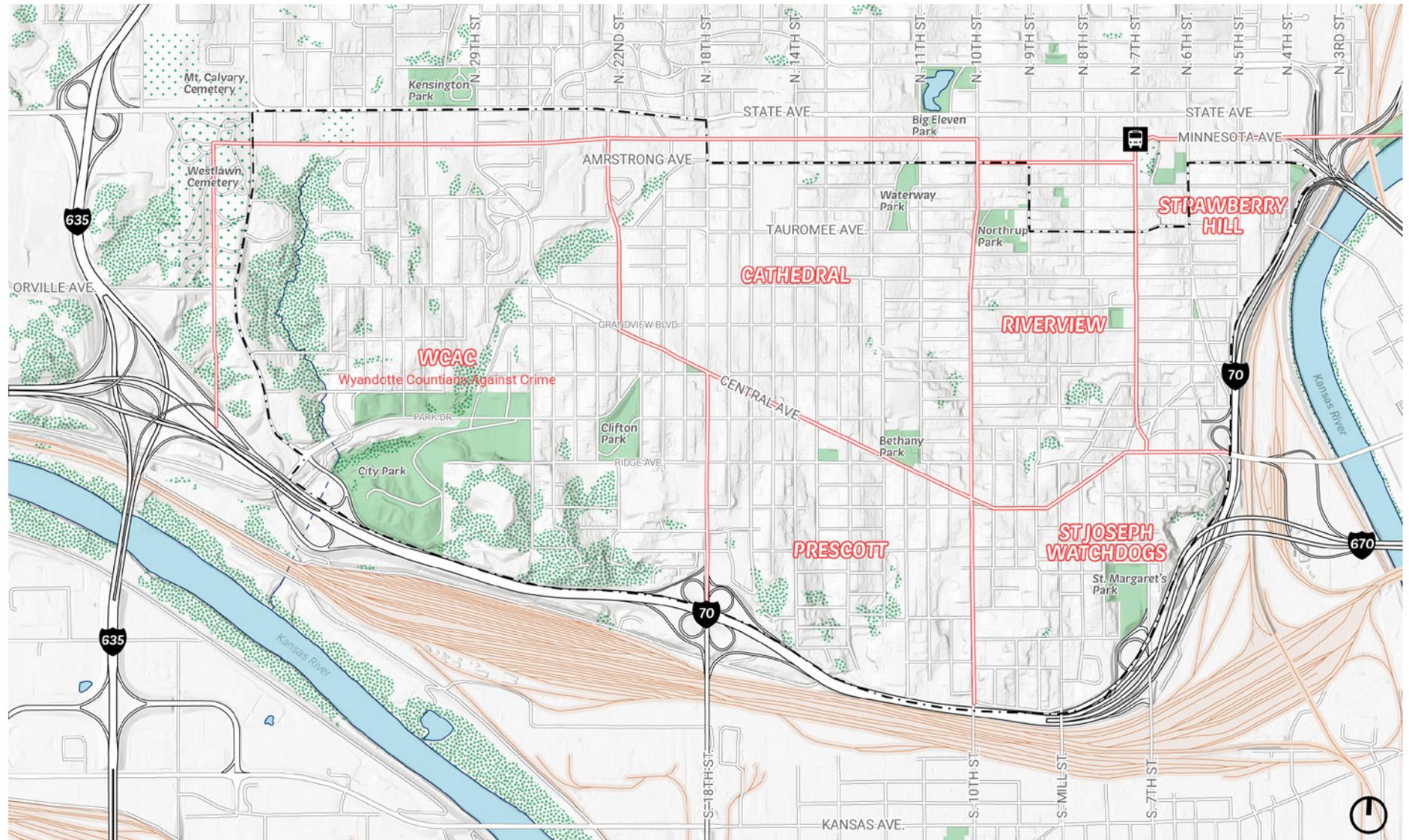
- The Study Area is 4 square miles
- Over 75% of parcels are residential
- 16% of parcels are vacant land
- 215 acres of green space across 13 parks and 10 community gardens
- Over two dozen churches exist within the study area
- 73% of the homes were built prior to 1960
- 11 schools are located within the study area from the elementary level up to high school.

The Central Area Master Plan Study Area encompasses 4 square miles directly to the west and south of Downtown Kansas City, KS. Highway boundaries of I-70 to the east and south and I-635 to the west create a clearly defined area. The northern boundary consists of typical urban streets and is more fluid with adjacent neighborhoods. The large width and high traffic on both State and Minnesota Avenues, however, creates a clear delineation between neighborhoods north and south.

What this planning process designates as the Central Area is in fact a collection of smaller neighborhoods all with their own unique identity. Historically these neighborhoods were defined by their residential character and mostly neighborhood serving commercial corridors and that condition continues to exist today. Central Area neighborhoods contain many of the key ingredients associated with healthy communities:

- **CHURCHES** play a big role in residents' lives with prominent locations within many of the Central Area neighborhoods.
- **PARKS** range from larger citywide draws like City Park to more neighborhood focused parks like Prescott Park. All together these parks serve a variety of needs for residents both active and passive.
- Multiple public and private **SCHOOLS** provide education from grade school up to the collegiate level at Donnelly College. These schools are held in high regard and residents call them out specifically as a reason the Central Area is a great place to raise a family.
- Historically, the East-West-running Central and Minnesota Avenues have been the main **COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS** for the area. While the character of the streets has changed over time, these two corridors still serve an important role in the community. Additionally, the north-south corridors of 5th, 6th, 7th, 10, and 18th play important commercial and connectivity roles.

Figure 1: **Study Area & Neighborhood Groups**

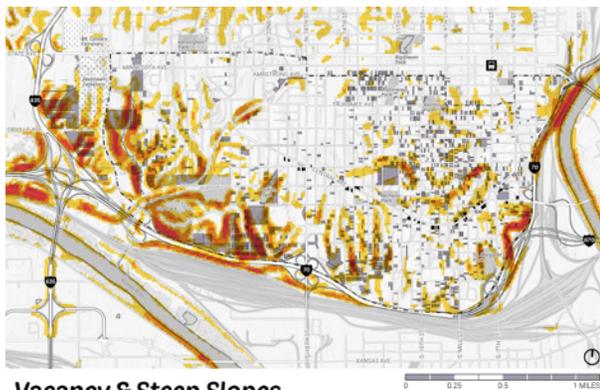


Study Area & Neighborhood Groups

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|------------------|
|  | STUDY AREA |  | CEMETERY |
|  | RAIL CORRIDOR |  | WOODED AREA |
|  | HYDROLOGY |  | PARKS/OPEN SPACE |
|  | NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP BOUNDARY |  | TRANSIT CENTER |

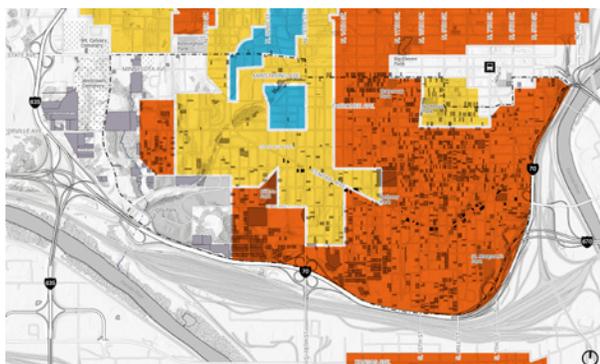


1 The federal Home Owner's Loan Corporation assigned grades to residential neighborhoods in cities that reflected their "mortgage security" that would then be visualized on color-coded maps. Those receiving the lowest grade of "D," colored red, were considered "hazardous" and "refuse to make loans in these areas [or] only on a conservative basis." "Redlining" maps are today acknowledged to have discriminated by race and preventing home ownership in minority communities. Source: mapping inequality



Vacancy & Steep Slopes

- BLOCKS IN STEEP SLOPE AREA (10% SLOPE AND OVER)
- VACANT BUILDING
- VACANT LAND



Home Owner's Loan Corporation - "Redlining Map"

- FIRST GRADE
- SECOND GRADE
- THIRD GRADE
- FOURTH GRADE
- VACANT LAND
- VACANT BUILDING

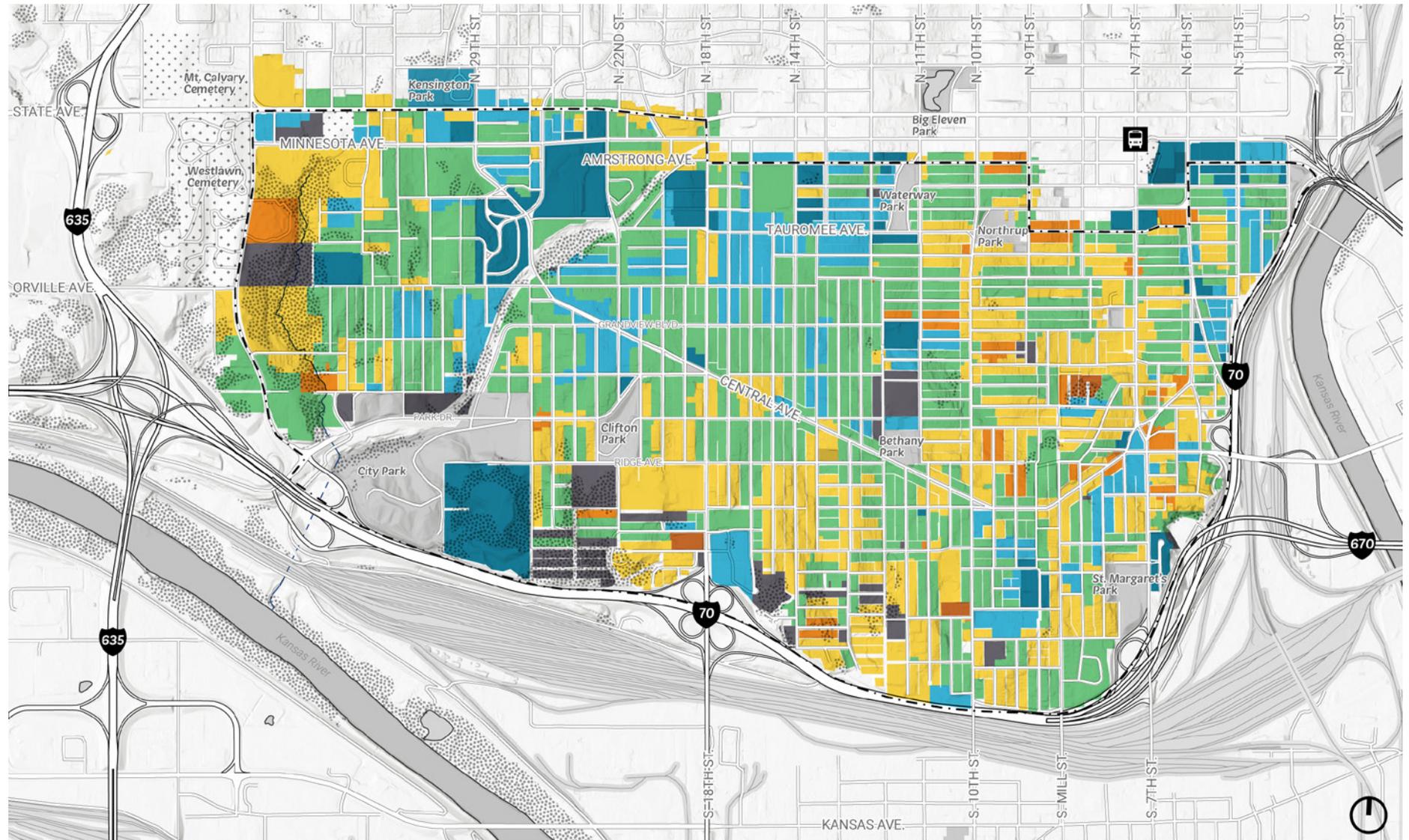
Population loss, topography, and former housing policies play a critical role in shaping the physical environment:

- **VACANT PROPERTIES** leave a lasting mark by disrupting the urban fabric of both commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods. While having mostly a negative impact, in certain circumstances they have allowed the neighborhood to adapt by replacing vacant lots with community gardens, new housing, or other active uses that benefit the community.
- **TOPOGRAPHY** gives the Central Area its unique physical character with rolling hills and steep slopes. It also provides challenges relating to accessibility, maintenance of property, and environmental conditions as well.
- A clear connection between vacancy and housing policies is visible when aligning a former Home Owner's Loan Corporation (**REDLINING**)¹ map with current vacancy. Similar lasting impacts can be found in cities across the country.

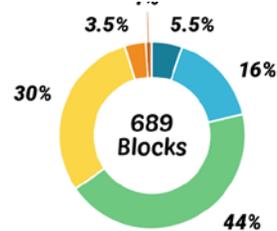
While correlation does not imply causation, it is safe to say the combination of former housing policies, population loss, the difference in quality of homes, and the difficulty in maintaining homes on steep slopes cumulatively led to the conditions that exist in the Central Area today.

In addition to vacancy, homes that are in disrepair can have an equal impact on the look and feel of a block when passing through. Gaining that perspective can only be done through a block by block analysis, which was completed in the summer of 2019. In this analysis it was determined that 65.5% of blocks are in good condition or their condition is trending up. This is a testament to the hard work and pride that residents have in their community and individual properties. For the 34.5% of blocks in either poor condition or trending down, recommendations will be targeted to these blocks particularly to help change course and prevent deteriorating homes from becoming the next vacant properties.

Figure 2: **Block Condition Survey**



Block Condition Survey



- BOUNDARY
- RAIL CORRIDOR
- HYDROLOGY
- WOODED AREA
- VACANT LAND
- TRANSIT CENTER

TRENDING UP

- A
- B
- C

TRENDING DOWN

- D
- E
- F

Neighborhood Character

Both small and large homes can be found throughout the neighborhood.



Some of the housing stock is old and in disrepair while others are brand new construction.

Churches play a vital role in the community, both large and small





Some older schools have been converted to housing while others are brand new to accommodate growing students.

Some auto-oriented commercial spaces are struggling and are converted into another use, such as restaurants while others are doing well.



While some of the older commercial spaces on Central Avenue haven't had investments in decades, others have seen a new influx of money and are thriving.



Neighbors have helped to improve public spaces with the addition of community gardens, while others are a regional draw because of their natural beauty



Demographic Profile



Please note that immigrant populations are historically underrepresented in census demographic data. Census data served as a baseline for the analysis with the understanding that the numbers may not be entirely representative of the community.



Key Demographic Statistics:

- 22,400 residents (2017)
- The population has declined since 2010 by 5%
- Majority Latinx population at 59%
- 16% of residents are foreign-born, with 74% of them coming from Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala or El Salvador
- 9% of residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher
- 66% of residents live in a family household
- Residents earn \$8,200 (20%) less than the median City income, and \$9,300 (22%) less than the median state income.
- 47% own their own home compared to 56% for the City
- 51% of residents are married couples.

POPULATION

Over the last two decades the population has fluctuated around 23,000 residents. After growing in population from 2000 to 2010, the population has begun to decrease from 2010 to 2017 with a current population of 22,400 residents

RACE & ETHNICITY

The demographic population in the Central Area has changed considerably in the last few decades. Since 2000 alone the percent of Hispanic or Latinx has grown from 41% of the population to 59%. Today, the Central Area constitutes the highest concentration of Latinx residents across the Kansas City region. The community is increasingly diversified with the growth of the Asian population from 3% in 2000 to 10% in 2010.

What is the foreign-born residents' country of origin for 2017?



POPULATION, RACE, & ETHNICITY

Source: U.S. Census 2000 and 2010, U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates 2013-2017

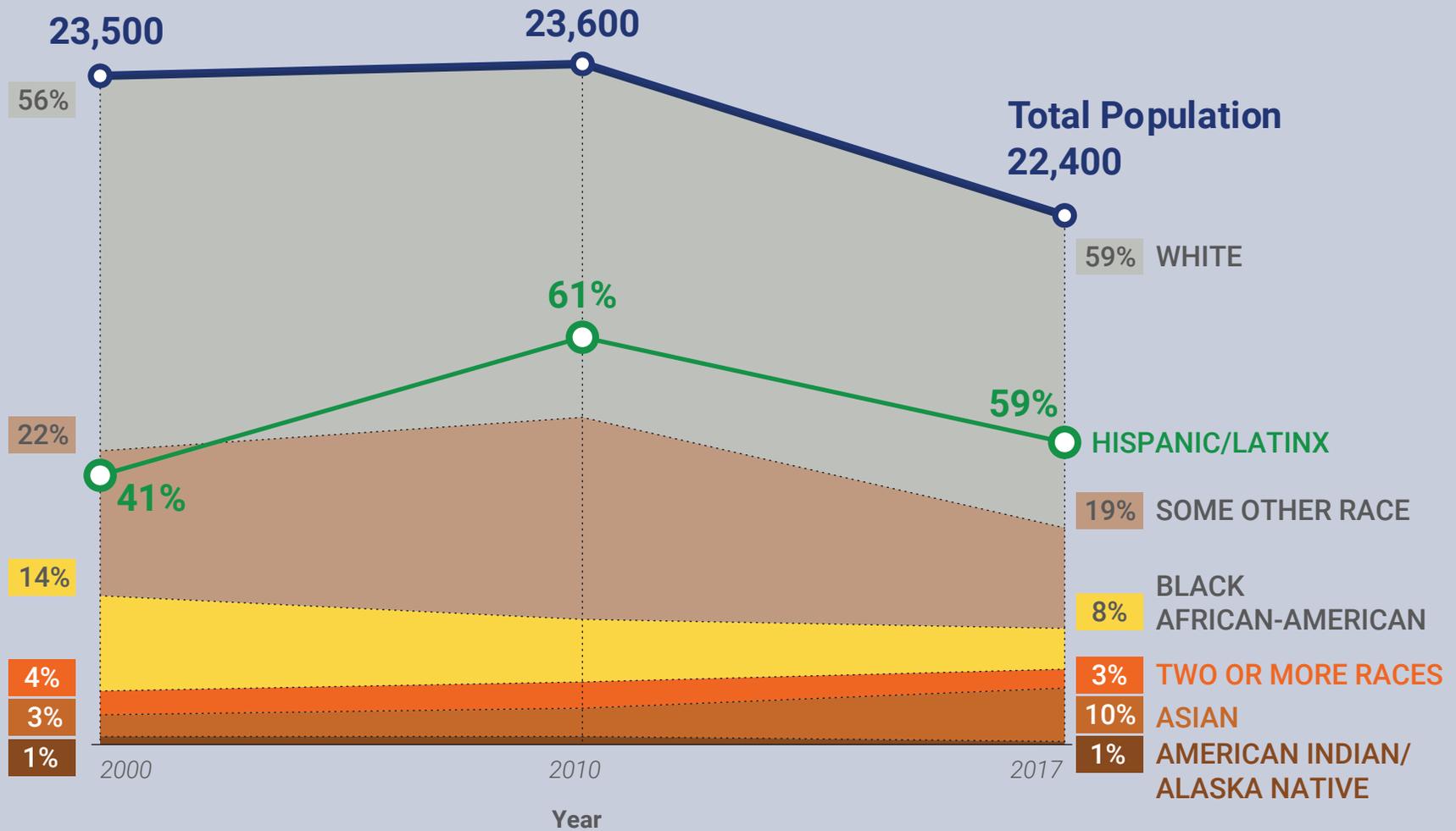
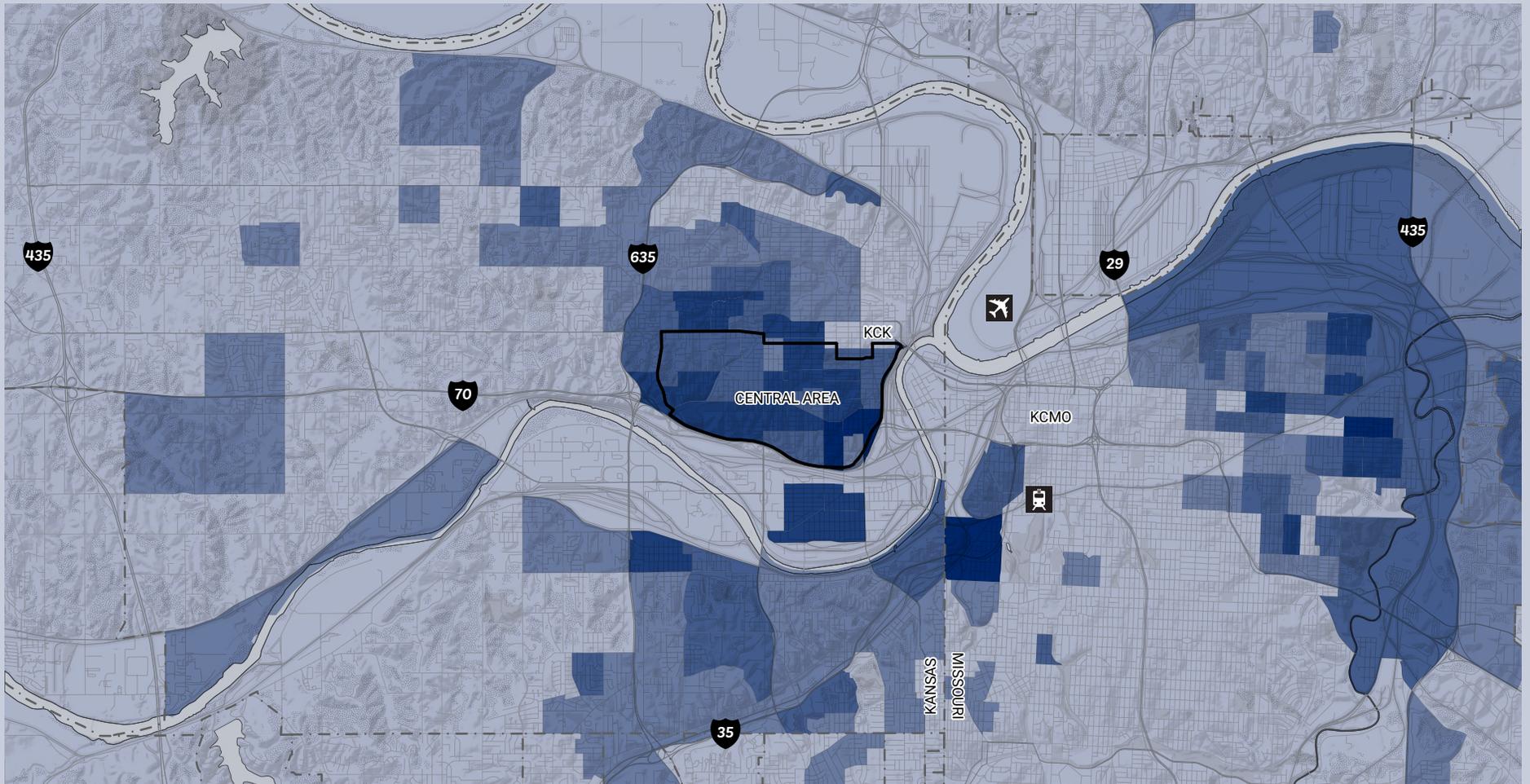


Figure 3: **Percent Hispanic or Latinx - 2017**



The above map shows the concentration of the Hispanic or Latinx population across the Kansas City Region. Darker colors equate to a higher concentration.

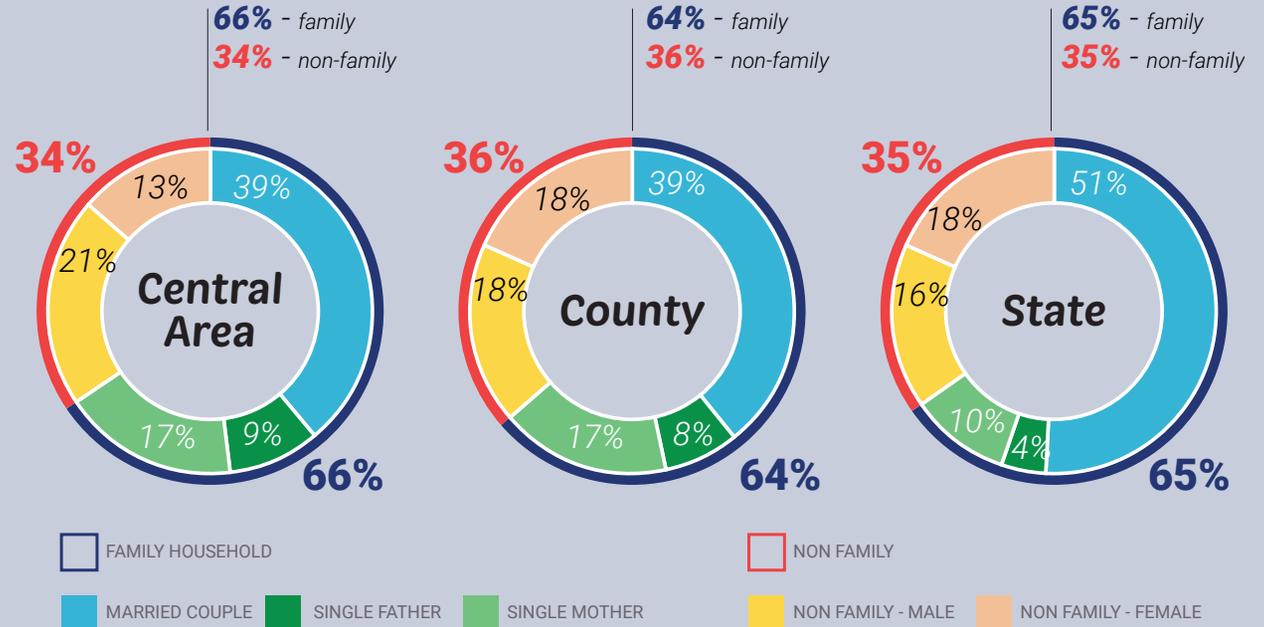


Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates 2013-2017.

HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP

The Central Area is largely a family oriented community which make up 65% of households. 51% of those are married couples, which is higher than both the overall City and State.

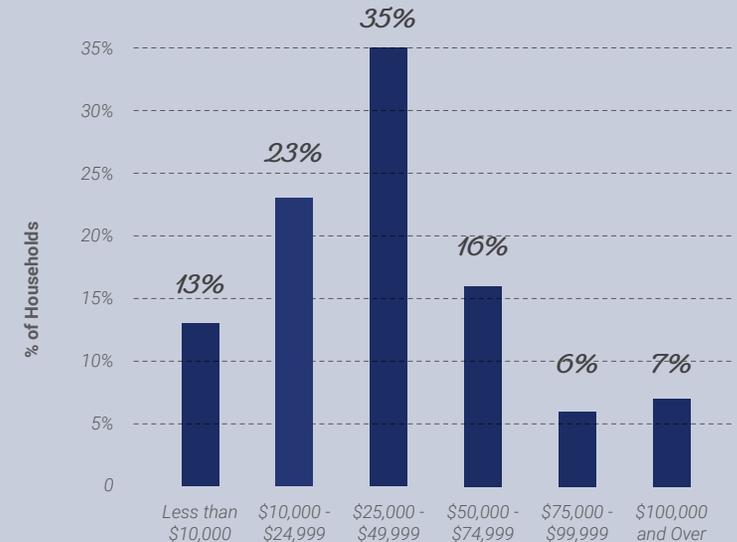
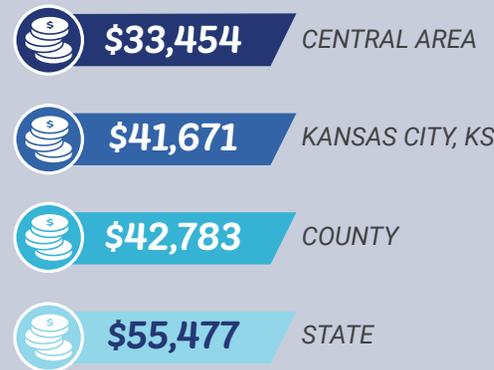
The U.S. Census Bureau defines a family as "a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together" (U.S. Census, 2020). A household is defined as all people, related or unrelated, that occupy a housing unit; this includes individuals living alone and groups of people living together, such as roommates or partners.



HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Households within the Central Area have lower median household incomes relative to the region and earn 60% of what residents in the State of Kansas earn as a whole.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2017)



Chapter

02

Key Findings

ELEMENTS OF THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

Analysis - Data & Public Outreach

Big Picture Ideas

Other Key Findings

Analysis - Data & Public Outreach

Overall Process

The combination of data analysis and public engagement are the foundations of which the vision, goals, and strategies are formulated. The overall process focused on these two elements to ensure that the story of the area is accurately measured and portrayed through both qualitative and quantitative data sources.

Data Analysis

In researching the existing conditions of the Central Area, the project focused on collecting a variety of datasets:

- A GIS block-by-block mapping of neighborhood block conditions
- A GIS parcel-by-parcel mapping of land use and vacancy
- Census research to analyze the demographic and socio-economic change over time
- A review of historic maps and planning documents from previous efforts whose boundaries overlap with the Central Area
- A detailed look at today's public transit system and transit modes including bike infrastructure
- A review of the existing businesses and their types
- An environmental analysis focusing on the natural topography
- A review of the public realm including sidewalk conditions, parks, and open spaces

- Employment analysis of the Central Area and its region
- Housing market research to analyze the current trend of home sales and needs
- Crime data by police districts over time

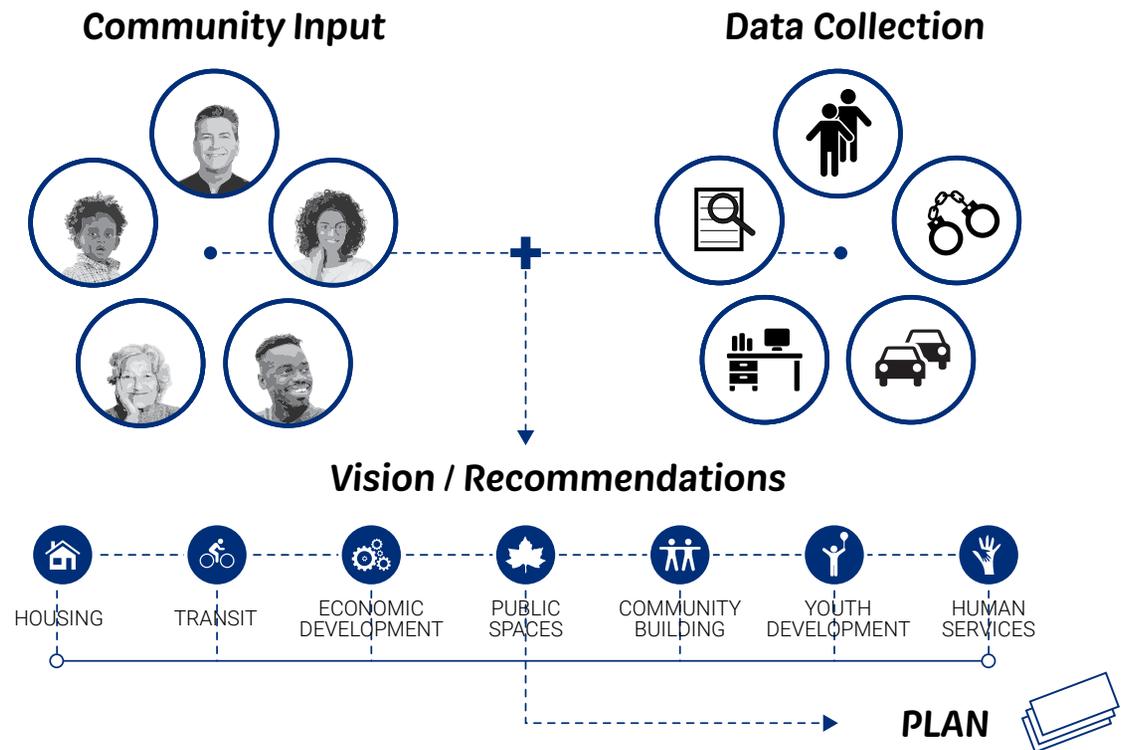
Public Outreach

A wide variety of outreach approaches were needed to engage a traditionally hard-to-reach population that included immigrant communities of which English is a second language. The project conducted outreach efforts in large and small settings and met with a number of residents and stakeholders. All of the outreach events were done in both English and Spanish to ensure that language was not a stumbling block to meet Spanish-speaking community members. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted the later part of the process, outreach efforts were restructured to online engagements. The following community engagement tools were used throughout the process:



Please note that all outreach material was produced in both English and Spanish to make the engagement as welcoming and accessible to the community as possible.

- 2 Community Listening Sessions
- 2 Public Open Houses
- Online MindMixer survey
- Online MySidewalk project page, which included a summary video in both English and Spanish
- 34 Stakeholder interviews from 11 organizations
- Engagement Tent at the 2019 Central Avenue Parade
- 4 Focus group meetings: Housing, Business, Mobility, Residents
- 9 Neighborhood meetings: CABA (Central Area Betterment Association), Cathedral, Prescott, St. Joseph's Watchdogs, Strawberry Hill, WCAC (Wyandotte County Against Crime), Livable Neighborhoods
- Postcards mailed to every household in the Central Area advertising events



Big Picture Ideas

Early in the engagement process the planning team looked to find the overarching themes for how residents experience the neighborhood now, and their wishes for the future. Out of that process developed three common ideas that were shared by community members.

These ideas, along with the findings from the research and analysis, became the basis to formulate the vision for the Central Area as well as the goals to achieve it in the near future.

"I want the Central Area to be a safer place to live and feel comfortable to walk in the area."

- Quote from neighborhood resident

Numerous public meetings allowed residents to share their thoughts and ideas for the neighborhood.



"I value the families and my neighbors."

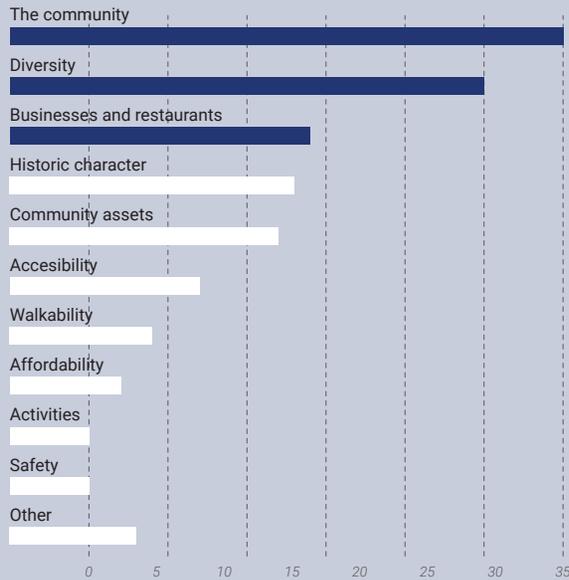
- Quote from neighborhood resident

The planning process asked targeted questions of the community.



What are the things you value most about the neighborhood?

- TOP 3
- 01 The community | La comunidad
 - 02 Diversity
 - 03 Businesses & Restaurants



Source: Public Open House, 2019

How do you define community?

Participants spoke about...

54% **People**

“ muy amables diverse MY FAMILY, NEIGHBORS AND PETS friends, neighbors, church members, fellow volunteers fun, family, close-knit MULTICULTURAL growing ”

18% **Neighborhood or location**

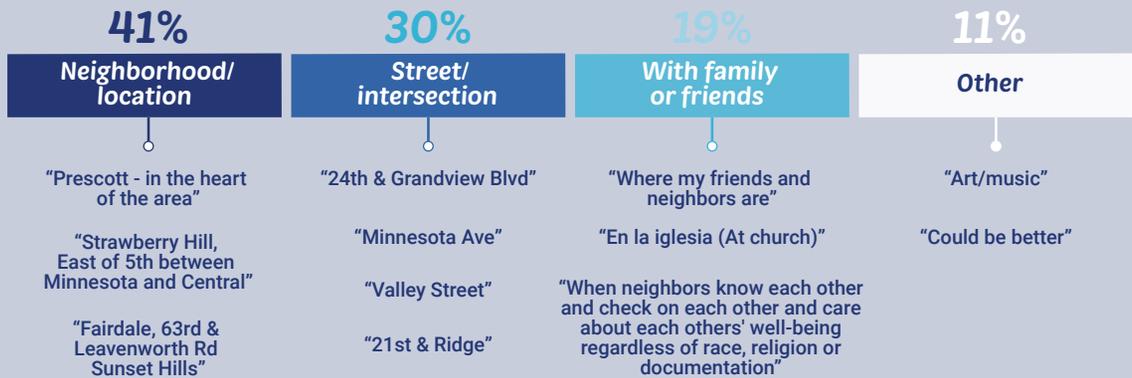
“ PRESCOTT Central Ave. 3 blocks around my house, plus the school below Central Ave. my neighborhood block STRAWBERRY HILL ”

“ calm and nice ruidosa (noisy) stable LONG-LASTING poor. no ADA-compliant FULL OF LOCAL BUSINESSES AND FAMILIES excellent ”

23% **Quality of life**

5% **Other**

Where is your community located?

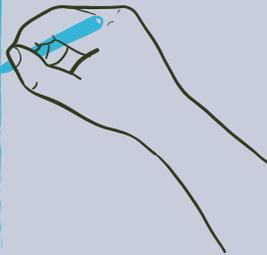


“Crime wise - perception does not meet reality. Only the worst part of crime hits the media.”

- Quote from neighborhood resident

61%
of participants
feel things have
improved

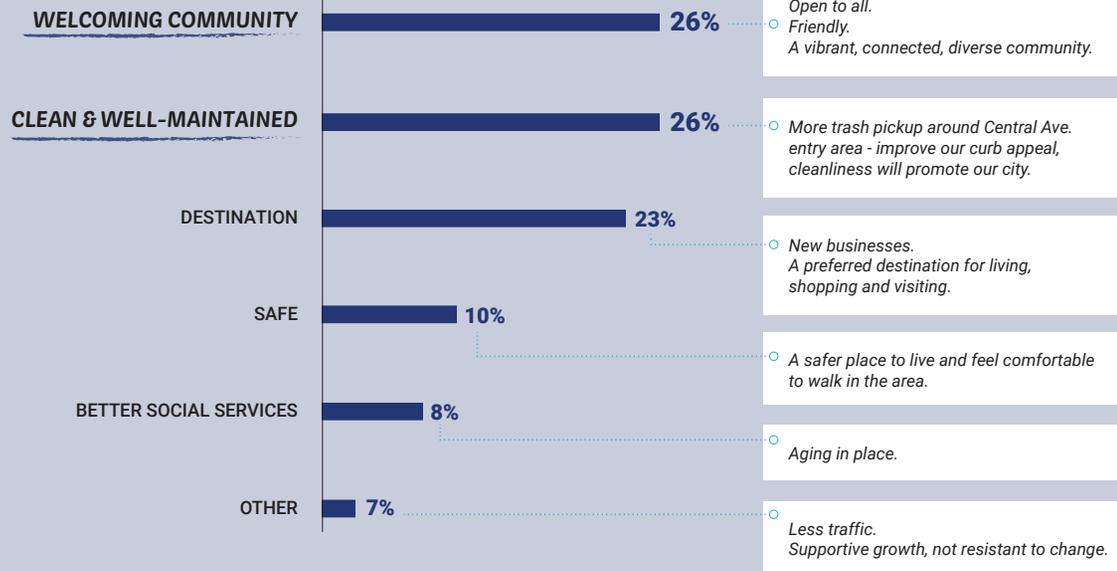
20%
of participants feel
some things
have improved
but there's still
work to be done



The vast majority of residents (81%) feel the community has improved over the last ten years.



What do you want the Central Area to be in the future?



Source: Public Open House, 2019

“The Central Area is racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse.”

- Quote from neighborhood resident

3 Key Issues:

- 01** Residents value the sense of community and it's diversity
- 02** Residents want the Central Area to be a healthy and safe place to live
- 03** Things are getting better and improvements have mostly been driven by the community



Other Key Findings

In addition to the big picture ideas, the following findings from the community input and data analysis shaped the plan's recommendations, which are the practical action items of the overarching vision and goals:

1

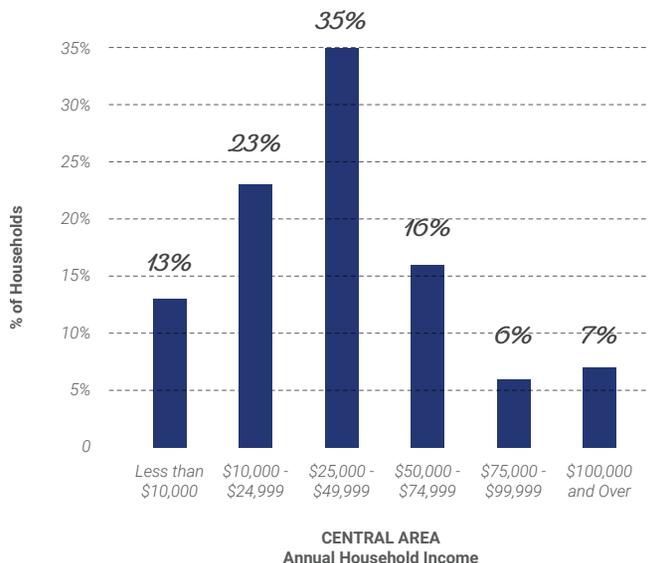
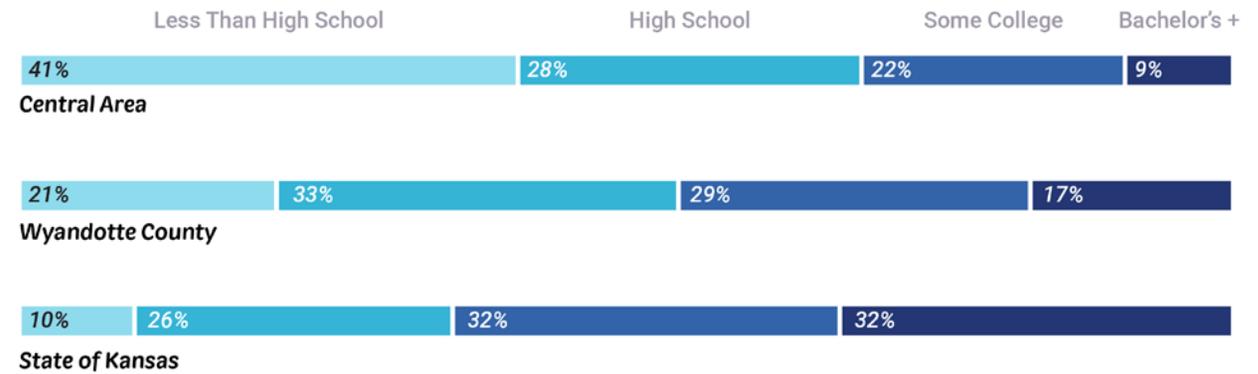
LOWER PAYING JOBS IMPACT HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Central Area residents are employed in industries with lower paying jobs when compared to the Region and State. The top three industries of workers living in the Central Area are Manufacturing (18%), Construction (16%), and Administrative, Support, and Waste Management (10%). Central Area households earned \$33,454 annually in 2017, which is less than the City, County, and State.

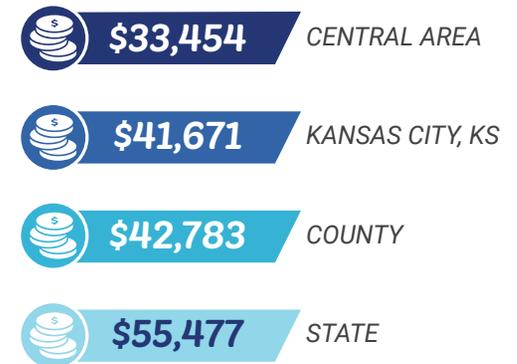
Because of lower incomes, households are less secure in their finances and are more vulnerable to changing economic conditions. Things like rising home prices or the COVID-19 pandemic can result in serious financial distress for many residents.

Educational Attainment & Median Income

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates 2013-2017.

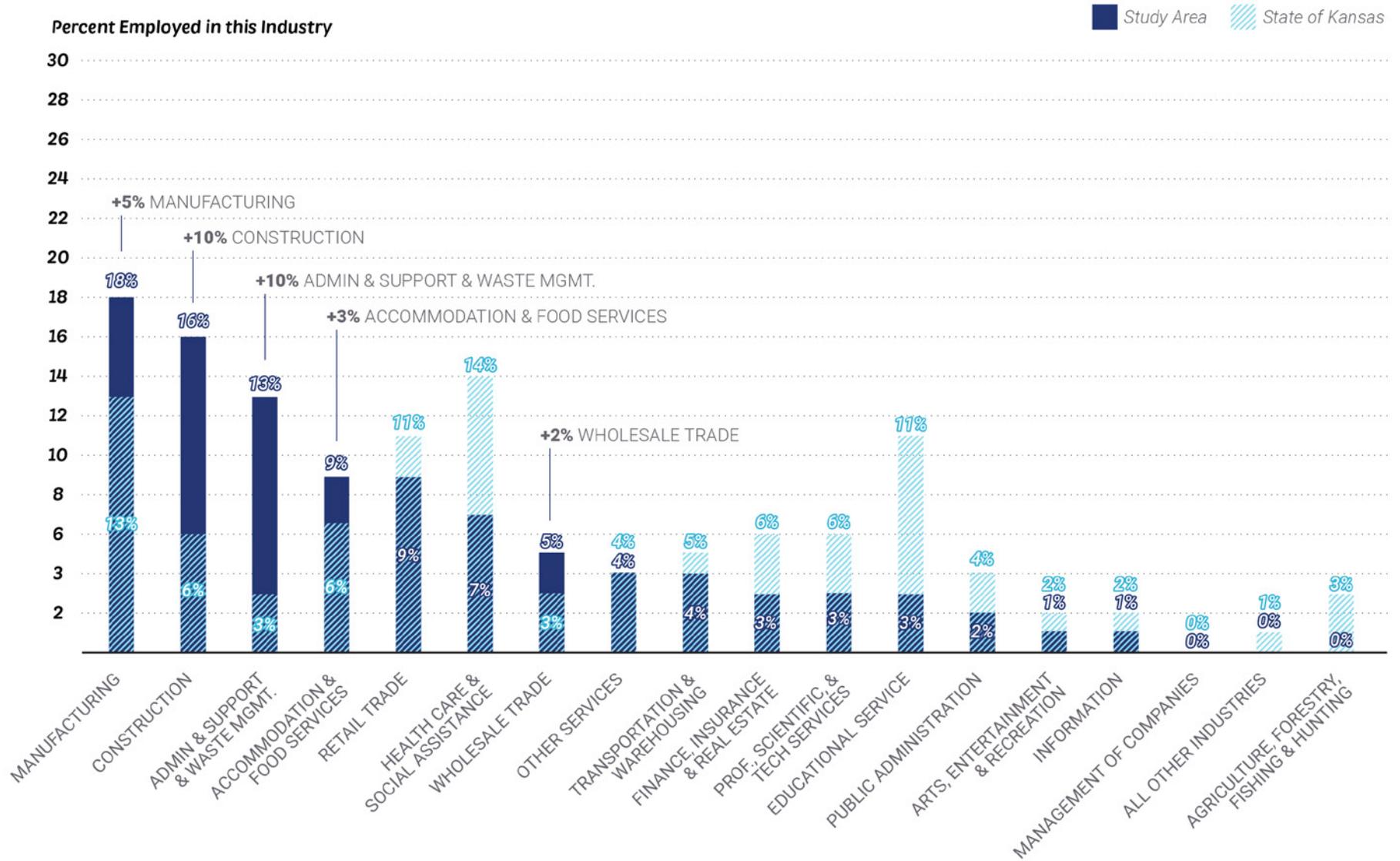


MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2017)



Employment by Industry

Source: Census, American Community Survey 2017, PolicyMap

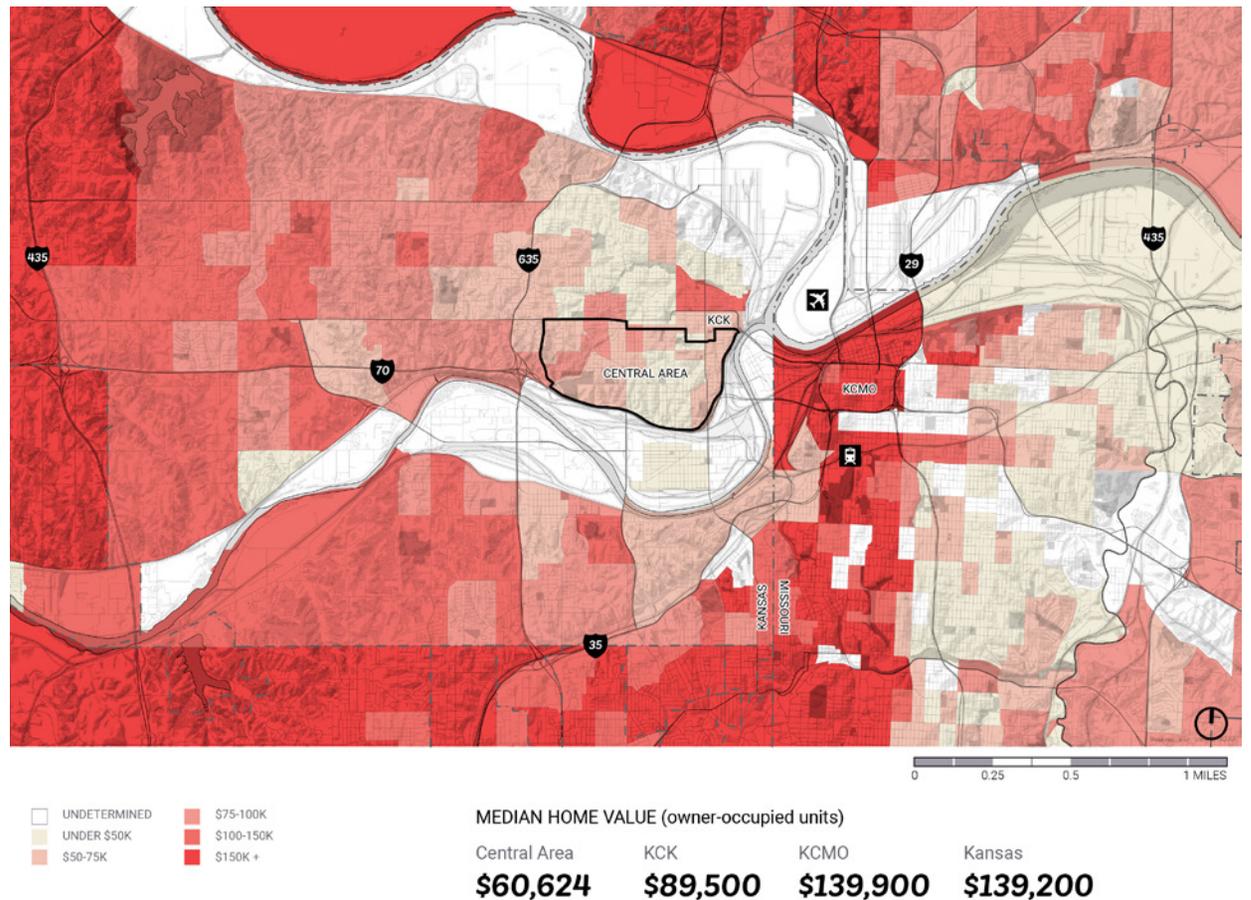


PEOPLE LOVE THEIR HOMES, BUT THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT AFFORDABILITY AND MAINTENANCE

Residents generally love their homes and appreciate their affordability relative to nearby neighborhoods and towns. The threat of rising rents and property taxes is a concern due to recent investments in the Central Area and in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood in particular.

Due to the historic nature of the housing stock, the cost of maintenance is a particular challenge as expressed by 29% of Open House participants. In a neighborhood with lower incomes and where only 47% of households own their home, these challenges become particularly acute.

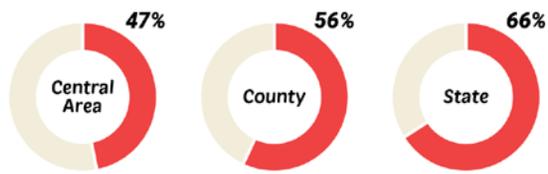
Figure 4: **Median House Values - 2017**



"All the homes are bursting at the seams. [They] have essentially become multifamily housing - cars piled up on the front yards - sometimes they just put gravel in the front yard and park cars there."

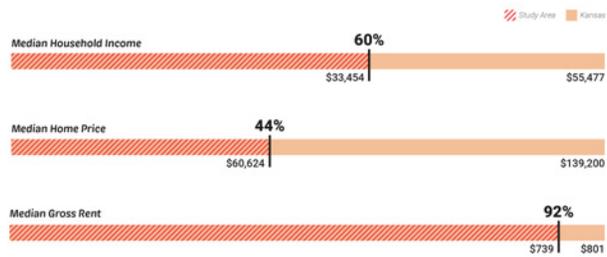
- Quote from neighborhood resident

HOUSING TENURE



HOUSING COSTS

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates 2013-2017.

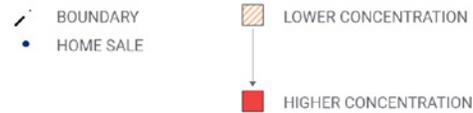
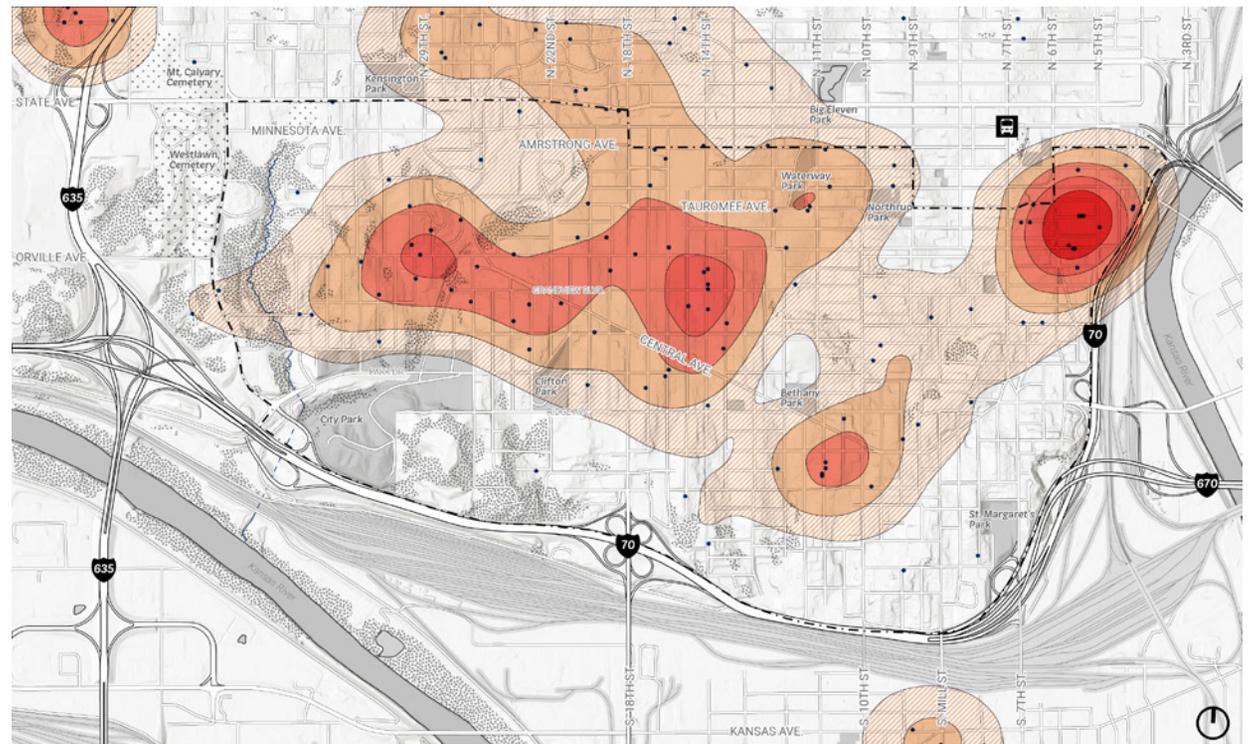


Mortgage

An estimated 30 yr. fixed rate mortgage for a house costing \$60,624 would be **\$418** month (20% down, 4.125 interest, 1.64% tax rate, \$100 month homeowners insurance)

50% of renters are cost burdened (paying more than 30% of their income towards rent).

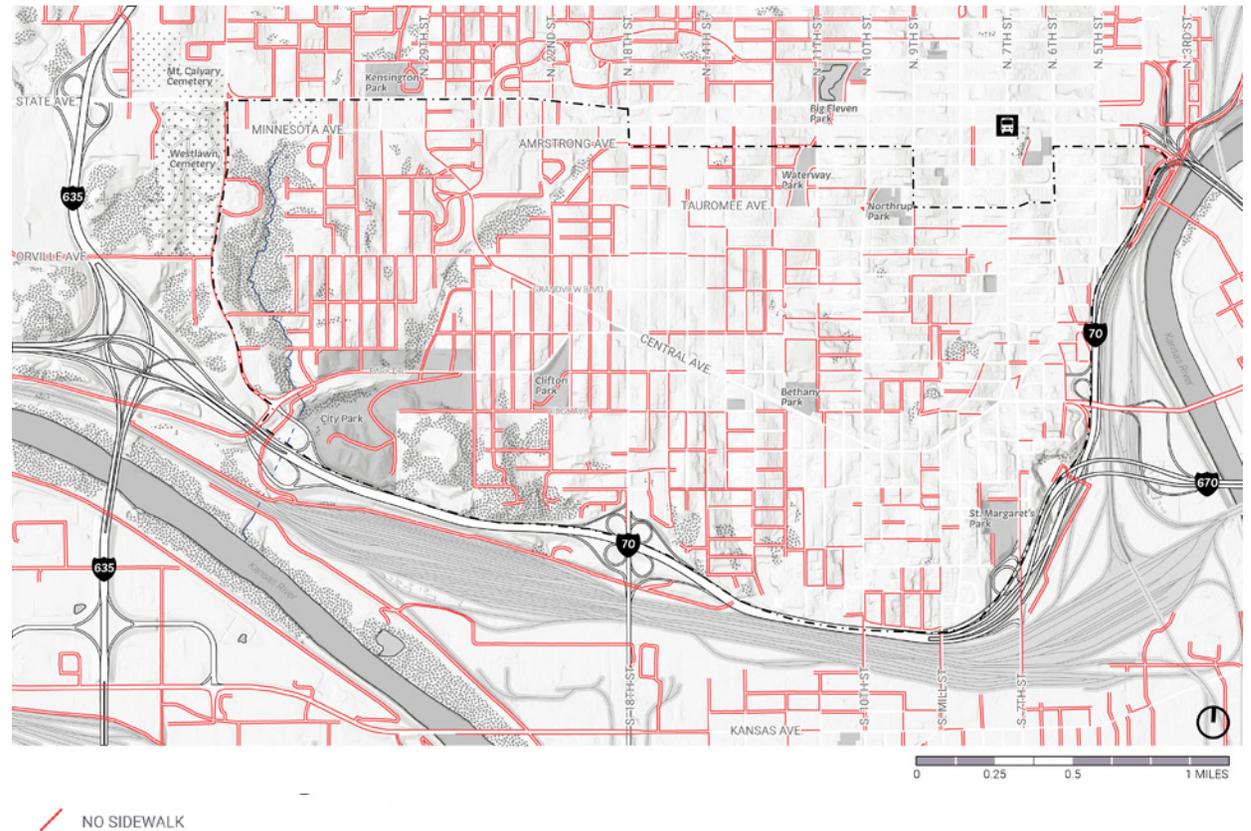
Figure 5: **Density of Home Sales in the Past Year**



THERE IS A DESIRE TO CHANGE THE MOBILITY STATUS QUO

The Central Area is a driving community with 93% of residents getting to work by car. This can be attributed to both national trends and the limited alternatives that exist for residents. Many streets lack sidewalks, few safe options exist for bicyclists, and the public transit that does exist is not particularly useful for how residents live their lives and the places they need to go. Buses run infrequently and the stops are poorly designed, often without seats or weather protection. There is a desire among residents to change the status quo.

Figure 6: **Sidewalks - Missing**



“Sidewalks are a major issue - poor condition. Homeowners are responsible for sidewalks so many times they don’t get fixed.”

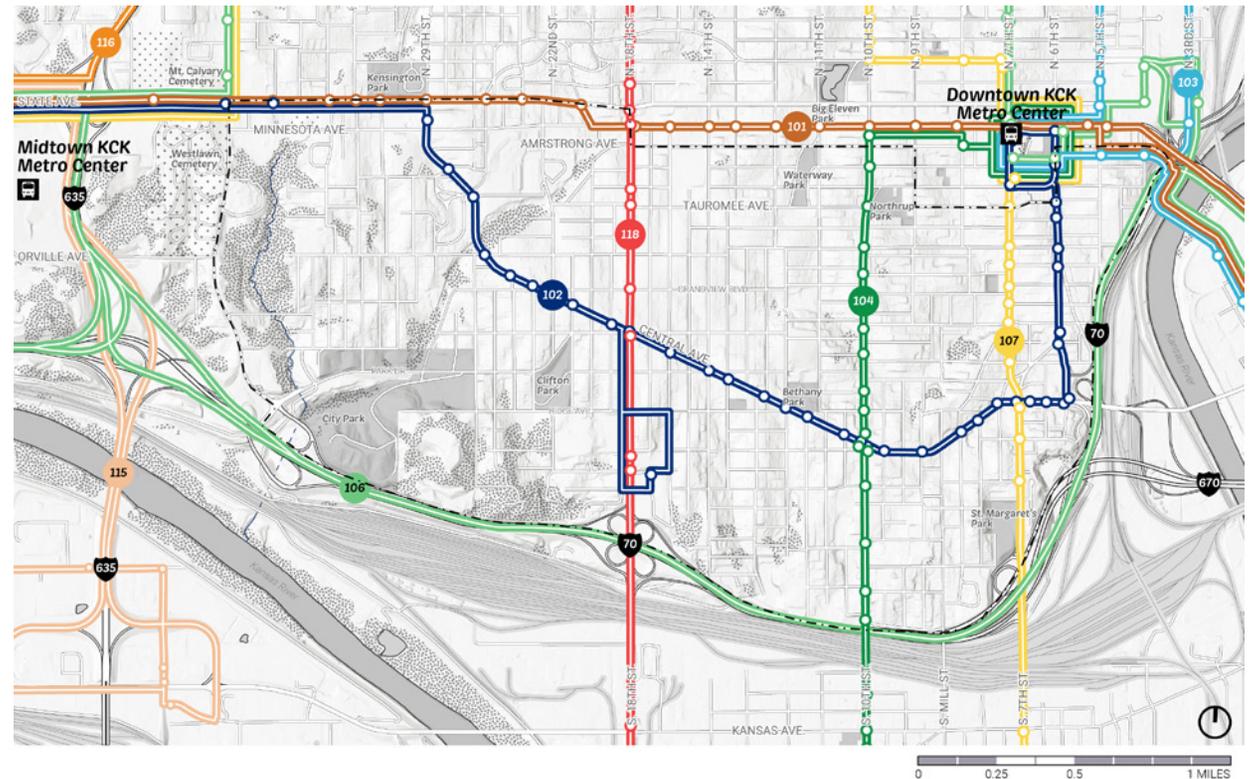
“Alleys could be better utilized for accessibility because [they are] often at a different grade.”

- Quote from neighborhood resident

Throughout the public engagement process residents responded that they want to see an improvement in sidewalks, public infrastructure, and more transportation options. Community members responded that walking and biking trails (13%) along with sidewalk and tree canopy (13%) would make Central Avenue a better and safer place.

Because so many residents do drive, parking becomes a bigger problem. Customers and employees on Central Avenue often times park in residential streets, preventing families from parking nearest to their homes. While adding more parking to the commercial corridor can address some of these issues, there are negative public realm consequences that should not be overlooked. To truly make parking easier will require a multi faceted approach that reduces the number of cars by shifting the neighborhoods mode of travel.

Figure 7: **Bus Network - Weekday Service**



 BUS ROUTE	101 WEEKDAY EVERY 0.5 HR. UNTIL 1PM SAT-SUN EVERY 1 HR. AFTER 1PM SAT-SUN EVERY 1 HR.	102 WEEKDAY EVERY 1 HR. SAT-SUN NO SERVICE	103 WEEKDAY EVERY 1 HR. SAT-SUN NO SERVICE	104 WEEKDAY EVERY 0.5 HR. UNTIL 1PM EVERY 1 HR. AFTER 1PM SAT EVERY 1 HR. SUN NO SERVICE	106 WEEKDAY EVERY 0.5 HR. UNTIL 7:30 PM EVERY 1 HR. AFTER 7:30 PM SAT EVERY 1 HR. SUN EVERY 1 HR.	107 WEEKDAY EVERY 0.5 HR. SAT EVERY 1 HR. SUN NO SERVICE	118 WEEKDAY EVERY 1 HR. SAT-SUN NO SERVICE
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When residents were asked what they valued the most about the neighborhood, the #3 answer was the diverse businesses and restaurants, many of which are on Central Avenue.

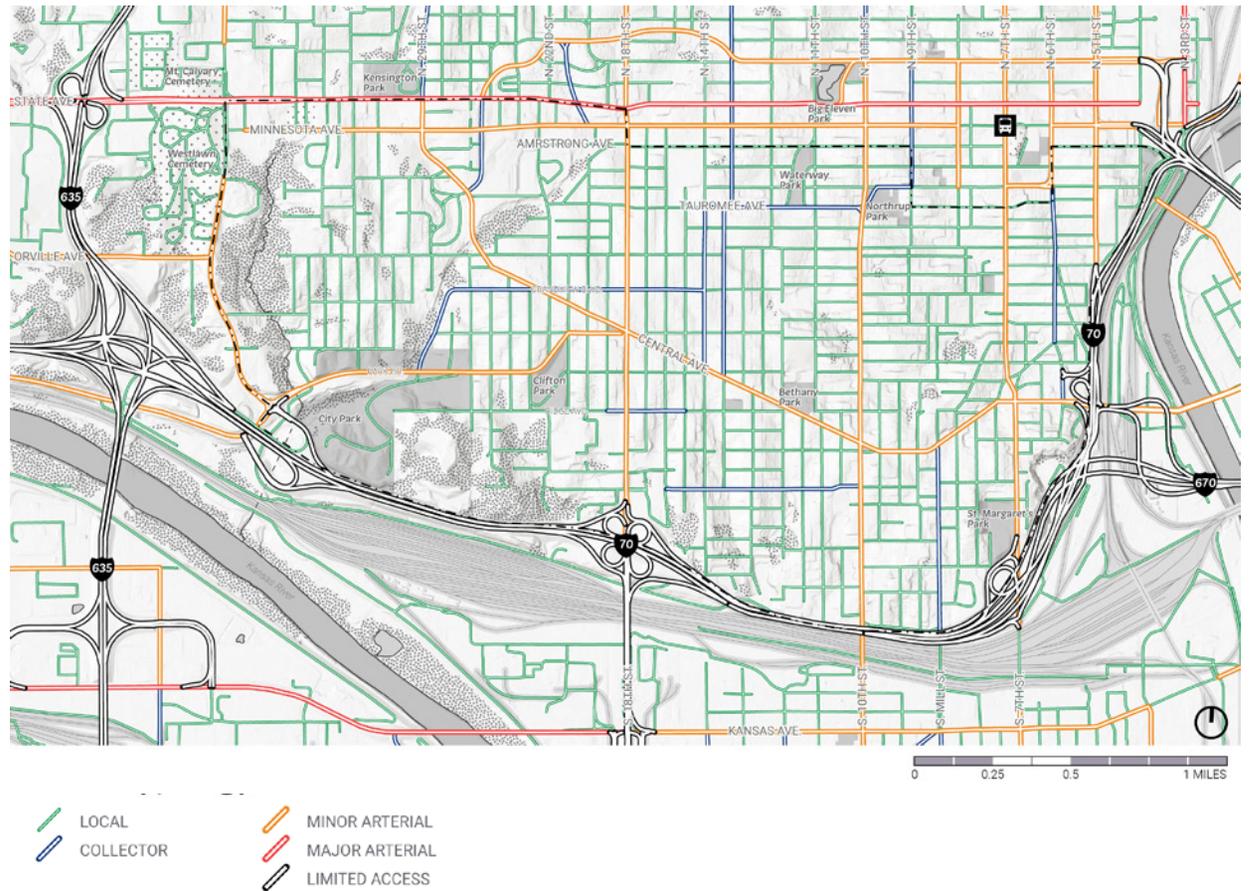
4

CENTRAL AVENUE PLAYS A CENTRAL ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Central Avenue is the physical, economic, and social connection that ties Central Area neighborhoods together.

- **Physically** it is the primary corridor for vehicular traffic and serves visitors from the surrounding neighborhoods and Kansas City, MO.
- **Economically** it provides a diverse group of businesses ranging from taqueria’s to BBQ restaurants. It is a place that creates local jobs and services and attracts visitors from across the City.
- **Socially** it is a source of pride for the Central Area and gives the community an identity.

Figure 8: **Street Typology**

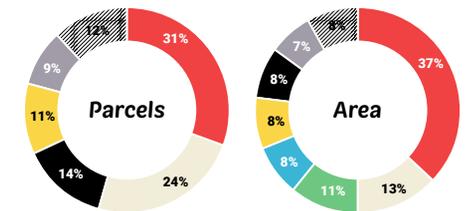
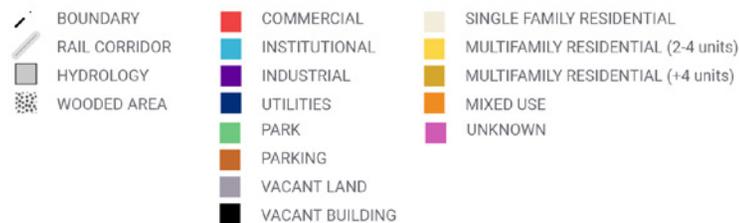


“Central Avenue is more vibrant than it used to be but people don’t feel comfortable walking into the unknown - need English and Spanish signs so all people feel welcome.”

- Quote from neighborhood resident

Central Avenue functions as the main gateway for the community and its physical condition is critical to improving the overall image of the area and promoting the diversity of the community.

Figure 9: **Land Use - Central Ave**

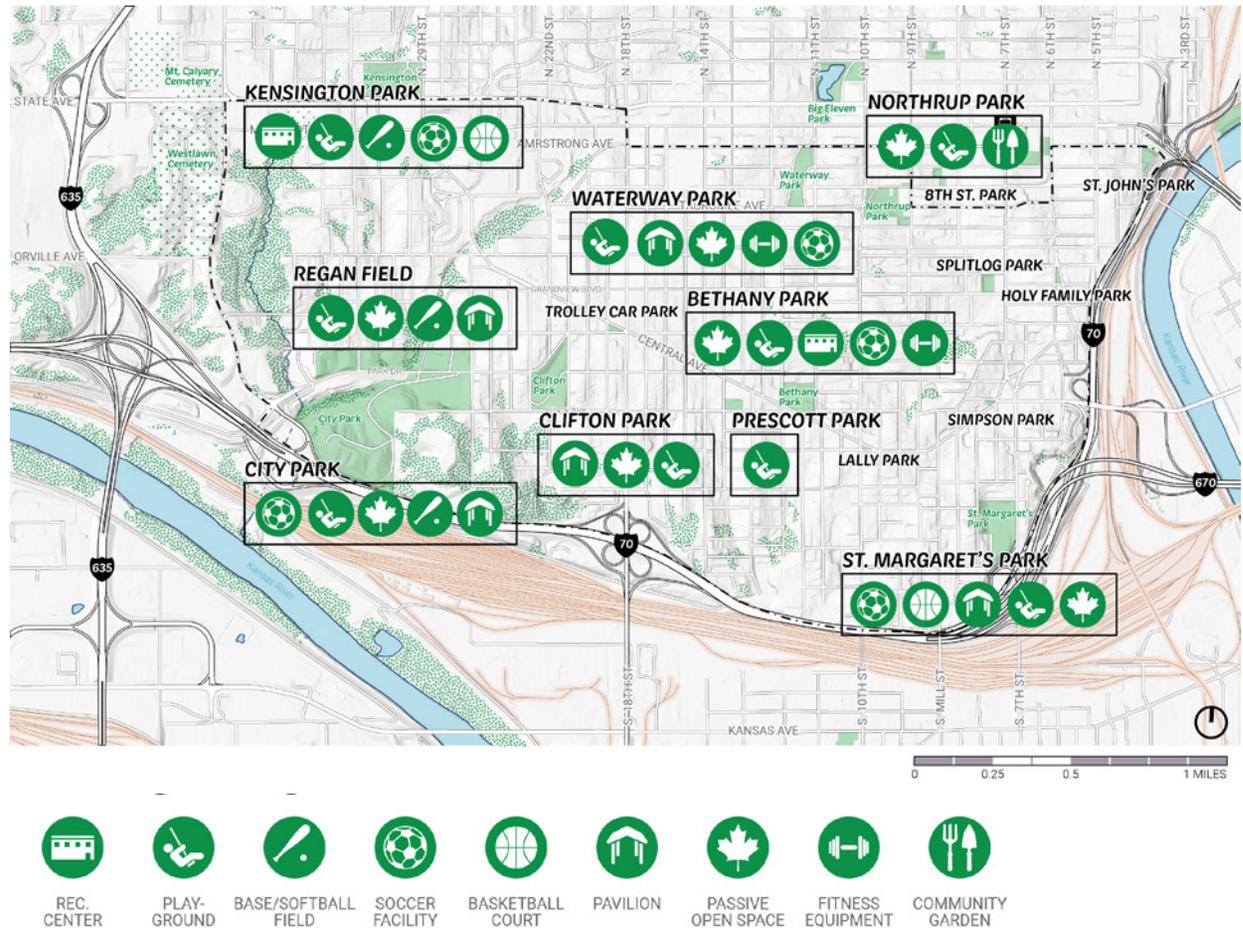


PARKS ARE IMPORTANT COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES BUT COULD USE SOME UPGRADES

The Central Area is home to a variety of different parks that serve various different needs. Some are smaller in scale and more neighborhood oriented while others are larger and draw visitors from across the City. These parks are integral gathering spaces for parents to bring their kids, friends to socialize at a barbecue, or residents to participate in organized sports.

There have been specific park investments in recent years, but many have languished, no longer serving the community role they once did. Residents continuously referenced the improvements done to Waterway Park as a model to be replicated across the Central Area and once again ensuring parks as vital community assets.

Figure 10: **Park Programming**





With these findings, the planning team set out to develop a collective vision for the Central Area. An engaged process with the Steering Committee and Neighborhood Organizations resulted in numerous iterations, eventually arriving at the collective **VISION & GOALS** seen in the following chapter.



LEFT
TOP: City Park
BOTTOM: Clifton Park

RIGHT
TOP: Splitlog Park
MIDDLE: Northrup Park
BOTTOM: Waterway Park



Chapter

03

Vision, Goals & Strategies

ELEMENTS OF THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

Vision & Goals

Goal 01 - Community

Goal 02 - Central Avenue

Goal 03 - Housing

Goal 04 - Mobility

Future Land Use Plan

Vision



The Central Area is a strong community defined by its diverse and welcoming residents. The strength of the community is built through a culture of inclusivity and grassroots activity that brings residents together through shared neighborhood improvements.

Central Avenue is the place that physically and socially connects the area by serving the needs of local residents as well as attracting a broader audience to its diverse offerings.

As the neighborhood changes over time it reinforces its strengths as a healthy and safe place for residents to start a business or call home.



Public
Input



VISION FOR A
**Strong
Community**



Existing
Conditions

Goals



COMMUNITY

Empower residents to build community through shared neighborhood improvements



CENTRAL AVENUE

Establish Central Avenue as the social, cultural, and employment center of the neighborhood



HOUSING

Provide housing that is suitable for a range of life stages and economic circumstances



MOBILITY

Design a mobility network that gives options and promotes a sense of community

Goal 01

Empower residents to build **COMMUNITY** through shared neighborhood improvements

Why this is important

“Lots of individuals and organizations are really passionate about improving the health and quality of life in our community,”

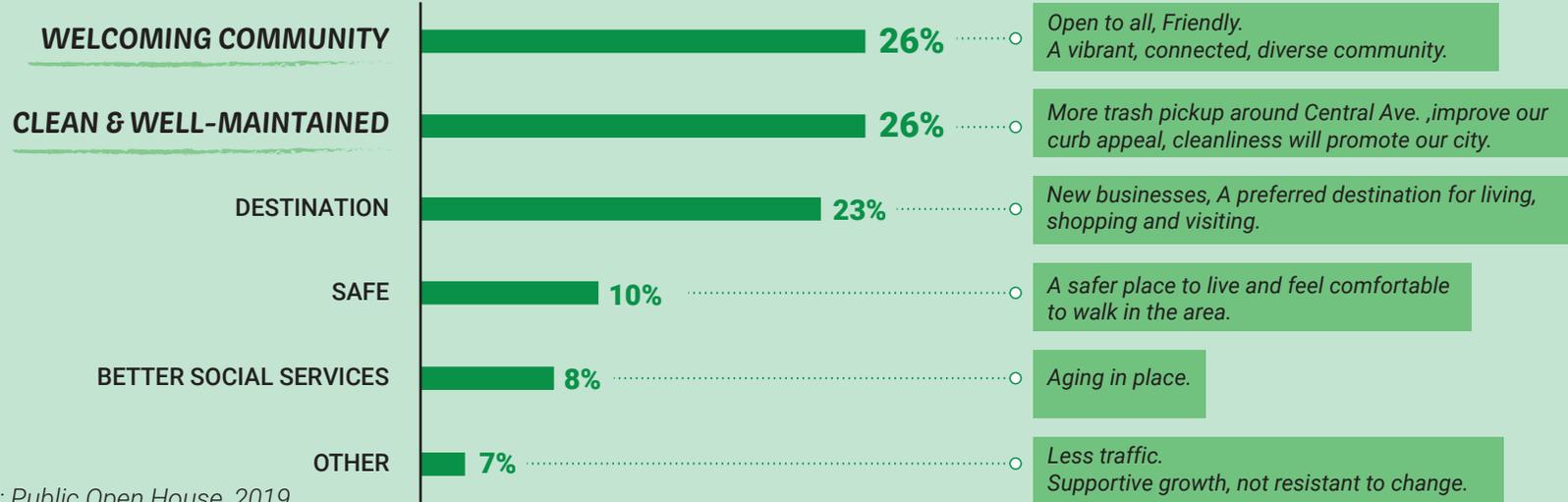
- Quote from neighborhood resident

The Central Area has always been a community with a diverse mix of cultures dating back to the early European immigrants, continued with the decade’s long influx of Latino Americans, and further solidified with more recent immigrants from Southeast Asia and Africa. This rich diversity has placed the Central Area in a unique position in the Kansas City region. Throughout the planning process, residents expressed the importance of maintaining the Central Area’s diversity all while enhancing a unified sense of community.

This is no small task as it is often a struggle to bring a diverse group of people together to socialize and feel like they belong. To best address this it was important to see how residents define community. When asked specifically, 54% said it is about people, and 41% defined it as a place where their neighbors and families live. In other words, community is both geographically-based and people-based. Those two ideas served as the basis for this plans strategy towards building an inclusive neighborhood.



What do you want the Central Area to be in the future?



Source: Public Open House, 2019

The two things people want to see the most when they envision the future is a welcoming place (26%) and a clean and well-maintained neighborhood (26%). These ideas are a great foundation for building community. Resident driven improvements to the Central Area can build lasting bonds gained through the shared experience, resulting in better spaces to socialize and engage. By

breaking down barriers, newer residents will have an opportunity to feel like they belong and participate as active members of the community. This section aims to build and strengthen participation while improving the physical parts of the Central Area. These efforts will ensure meaningful engagement from every group of the community regardless of background and culture.

TOP: City Park draws residents from across the City with its beautiful views of the surrounding landscape

MIDDLE: Watergate Park is a great example of how improved park spaces can bring a community together

BOTTOM: The WCAC Orchard is a testament to what residents can accomplish to improve their own community.



To help maintain the diversity of the neighborhood while building community the planning process has developed three key strategies:

**01
CREATE AN INCLUSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD
THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL**

An inclusive community is a place where people feel welcome and accepted regardless of their background, race, ethnicity, economic or social condition. Inclusion encourages communities to grow together, build resiliency, strengthen support networks among neighbors, and also help form a sense of ownership as one unified group. Emphasizing the importance of a community that is open to everyone is critical to ensure that the growth of the Central Area is sustainable and a genuine reflection of residents. “Everyone” includes young and old, long-term residents and newcomers, non-English-speaking and English-speaking families, and households of all incomes. The following action items focus on establishing and strengthening an inclusive community while celebrating and promoting the wealth of cultural identities present in the Central Area.

**02
BEAUTIFY NEIGHBORHOOD AND ACTIVATE
VACANT LOTS**

The abundant vacant lots scattered throughout the neighborhood are viewed by residents as unsightly and detrimental to their overall quality of life. While that is true, they can also be viewed as an opportunity to provide additional public spaces for the community. The numerous community gardens within the Central Area are a great example for how vacant lots can be repurposed to create an asset rather than a liability. There is also a feeling of camaraderie that can be achieved through such improvements that are an added benefit towards building community. Site control is often critical to making improvements to vacant land and luckily the Land Bank has significant holdings in the Central Area.

Key Strategies:

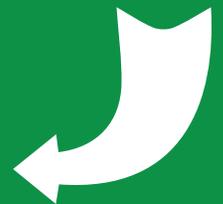
- 01** Create an inclusive neighborhood that is accessible to all
- 02** Beautify neighborhood and activate vacant lots
- 03** Improve existing parks

03

IMPROVE EXISTING PARKS

Parks within the Central Area provide residents with a variety of different passive and active recreational opportunities. Some are large, like City Park, and draw from residents across the City. Others are small, like Prescott Park, and draw residents from the immediate neighborhood. They also differ in their level of investment and maintenance with many having seen little improvement in years. While each park is unique and with its own set of challenges and opportunities, there are some common improvements that will help parks best fulfill their role as community gathering spaces. One only needs to look to Waterway Park to see what an improved space can do to bring a community together. After experiencing disinvestment over the years, basic improvements like new paths and playgrounds have made a world of difference. The space is now a vital part of the neighborhood and serves as a gathering space for the whole community. Using this as a model, recommendations will seek to replicate that success across the Central Area.

Please proceed to the next pages for more details on each strategy





Create an inclusive neighborhood that is accessible to all

Implementation:

Action Item: **1A**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG (Unified Government)
- CABA
- El Centro
- Catholic Charities of Northeastern Kansas
- Bishop Sullivan Center
- Bethel Neighborhood Center
- La Luz Immigration Clinic
- Mission Adelante
- Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.
- Neighborhood groups
- Residents

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATIONAL** driven

Timeline:

Ongoing

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF (Neighborhood Rising Fund), Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant, United Way

Create a Platform for Non-Profit Orgs Helping Immigrant Communities to Collaborate

There are over 25,000 foreign-born residents in Wyandotte County representing 16% of the total population. Many hail from Mexico and Central America and almost 2 in every 10 come from Southeast Asian countries, particularly Burma, Bhutan and Laos. This highlights the need to have far-reaching community services that can also cater to non-English-speaking residents. Newly arriving immigrants often need assistance across many different areas. Whether that is navigating the American legal system, applying for a job or training, learning a new language, or settling in with their family, it is essential to create a platform where organizations can share resources and work jointly to continue providing quality services.

Many organizations already operate and provide services within the Central Area to help immigrant communities. The below list includes just some of the many organizations doing great work.

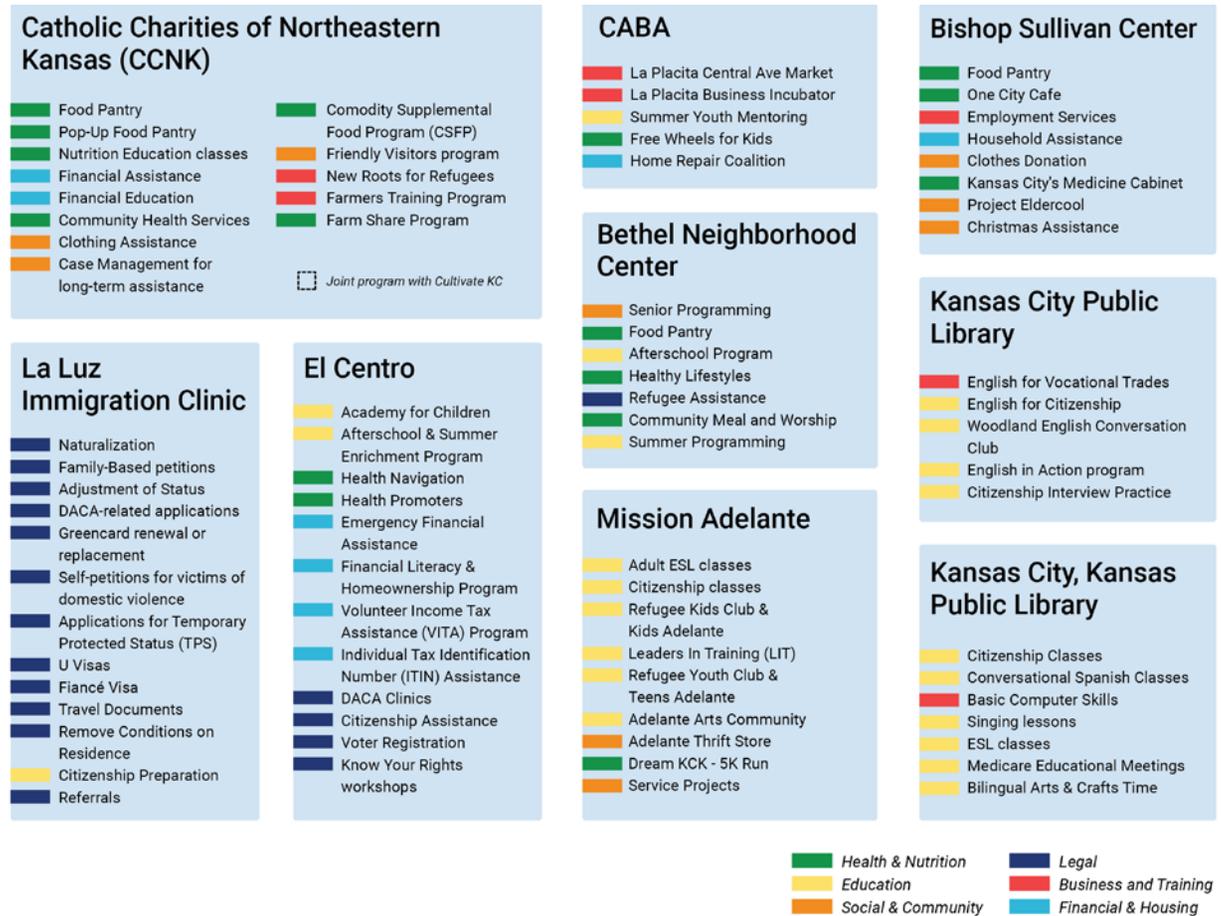
- Catholic Charities of Northeastern Kansas
- La Luz Immigration Clinic
- El Centro
- CABA (Central Area Betterment Association)
- Bethel Neighborhood Center
- Mission Adelante
- Bishop Sullivan Center
- Kansas City Public Library (Missouri and Kansas)

Organizations are often singularly focused on their mission that they don't have time to collaborate with other similar organizations. The first step to help coordination can be to convene heads of organizations to identify services they offer, understand existing needs, share best practices, and target areas of collaboration. This can happen as an ongoing

EXISTING IMMIGRANT SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

meeting or a large event that celebrates all of these valuable organizations. Collaboration also allows for organizations to build a comprehensive framework of services to leverage existing resources and maximize their impact. For example, identifying how services providers complement each other can lead to the creation of joint programs, and open the door to new funding sources not previously available to individual organizations or programs.

An equally important step is to promote the various services available throughout the Central Area. As new immigrant and refugee families continue to arrive, it is important to let them know about available resources broadly and in a variety of languages. This can be carried out as a website, on social media platforms, or through free brochures and other printed media to be distributed throughout Central Area businesses and organizations who can determine how best to reach the community and disseminate this information.



Potential Project Partners:

- UG
- CABA
- El Centro
- Catholic Charities of Northeastern Kansas
- Bishop Sullivan Center
- Bethel Neighborhood Center
- La Luz Immigration Clinic
- Mission Adelante
- Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.
- Neighborhood groups
- Residents

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATIONAL & RESIDENT** driven

Timeline: 0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant, United Way

Identify Neighbors that can Help Cross Cultural Divide

Since multiple cultures and languages coexist in the Central Area, it is important to be aware of the cultural divide that occurs between different groups. Addressing the divide implies accepting differences, creating opportunities to build trust, learning each other's heritage, and understanding the values that originate from different histories and backgrounds.

Building trust takes time. One way to begin to bridge the cultural divide can be to build relationships through neighbors or leaders in the community who can serve as connectors between different groups and help bridge the gap. A great fit for this role would be residents who are respected in their community, have built friendships and trust among their neighbors, understand the need for education about different cultures, and acknowledge that cultural differences are something to be appreciated and celebrated.

A great example of how residents can have a transformational role in their blocks and neighborhoods is the Block CAPtains Program in Lancaster, PA. Block CAPtains is a community initiative spearheaded by Community Action Partnership (CAP), an organization that focuses on combating generational poverty through community empowerment and leadership development. Through the Block CAPtains program, local leaders are hired and trained by CAP to bring positive change to their communities and encourage others to take action about issues that impact the neighborhood, such as housing conditions or neighborhood cleanliness. Block CAPtains help build stronger connections with neighbors, empower them to make the changes they'd like to see in their community, and connect them to appropriate resources while being fairly compensated for their work and building leadership skills.

Livable Neighborhoods would be a great organization to lead such a program in the Central Area.



Community Action Partnership Block CAPtains in Lancaster, PA differ from a typical block captain in that they are trained and given a stipend to perform their duties. They are also charged specifically with helping to break down barriers within neighborhoods. (Source: Lancaster Online)

Potential Project Partners:

- CABA
- El Centro
- Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.
- Neighborhood groups
- Mission Adelante
- Residents

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION & RESIDENT** driven

Timeline:

Ongoing

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant

Organize Smaller Scale Neighborhood Functions that Allow Neighbors to Socialize

Much of the existing programming around bringing different cultures together are in the form of larger events that attract people from all over the region and are often not the best opportunity to meet neighbors. A variety of smaller scale neighborhood events can help break the divide and invite community members to bond with each other.

Although the current pandemic discourages large group gatherings, a few options can be considered. Small neighborhood cleanups, block parties, or community hangouts in controlled outdoor spaces can be interim solutions. Once public health and safety have been addressed post-pandemic, programming ideas can include the following:



OPEN STREETS / BLOCK PARTIES

The temporary closure of streets allows families and children to be outdoors, chat, and play while keeping social distancing. The UG has launched an open streets program as an immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the long run, the UG can make their open street and block party permits more accessible to residents overall by making the forms available in different languages, providing clear how-to instructions, information about fees, and processing times, among others. Printed forms could also be made available in other clearly designated locations (such as libraries, or cultural and community organizations) for those who would prefer to fill in an application manually.



Online survey participants responded that block parties (18%) will be most helpful to encourage resident interaction with each other. They also said neighborhood cleanups (16%), improved parks (13%), and safe/active commercial corridors (13%) would help as well.



COMMUNITY DINNER PARTY

The Harvest Dinner Party in Camden, NJ, is a community event organized by Connect The Lots and Cooper’s Ferry Partnership, as part of the annual Camden Nights Gardens event. Camden Nights Out seeks to activate underutilized spaces such as vacant lots and open spaces with light displays, projections and public art to visually connect different neighborhoods in the city.

As one of the events carried out throughout several days, the Harvest Dinner Party brings together neighbors from different parts of Camden to share a meal at a common table.



INTERFAITH BASED EVENTS

Churches and other faith-based organizations, as well as cultural events, have a crucial role in the community’s life, and can serve as places where connections among neighbors happen more spontaneously and generate conversation. These places naturally gather people around faith, food, shared interests, or helping others in need. Intercultural connections among community members can be encouraged through shared programming that is welcoming to people of all cultures. This can also be an opportunity to acknowledge and include other groups in the community that are new to the area or not as represented. For example, faith-based organizations can host community meals with residents of different faiths and congregations to break bread together and encourage conversation.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Another way to bridge the cultural divide can be to have a shared calendar of community events in multiple languages such as English, Spanish, and Burmese, among others. A few neighborhood organizations could take the lead in advertising these shared events through social media or promote them in physical locations such as grocery stores and other establishments along the Central Avenue corridor.

02

Beautify neighborhood and activate vacant lots

Implementation:

Action Item: **2A**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Land Bank
- Cultivate KC

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & RESIDENT** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

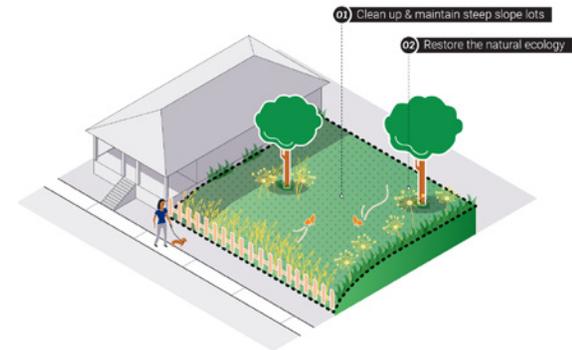
NRF, TIF (Tax Increment Financing), Kansas Recreation and Park Association Grant

Coordinate with Land Bank on how to Activate Vacant Lots

Within Central Area Land Bank holdings, 29% of parcels will be difficult to redevelop due to naturally occurring steep slopes. The question becomes what happens to these lots if they are never developed? How can they enhance the neighborhood rather than detract? Communities across the country have found creative ways to bring similar properties back to life, often with minimal financial investment. One method is to restore the lots to their natural state contributing to the natural ecology. This can be done with minimal cost and should be considered for parcels already adjacent to wooded areas. Another option is to make the lots actively programmed through planting beds for neighbors to garden, seating areas and playgrounds for families to enjoy, and planting trees and flowers to beautify the lot.

Vacant Land Strategies

RESTORE vacant lots to their natural ecology



Vacant Land Strategies

Temporary recommendations to ACTIVATE vacant lots

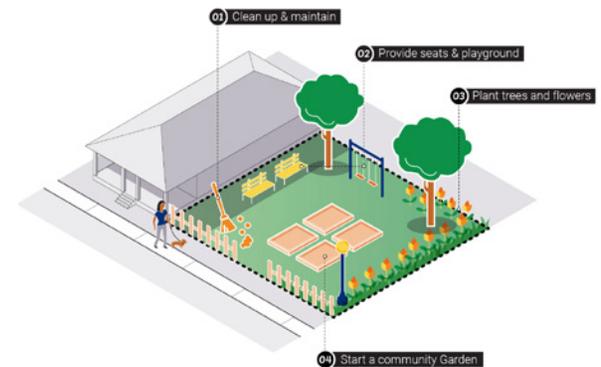
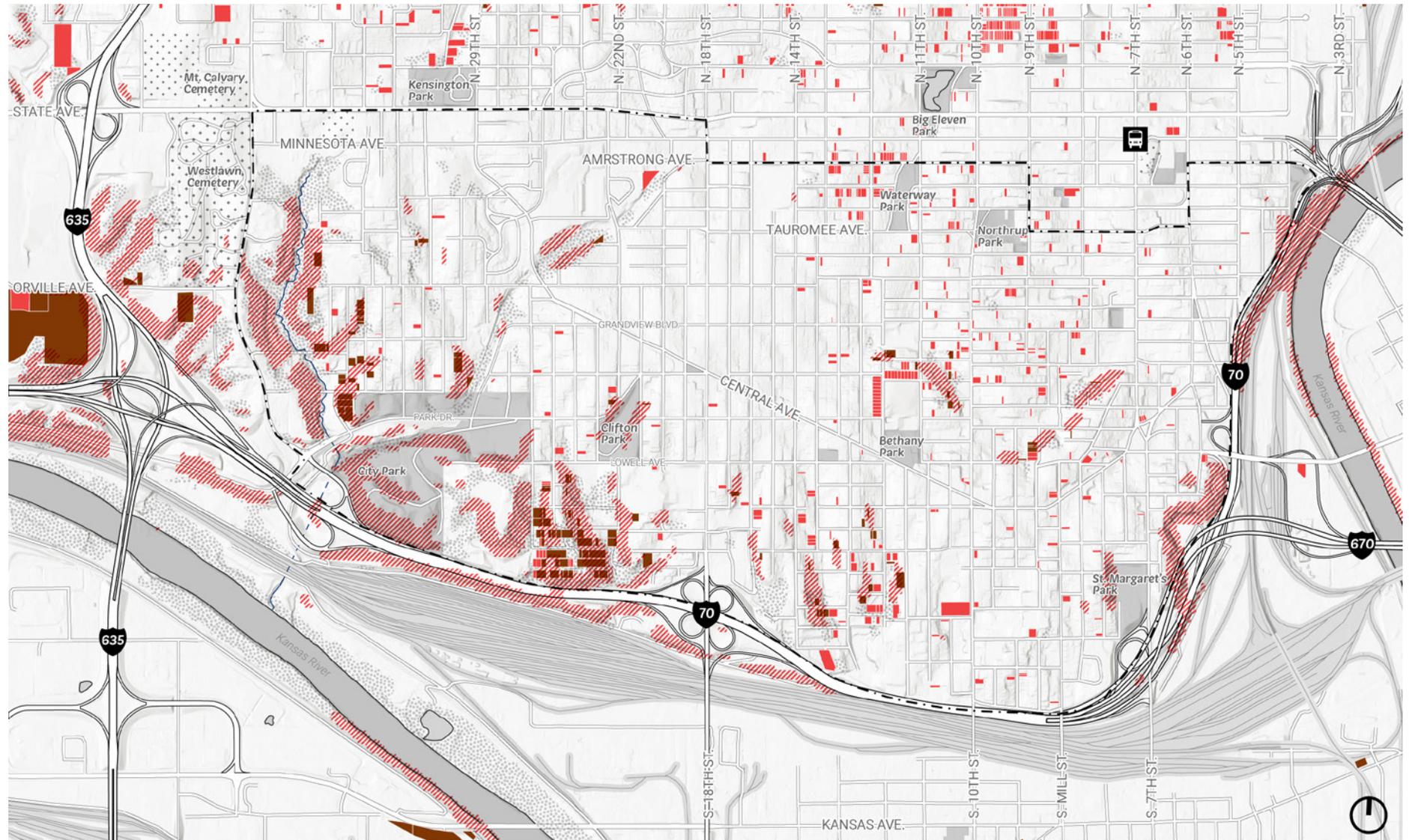


Figure 11: Land Bank Parcels on Steep Slopes

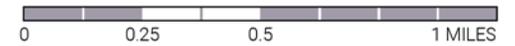


Land Bank parcels on Steep Slopes



- BOUNDARY
- WOODED AREA
- LAND BANK PARCELS

- LAND BANK PARCELS ON STEEP SLOPE AREA
- STEEP SLOPE AREA (15% OR HIGHER)



TOP:
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) LandCare lot.

BOTTOM:
New Roots for Refugees participants.



New Roots for Refugees is a great example of how to turn vacant lots from a neighborhood liability to an asset. Starting in 2008 as a collaboration between Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas and Cultivate KC, it includes a four-year training program that helps refugees in Northeast Kansas City utilize existing agricultural skill to help set roots in a new country and culture. Program participants utilize outdoor gardens owned by Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas with already existing skill sets to cultivate fresh produce, which are sold to neighboring towns and farmers markets and help provide for their families. Due to the large number of vacant lots and the culturally diverse demographic, there are opportunities for the Central Area to provide additional space for similar programs.

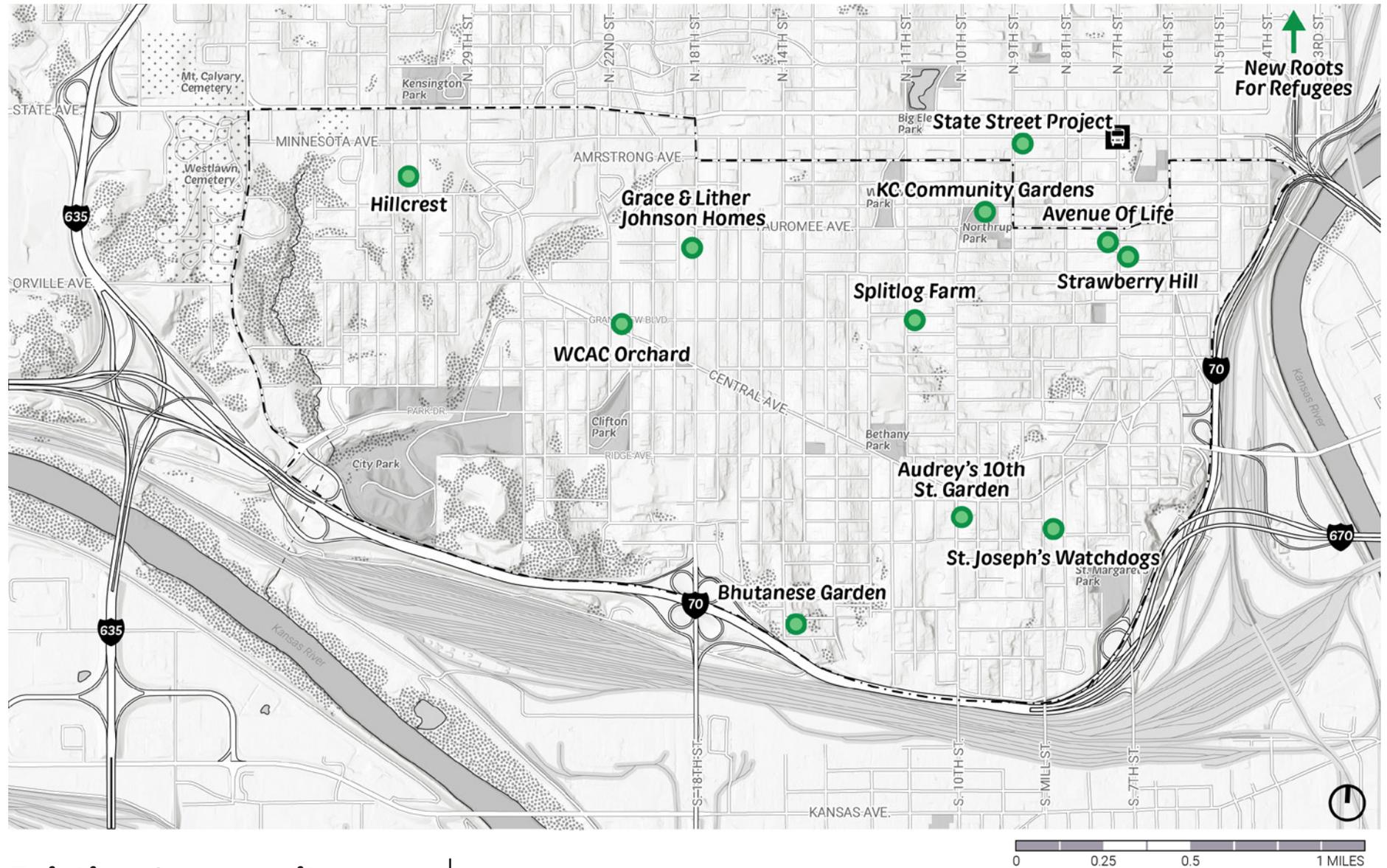


30% of the online survey participants responded that vacant lots should be used as community gardens.

Improvements should not be limited to vacant lots that have no development potential as interim interventions can have equally long-term benefits. The Philadelphia Horticultural Society's (PHS) LandCare program is a successful precedent that highlights the multiplier effect of vacant lot maintenance. Recent studies have measured decreased number of crimes, lowered stress levels of residents, and increased property values of nearby homes. PHS has been able to achieve this by simply cleaning the lots and installing basic fencing, all at a minimal cost.

Offered above are just some of the many ways to reactivate vacant lots. The Land Bank of Wyandotte County should begin an engagement process with neighborhood organizations about specific properties that are not suitable for development, and let the neighborhood decide how best to reuse the land. Efforts should also be made to improve vacant lots on an interim basis until they are ready to be developed.

Figure 12: Existing Community Gardens



Existing Community Gardens

Implementation:

Action Item: **2B**

"Kansas Printer" is one of eight murals depicting Kansas City's history along Minnesota Avenue (Visit Kansas City, KS).

Potential Project Partners:

- Neighborhood groups
- Livable Communities, Inc.
- Public schools

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION & RESIDENT** driven

Timeline:

0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant, United Way

Public Art that Tells the Neighborhood Story

Cities have had success in portraying neighborhood identity and stories into powerful public artworks that also help to beautify the community. This could be particularly impactful in a neighborhood as diverse as the Central Area. The mere process of both designing a mural and implementing it is a great community bonding experience. Murals can also be used as an economic development tool through tours, programmed activities, and increased foot traffic. A great example is the Mural Arts program in Philadelphia, which organizes mural sightseeing walking tours during the summer, and on public transit routes in the Fall and Winter months, combining public art with walkability and public transit use. Kansas City's own "Avenue of Murals" along Minnesota Avenue tells the story of the City and represents its diversity. One could image a similar tour that tells the neighborhood story as one traverses the Central Avenue corridor.



"Families Belong Together" mural by Chilean artist Ian Pierce in collaboration with Mexican artist Cesar Viveros (Mural Arts, 2018).

The mural was made at a time of recent national events related to immigration laws and family separations. Located in the Kensington neighborhood, a majority Hispanic neighborhood in Philadelphia, the mural is meant to pay tribute to immigrant families that seek a better future in the US.

Murals can also be used to beautify abandoned structures, remaking them in a positive light. The UG's Stories on Stories project takes such an approach by installing resident-driven artwork onto the boards of vacant buildings, all while connecting neighborhoods and leading to crime reduction. Plans are in the works to implement a Stories on Stories project on the abandoned building within Clifton Park and will serve as a great community building experience for Central Area residents.





Improve existing parks

Implementation:

Action Item: **3A**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Parks & Recreation
- Neighborhood groups
- Residents

This recommendation will be mostly **RESIDENT** driven

Timeline:

0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:

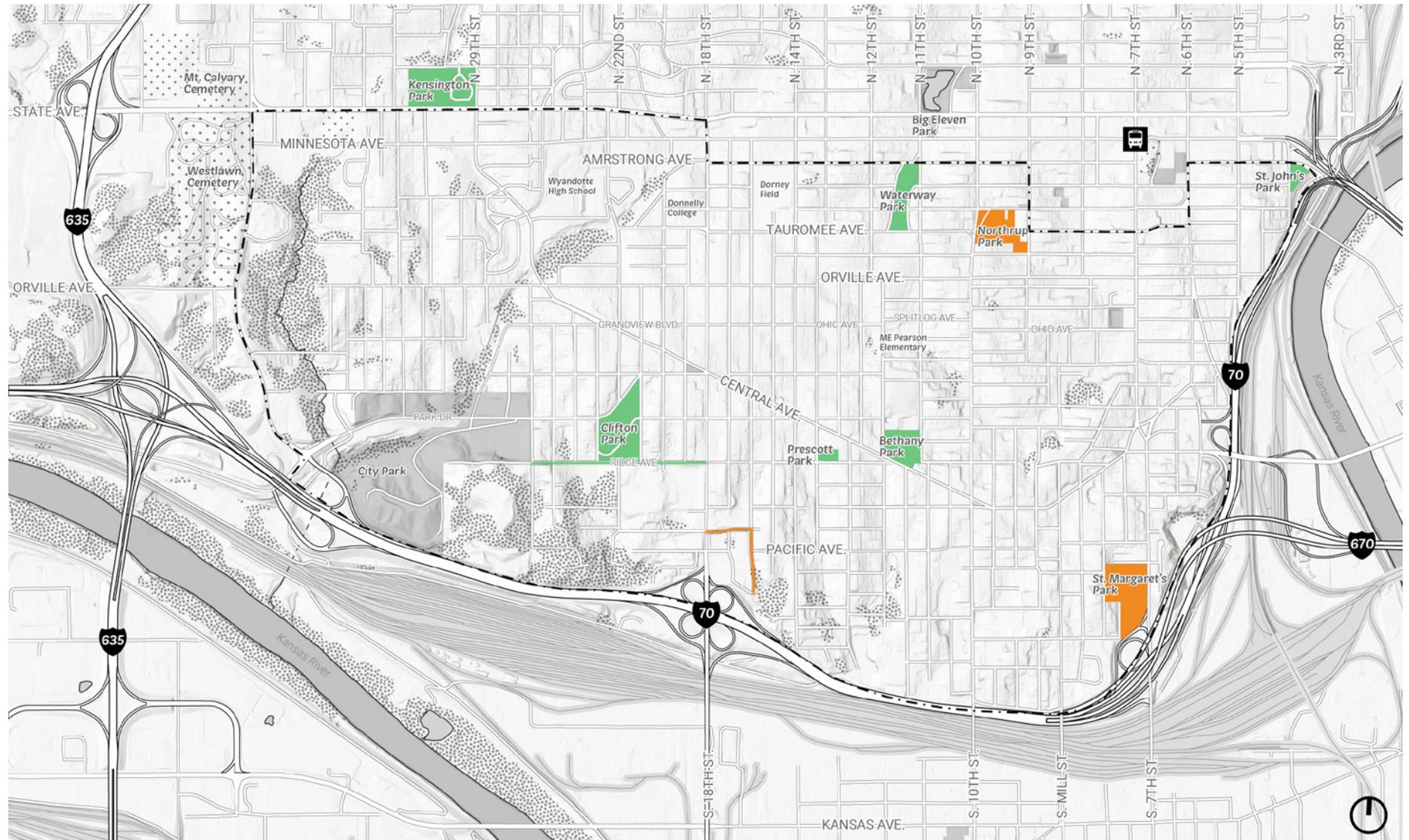
NRF, TIF, Kansas Recreation and Park Association Grant

Create “Friends of Groups” or Designate “Adopt-A-Spot” Groups to all Neighborhood Parks

Dedicated parks groups are a great way for a community to take ownership of a space and build community. For example, “Friends of Bethany Park” or “Friends of Northrup Park” can be comprised of residents, neighborhood leaders, and other interested parties in taking care of each park to better serve constituents. Responsibilities can vary from maintaining the parks’ cleanliness and raising money for improvements, to ensuring events run smoothly and safely.

There are opportunities to leverage the already existing Adopt-A-Spot program to achieve similar goals. There are currently nine Adopt-A-Spot locations, both parks and streets, in the Central Area. Two of these are parks available for adoption, namely St. Margaret Park and Northrup Park. Residents and neighborhood organizations should consider participating in this program to not only have the municipality’s support but also to bring people together in valuing public spaces.

Figure 13: **Adopt-A-Spot Locations**



Adopt-A-Spot Locations

Source: Unified Government, downloaded Feb, 2020

- BOUNDARY
- RESERVED
- AVAILABLE



Potential Project Partners:
- UG Parks & Recreation

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:
NRF, TIF, Kansas Recreation and Park Association Grant

Make Strategic Improvements to Key Parks

Improvements through neighborhood organizations can only go so far in addressing some of the current need. It will be important to also leverage government and institutional support to achieve larger improvements that are outside of a neighborhood groups capacity. There are some across the board improvements that parks in the Central Area would benefit from.

IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY

Many of the existing parks lack a defined entrance and have limited sidewalk accessibility to nearby residences. Things like an accessible landscaped entrance closest to where most residents live, as well as continuous sidewalks around the perimeter of parks would go a long way in helping to address these issues.

PUT AMENITIES FRONT AND CENTER

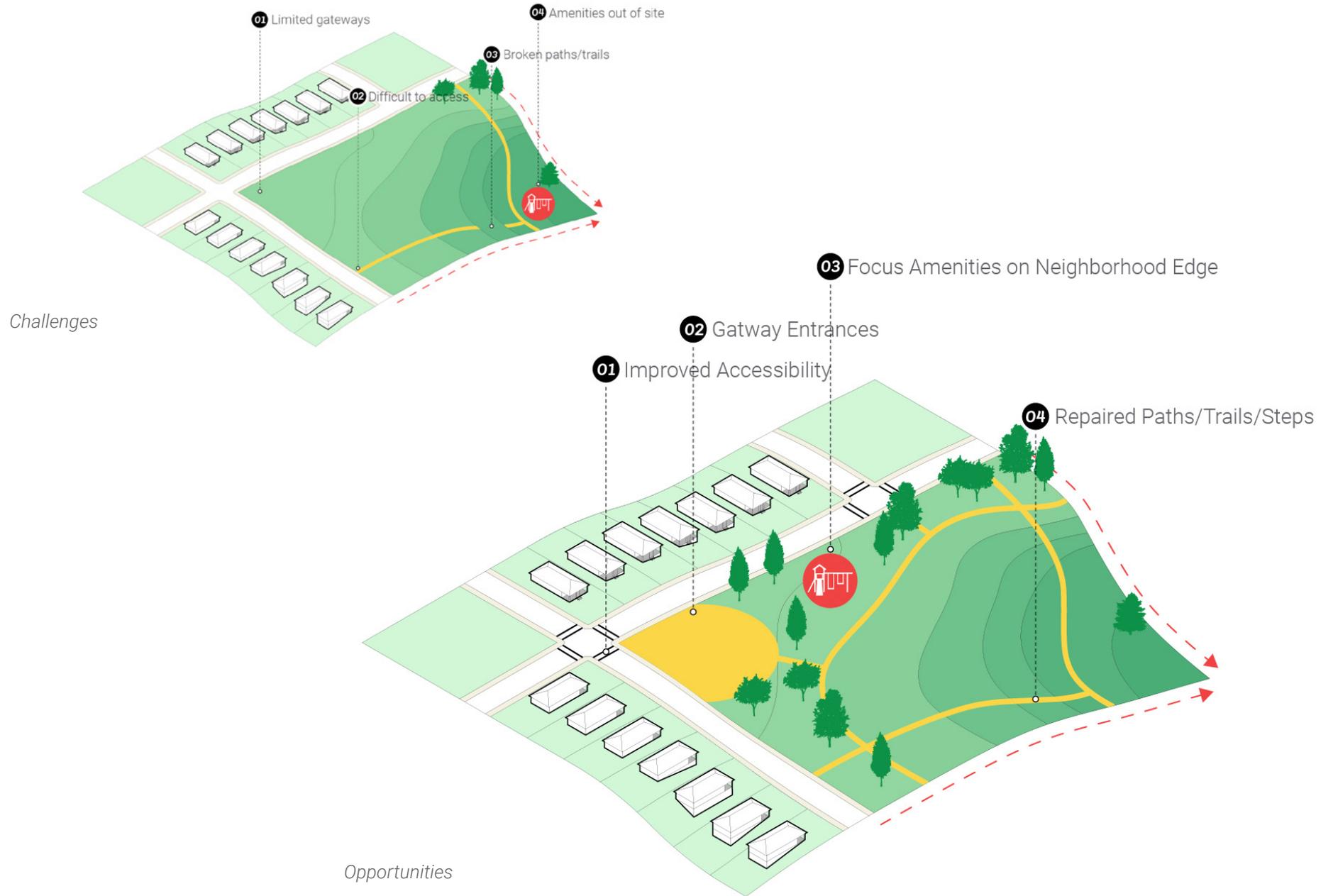
Often times amenities like a children's playground are located on the interior of parks and can lead to a sense that parks are being unused. By locating these amenities near the neighborhood edge, it will activate the park space and put them closer to where residents live. For parks that are in need of additional amenities, consider creating new pedestrian paths and trails that weave together different parts of the park, ensuring that the overall open space is activated and enjoyed by the community.

STORMWATER ENHANCEMENTS

There are opportunities to utilize the natural topography of parks to mitigate stormwater runoff and protect nearby residences. Through appropriate plantings, these landscapes can provide an important environmental benefit and be aesthetically pleasing as well.

While the previous recommendations can be applied across-the-board to Central Area parks, particular ones in need of special attention arose from the public process namely Clifton & Bethany.

Figure 14: **Existing Park Challenges and Opportunities**



CLIFTON PARK

The UG Parks Department will commence long planned improvements to Clifton Park upon the completion of the Central Area plan that will include improved accessibility and new amenities. In addition, the Stories on Stories initiative is working to use the vacant former bath house within the park grounds as a canvas for a public mural. This is a great opportunity for the community to take part in a temporary improvement and build momentum for a permanent rehabilitation of the building into a neighborhood amenity.

01 Improved Sidewalks/Trails

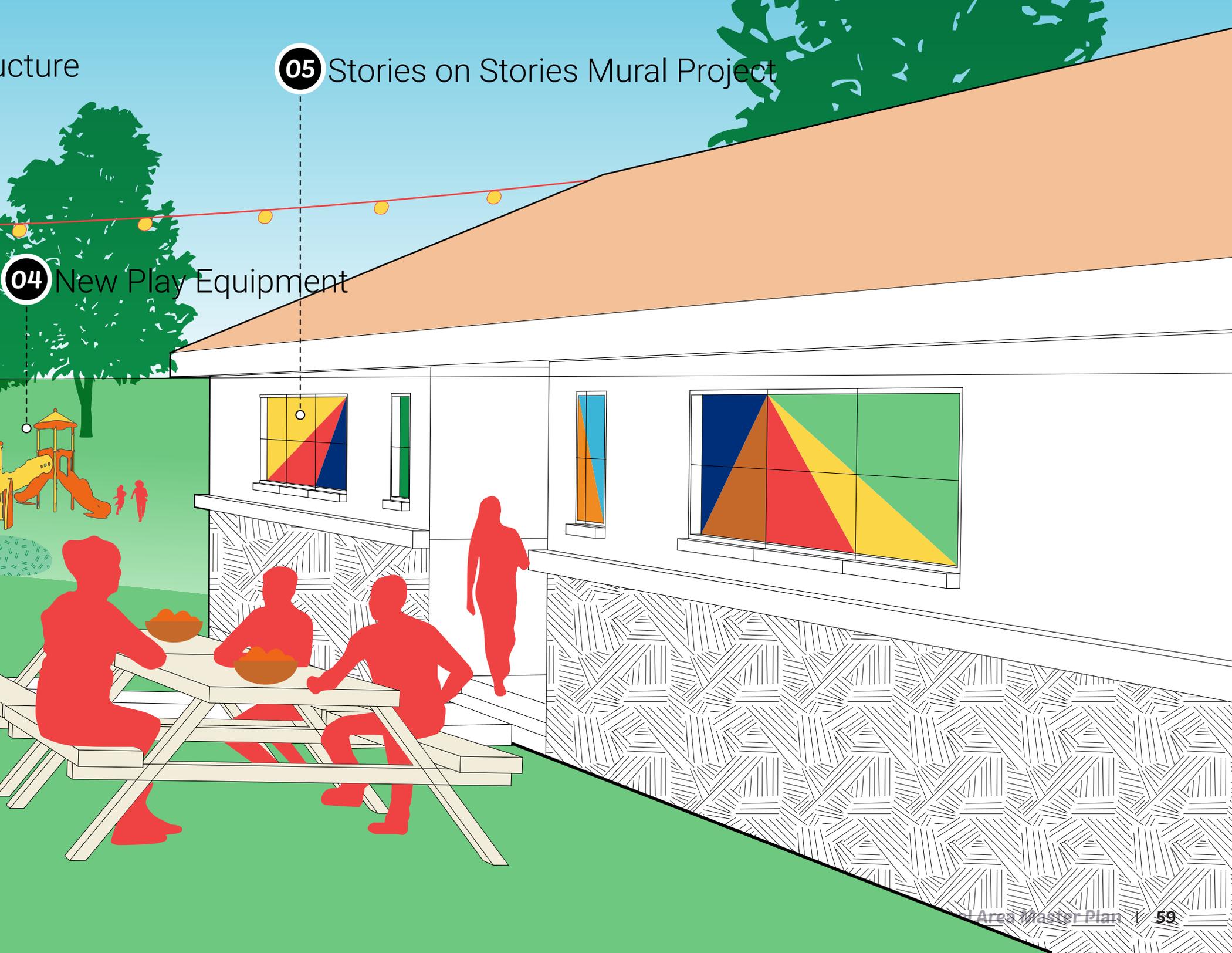
02 Community Dinner

03 Stormwater Infrastructure

Structure

05 Stories on Stories Mural Project

04 New Play Equipment



Goal 02

Establish
CENTRAL AVENUE as
the social, cultural, and
employment center of the
neighborhood

Why this is important

“We need to find the defining features of Central Avenue and capitalize on them.”

- Quote from neighborhood resident

Commercial corridors play a vital role in community health. They can reflect a neighborhood's identity and provide spaces for people of different cultures to socialize. They are also places where neighborhood entrepreneurs can start businesses, create jobs, and provide needed services. Finally, they can help stabilize housing values providing an opportunity for residents to build wealth.

While there are numerous commercial corridors within the Central Area, Central Avenue plays an out-sized role as the one true connection across all. This importance dates back to the beginning of the City connecting the working class neighborhoods of the Central Area with job centers along the Kansas Riverfront and over to Kansas City, MO.

Due to its historical importance as a transit corridor, naturally a commercial corridor followed suite with a thriving street that serviced many of the needs of the community. As nearby jobs and residents disappeared, and residents fled the City, Central Avenues fortunes followed a similar decline.

TOP: This historic photo of Central Avenue depicts a vibrant commercial corridor (source: Kansas Historical Society)

MIDDLE: A picture from the same location today, just west of 7th Street, shows a street more geared to the automobile than the pedestrian (source: google maps)

BOTTOM: Central Avenue near 6th Street is one of the vibrant sections of the commercial corridor.



To help the continued resurgence of Central Avenue the planning process has developed three key strategies:

04 CREATE A PLACE ON CENTRAL AVENUE THROUGH PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Central Avenue historically was a prototypical dense urban commercial district where residents arrived by foot or streetcar, and the storefronts and street reflected that relationship. As the population declined and residents increasingly traveled by car, the majority of the street now reflects that dynamic. It currently is more of a hybrid street, that has some of the traditional urban fabric in place, with a street design that prioritizes the automobile. Because of that, Central Avenue feels like a place that you should pass through rather than stop at a local business, have a bite of food, or socialize with neighbors

In addition to the street design, many of the storefronts are either vacant or unwelcoming. A parcel-by-parcel survey identified 14% percent of properties on the corridor as vacant. These conditions make residents and particularly visitors uncomfortable congregating on the street and taking advantage of all it has to offer. Targeted improvements to the redesigned street and improved storefronts and public realm will help to solidify Central Avenue's role as a vital place economically and socially.

05 LEVERAGE DIVERSITY TO CREATE A UNIQUE IDENTITY AND MARKET OPPORTUNITY

Over the course of the last few decades, an influx of immigrants to the Central Area has breathed new life into neighborhoods and started new businesses on Central Avenue, which had previously seen decades of disinvestment. The diversity of business reflects these newfound demographics with businesses catering to the Latinx population, as well as more recent immigrants from Southeast Asia and other regions of the world.

Commercial corridors often struggle to compete on a city and regional basis and are always looking for ways to differentiate themselves. Central Avenue has the unique opportunity to double down on the diversity of businesses to stand out from the competition. By no means should one culture be favored over others, but having a truly diverse set of offerings can really make the corridor stand out. As the corridor becomes more successful, there are additional opportunities to provide the local services that many residents desire.

Key Strategies:

- 04** Create a “place” on Central Avenue through physical improvements
- 05** Leverage diversity to create a unique identity and market opportunity
- 06** Provide resources for existing businesses and those looking to start new enterprises

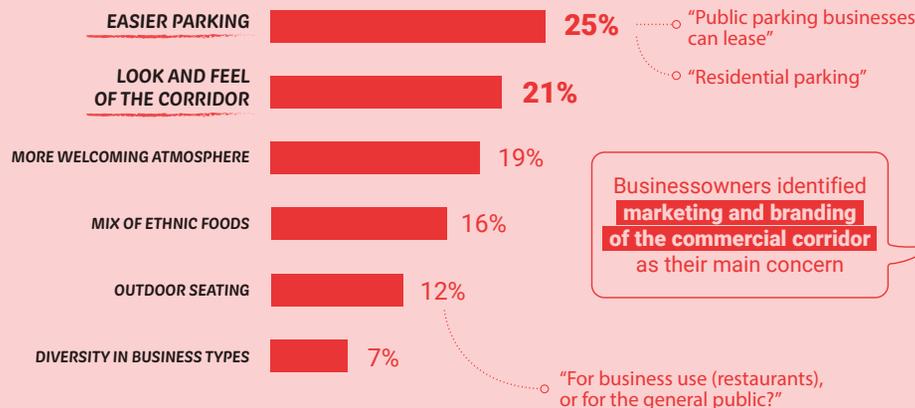
06 PROVIDE RESOURCES FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES AND THOSE LOOKING TO START NEW ENTERPRISES

Many of the businesses on Central Avenue have taken a boot-strapped mentality to start. While that mentality is a virtue, it cannot be assumed that everyone can take a similar approach. Opportunities exist to better connect existing business owners and future entrepreneurs with resources be it financial

advice, mentorship programs, or real estate partnerships. The Unified Government can also play a role by streamlining processes and zoning requirements to get businesses up and running as quickly as possible with less bureaucracy and upfront capital.



What is the number 1 thing that is missing from the Central Avenue commercial corridor?



Please proceed to the next pages for specific recommendations on each strategy



04

Create a “place” on Central Avenue through physical improvements

Implementation:

Action Item: **4A**

Figure 15: **Existing Central Avenue Sections**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Public Works
- UG Planning & Urban Design
- WYEDC
- Dotte Agency

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:

2-5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

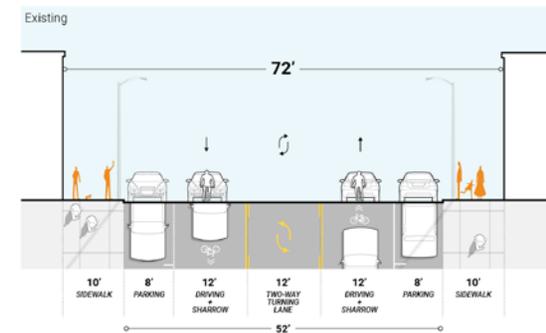
TIF, Sales Tax Revenue Bonds (STAR)

Redesign Central Avenue

The typical Central Avenue street section includes two travel lanes and two parking lanes in each direction, with a continuous turn lane throughout the corridor. Recent updates on the stretch from North Tremont Street to North 6th Street have removed the turning lane and introduced angled parking and improved pedestrian crossings in its place. It is not a coincidence that this stretch of Central Avenue feels the most like a true urban commercial corridor and the recent investments in new businesses and buildings reflect that character. The condition that exists on that stretch should be replicated across the corridor up to 18th Street where the commercial corridor changes in character to more residential in nature.

Central Avenue

10th & Baltimore



Central Avenue

6th & Tremont

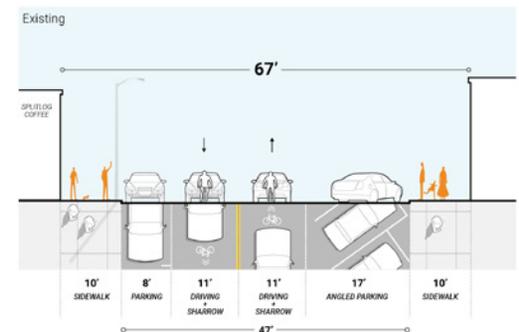


Figure 16: **Central Avenue Focus Areas**



Recognizing that a complete retrofit of the whole Central Avenue corridor would be costly, implementation should be done on targeted sections of the corridor, specifically from 18th - 13th, 11th - Ferree, 8th - Simpson, and 7th - 6th. These blocks have the most potential to replicate the success on the eastern end due to their in-tact traditional urban fabric and building types.

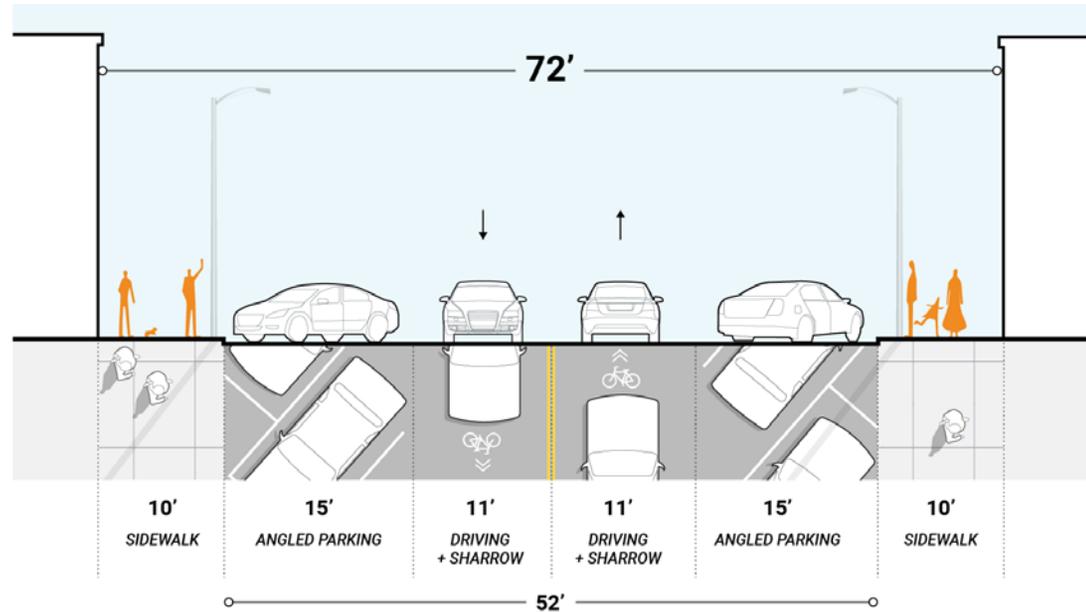
The in-between stretches of the corridor are more residential in nature with newer auto-dependent commercial buildings, making a walkable urban space increasingly difficult.

- 01** 18th Street - 13th Street
- 02** 11th Street - Ferree Street
- 03** 8th Street - Simpson Avenue
- 04** 7th Street - 6th Street



62% of the online survey participants chose this design option as their preferred choice for Central Avenue.

Figure 17: **Proposed Street Section - Central Avenue**

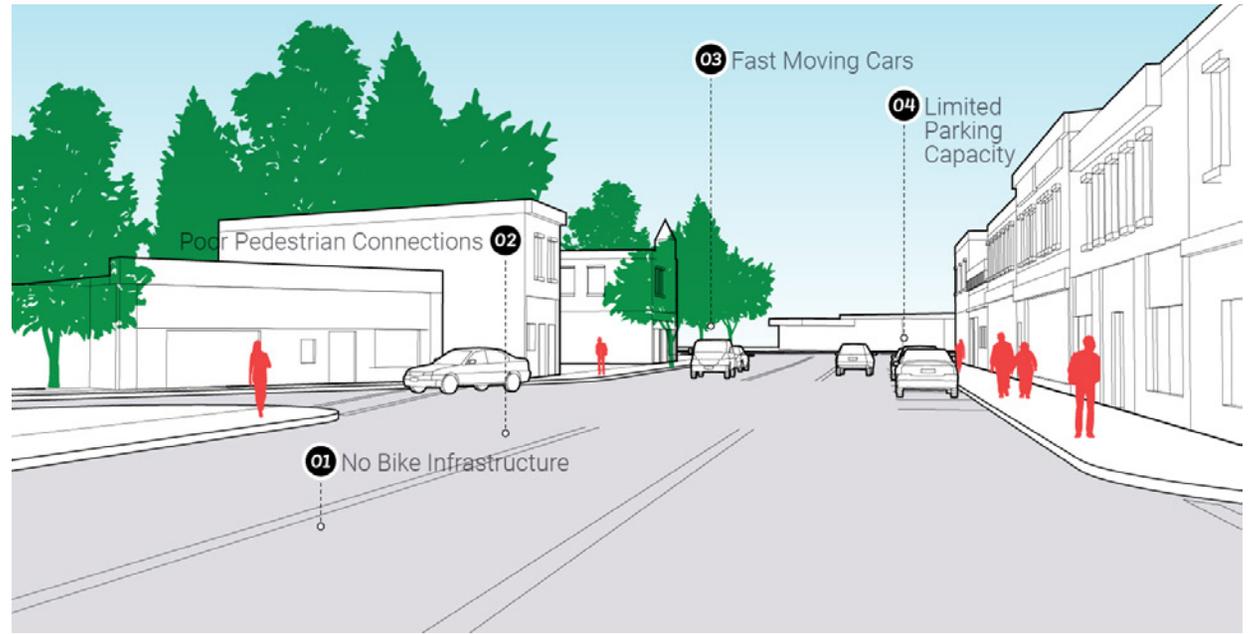


Two different street sections were considered in the planning process, both of which removed the turn lane except at heavily trafficked intersections (7th, 10th, & 18th Streets). The first option replaced the turn lane with protected bike lanes, creating a safe bike corridor for the community and slowed down speeding cars with a narrower right-of-way. The downside of this option was that it would not increase the parking capacity of the corridor and would need to be implemented all at the same time to serve as a true bicycle connection.

The second option, which was preferred by residents, was to replicate the condition found near 6th Street. This option removes the turn lane and replaces this space with angled parking on one or both sides depending on the street width. The benefits of this include increased parking capacity and the ability to implement the redesign incrementally over time, outweighing the downside of having to incorporate bike sharrows (shared bike/driving lanes) rather than separated bike and travel lanes as Option 1 proposed.

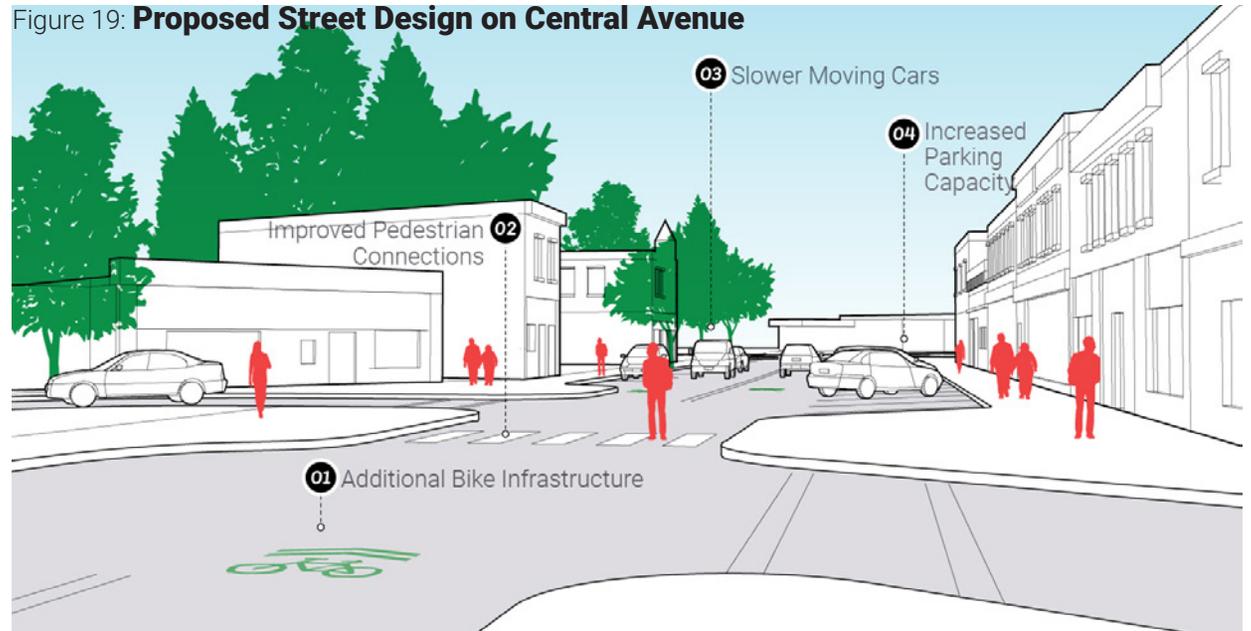
This image on the right depicts the current condition of Central Avenue from Simpson Avenue to Coy Street. This particular stretch is conducive to fast moving vehicles, limited parking (9 total parallel parking spaces) and does not capitalize on the historic character of the existing buildings.

Figure 18: **Existing Street Design on Central Avenue**



With the proposed interventions, this stretch of Central Avenue begins to create a sense of place with its own unique identity. Cars are slowed down, pedestrians have better connections, and parking spaces increase from 9 to 22. All of these are conducive to helping the existing businesses on Central Avenue thrive, as well as help fill in some of the existing vacant storefronts.

Figure 19: **Proposed Street Design on Central Avenue**





26% of the online survey participants said Central Avenue feels the most difficult to walk on/across and is in need of the pedestrian improvements.

2 Parklets are public seating platforms that convert curbside parking spaces into vibrant community spaces. Most parklets have a distinctive design that incorporates seating, greenery, and/or bike racks and accommodate unmet demand for public space on thriving neighborhood retail streets or commercial areas. Source: NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials)

Implementation:

Action Item: **4B**

Potential Project Partners:

- Business Owners
- CABA
- WYEDC (Wyandotte Economic Development Council)
- KCK Chamber of Commerce
- UG Planning & Urban Design

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS OWNERS** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, UG Small Business Grant, TIF, STAR (Sales Tax Revenue Bonds), Private capital

Improve Storefronts & Sidewalk Usage

In addition to the proposed changes within the street right-of-way, changes to the sidewalk spaces can play an important role in the look and feel of a commercial corridor. Some of the many potential options to improve the Central Avenue corridor fall into the below categories:

- ENVIRONMENTAL: Street trees, green infrastructure and landscaping
- AMENITIES: Benches, cafe tables and bike racks
- LIGHTING: Pedestrian-scaled lighting and decorative lighting
- FACADES: Help property owners improve their storefront appearances

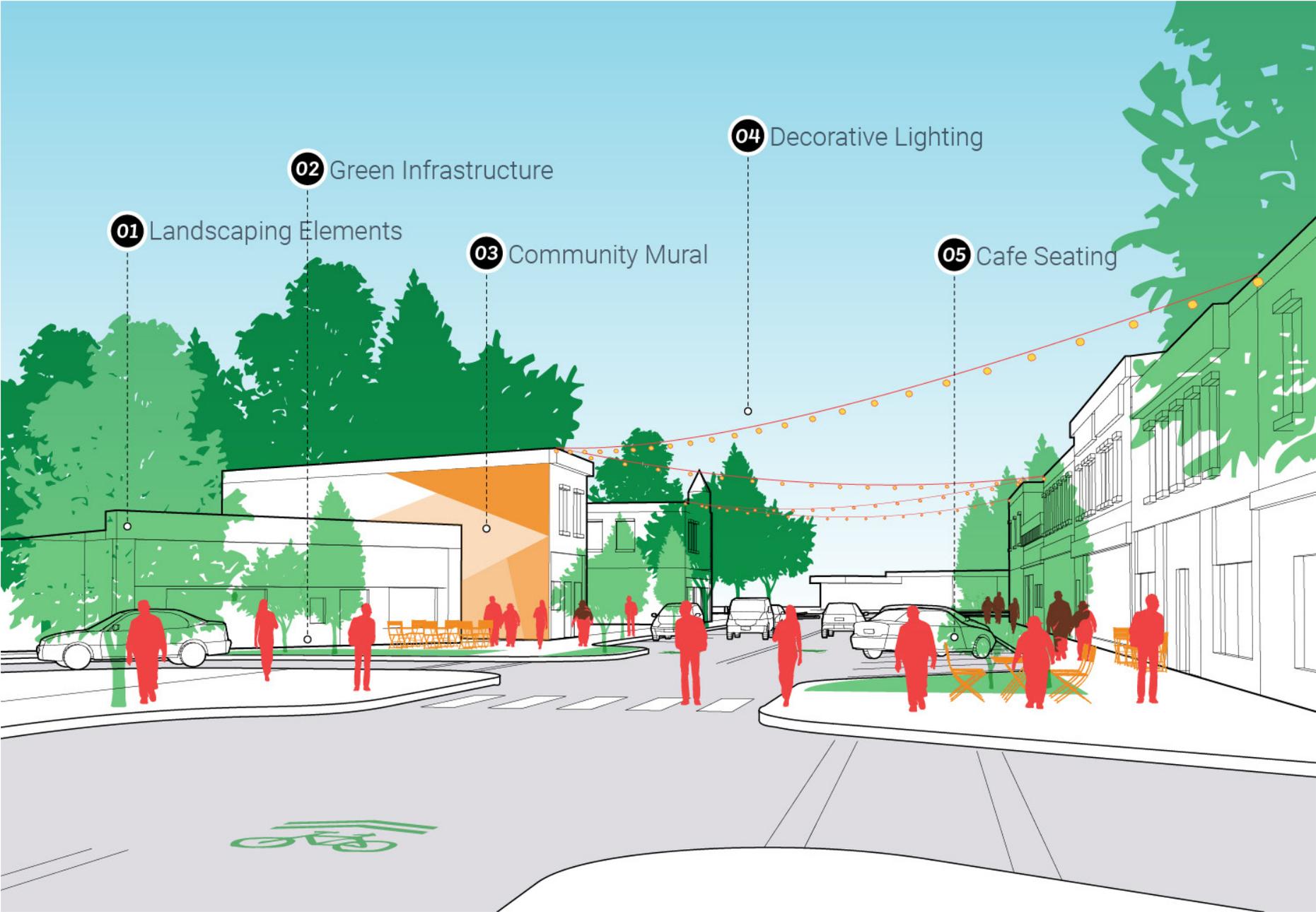
These smaller-scale interventions, cumulatively can add up to an improved public realm. While implementing the physical street change will require funding and implementation through the Unified Government, these interventions can be implemented by a variety of organizations or individual property owners.

Street trees and new pedestrian lighting can be coordinated with the overall street improvements. Smaller scale plantings like outdoor pots, cafe seating, or decorative lighting can be done by neighborhood organizations or individual property owners.

Additionally, concepts such as site improvement programs, which could be for facade improvements to local streetscapes enhancements, should be considered for portions of the Central Area to help improve its visual appearance.

The current COVID-19 legislation allowing outdoor restaurant/cafe seating and parklets² within the public right-of-way is a great trial run for this strategy and efforts should be made to codify similar allowances on a permanent basis.

Figure 20: **Central Avenue Potential Recommendation**



Potential Project Partners:

- UG Parks & Recreation
- Roots for Refugees
- WYEDC
- CABA

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, Artplace National Creative Placemaking Fund, TIF, STAR

Repurpose Vacant Lots and Improve Existing Pocket Parks

Central Avenue uniquely has 5 small parks all within a few minutes walk of each other. While some are more formalized parks like Bethany, others are pieces of interstitial space left over from the unique angle that Central Avenue cuts across the formalized urban grid. Unfortunately, many of these parks feel like left over space and often aren't recognized as places to gather.

Broadly speaking, according to a parks assessment by the UG's Parks Department, these open spaces are most in need of improved landscaping, amenities, potential for art, and improved accessibility. More specifically, all of these parks could be improved in one capacity or another to better serve residents and support commercial activity on the corridor.

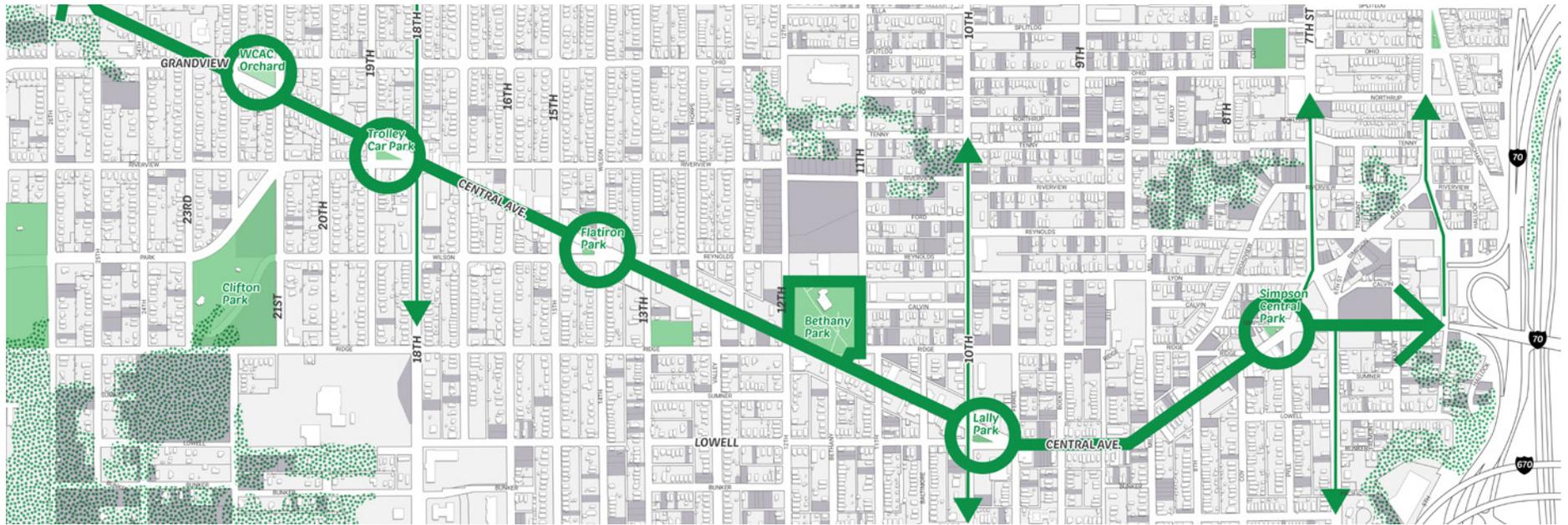
Many of these parks align with the areas highlighted for physical improvements and focused investment. Through coordination, business owners within each focus area can

improve specific parks creating a unique identity which can help to support their businesses.

Vacant lots provide an additional opportunity to improve Central Avenue. Commercial corridors around the country have come up with creative ways for vacant lots to add to a corridors vibrancy rather than detract. Often done with a minimal budget and a DIY aesthetic, these spaces can continue to reinforce the bootstrap mentality that has been the hallmark of Central Avenue success to date. Potential opportunities to repurpose vacant land include:

- Gardens
- Markets
- Sculpture
- Cleaned & Greened lots
- Ancillary Commercial Space for Adjacent Properties
- New pop-up commercial spaces

Figure 21: **Central Avenue Pocket Parks & Vacant Lots**



The Wyandotte Countians Against Crime (WCAC) Orchard is a great example of how a neighborhood can take a vacant property and repurpose it to a vibrant space that is an asset for the corridor and neighborhood at large.

Implementation will require a hierarchy of responsibility. Vacant lots would be the responsibility of adjacent property owners with local organizational support. Smaller pocket parks will require broader business cooperation and local organizational support. While improvements to Bethany Park will be driven by the UG with local organizational, business, and resident support.



Greensgrow West - Philadelphia, PA

Greensgrow is an urban garden center that repurposed a vacant plot of land and turned it into a vibrant commercial space on an existing corridor. Central Avenue can take a similar approach by adding commercial spaces to vacant land without the upfront building costs



The Village of Arts & Humanities - Philadelphia, PA

"The Village" repurposed vacant properties around the Germantown Avenue commercial corridor and passive garden spaces full of unique art pieces and murals that reflect the character of the neighborhood.

Flatiron Park is a small park directly adjacent to El Torito and across the street from Community Housing of Wyandotte County's (CHWC) headquarters. With some tree coverage and benches, the park offers a quiet place of respite for pedestrians on Central Avenue. A few interventions can help to improve the park and make it more of an amenity:

- Decorative lighting
- Potential for mural on El Torito wall
- Better connection to the small green space across 14th Street

Simpson Park is a small park with amenities such as a shade structure and benches. This park suffers from its lack of proximity to active places on the commercial corridor. Improvements should be coordinated with street redesign efforts as well as with nearby business owners

Lally Park is a park of moderate size that is located at the key intersection of 10th and Central Avenue. Surrounded by wide roads on all sides, it suffers from feeling like a large traffic island rather than a designated park.

In the interim, Lowell Avenue can be closed on select days and filled with active programming. These temporary event will create momentum to further improve the park.

In the long term, the idea of permanently vacating Lowell Avenue should be considered, greatly expanding the park footprint.



Figure 22: **Existing Trolley Car Park**

Trolley Car Park has seen improvements in recent years due to the re-engineering of the 18th, Central, and Park drive intersection. The resulting Park Drive road leaves a considerable amount of space dedicated to cars and parking, which could better be used as park space.

Improvements to the park should include:

- Improved pedestrian accessibility across 18th and Central Avenue
- Reduce the size of the truncated Park Drive while still maintaining access to existing businesses
- Reallocate Park Drive parking to the perimeter of the park

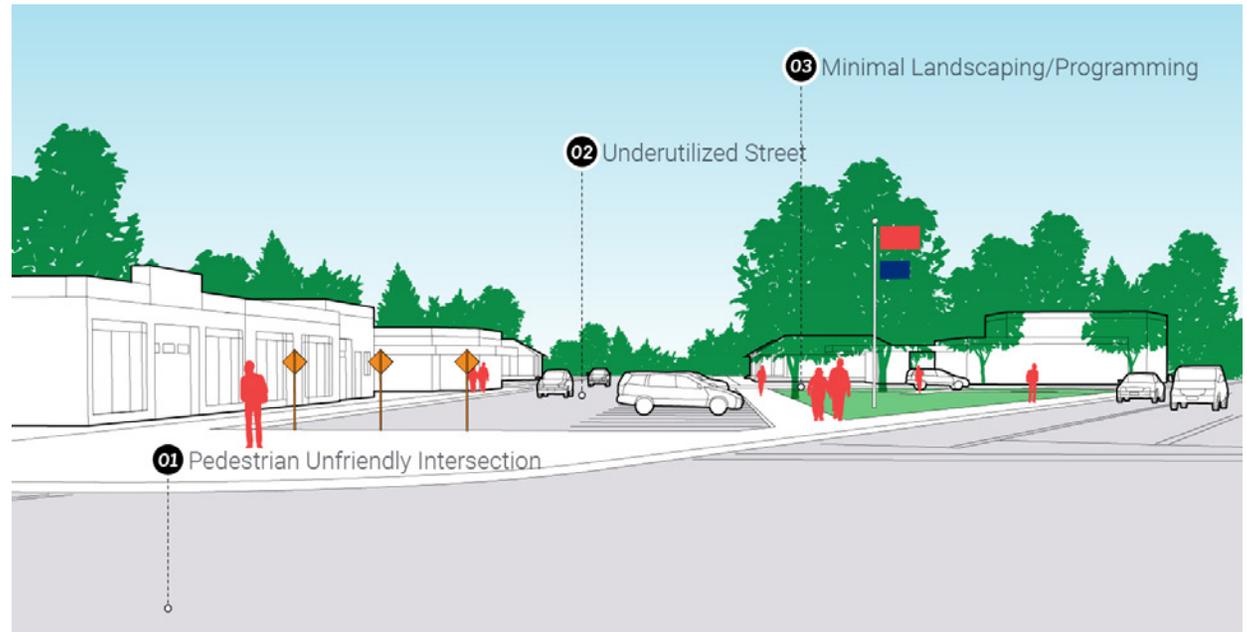
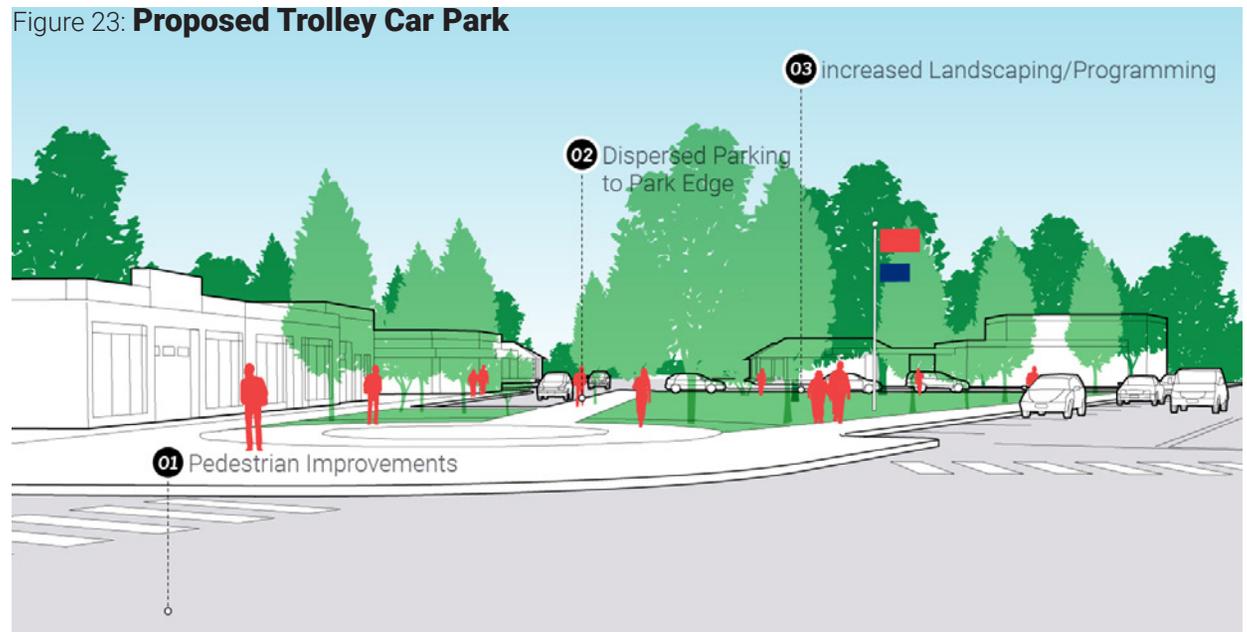


Figure 23: **Proposed Trolley Car Park**





Out of all the parks along Central Avenue, 67% of the survey participants responded that Bethany Park should be prioritized for improvement.

When asked the same question about all of the parks within the Central Area, Bethany Park came out on top again with 38% of the vote, followed by City Park at 22% and Kensington Park at 12%.

BETHANY PARK

Bethany Park is a vital public space to the Central Area providing approximately 4 acres of open space to the neighborhood that is visible from the commercial corridor and is accessible to various means of public transit. Additionally, it is also the place where many community events take place, including La Placita Farmers Market every two weeks and the food festival following the Dotteversity Parade.

The park, however, is lacking amenities such as benches or picnic tables, shade and general programming that would make it more attractive and welcoming to the community. Furthermore, the park does not currently have the infrastructure to best accommodate the events that take place there. Any strategy to improve Bethany Park should be based on attracting foot traffic from main corridors and commercial anchors, and on encouraging people to remain in the park once they are there.



Bethany Park provides 4 acres of open space along the Central Avenue. Its strategic location makes it an ideal site for open space improvements and amenities.

To this end, some recommendations to improve Bethany Park could be:

- Enable and adapt designated areas of the park for sitting or eating with fixed benches or tables
- Create a stronger pedestrian connection with the Medical Center as a way to encourage new users to come to the park (i.e. employees from the Center taking their lunch break)
- Include bicycle stations for multimodal circulation. Bethany Park is already a meeting point for several events and is close to corridors with bike lanes, sharrows, bus stops and bus routes, particularly on 10th Street and Central Avenue respectively
- Create internal trails in the park for running or walking, as well as including more lighting to increase the sense of comfort and security among users
- Work with CABA to understand the spatial and infrastructure needs of the Farmers Market (e.g. loading and unloading, waste management, gas and water), and make appropriate redesigns to the park to accommodate this type of activity
- Use mural art in the community center building as a way to draw people's attention to the park and improve the look and feel of the center itself. This could potentially become a participatory project in the form of an artist residency program
- In the long term, consider developing the vacant lot north of the Medical Center as a strategic site to bring more residential and mixed-use development that creates more density in the neighborhood



Leverage diversity to create a unique identity and market opportunity

Implementation:

Action Item: **5A**

Potential Project Partners:

- CABA
- KCK Chamber of Commerce
- WYEDC
- Downtown KCK Shareholders
- KCCG (Kansas City Community Gardens)
- UG Parks & Recreation
- KCK Farmer's Market
- Mission Adelante

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

0 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, Artplace National Creative Placemaking Fund, Kansas Strategic Investment Program Grant

Make La Placita the Premier Global Food Market in the Region

The Central Avenue Betterment Association's events for the Central Area are a great way of marketing the diverse cultures and businesses within the commercial corridor. While many of these parades and programs happen on a yearly basis, La Placita Farmers Market attracts customers to Central Ave on a recurring basis by taking place twice a month in Bethany Park.

Markets such as La Placita can be a powerful anchor and catalyst to support redevelopment and investment and provides a unique opportunity to have an authentic multicultural experience. Open-air markets play a key role in helping people launch small businesses by offering them a low-cost space to sell their products, and giving them access to a range of customers that, over time, can become a more robust customer base.

With the onset of COVID-19, outdoor food venues like La Placita become even more important to support small businesses.

According to the Central Area neighborhood survey launched in July 2020, 58% of participants stated they would not feel safe going back to businesses and restaurants on Central Avenue. Therefore, La Placita has the advantage of taking place outdoors, where customers may feel safer.

The key question becomes how best to strengthen La Placita as a global food market. One potential strategy during this time can be to promote La Placita's advantage as a safe place to eat outdoors while keeping social distancing. Attendance can be further encouraged by setting up moveable chairs and tables for customers to dine while keeping a safe distance in between sit-down areas.

CABA can also consider expanding their available space to encourage restaurants with a physical establishment on the corridor to offer their products in the market. Especially in the case of businesses that do not own their buildings, having a stand at La Placita can be an affordable alternative for small business owners to sell their products and continue generating income during this time.



When asked what would help La Placita Farmers Market grow and prosper, the top 3 options chosen by survey participants were a dedicated physical market space (25%), better marketing (18%), and additional programming, including music, activities for kids, etc. (16%)



Another program worth highlighting and strengthening is the Flavors of Central Tour. Led by CABA, this program takes visitors and participants to a number of featured restaurants along Central Ave with the help of volunteers positioned throughout the commercial corridor. With the purchase of one ticket, diners are able to enjoy a variety of specialty dishes or drinks while walking through Central Avenue. The UG should work together with CABA to understand the program's marketing and operational needs that can help it expand, take place more frequently or happen in conjunction with other neighborhood events (i.e. theater or dance festivals, holidays) to maximize attendance.



Physical improvements can include the addition of food trucks along Central Avenue to create an edge and protect the festival from street traffic. A mid to long-term option may be to add permanent or semi-permanent infrastructure to increase the sense of "permanence" of La Placita. An example of semi-permanent infrastructure can be the use of modified containers such as the Iron District in North Kansas City. Specific improvements, such as adding awnings to the stands, can provide weather protection and create a sense of comfort, like those found in New Albany, IN.



LEFT:
Vendors at La Placita Market prepare a variety of fresh dishes to give a taste of the culinary diversity and cultural wealth of Central Avenue

MIDDLE:
The Iron District, in North Kansas City, is an outdoor food, beverage, and retail space made with modified containers that house a variety of vendors.

RIGHT:
High-ceiling stands with broad awnings provide a sheltered space for vendors in New Albany's City Square in Indiana.

Potential Project Partners:

- KCK Chamber of Commerce
- CABA
- Downtown KCK Shareholders
- WYEDC
- UG Planning & Urban Design
- UG Streets Department

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

0 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, National Endowment for the Arts
Our Town Grant, Artplace National
Creative Placemaking Fund, Kansas
Strategic Investment Program Grant

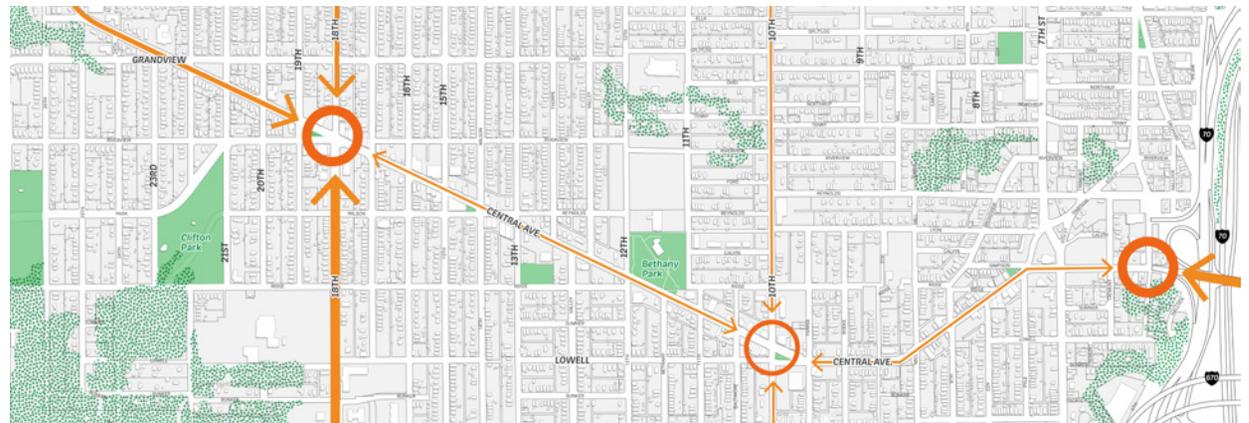
Create Major Gateways to the Corridor

The Central Avenue corridor has two clear gateways at 18th and Central and 6th and Central, with a secondary gateway at 10th and Central. These are great opportunities to help set the tone and reinforce a sense of place for the corridor for those traveling from outside of the neighborhood. Gateway designs should be determined through a community led design process to ensure they are representative of the community.



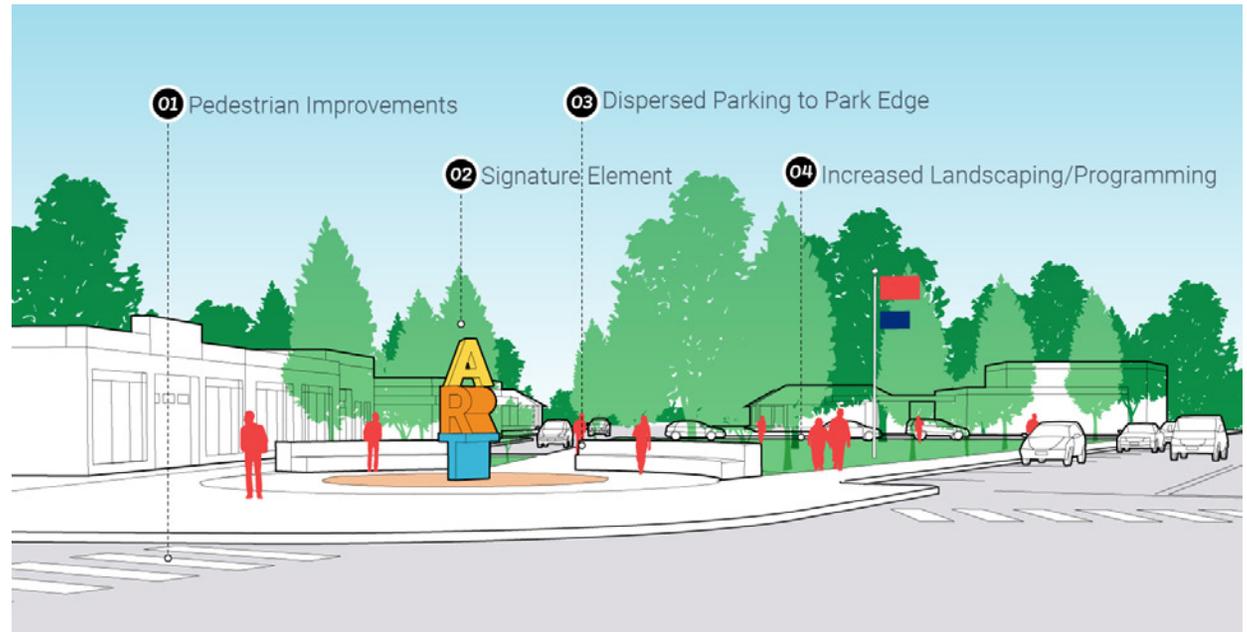
The Grove in St. Louis, MO was referenced on numerous occasions as a good precedent for a gateway that helps to define a neighborhood or commercial corridor.

Figure 24: **Gateways on Central Avenue**



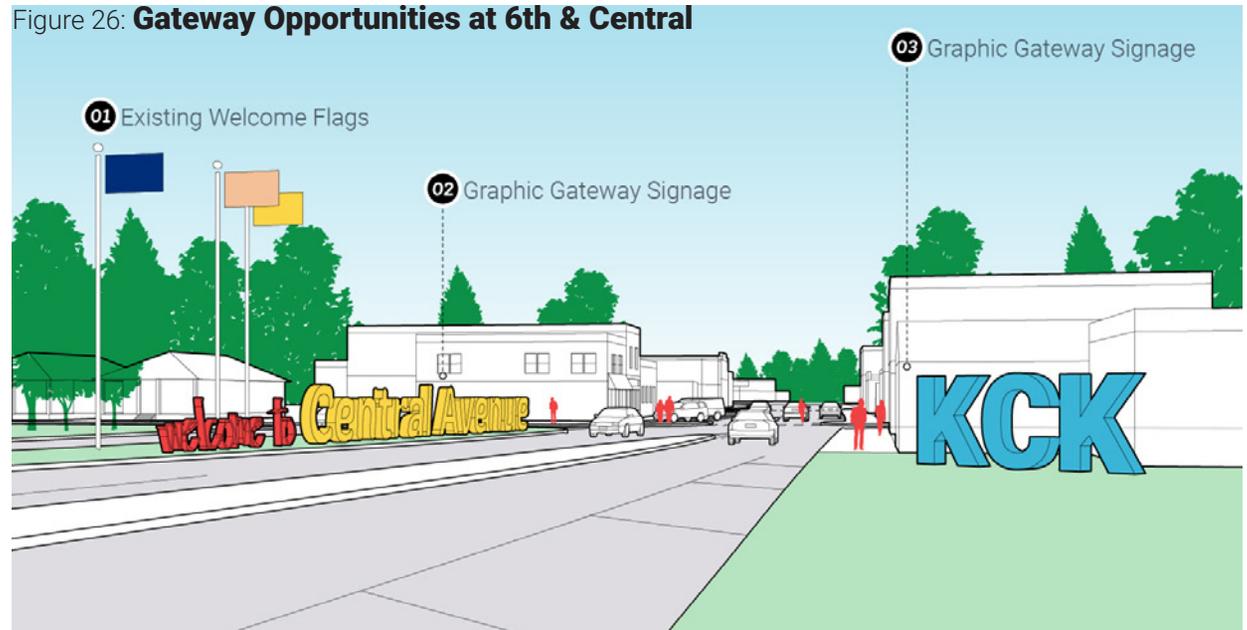
18th Street is the main entrance to residents traveling from nearby highway exits as well as entering the Central Avenue Commercial corridor from the west. The opportunity to reallocate street space in Trolley Car Park for park usage as previously discussed presents an opportunity for a larger signature art piece.

Figure 25: **Gateway Opportunity at 18th & Central**



The intersection of 6th and Central is the main entrance from the West Bottoms, Downtown Kansas City, MO, and major highways such as I-70 and I-670. This location is a great opportunity to create a visual entrance to the corridor that reinforces the neighborhood character. Currently numerous flag poles welcome visitors to the area, but they can easily be missed as one travels through. Something more graphic and visible will work to better grab peoples attention.

Figure 26: **Gateway Opportunities at 6th & Central**



Potential Project Partners:

- KCK Chamber of Commerce
- CABA
- Downtown KCK Shareholders
- WYEDC

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION & BUSINESS OWNERS** driven

Timeline:

0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, National Endowment for the Arts
Our Town Grant, Artplace National
Creative Placemaking Fund, Kansas
Strategic Investment Program Grant

Ensure Diversity has an Outward Presence on the Corridor

Businesses along Central Avenue have a unique character and identity that should be celebrated and reinforced through the imagery the corridor conveys to the public. Doing so will help define a consistent brand and can be used in marketing material as well.

There are many ways to help reinforce this idea in a thoughtful way that adds to the corridor.

- Wayfinding signage
- Business signs
- Murals
- Decorative crosswalks
- Sculptures or other art works
- Decorative painting
- Multilingual signage

An important consideration in any marketing or district branding effort is to make it available in different languages as a way of catering to a larger, more diverse audience, both locally and regionally. In doing so, the Central Avenue takes a stance as an inclusive place that opens its doors to all.

Implementation for this strategy will require a coordinated effort among the UG, Local Organizations, and individual property and business owners.



TOP:
Multilingual wayfinding signage highlights the diversity of a corridor and makes it accessible to all (Source: segd.org)

BOTTOM:
Cool business signage activates a corridor and can help with branding, as seen with Lulu's Noodle Shop in the Crossroads neighborhood of Kansas City, KS (Source: onthegrid.city)



TOP:
Large scale public art projects can bring attention to a commercial corridor, as seen on a mural on Germantown Avenue in Philadelphia by Hass & Hahn (Source: Mural Arts)



BOTTOM:
Decorative crosswalks can add vibrancy and color to a corridor (Source: austintexas.gov)



TOP:
Streetscape sculpture celebrate the Puerto Rican heritage of El Centro de Oro in Philadelphia (Source: Hidden City Philadelphia)



BOTTOM:
Decorative lighting on North Broad Street in Philadelphia can improve safety and add visual interest (Source: PHL Council)



Provide resources for existing businesses and those looking to start new enterprises

Implementation:

Action Item: **6A**

Potential Project Partners:

- Forward Cities
- Business Owners
- KCK Chamber of Commerce
- WYEDC
- UG Planning & Urban Design

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

LISC (Local Initiative Support Corporation), Private funding, UG Small Business Grant

Jumpstart a Business Incubator on Central Avenue

Business incubators are organizations designed to foster the growth of start-ups and small businesses by providing administrative and management resources that are essential to their operation. These resources can include affordable physical space, coaching and training, marketing support, networking opportunities, and/or financial support.

Outside of the UG and CABA, there are few organizations in the Central Area that offer resources with a focus on small business support. This is especially the case for immigrant small business owners that are navigating regulations or working towards financial stability to launch their own business.

Considering that almost 40% of land use in the corridor is commercial, an incubator on Central Avenue with a particular focus on food and retail would greatly benefit businesses and residents in the area.

Ideally, business incubation programs are tailored to the needs of the of the businesses and entrepreneurs they serve, so they can take on many forms.

One example of a business incubator is the Community Entrepreneurship Accelerator, a capacity-building program for local entrepreneurs and small business owners, led by Forward Cities, a national non-profit that helps communities and cities build equitable entrepreneurship and economic development. This accelerator's focus is to build local capacity by mapping and leveraging local assets, providing training to local business owners, investing in high-potential ventures and coordinating collaborative work among different local groups over a period of two years.



A parcel-by-parcel survey of the Central Avenue completed in 2019 showed that 37% of the corridor's total land use is commercial, 13% is single-family residential, and 11% is open space (Interface Studio field survey, 2019).

In the case of the Central Avenue, food is an essential part of the cultural identity of the corridor. Furthermore, food businesses have been at the center of a myriad of cultural activities and programming that attract visitors from all over the region and move the Central Area's economic engine.

Hence, any business incubators initiative must prioritize the provision of adequate physical space for food ventures to flourish. Such spaces can include commissary kitchens where starting entrepreneurs can test out products, storage space, meeting rooms for business meetings or trainings, and even mobile spaces such as food trucks.

CABA would serve as the appropriate organization to lead this initiative with an institutional partner, given their connections to the business community.



Food trucks park on Central Ave during La Placita Farmers Market.

The community entrepreneurship accelerator could support existing food truck owners and those who are interested by providing food truck and food management trainings.

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Parking Control, Planning & Urban Design, Public Works

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS OWNERS** driven

Timeline:

0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:

UG

Create a Central Avenue Overlay District to Better Support Businesses

Concurrent to the Central Area Master plan is a citywide zoning code update which will help to streamline some processes within the Central Avenue corridor. Due to the importance of Central Avenue and its unique requirements, a more nuanced approach to zoning should be taken in the form of an overlay district. Overlay districts are tools that allow for special provisions on top of the underlying base zoning classification.

Provisions can include the following:

- Historic preservation
- Environmental protection
- Parking regulations
- Ground floor activation
- Streetscape improvements
- Affordability requirements
- Green infrastructure
- Sidewalk activation

Parking and sidewalk activation are two issues of importance for Central Avenue that can be addresses in a zoning overlay. Current regulations restrict outdoor seating and other sidewalk activations. Emergency declarations due to the UG's COVID-19 response have relaxed many of these restrictions in support of businesses. Their temporary status should be extended to a more permanent basis.

Parking issues have come up time and time again from both a business owner and shopper perspectives. Some business owners say the parking requirements are too onerous and put an additional burden on new businesses getting up and running. Others complain that the lack of parking throughout the district prevents people from shopping on the corridor. Shoppers pretty much universally say that finding parking within the district is a challenge. Changing the makeup of Central Avenue to better utilize the existing right of way and reallocate driving space to parking has already been discussed in this chapter and is an initial first step that the UG can make to add to the parking supply. Designating the Central Avenue corridor as a Parking

“Decrease parking and also improve sidewalk conditions to let residents walk more.”

- Quote from a neighborhood resident

Overlay District can allow for flexible, adaptive parking regulations that align with planned uses and support city development policies and design standards. A parking overlay district identifies unique parking provisions within district boundaries; these provisions often include regulations or incentives and guide development within a designated district. These parking provisions may include established parking maximums, an in-lieu fee program, shared parking policy and procedures, and bicycle parking requirements.

FLEXIBLE PARKING STANDARDS

These standards provide flexibility for future land use changes and encourage the use of shared parking infrastructure, rather than unshared private lots to create a healthy market for parking, where parking spaces are bought, sold, rented and leased like any normal commodity.

The Unified Government currently has parking minimums for new developments. Minimum parking requirements do not consider nuances of the site and the surrounding areas. An alternative approach is parking maximums,

which determines a cap on how much parking can be built on site; this is an effective tool to ensure that developments are not over built and provide flexibility to developers to determine how much parking is necessary.

SHARED PARKING PROGRAM

Current Municipal Code standards allow for shared parking for commercial areas (Section 27-525) and any actions to implement shared parking between multiple uses require the UG approval. Shared parking helps minimize the total amount of street-level land dedicated to parking by sharing facilities between land uses with different peak parking periods. Different land uses often have different peak periods; for example, offices have peak parking during the week between 10 am and 5 pm and restaurants often have peak parking during the weekday evening hours. A shared parking program requires that parking facilities are shared between land uses, rather than each tenant or development having their own dedicated spaces. Sharing parking results in maximum efficiency of parking supply, regardless of who owns or operates each parking facility.

The Unified Government can encourage shared parking within the Central Avenue Corridor by establishing a policy update for future developments. For existing facilities, a set process and reporting method is required to identify the number of spaces at each site that are underutilized and available for sharing; each shared spaces will need to be marked appropriately. To facilitate this process, the UG will need to develop a standard shared parking agreement or similar documentation to be required by existing and future property owners; this agreement will be subject to review by the UG, as per current code requirements.

Potential Project Partners:

- CABA
- WYEDC
- KCK Chamber of Commerce
- UG Planning & Urban Design

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

Ongoing

Potential Funding Sources:

NRF, UG Small Business Grant, TIF

Potential District Manager Programs

Ongoing funding streams and management for the Central Avenue commercial corridor will help to support many of the suggested action items. CABA currently serves as the corridor manager albeit with a limited staff and budget and does amazing work promoting the corridor with such limited resources. To increase funding and capacity, many commercial areas take the approach of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) or Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), which complement the UG by taking on functions such as sanitation and beautification, business assistance, programming and district marketing, among others. All of this is done through a tax levied on commercial business properties.

Although they can be greatly beneficial to small business communities, setting up a BID or CID and helping it operate requires great coordination, capacity and resources. In the case of the Central Area, where local organizations are already operating at capacity across a number of initiatives and programs, creating a formally established BID or CID many not be an immediate priority, and could be burdensome on the small business community that is still trying to grow. The Central Area should first make some of the initial investments already discussed, and reevaluate potential corridor management and financing on an ongoing basis.

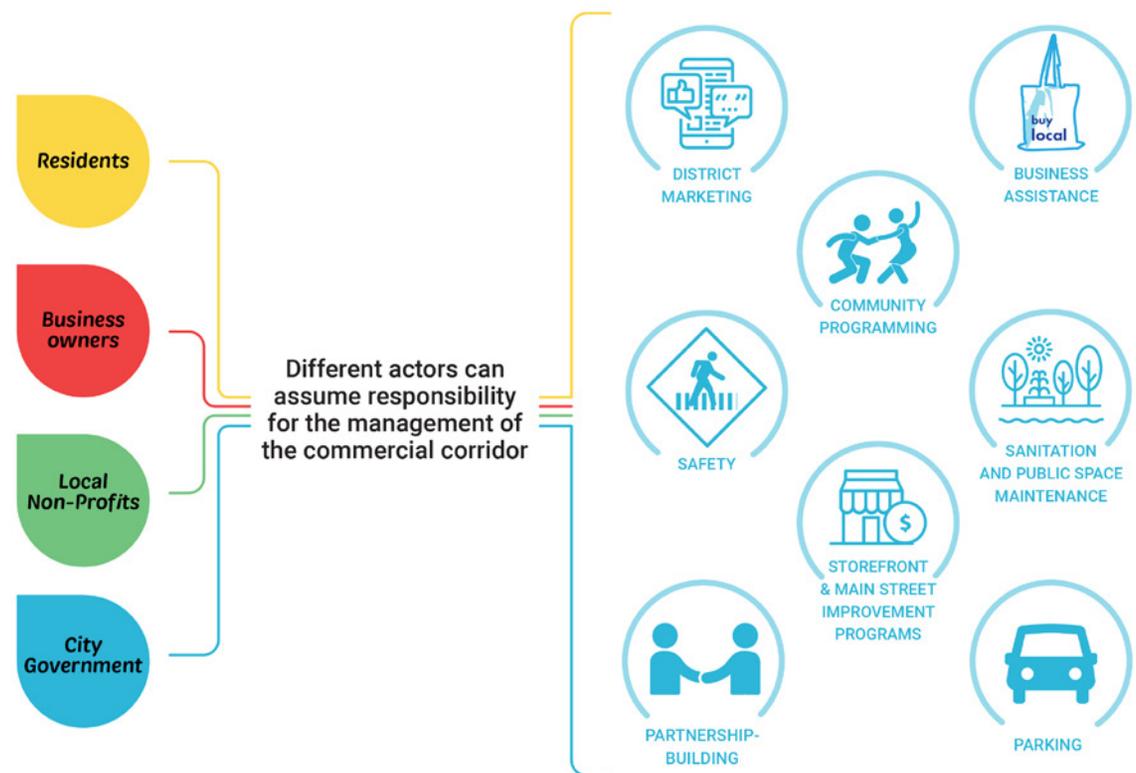
In the interim, the approach to managing Central Avenue should be to coordinate how different stakeholders can take ownership of a specific task within their scope of activity, so that they can carry it out over time.

For example, business owners can take care of keeping their own storefronts and sidewalks clean. If there are several businesses on one block, they can jointly coordinate a cleanup day or other improvements to attract customers to their area. The Unified Government could provide trash cans, take care of sidewalk trees and provide grants for storefront repairs, while local nonprofits can organize different kinds of programming with local partners. Similar levels of coordination can help to implement additional action items.

Areas of action that community actors should address first are suggested below:

- Phase 01 - Cleaning and greening of vacant lots or open spaces, and programming
- Phase 02 - Creating an updated web page with the different offerings in Central Avenue, developing an identity for Central Ave and marketing it, as well as offering business development programs
- Phase 03 - Matching business with storefront space or matching funds.

COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT DIAGRAM



When asked which changes they would like to see the most on Central Avenue, 19% of the survey participants responded they'd like to see streetscape elements (benches, trash cans, bike racks, etc.). The second highest was more parking and new landscaping. When asked where on the corridor should there be an initial first investment, residents picked the stretch of Central Avenue between 13th & 18th Streets as their top priority.

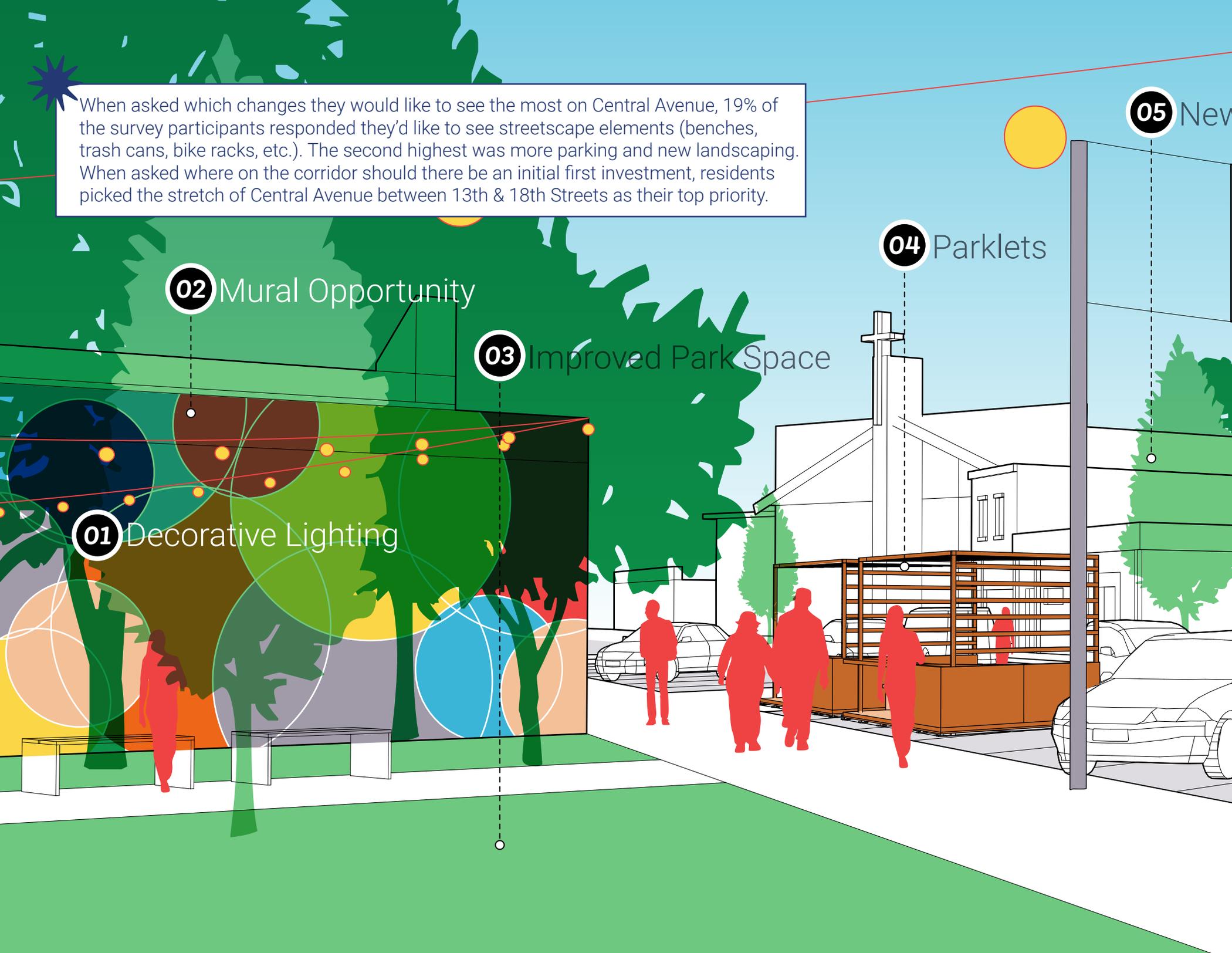
02 Mural Opportunity

03 Improved Park Space

01 Decorative Lighting

04 Parklets

05 New



Planting Trees & Landscaping

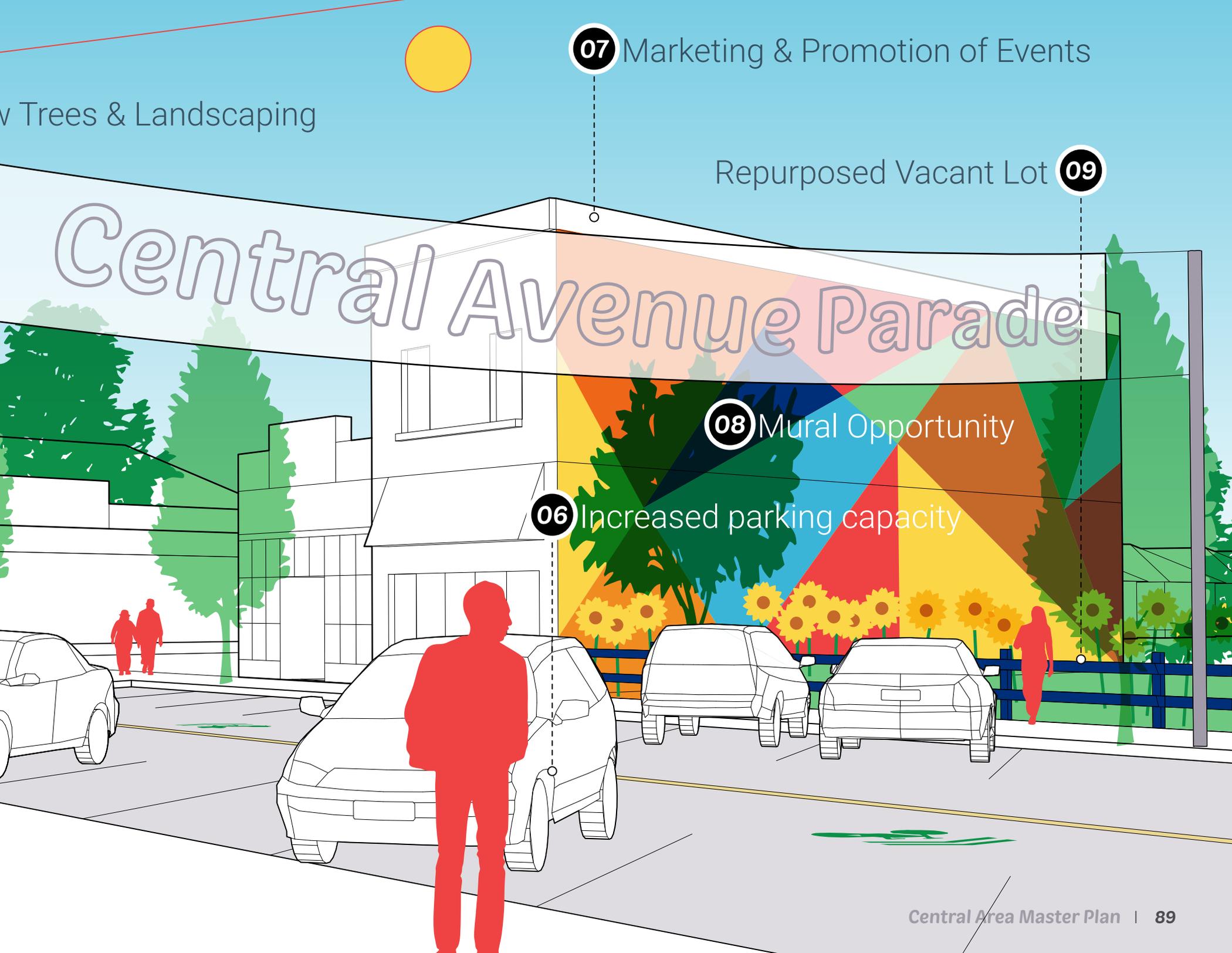
07 Marketing & Promotion of Events

Repurposed Vacant Lot 09

Central Avenue Parade

08 Mural Opportunity

06 Increased parking capacity



Goal 03

Provide **HOUSING** that is suitable for a range of life stages and economic circumstances

Why this is important

“Housing stock is in good shape and fairly cheap – good place to start a family and plant roots”

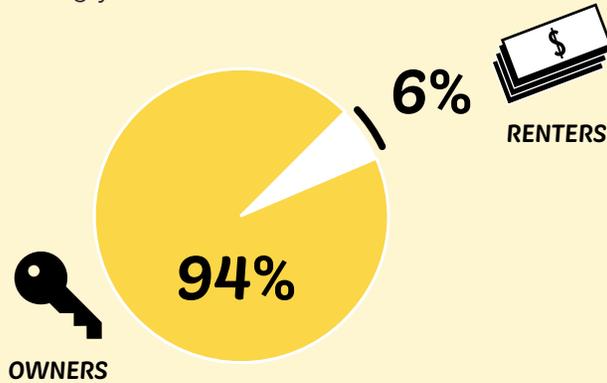
- Quote from neighborhood resident

The Central Area historically developed as a residential community with quality housing and easy access to job centers in Downtown Kansas City (Kansas or Missouri), nearby industrial areas, or local commercial corridors. The housing ranged in size, but was typically single-family in nature. The decline of the residential population resulted in some lost housing stock due to vacancy and abandonment, but the majority of the community is still intact with 73% of homes built prior to 1960. As of today, the Central Area is a collection of historic homes that are relatively affordable and varying degrees of maintenance.

Residents time and again referenced the love they have for their homes throughout the engagement process. When asked what they value the most about their neighborhood, residents overwhelmingly said a sense of community. Quality housing is a fundamental building block of a healthy, equitable community. Housing should be built of a quality that residents are safe within their own homes; it should be provided at a cost that is relatively affordable so residents are not financially burdened; and finally it should be accessible to all types of people, families or financial circumstances to create a truly equitable and diverse community.



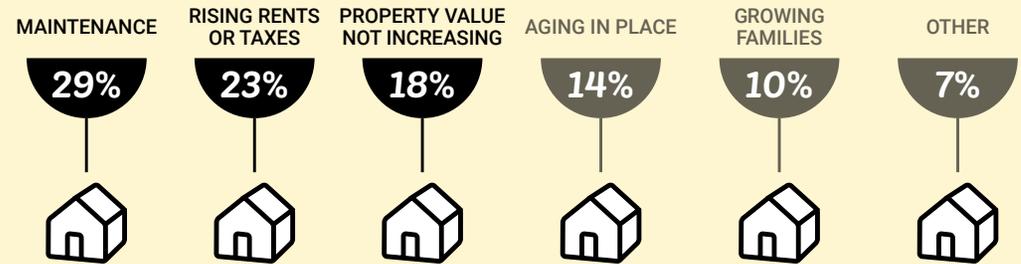
What are the biggest concerns regarding your home?



THE MAJORITY OF PUBLIC OUTREACH PARTICIPANTS ARE HOMEOWNERS.

The U.S. Census shows 47% of residents own their home in the Central Area compared to 56% in Wyandotte County

MAIN CONCERNS FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS WERE:



Source: Public Open House, 2019

The Central Area provides these conditions for some, but not all residents. When asked specifically about their housing situation, residents see maintenance issues, rising rents, and conversely the lack of rising property values as the main issues affecting them, further acknowledging the diversity of situations that the plan needs to address. Luckily, there are organizational structures and resident leadership that can be tapped to further extend the opportunity for quality housing to all, which will further strengthen the community at large.

“Housing needs to be affordable and SAFE – lots of housing is affordable but of very poor quality – lead is an issue. Can there be some gap funding to fix larger issues like foundational issues, roofs, etc.”

- Quote from a neighborhood resident

“All the homes are busting at the seams – have essentially become multifamily housing – cars piled up on the front yards – sometimes they just put gravel in the front yard and park cars there”

- Quote from a neighborhood resident

TOP: Some homes in the Central Area are in poor condition and in need of repairs

MIDDLE: While the majority of homes in the Central Area are historic, there is some new construction taking place in recent years

BOTTOM: The majority of housing units are single family in nature, there are some apartment type units in converted buildings such as schools.



To help address the housing challenges and opportunities outlined the planning process has developed two key strategies:

07 PROVIDE SUPPORT & RESOURCES FOR EXISTING HOMEOWNERS & RENTERS

At first glance housing costs in the Central Area are relatively affordable when compared to the City and Region, but when you realize that income levels are commensurately lower, these “affordable” homes are often still out of reach for many residents. The result is lower levels of home ownership relative to the City, renters that are cost burdened, and housing conditions that suffer. Those who can afford to own their homes often don’t have the resources to maintain them due to the upkeep requirement of older homes. Already existing programs can be greater utilized to help address these issues.

Residents also foresee future issues around displacement and rising housing cost after witnessing development in certain Kansas City, MO neighborhoods. Investments in the Central Area, particularly in the eastern side near Strawberry Hill, have begun to stoke these fears. These issues pose different problems for homeowners and renters. For renters, there is the immediate shock of having to pay higher rents when they are already cost burdened. Homeowners have a higher level of protection due to fixed mortgage costs, but are vulnerable to higher property taxes after reassessments. There is also the challenge of increased prices pushing homeownership further out of reach for many residents.

This planning process takes place at an important time in that it is far enough in advance of many of the foreseeable challenges that there are opportunities to make meaningful changes to effect outcomes.

08
**ADD TO THE HOUSING STOCK TO DIVERSIFY
OPTIONS AND SUPPORT BROADER
COMMUNITY GOALS**

It is also important to remember that housing needs vary as households move through different life stages. Having housing stock that can accommodate a range of ages helps maintain the vitality and stability of a neighborhood. Throughout the process we have heard that many existing homes often don't suite the needs of residents. This impacts older residents who find their homes difficult to age into, younger residents who want apartment style living, or growing families who have changing house needs. Diversifying the types of housing in the Central Area ensures that the housing stock can also meet a range of incomes and helps support diversity within the neighborhood.

The neighborhood can also benefit from additional residents. Through the engagement process, residents said their biggest concern is the detrimental impact that vacant land and buildings have on their community. Community led initiatives to improve vacant lots will most likely only help part of the problems due to the sheer quantity of vacant land. When done in collaboration with new development, the neighborhood will begin to address the vacancy issues from multiple fronts. New residents can also help existing businesses by broadening the pool of potential customers and increasing the demand for additional services and businesses. This will help continue the momentum that is already taking place on existing commercial corridors.

Key Strategies:

- 07** Provide support & resources for existing homeowners & renters
- 08** Add to the housing stock to diversify options and support broader community goals

Please proceed to the next pages for more details on each strategy





Provide support & resources for existing homeowners & renters

Implementation:

Action Item: **7A**

Potential Project Partners:

- CHWC
- KCK Housing Authority
- UG Community Development
- Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.

This recommendation will be mostly **INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:

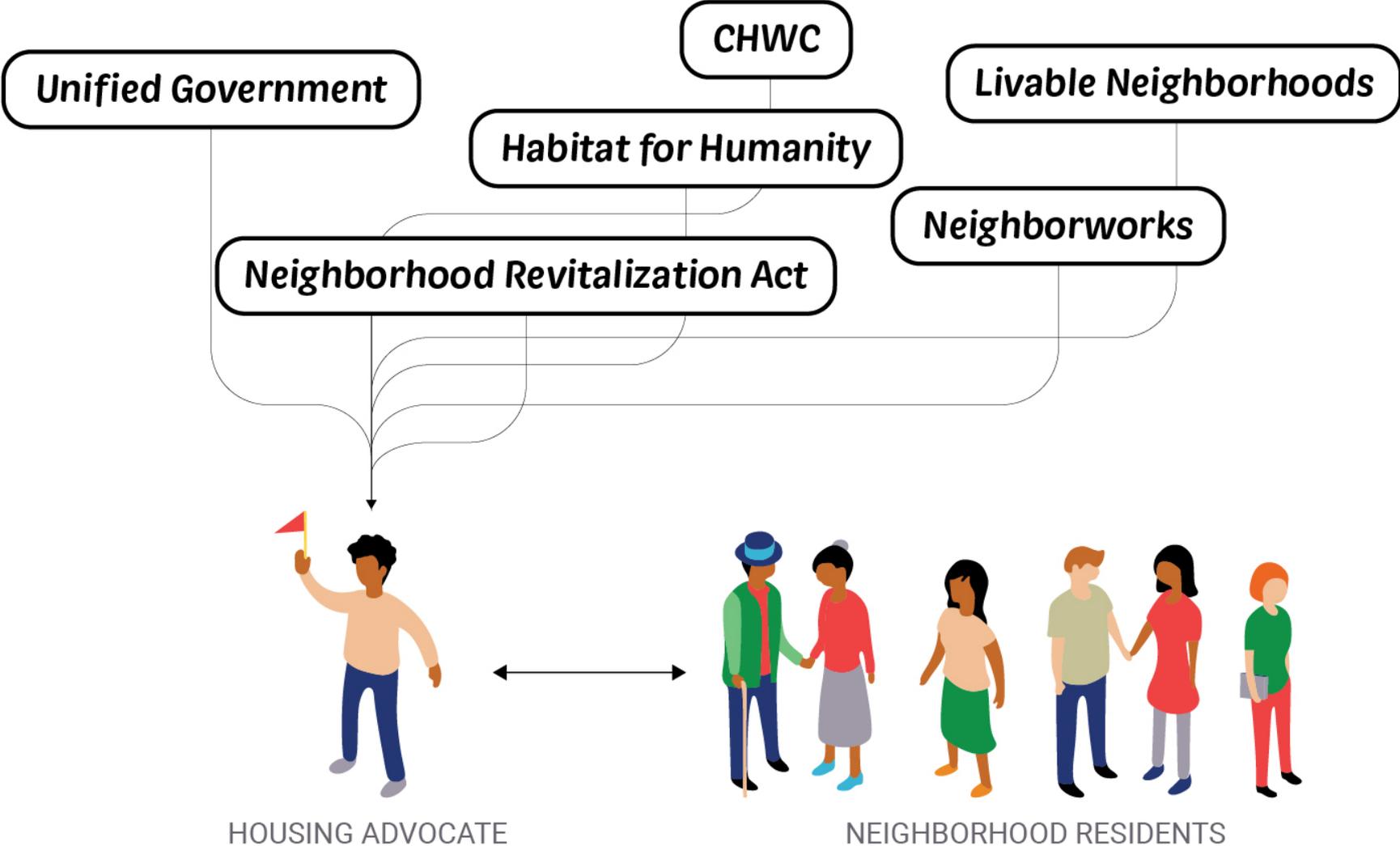
UG, Community groups, NRF

Create a Housing Advocate for the Central Area

Housing services take many forms depending on the level of support needed. Residents often need help in buying new homes, finding quality rental units, financial assistance, or help maintaining their properties. Luckily resources already exist to help in these situations, but it is often difficult to connect residents with resources due to the dispersed organizational structures.

Local housing organizations have had success by assigning one person whose sole responsibility is to provide a connection between residents and housing services and to advocate on their behalf.

Because Community Housing of Wyandotte County (CHWC) already serves many of the roles outlined above, they are a natural fit for this advocacy role. CHWC already provides support in connecting residents with their affordable for sale and rental units, but having a dedicated advocate whose sole job is to connect residents with those resources in addition to rental assistance and home repair programs will greatly support the neighborhood.



Potential Project Partners:

- UG
- Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & RESIDENT** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

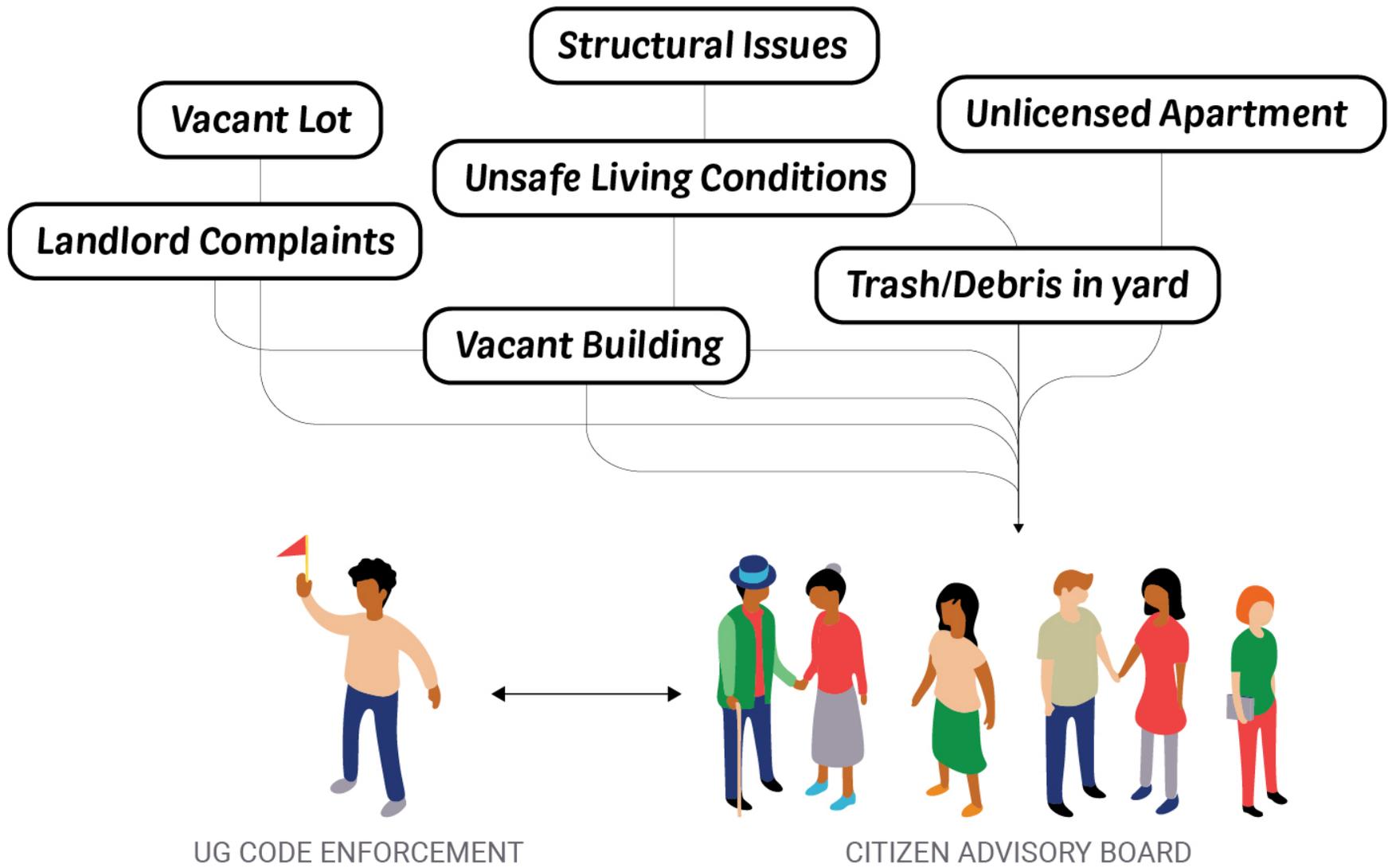
UG, Community groups, NRF

Targeted Code Enforcement with Assistance from Resident Advocate Groups

Residents serve as the eyes and ears of a neighborhood and typically have a better understanding of particular circumstances than a government official will. They know when to differentiate between an absentee landlord who is not maintaining their property to a certain standard, versus an elderly individual who is physically unable to do so. These are important points of distinction and should be treated as such.

Similar to how the residents would benefit from having a knowledgeable advocate regarding housing services, the UG code enforcement officers would benefit by having direct lines of communication to neighborhood organizations and residents. Citizen Advisory Councils are one way communities can strengthen these connections. The Central Area has had similar success regarding crime enforcement and improved relations with police officials.

It will be important to devise a series of protocols in how best to address particular circumstances. Such a Citizen Advisory Council would never want to be put anyone into circumstances where they are forced to report on a neighbor when they feel uncomfortable. These protocols can be codified from the beginning of the Council's formation.



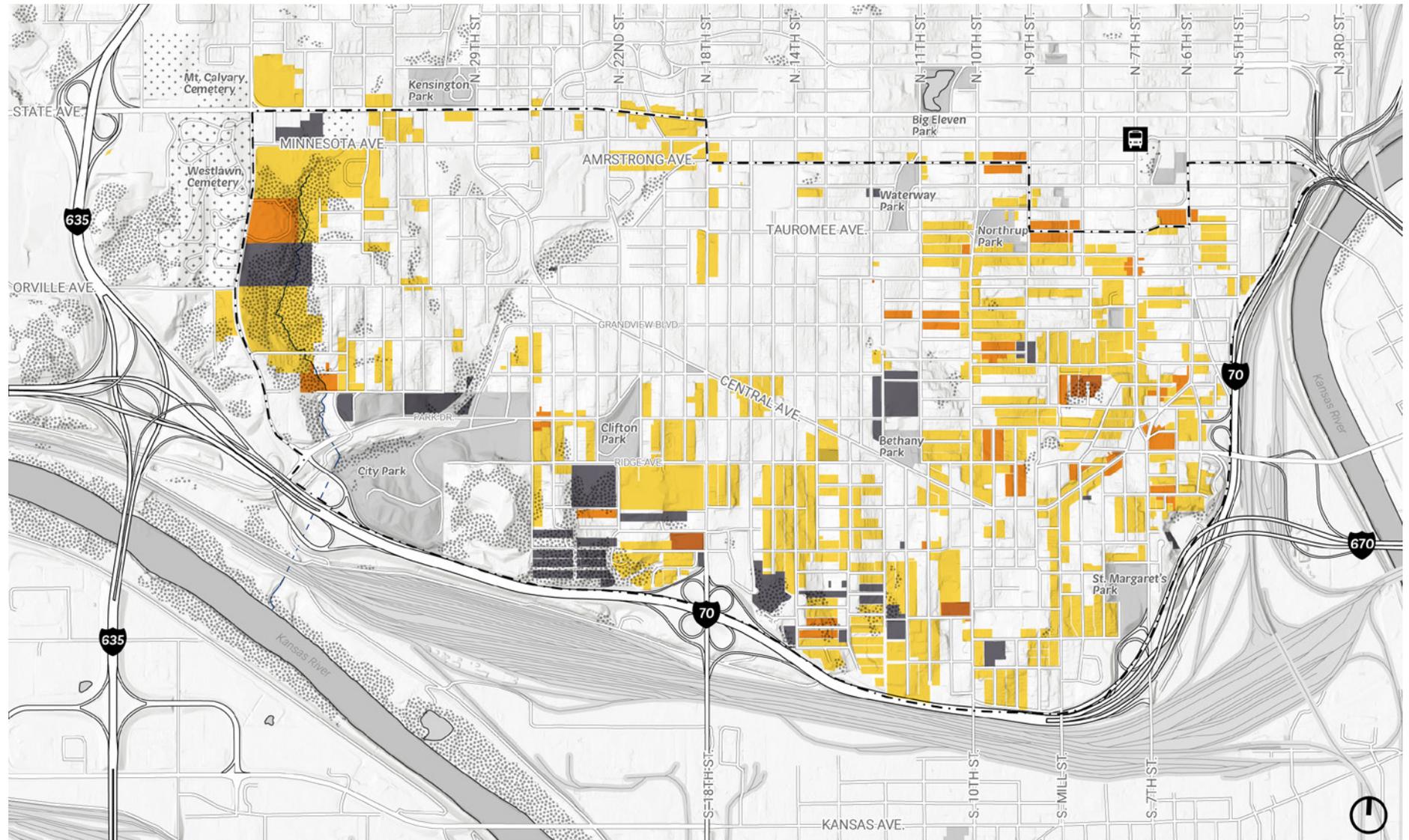


23% of the online survey participants said that they would like to see an improved coordination with resident groups and inspectors. 30% said they would support an education opportunity for homeowners around existing codes.

Field work to identify blocks for targeted code enforcement can help to supplement the information gathered from resident advocate groups. Part of the initial data gathering portion of the Central Area Master Plan included a block by block analysis of the conditions of streets. This analysis was done on an A - F scale with C and D conditions being the threshold between blocks on an upswing and blocks falling into disrepair. This analysis looked at everything from vacancy, building maintenance, new investment, and overall feeling. While not an exact science, it does help to give a basic understanding of the blocks that are doing well and the ones that need some help.

In coordination with resident advocate groups, code enforcement should be targeted in areas with the D – F condition. A particular emphasis should be placed on the D condition to help prevent the block from falling further behind from a maintenance perspective.

Figure 27: **Block Condition Survey**



Block Condition Survey - D through F

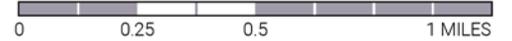
- BOUNDARY
- RAIL CORRIDOR
- HYDROLOGY
- WOODED AREA
- VACANT LAND
- TRANSIT CENTER

TRENDING UP

- A
- B
- C

TRENDING DOWN

- D
- E
- F





When asked what residents need the most help with in terms of home maintenance, 39% said infrastructure costs (sidewalk repair, alley repair, sewer/water lines). Another 29% said they need help with major repairs like roof and wall maintenance.

Implementation:

Action Item: **7C**

Potential Project Partners:

- CHWC
- UG SOAR (Stabilization, Occupation, and Revitalization) Program
- Habitat for Humanity Kansas City
- Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.
- NeighborWorks

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

CDBG (Community Development Block Grant), TIF, Greater Kansas City LISC, Local banks, USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) Home repair program

Capitalize a Home Repair Program

A cumulative series of delayed maintenance issues can often lead to repairs worth more than a home costs and ultimately abandonment. There are usually multiple opportunities to intervene and prevent an occupied building from becoming vacant throughout its lifespan. Once a home reaches a state of vacancy, responsibility shifts to the Land Bank to either perform renovations or complete demolitions. While these rehabilitation and demolition programs are important measures for the community, repairing and maintaining homes earlier in the process will have better outcomes by keeping residents in their homes and can often be done at a fraction of the cost. Home repair programs are also a tool to upgrade housing to support affordability considerations.

Existing home repair programs do exist, but they tend to only address smaller cosmetic issues rather than the larger maintenance issues where residents need the most help.

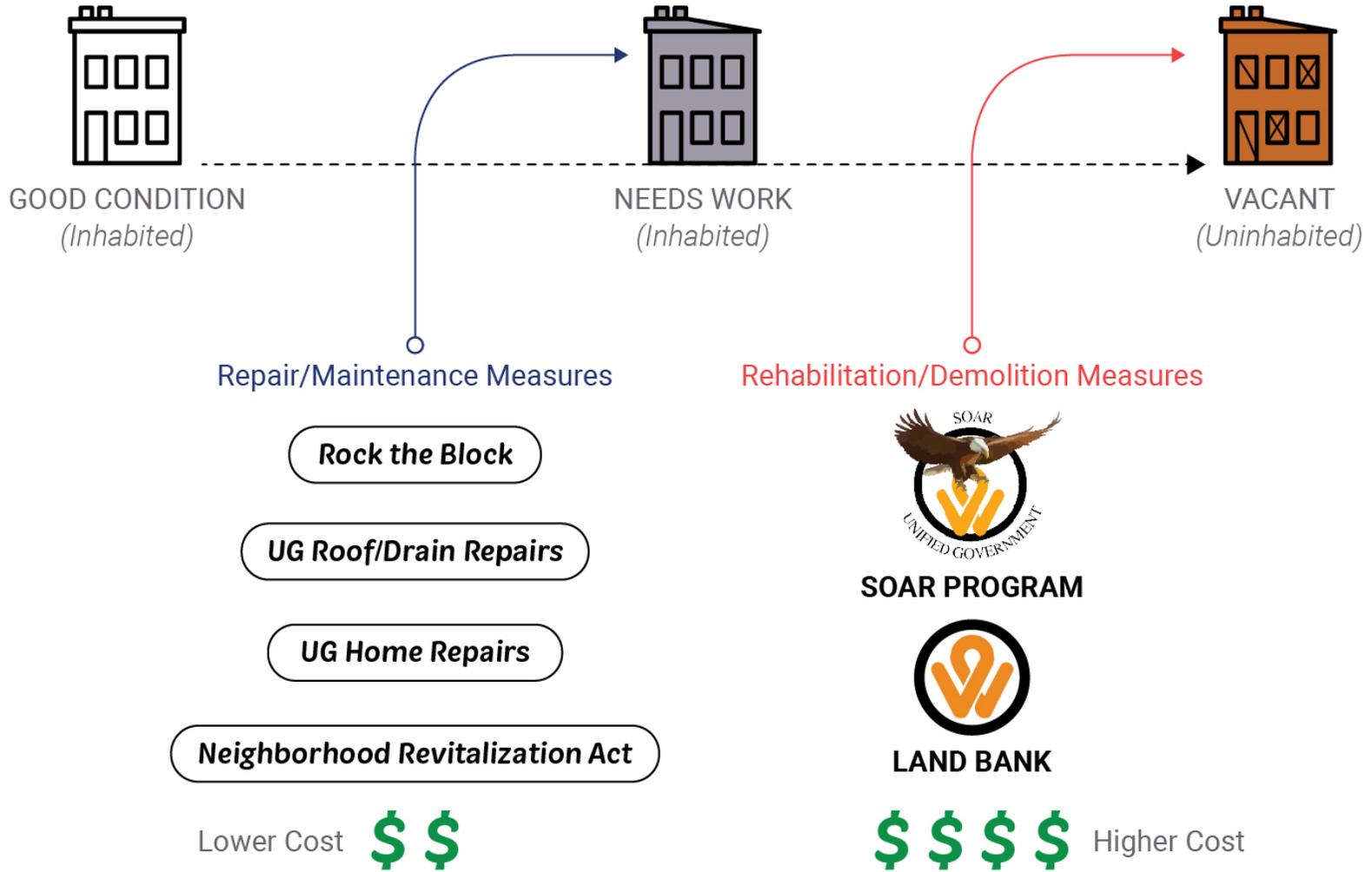
The existing UG home repair program geared towards addressing those larger issues lacks the financial resources to make a considerable impact on the community and meet the demand of support needed. The existing home repair program supported by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program could be expanded through coordination with local banks and philanthropic institutions.

Potential mechanisms include:

- Use of special assessments as a repayment mechanism to accommodate any financing gaps caused by appraisals and property valuations
- Capitalizing a loan fund with an interest only payment feature, and principal retirement upon sale or refinancing of a property

HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

* Intervene when the building needs repairs/ maintenance - before it becomes vacant.



Potential Funding Sources

Regional Foundations, Local Banks, CDBG funding, TIF District, City Funding, Partnerships...

Implementation:

Action Item: **7D**

Potential Project Partners:

- Various UG Departments
- Commissioners

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:

6 - 10 years

Potential Funding Sources:

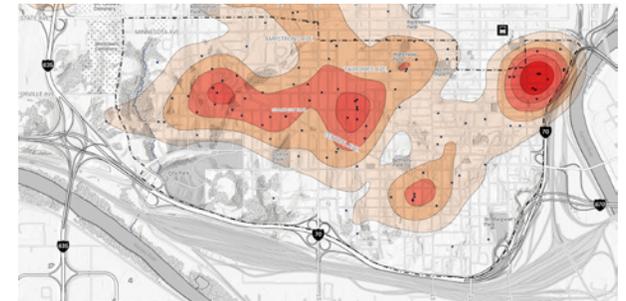
Policy

Long-term Homeowner Protections

Long-term homeowners who have been invested in the community for decades should be able to benefit from future investments in the Central Area. As is so often the case, as investment moves in and property values increase, new assessments rise to the point where long-term residents, many of which are on fixed incomes, can no longer afford the property taxes at the higher assessed rate. In turn, there is potential these residents will be forced to move to different neighborhoods they can still afford. This process of displacement has happened across the country and more locally in neighborhoods in Kansas City, MO. With the new investment that has been occurring in neighborhoods like Strawberry Hill, many residents see the writing on the wall.

There are a few things to consider to quell these fears. One is that the Central Area is a collection of numerous neighborhoods, so just because larger levels of investment are happening in Strawberry Hill doesn't mean other neighborhoods in the Central Area will be impacted. Second, homeowners are generally

As seen in the density of home sales map below, investments in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood have led to many of the concerns residents have regarding increasing home prices.



protected from rising property values except when properties are reassessed. As much of the neighborhood was recently reassessed, this threat will only take place in 7 years time at the earliest.

The Unified Government can look to other cities who have taken proactive measures to successfully address this issue. In Philadelphia in particular, the Long Term Homeowners Occupancy (LOOP) program caps the amount that property assessments can rise over a given period of time, offering a level of protection for residents. While this threat in the Central Area is not such that immediate action is required, it is something that can be monitored over time and applied if necessary.

EXISTING HOUSING COSTS AND POTENTIAL PROTECTIONS - PHILADELPHIA LOOP PROGRAM PRECEDENT



MORTGAGE COSTS = LOAN PAYMENT + PROPERTY TAX

LOAN PAYMENT

Fixed Cost (unless variable mortgage)

PROPERTY TAX

Variable based on assessment (every 7 years)

Precedent Program:

PHILADELPHIA LOOP PROGRAM

(Longterm Owner Occupants Program)

Real Estate Tax Relief program for eligible homeowners whose property assessments increased by 50% or more from previous year

	2019	2020	2020 (with LOOP)
Assessed Value	\$80,000	\$185,000	\$120,000
Tax Due (1.3998%)	\$1,119.84	\$2,589.63	\$1,679.76



**Monitor
before
next
assessment**



Add to the housing stock to diversify options and support broader community goals

Implementation:

Action Item: **8A**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG
- CHWC
- Area Agency on Aging
- Kansas Housing Resources Corporation
- Private developers
- Local banks

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:

6 - 10 years

Potential Funding Sources:

CDBG, TIF, Greater Kansas City LISC, Local banks, USDA Home repair program

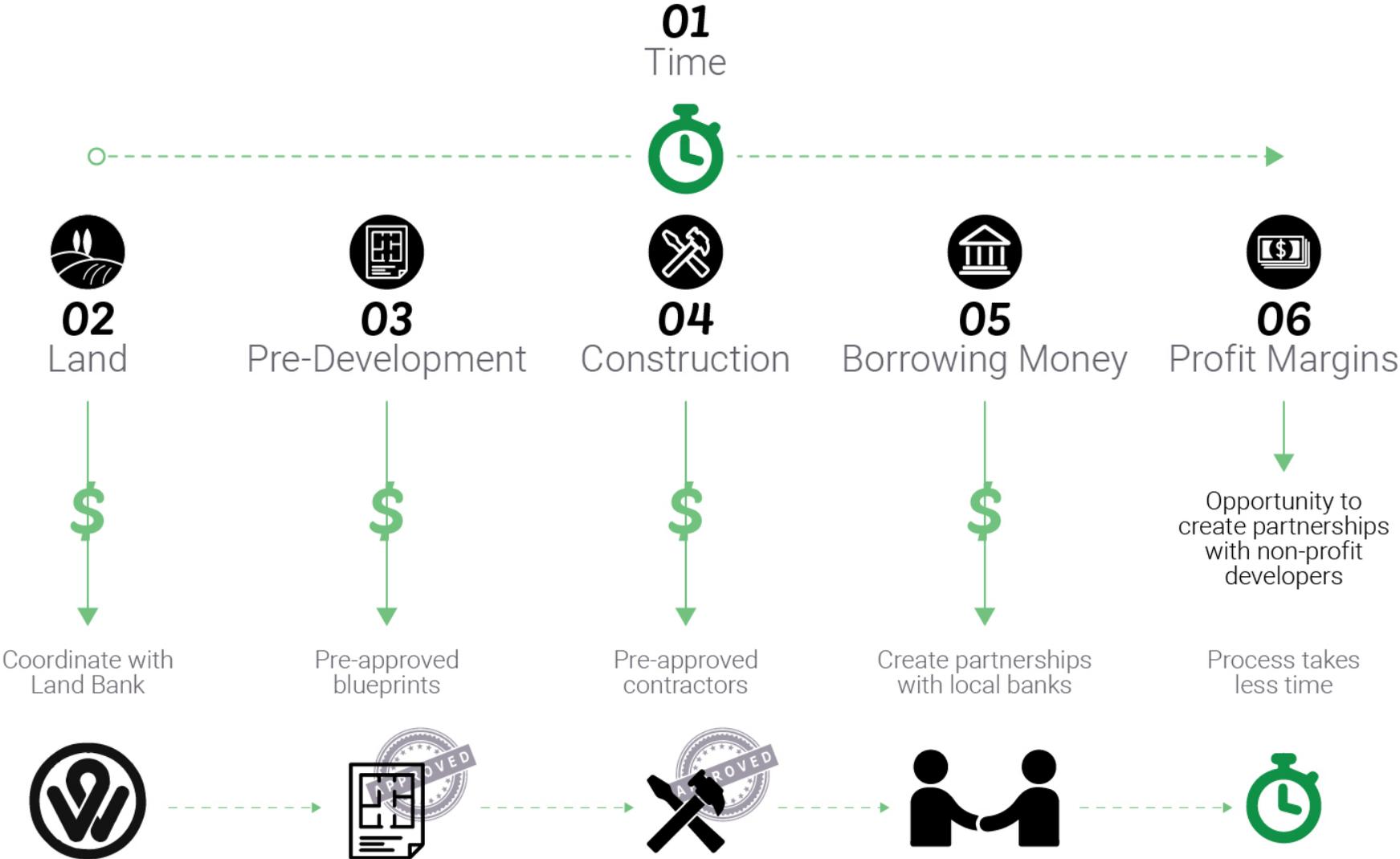
Support an Infill Housing Strategy

Due to the large number of vacant properties, many of which are publicly owned, an infill housing strategy should be considered that can help provide diverse housing stock at a range of price points. The intention of such a strategy would be to lower the barriers to entry for development bringing a broader group of investors/builders into the process, while also producing a product that is more affordable to local residents.

The strategy should be built around addressing the key elements of cost for new housing:

- Land acquisition
- Development costs including regulatory costs
- Construction
- Cost of Capital
- Investment return requirements
- Time

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT



3 *Pink Zoning refers to the process of simplifying or streamlining zoning regulations and building codes in specific areas of a city in order to encourage small-scale development. Pink Zoning does not replace existing zoning codes, but makes the permitting process more flexible for small developers, business owners and property owners who would otherwise not be able to comply with the fees, time frames or conditions as required under a conventional zoning process. Examples of "pink regulations" include speed permitting and pre-approved building plans.*

Elements of Infill Housing Strategy:

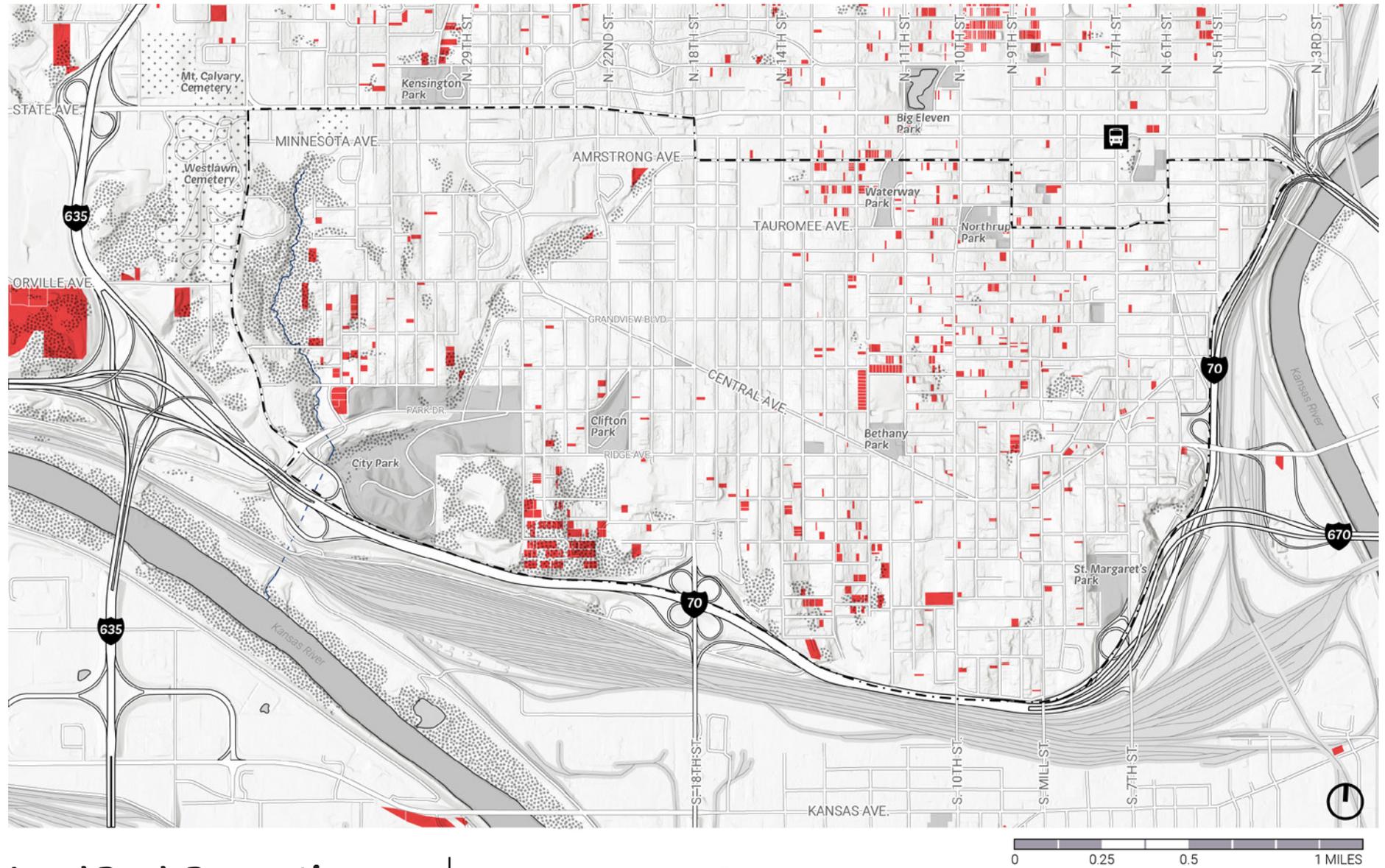
- **LAND:** Addressing land acquisition costs by intentional linkage to land bank properties within the Central Area. The land bank can be an important tool to support the development of quality housing across a range of price points by addressing one of the key components of the cost structure of new housing – land valuations. A disposition strategy for land bank properties within the Central Area that essentially “granted” the land or charged a minimal amount for properties to be developed as housing

- **DEVELOPMENT COSTS:** Providing lean development processes such as Pink Zoning³ or pre-approved designs that allow small contractors to be able to development small lot infill housing units with less risk of a protracted regulatory review process
- **CONSTRUCTION:** Working with and supporting contractors on lean construction techniques or bulk buying when possible
- **COST OF CAPITAL:** Providing subsidies where appropriate that reduces the amount of conventional financing required

- **PROFIT MARGIN / RETURN:** Working with community developers or smaller contractors that have lower margin requirements than large, investor-owned developers and builders

Existing Unified Government programs such as the Land Bank and SOAR Program have laid the groundwork for many of the elements of an infill housing strategy. Further exploration will be required by the UG before implementation.

Figure 28: Land Bank Properties



Land Bank Properties

- BOUNDARY
- LAND BANK PROPERTIES

Potential Project Partners:

- Property owners
- UG Land Bank & SOAR Program
- UG Planning
- UG Economic Development
- CHWC
- CABA
- Alcott Arts
- Neighborhood Groups
- Livable Neighborhoods

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & RESIDENT & INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

0 - 5 years

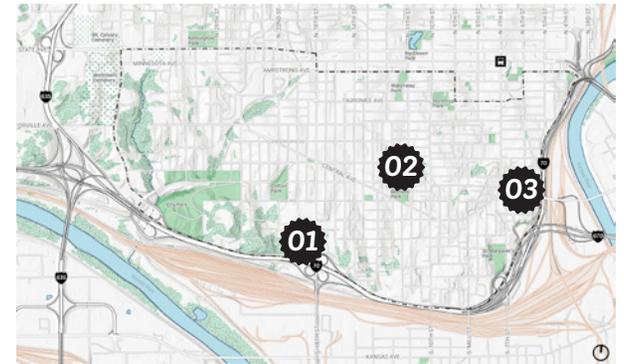
Potential Funding Sources:

Coordination

Establish a Vision for Key Development Sites

The majority of vacant lots in the Central Area are smaller in nature and will most likely result in single-family homes if developed. Existing zoning can work well to control these sites and make sure they are neighborhood appropriate. There are some larger development sites, however, that should require an additional level of scrutiny. Ownership structures are mixed, ranging from single private owners, to organizationally owned, to multiple private ownership, all of which means the community has a different level of control in their outcomes. For parcels owned by a single property owner, there is less opportunity unless the development requires sign off by the City. If that is the case, having a vision for the site that has been vetted by the community is an important piece of leverage.

Three sites in particular arose out this planning process that should be further explored in partnership with the community and local developers.



- 01** Alcott Arts Center and Adjacent Residential Community
- 02** Former Bethany Hospital Site
- 03** 7th and Central Site

ALCOTT ARTS SITE

The existing Alcott Arts Center is a beloved neighborhood institution. Due to its proximate location to easy highway access, local developers have been working to assemble the site and surrounding residential homes to redevelop as a modern logistics and distribution center. Throughout the engagement process residents expressed concern over this proposal. The Unified Government should maintain the current residential zoning for the district, preventing the development from occurring in its proposed form, and work to support the Alcott Arts Center, as well as the nearby residential community.



BETHANY HOSPITAL SITE

The former Bethany Hospital site and adjacent parcels are over 9 acres of vacant land in the heart of the Central Area. CHWC currently owns the property and have had numerous development proposals over the years. With a recent LISC grant, development seems more likely than ever. Due to adjacent neighborhood assets such as Bethany Park, La Placita, ME Pearson Elementary, Vibrant Health Center, Bethany Community Center, and its central location, the redevelopment of this site is of particular importance. A larger conversation between CHWC, adjacent institutions, CABA, and residents should commence to ensure redevelopment conforms to the overall community vision.



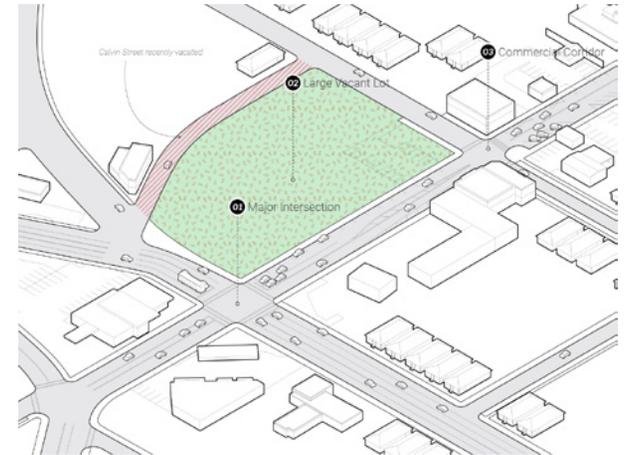


7TH & CENTRAL SITE

The block between Tremont Street and 6th Street on Central Avenue has experienced an influx in new investment in recent years. New businesses such as Slap's BBQ, Splitlog Coffee, and Chicago's Bar have brought a new level of vibrancy to this stretch of the commercial corridor. Just to the west of this is a full block of vacant land. In order to continue the momentum already taking place it is critical in how this block is redeveloped.

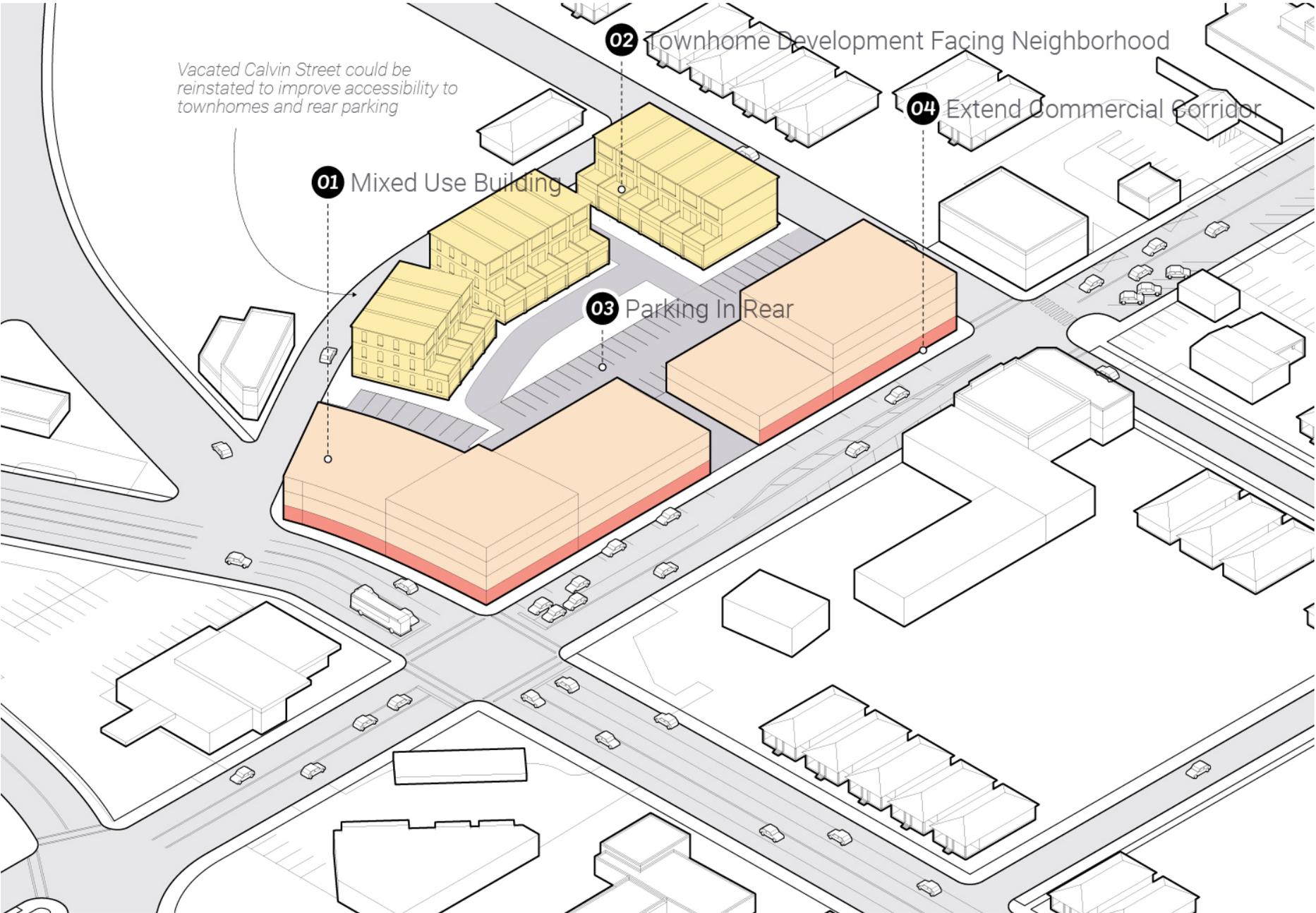
One only needs to look at the rest of the development at the corner of 7th and Central to see what a detrimental impact to a pedestrian commercial corridor looks like - auto oriented strip type development.

While this site is privately owned, the UG does hold some leverage in its redevelopment as a project of this size will inevitably need assistance from the City in one form or another. Determining a community vision for the site will be an important point of reference through any redevelopment process. Residents expressed their vision for the site to be mixed use in nature and address the street in a pedestrian friendly manner. Doing so will bring new residents to the area in a housing type that currently doesn't exist in the Central Area, all while continuing the commercial nature of the street. Due to the large full block size, there is ample opportunity to push parking to the rear of the property all while satisfying the necessary requirements.



Scaling down the development on Tremont and Calvin streets will better address the adjacent single-family residential community.

Figure 29: **7th & Central Potential Development**

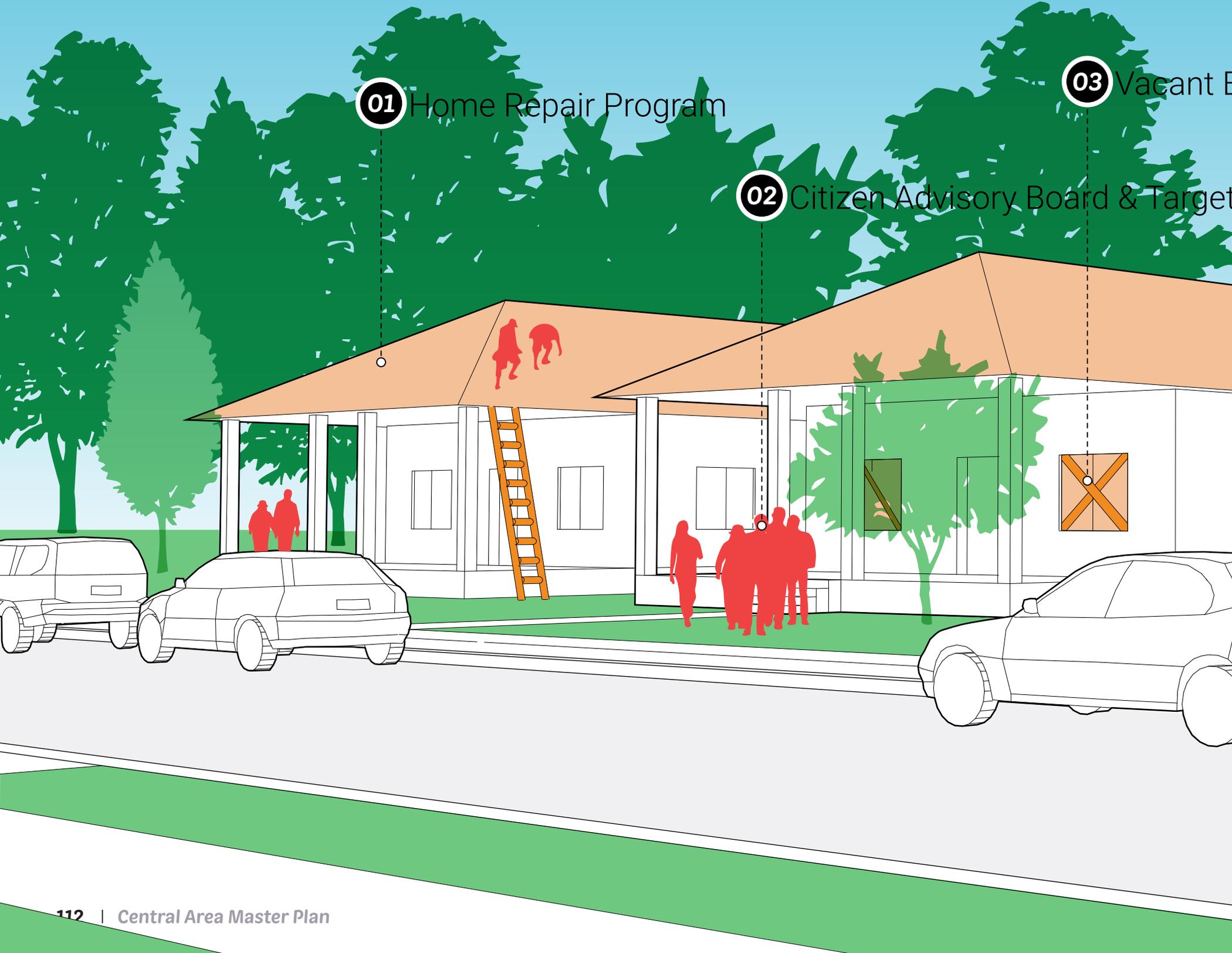


Lot is privately owned. Picture shown for illustrative purposes only.

01 Home Repair Program

02 Citizen Advisory Board & Target

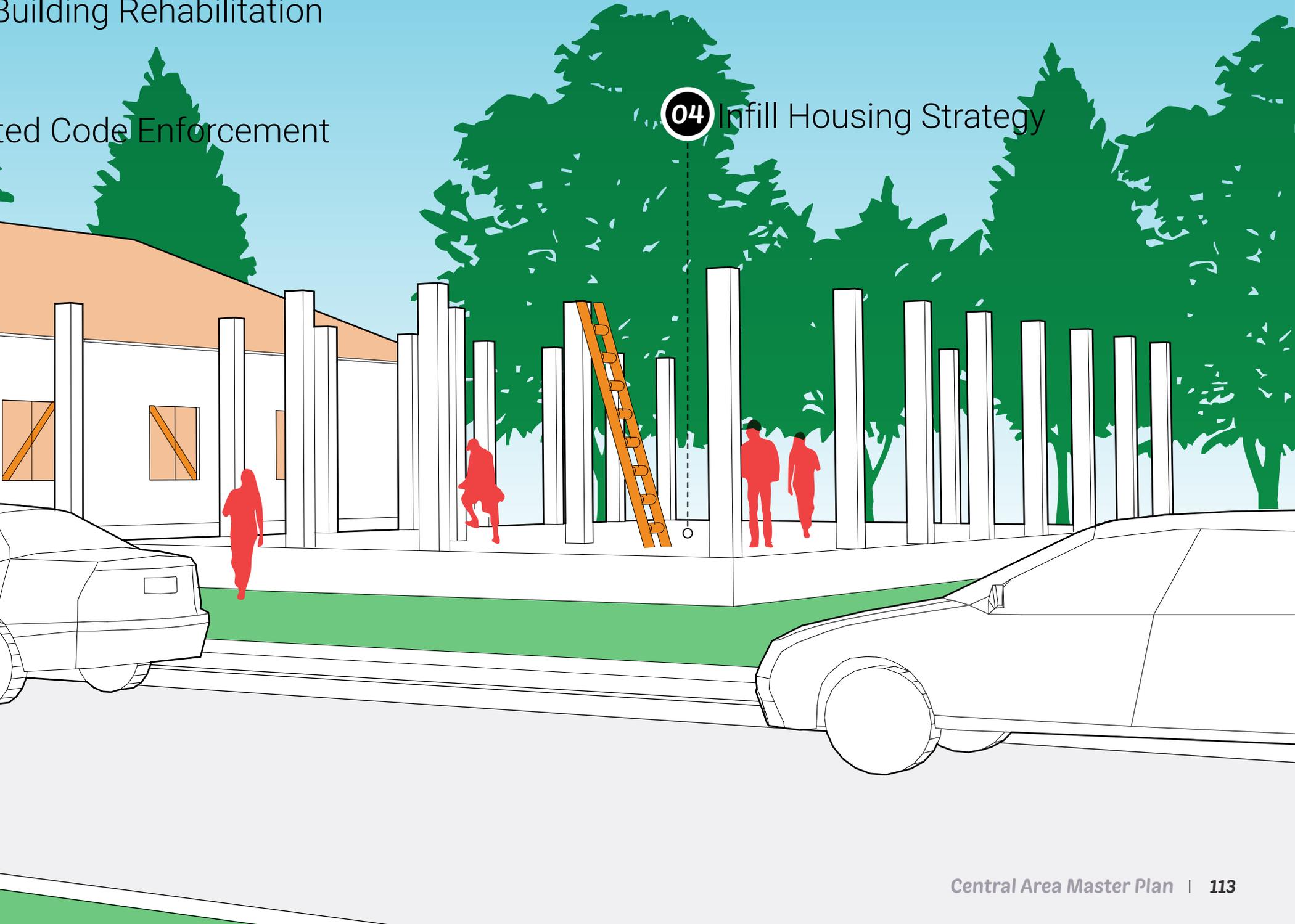
03 Vacant E



Building Rehabilitation

Code Enforcement

04 Infill Housing Strategy



Goal 04

Design a **MOBILITY** network that gives options and promotes a sense of community

Why this is important

“Can we improve the quality of life with small walkable pockets?”

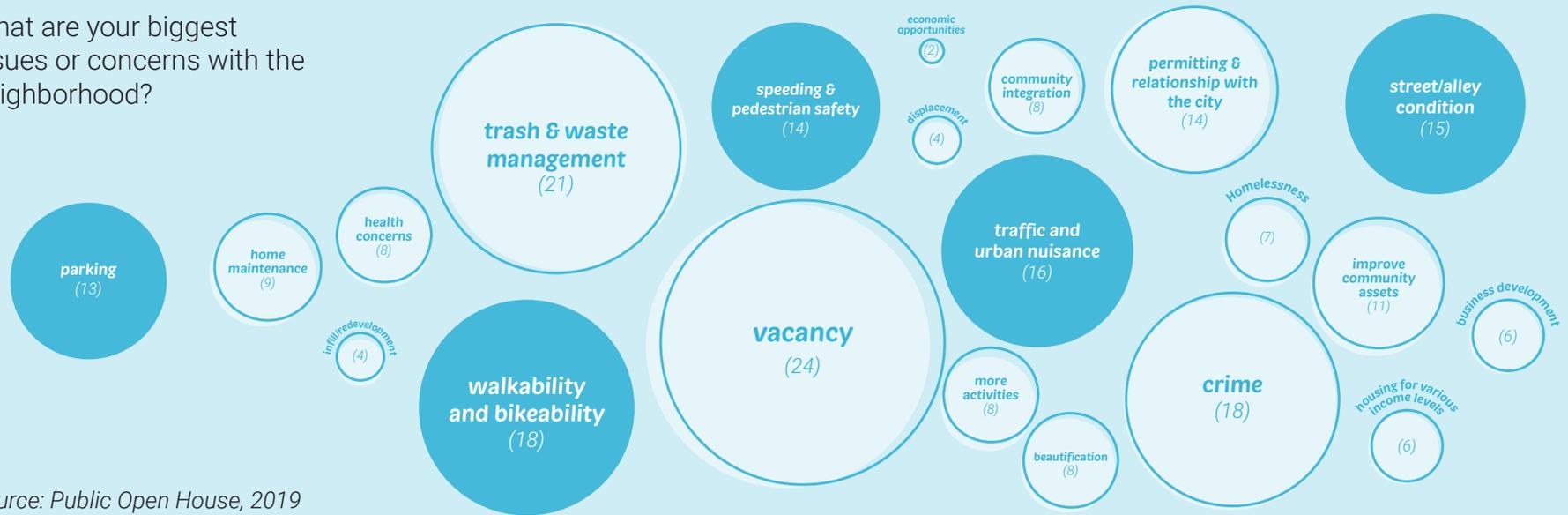
- Quote from neighborhood resident

The Central Area’s historic development pattern occurred when residents traveled by walking or on street cars. As mobility habits have changed over the years, the Central Area has changed as well, and is currently designed primarily for cars and generally lacks the essential connections to bring people together in a safe, convenient manner. For those unable to afford a car, the transportation options to commute to a job, visit a family member or go shopping drastically diminish and create social and economic barriers. Those who do own cars suffer similar consequences due to the high cost of car ownership and the isolation that occurs through single occupancy automobile trips. There are also serious personal and environmental health conditions to consider as well.

Options do exist for those not traveling by automobile, but are a less ideal option for most residents. Due to the historic development pattern, walking could be a viable alternative for nearby trips to the corner store, visit a neighbor, or walk a child to school. Unfortunately, sidewalks are often missing or in a state of disrepair and pedestrians are forced to walk in streets among traveling automobiles. A nascent bike network on 10th street is useful for nearby residents, but lacks the connections for residents to feel safe biking throughout the community. The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) and its partner agencies have been and continue to identify meaningful ways to improve Kansas City’s multimodal ecosystem. Today, the Central Area has limited bus transit service with three north-south



What are your biggest issues or concerns with the neighborhood?



Source: Public Open House, 2019

routes that connect to State Avenue and two of these routes connect to the Downtown KCK Metro Center, which provides direct service to downtown Kansas City, Missouri and other regional destinations. Two east-west routes are present along Central Avenue and State Avenue, which also provide a direct connection to the transportation center. While the current service along State Avenue is considered a “high-demand corridor” that runs frequently, the remaining routes in the Central Area operate less frequently and service is limited to only weekdays.

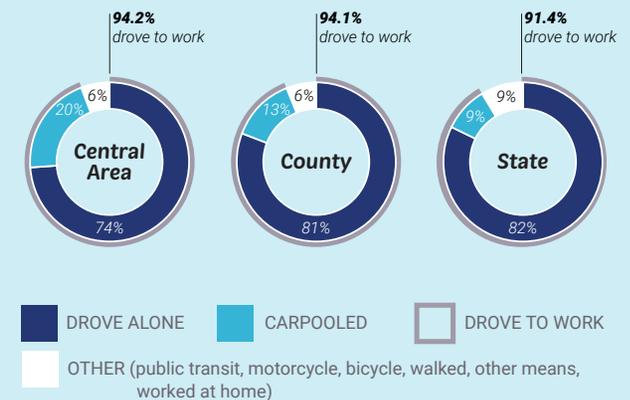
Throughout the community engagement process residents expressed a strong desire to add more choice to the mobility network. Feedback on key barriers facing their

neighborhood included the need for better street lighting, better sidewalk conditions, and management of vehicle activity.

While there is no single solution to fix systemic transportation and mobility issues in the Central Area, there are opportunities and actions to consider. This mobility framework provides recommendations that focus on measures to improve current and future transportation conditions. Importantly, the following recommendations aim to strengthen ongoing initiatives and introduce new ideas to create more mobility choices for residents, employees, and visitors of the Central Area.

Means of Transit to Work - 2017

Source: Census, American Community Survey 2017



TOP: An example of how the turning lane on Central Ave. is often used as a loading area, causing an unsafe vehicular traffic condition.

MIDDLE: Existing sharrow located on both sides of Central Avenue near 15th Street.

BOTTOM: Sidewalk conditions near parks can be improved to provide a better pedestrian network.



To help achieve a more balanced and equitable mobility network for the Central Area, the planning process has developed four key strategies:

09 IMPROVE THE COMFORT AND SAFETY OF THE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

A healthy street is essentially a place where people can simply enjoy walking, rolling, or strolling in a comfortable, convenient, and safe manner while also enabling them to exercise at their own pace. While the Central Area provides an established, grid-like street network that makes it easy to navigate around by car, those wishing to travel on foot or wheelchair face many challenges. The lack of sidewalk connections, missing ramps, and inadequate spacing between people and moving vehicles creates a more hostile and uncomfortable experience. Additionally, higher trafficked streets such as 7th, 10th, and 18th are difficult for pedestrians to cross, effectively creating an additional barrier to access the Central Area. Recommendations to follow set the groundwork to address these issues and focus on ways to improve the health and safety of community members through transportation design, policies, and programs.

10 DEVELOP A BIKE AND TRAIL NETWORK TO CONNECT THE COMMUNITY

The Central Area is nearly deprived of a bike network with the only established bike facilities located along 10th Street, which includes a bike lane on both sides of the street, and portions of Central Avenue, which includes painted sharrows within the traffic lane for bikes to “share” the lane with moving vehicles. While the vast majority of streets in the Central Area are narrower, lower-traffic streets compared to major arterials such as 18th Street and State Avenue, there are no bike design features to help delineate adequate biking zones within the street right-of-way. Such conditions lead to an uncomfortable and unsafe environment for those wishing to bike as their primary commute or to simply go for a recreational ride.

Key Strategies:

- 09 Improve the comfort and safety of the pedestrian network
- 10 Develop a bike and trail network to connect the community
- 11 Increase transit & shared mobility ridership through improved connections & collaboration
- 12 Improve regional connections

Please proceed to the next pages for more details on each strategy



11 INCREASE TRANSIT & SHARED MOBILITY RIDERSHIP THROUGH IMPROVED CONNECTIONS & COLLABORATION

Because public transit options are limited to infrequent bus service, not having a private vehicle creates a substantial barrier to accessing jobs or reaching other key destinations. With a specific focus on enhancing transit service, RideKC's "Smart Moves" vision lays out the foundation for a series of near, mid, and long-term strategies to adequately finance and implement multiple projects and programs to move more people in an efficient manner in and around the Kansas City metro area. Recommendations align with these established strategies and provide more detail on how they can be applied to the Central Area community. In addition to public transit options the UG, MARC, major employers and other regional agencies can develop commuter programs to increase access to jobs, attract and retain employees, and ultimately to move people to and from employment destinations in the most efficient, affordable, equitable manner.

12 IMPROVE REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

While close in proximity, Downtown Kansas City, Missouri and the Kansas River feel disconnected from the Central Area due to topography, infrastructure barriers, and a loss of industry, which united the two cities. Downtown Kansas City, Missouri is the heartbeat of the regional economy supporting over 100,000 jobs and its thriving arts and culture scene attracts visitors both regionally and nationally. Residents acknowledged that much of the investment in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood can be attributed to its proximity to Downtown KCMO. Creating better connections to KCMO will further open new job and cultural opportunities for residents. The Kansas City regional trail network, including the Riverfront Heritage Trail, Jersey Creek Greenway, and the Kaw Levee Trail largely bypass the Central Area. Improving these connections will provide for more recreational opportunities and alternative modes of transit for residents, as well as reestablish the historical connection between the Central Area and the Kansas River.



Improve the comfort and safety of the pedestrian network

Implementation:

Action Item: **9A**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Public Works
- UG Transit

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
0 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program), MARC (Mid-America Regional Council), Safe Routes to School

Make Focused Sidewalk Improvements

Large portions of the Central Area have intermittent or non-existent sidewalks. These gaps in the pedestrian network can be a major barrier for those on foot, in a wheelchair or motorized scooters, and other personal modes. Luckily, the Unified Government (UG) has performed a sidewalk audit in recent years to help obtain a full grasp of existing conditions. Ideally every street in the Central Area would have sidewalks, but financial limitations make that scenario unlikely in the near term. A more focused approach is required to implement resources in the most useful manner for the community. The resulting map on the opposite page determines the priority sidewalk improvement network focusing on streets with no sidewalks that are adjacent to neighborhood institutions such as schools, churches, parks, and the Central Avenue commercial corridor.

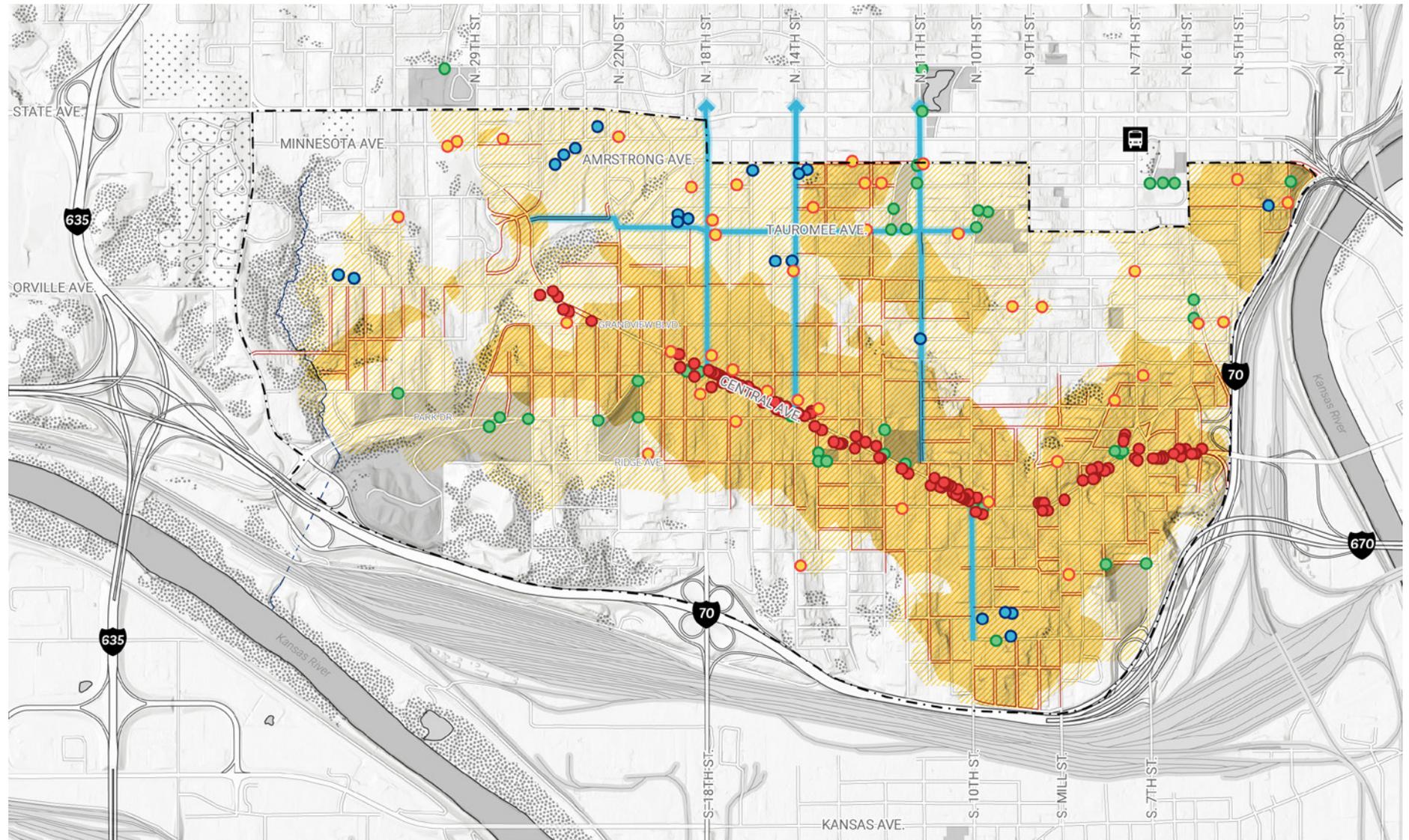


40% of the online survey participants said sidewalks near the schools should be prioritized for improvements.

OTHER PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

- It is recommended that the UG continue to work with neighborhood organizations to support city-wide efforts for ADA-compliant ramp installation at street intersections to provide a safe, convenient, and accessible experience for persons of all abilities
- Install new and/or modify high-visibility crosswalks at intersections located within two blocks from parks, schools, bus stops, and commercial retail zones
- Install consistent signage (e.g., “school zone, pedestrian crossing, slow traffic zone, watch for children”, etc.) within a 3- to 4-block radius from parks, schools, bus stops, and commercial retail zones
- Designate specific Safe Routes to School Corridors to encourage walking and biking to school while improving safety for the entire neighborhood. These routes may include 10th Street (south of Central Avenue), 11th Street, 14th Street, 18th Street, Grandview Boulevard, and Tauromee Avenue

Figure 30: **Priority Sidewalk Improvements**



Priority Sidewalk Improvements

-  **BOUNDARY**
-  **5-MIN WALKSHED AREA**
5-MINUTE WALKING DISTANCE TO ANY GIVEN COMMUNITY ASSET
-  **PRIORITY WALKSHED AREA**
ALL COMMUNITY ASSET TYPES ARE WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE
-  **PROPOSED SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL**
-  **PARTIAL or MISSING SIDEWALK**
WITHIN PRIORITY WALKSHED AREA
-  **CENTRAL AVE. BUSINESS ENTRANCE**
-  **PARK ENTRANCE**
-  **SCHOOL ENTRANCE**
-  **CHURCH ENTRANCE**
-  **TRANSIT CENTER**



Residents ranked Central, 18th, 10th, and 7th as the streets most difficult to walk on/across and in need of the most pedestrian improvements.

Implementation:

Action Item: **9B**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Public Works
- Property owners
- US Bank
- KDOT (Kansas Department of Transportation)

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
0 - 5 years

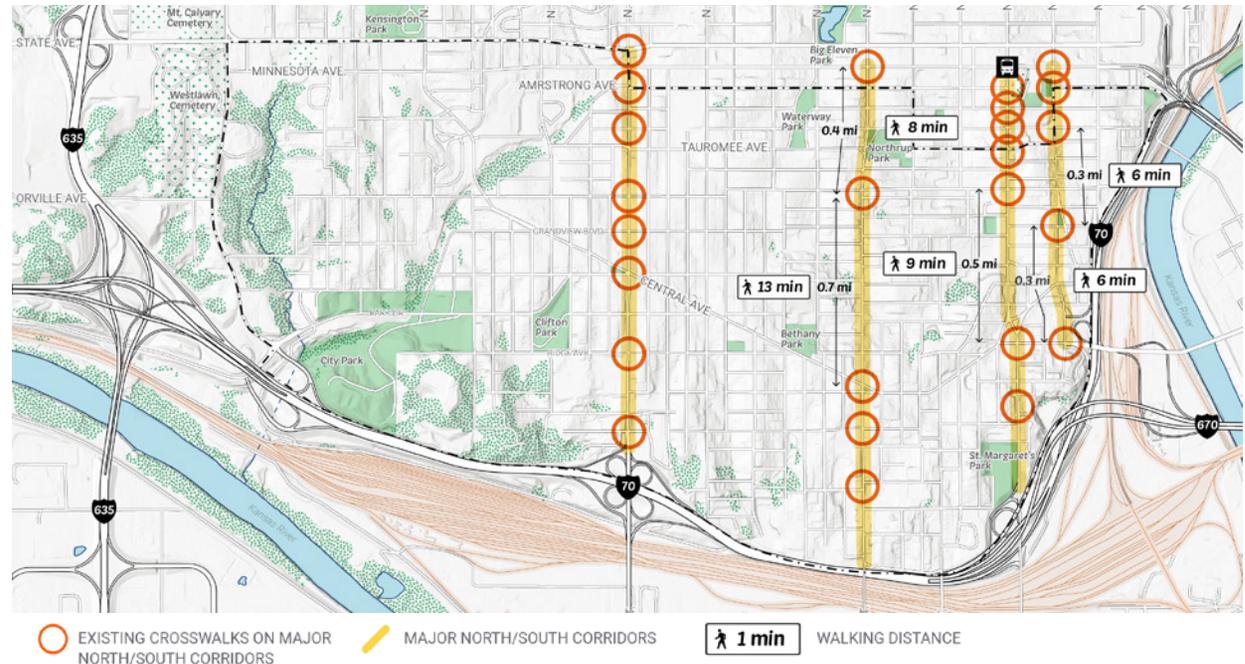
Potential Funding Sources:
CMAQ, MARC, TA (Transportation Alternative Set-Aside Program)

Redesign Key Intersections

Numerous streets and intersections are particularly difficult to navigate as a pedestrian in the Central Area. The major north-south streets are a significant barrier for pedestrians traveling east-west. While 18th Street has pedestrian crossings at fairly regular

intervals, 6th, 7th, and 10th Streets do not, and sometimes pedestrians have to travel two thirds of a mile before they can cross at a designated intersection. 7th Street and 10th Street should be given first priority in adding new signals and crossings to improve the safety of the pedestrian network.

Figure 31: **Difficult East-West Pedestrian Connections**





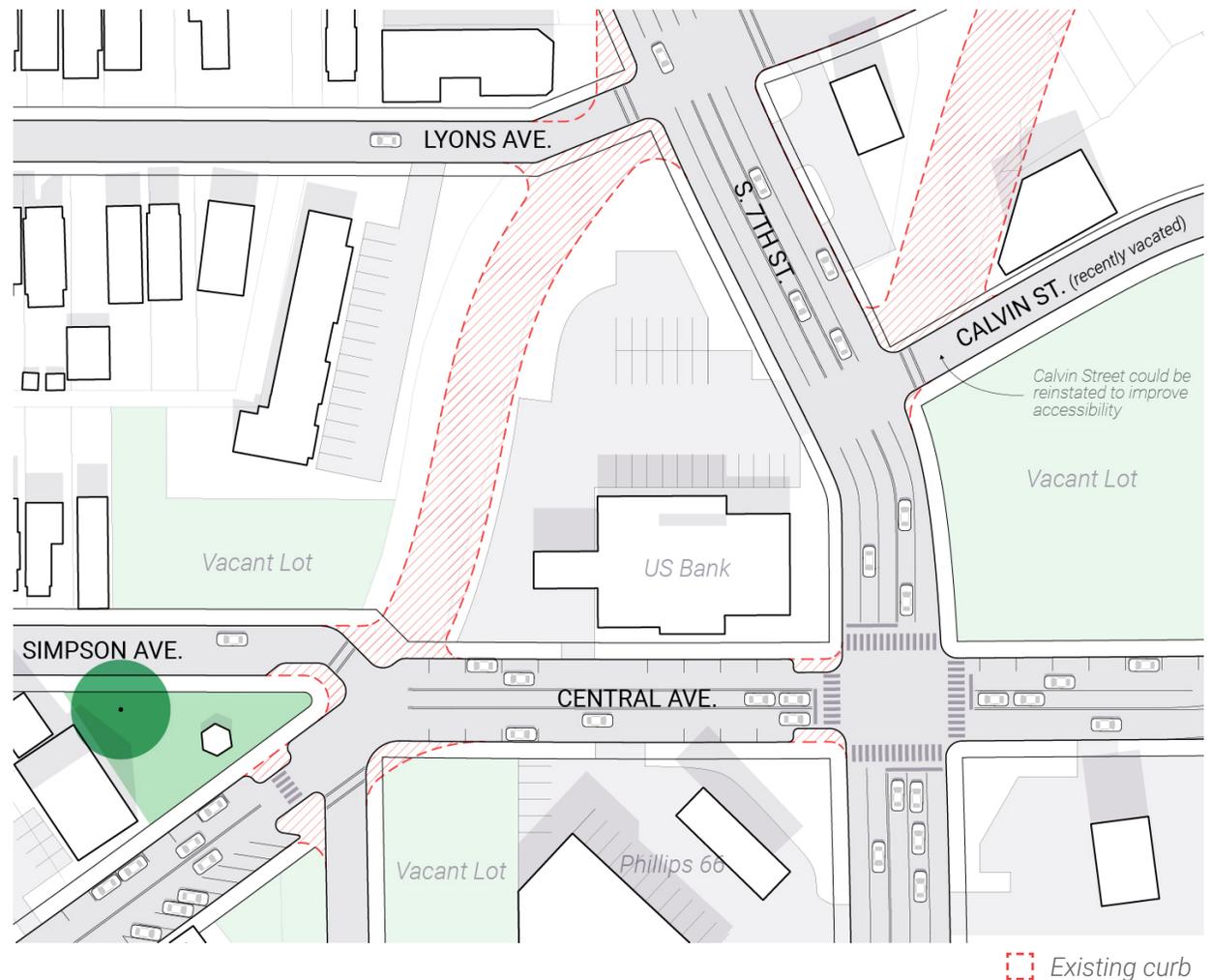
Please note that the UG Public Works and KDOT are working on a redesign for 7th and Central. In addition, UG Transit is planning on adding bus shelters and pedestrian improvements.

Figure 32: **7th & Central Potential Reconfiguration**

The intersection of 18th Street and Central Avenue is a natural gateway for the Central Avenue Corridor and a cornerstone location of business activity. The current design of the intersection prioritizes large amounts of vehicle traffic to the detriment of pedestrians.

It is recommended that the intersection be redesigned to include the installation of high-visibility crosswalks and pedestrian-priority signals. In addition, extending the southeast corner further out to reduce turning radii for vehicles turning onto southbound Central Avenue from northbound 18th Street, and requiring slower turns.

At the eastern-most point of the Central Avenue Corridor is the convoluted intersection of Simpson Avenue, Central Avenue, 7th Street, Pyle Street, and Calvin Street. Vacating the redundant Simpson Avenue (between Central & 7th) and the North 6th Traffic way (between 7th & Simpson) will simplify the intersection and make it easier to navigate for all modes of transit. A redesigned intersection will also allow for increased land opportunities combined with improvements to vehicle traffic flow and safer pedestrian crossings.





Develop a bike and trail network to connect the community

Implementation:

Action Item: **10A**

Potential Project Partners:

- BikeWalkKC
- KCATA (Kansas City Area Transportation Authority)
- RideKC
- UG Public Works
- UG Transit
- MARC
- KDOT

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
Ongoing

Potential Funding Sources:
National Recreational Trails Program, CMAQ, TA, Rails to Trails

Develop a Bike Network

In order to create a true bicycle network that is safe and accessible for the Central Area additional infrastructure is needed beyond the existing bike lane on 10th Street. Recommendations build off the existing Sidewalk and Trail Master Plan with slight modifications found through the planning process. Street traffic activity, roadway quality, provision of on-street parking, access to adjacent land uses and driveways, and intersection operations will help determine the design and placement of new bikeways. The proposed bike way network includes two different classifications:

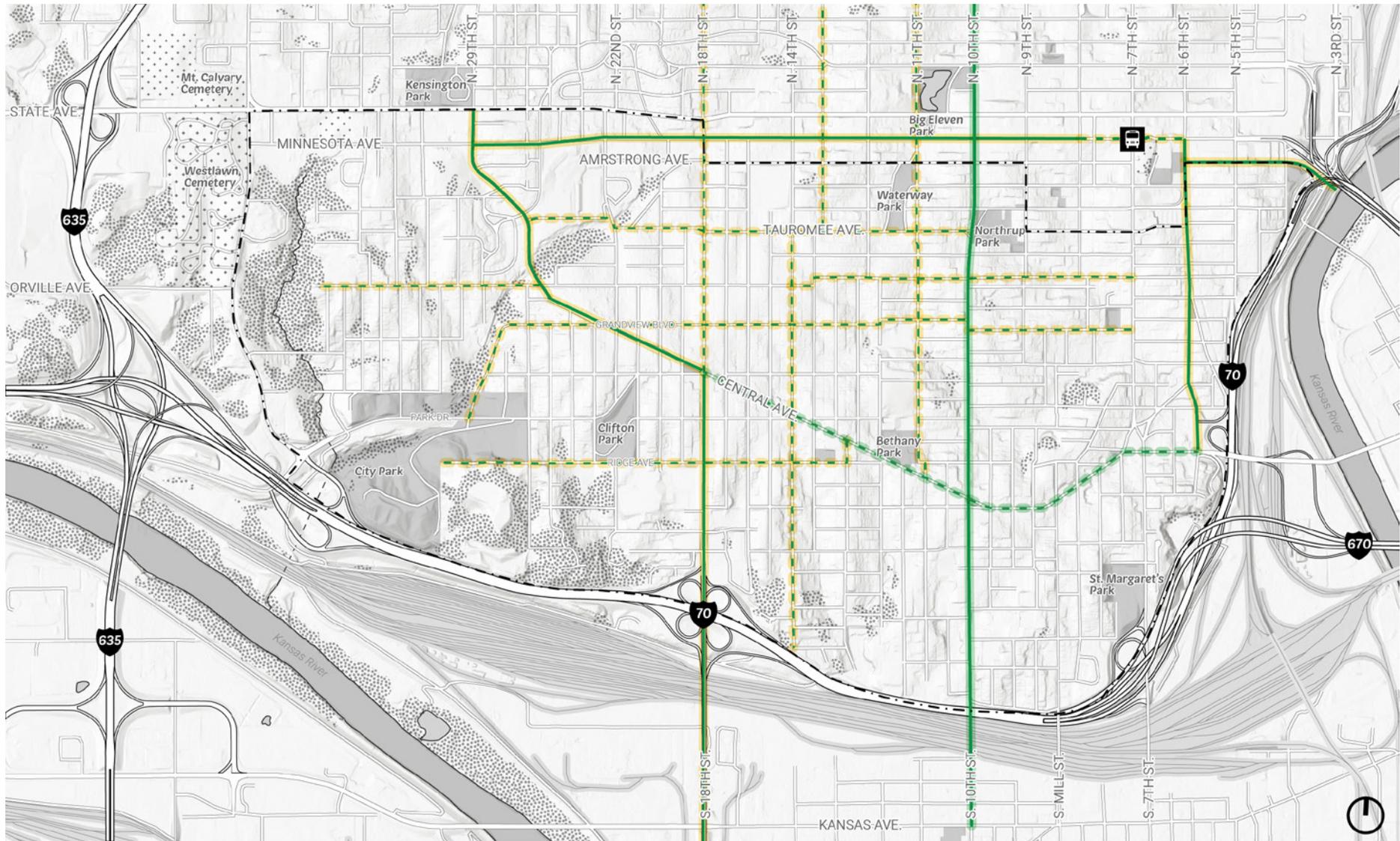
SHARROWS increase the visibility of bicyclists through signage and street markings, but do not provide designated street space for cyclists. These work well on roads that receive low traffic volumes or where there is not sufficient street space available. Potential streets may include:

- Grandview
- 13th/14th
- Tauomee
- 11th
- Orville
- 18 north of Central
- Ridge

BIKE LANES create designated street space for cyclists through street markings. While still sharing space in the street right-of-way with automobiles, they provide a higher level of safety for cyclists than sharrows. Potential streets may include:

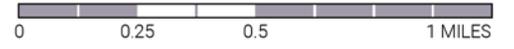
- 6th Street north of Central
- Central Avenue/Westview/29th Street (18th - State Avenue)
- Minnesota Avenue
- Armstrong (connection to river trail)
- 18 south of Central

Figure 33: **Proposed Future Bike Network**



Proposed Future Bike Network

-  BOUNDARY
-  EXISTING BIKE LANE
-  EXISTING SHARROW
-  TRANSIT CENTER
-  PROPOSED BIKE LANE
-  PROPOSED SHARROW
-  PROPOSED TRAIL





33% of the online survey participants said Central Avenue should be prioritized to have a dedicated bicycle lane. Minnesota Avenue was voted the 2nd highest (21%), followed by 7th Street (20%).



PHASE 01

The first phase should implement the proposed protected bike lane on 6th street. This portion of the network will improve connections on the eastern side of the Central Area as well as Downtown.



PHASE 02

The next phase of implementation should build off the already existing bike network on Central Avenue and 10th Street. This phase should include the extension of the Central Avenue bike lane to State and a new Minnesota Avenue bike lane to connect to Downtown. Once complete the Central Area will have the beginnings of a true bike network.



PHASE 03

The third phase of implementation can focus on the smaller neighborhood streets that will require less investment due to a lower level of infrastructure requirements. Coordination should take place on 18th Street with planned future investments.

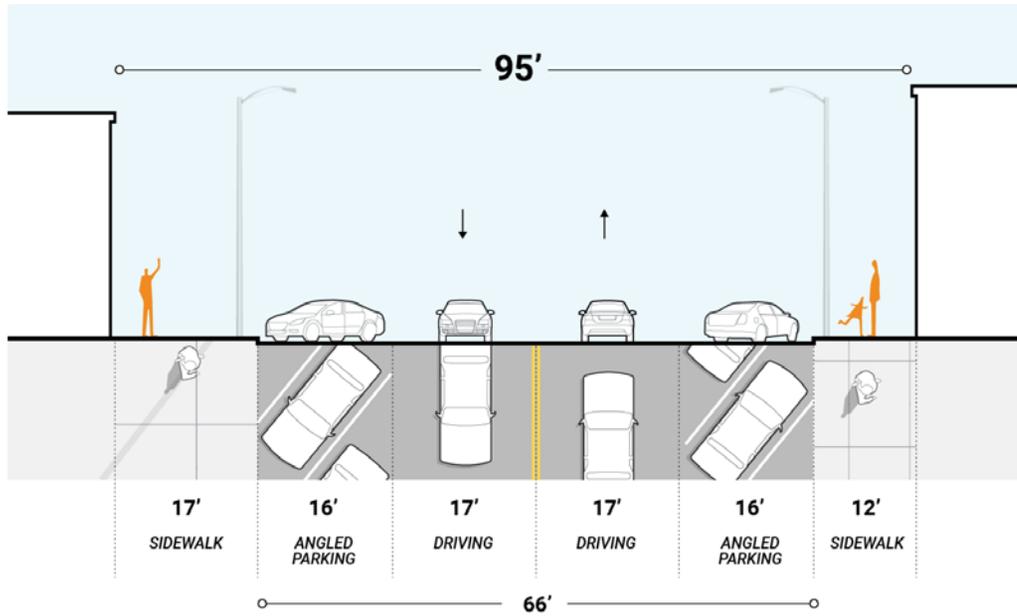


Figure 34: **Existing Minnesota Avenue**

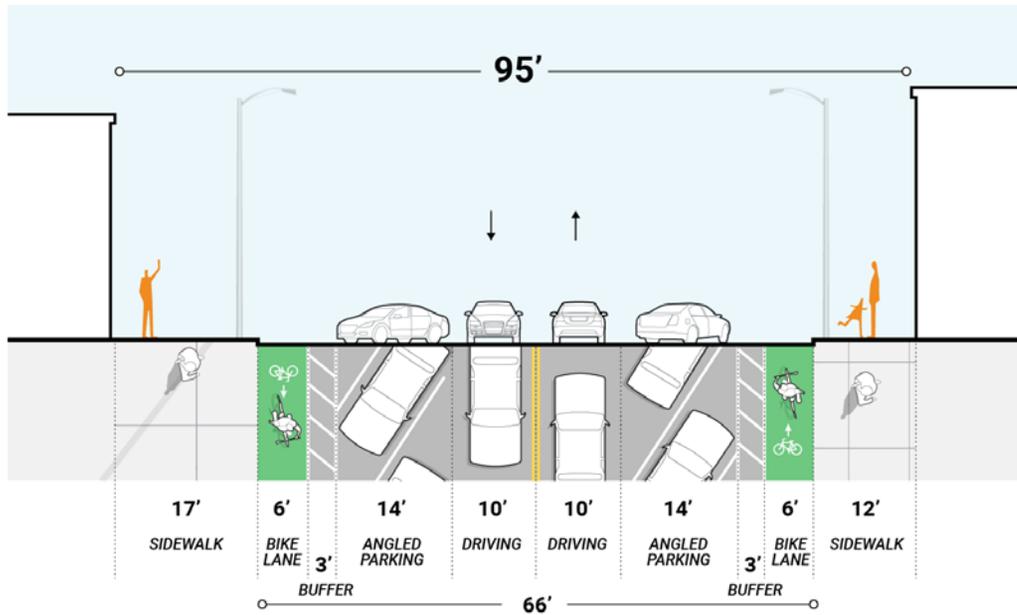


Figure 35: **Proposed Minnesota Avenue**

Potential Project Partners:

- BikeWalkKC
- UG Transit, Planning & Urban Design, Parks & Recreation
- Property owners

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:

CMAQ, STP (Surface Transportation Program), TA

Implement Bike Share Stations at Key Locations

Bike share programs have become an increasingly popular way for cities to move more residents on bicycles due to their ease of use and affordability. They help to break down many of the barriers to entry as users don't have to worry about purchasing, maintaining, or storing a personal bike. The Central Area should capitalize on this effort as the UG roles out the citywide bike share program.

In the immediate term, bike share locations should be located adjacent to the existing bike infrastructure on Central Avenue and 10th Street. Lally Park would be a great first location for this. With the intersection of the already existing bike infrastructure as well as numerous bus lines, there is already a mobility hub that can be capitalized on. Bethany Park is another potential first location. It's location on Central Avenue with access to bike and bus infrastructure makes it an ideal candidate.

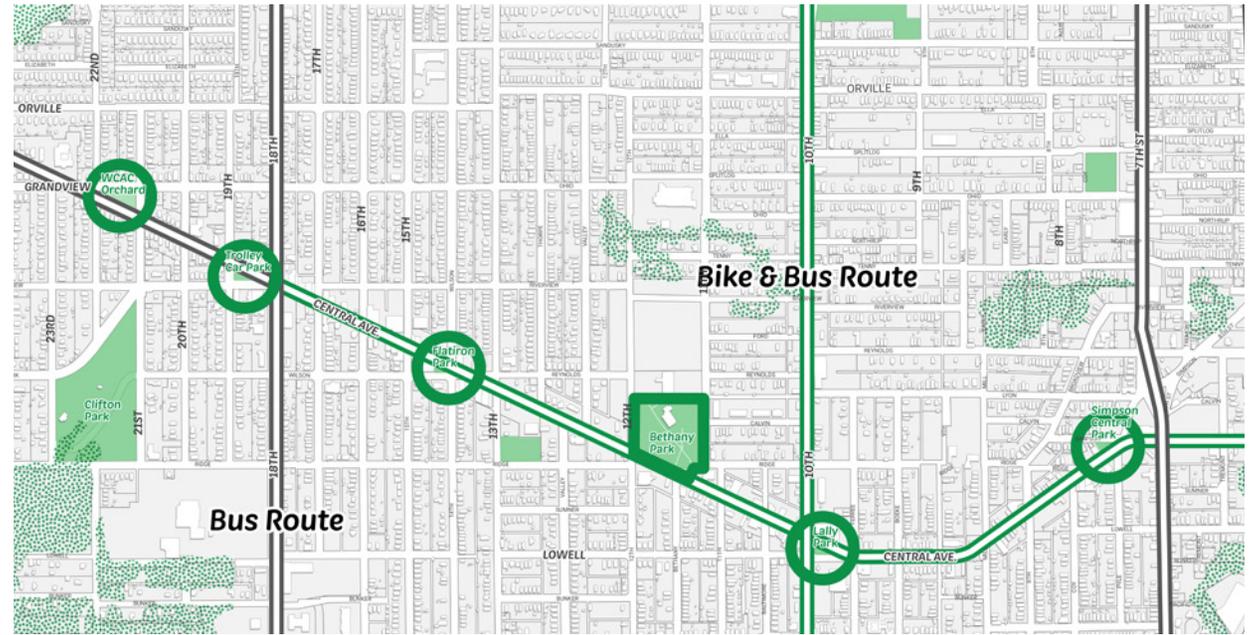
Going forward, new stations should consider the following determinations:

- Parks
- Schools
- Churches
- Commercial Corridors
- Existing bike and bus infrastructure
- Employment locations



32% of the survey participants said bike share locations should be located near public transit stops. Parks (29%) and on/around commercial corridors (25%) were also chosen as the top two and 3, respectively.

Figure 36: **Potential Initial Bike Share Locations**



Lally Park is at the crossroads of existing bike and bus infrastructure in the Central Area. With additional improvements, Lally Park will begin to be a mobility hub for the neighborhood and adjacent commercial corridor.



Figure 37: **10th & Central Potential Bike Share Location**

11

Increase transit & shared mobility ridership through improved connections & collaboration

Implementation:

Action Item: **11A**

Potential Project Partners:

- KCATA
- RideKC
- UG Transit
- MARC

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
0 - 1 year

Potential Funding Sources:
CMAQ, STP

Improve the Transit Experience

To support potential service improvements, it is recommended that the UG collaborate with the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) and the Kansas City Transit Authority (RideKC), as well as neighborhood groups to identify locations to upgrade and/or construct new transit facilities and related amenities to enhance the safety, comfort, reliability, and ease of service throughout the Central Area.

IMPROVE BUS STOPS

Improvements may include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct a bus stop inventory and identify locations to construct new, or upgrade bus stops with shelters, benches, and waiting areas to accommodate all-weather conditions
- Identify opportunities to consolidate existing and/or add new bus stop locations to maximize ridership capture and improve bus travel time along each route in the Central Area
- Evaluate current bus transit service based on established performance metrics and standards to determine opportunities for a bus network redesign in the Central Area



Modern bus stops can provide amenities for transit riders as well as help market a commercial corridors' identity. With digital technology, bus stops can provide real time information while also becoming potential revenue streams through advertising.

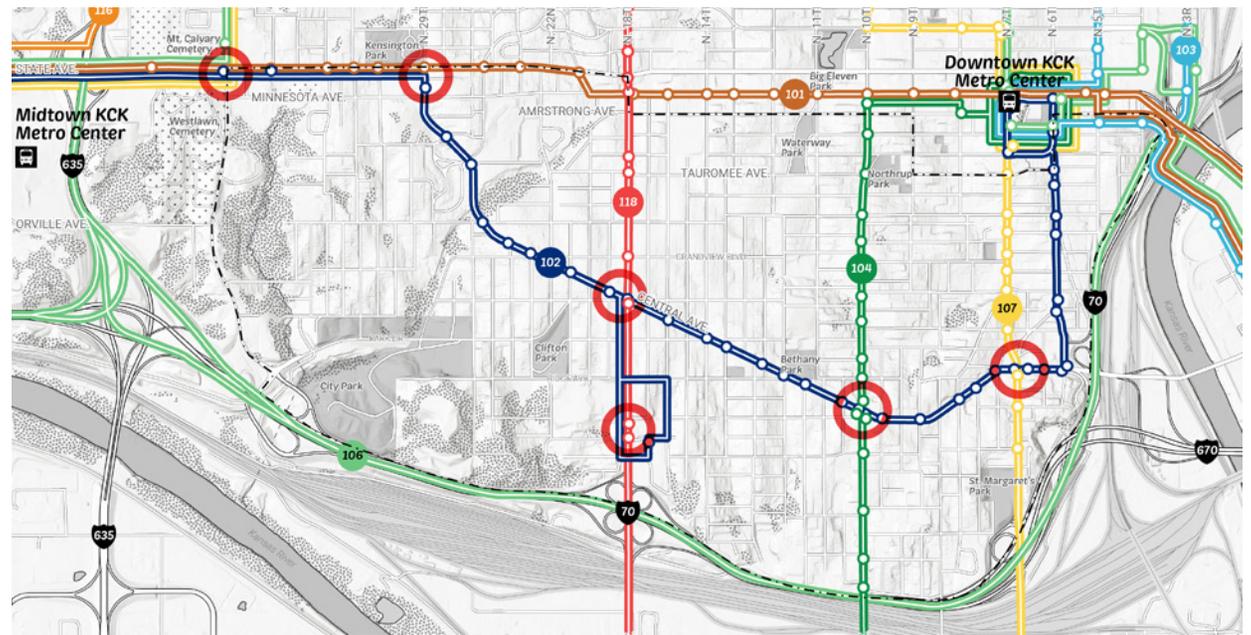
CREATE MOBILITY HUBS

It is recommended that the UG work with RideKC and MARC to further promote and expand the Downtown KCK Metro Center to allow for increased bus service and connections (transfer opportunities), and an array of shared mobility, such as carshare, bikeshare, and capacity for other future modes.

A key strategy per RideKC's vision is to create a "network of mobility hubs" that create concentrations of inter-modal activity and resources, such as a mix of bus transit, bike share stations, van-pools and carpool pick-up/drop-off location, carshare vehicles, and other micro-mobility devices (e.g., electric bikes and scooters). Lally Park can provide many of these additional services in one centralized location.

Building off previous recommendations, a concentration of transit improvements in one location can improve ease of transfer between modes and a better overall transit experience.

Figure 38: **Potential Mobility Hubs**



IDENTIFY PARK-AND-RIDE LOCATIONS

Park-and-ride locations allow for area residents to participate in shuttle bus, van-pool, and carpool programs in order to make it to their place of employment in an efficient, affordable manner. For example, if there is a group of residents that all work in Downtown KCK or KCMO and access to a personal vehicle or transit is limited, they can be picked up at a park-and-ride lot via van or shuttle that takes them to work in these downtown areas. They are then picked up at a downtown location and taken back to the park-and-ride lot. These services help augment and supplement bus transit services and allow for more coverage in terms of access to transportation and to their jobs.

It is recommended that the UG works with MARC and RideKC to explore the following potential park-and-ride locations to operate an area-wide shuttle and/or van-pool service as a way to move community residents to jobs in Downtown KCK and KCMO.

- Bethany Community Center
- Street Peter's Cathedral Church

These agencies and the UG will be required to develop a leasing agreement with the above property owners to determine the number of parking spaces and hours of operation to serve as a park-and-ride lot and to not hinder current business operations or access to such businesses by their patrons.



Headway is a transportation term that defines the distance between two vehicles in a transit system, measured in time or space. Decreasing headways means reducing the time or distance in a system without a reduction in the speed of the vehicles.

Implementation:

Action Item: **11B**

Potential Project Partners:

- KCATA
- RideKC
- UG Transit
- MARC

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

CMAQ

Decrease Bus Headways Through the Central Area

Providing more frequent, reliable and accessible transit can play a major role in moving more people throughout the area, while also supporting a more affordable transportation option. As a part of RideKC's near- and long-term plans to enhance transit service in the Central Area, it is recommended that the UG work with MARC, and RideKC to promote the following transit improvements and further these initiatives as per their system-wide vision and goals:

Route 118 (18th Street)

Modify weekday bus frequency from 60 minutes to 30 minutes. Timed transfers to Route 101 (State Avenue).

Route 118 (18th Street)

Pilot Saturday service and consider long-term operations.

Route 104 (Argentine)

Modify weekday bus frequency from 30 minutes to 15-20 minutes. Timed transfers to Route 101 (State Avenue).

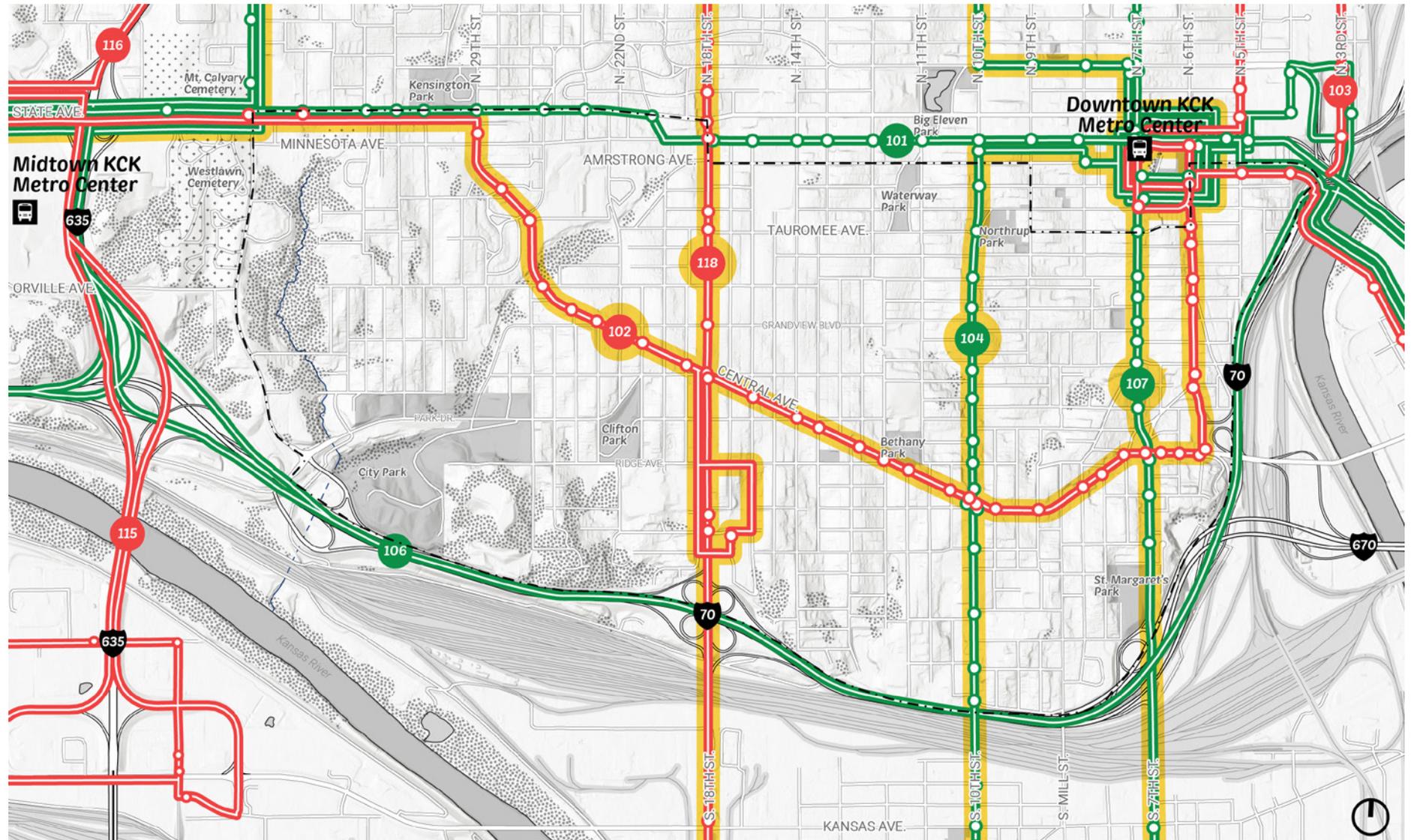
Route 107 (7th Street-Parallel)

Prioritize RideKC commitment to modify weekday frequency to 30 minutes. Timed transfers at Downtown KCK Transit Center.

Route 102 (Central Avenue)

Modify weekday bus frequency from 60 minutes to 30 minutes. Pilot Saturday service and consider long-term operations.

Figure 39: Existing Bus Headways



Existing Bus Headways

-  Every 0.5 Hours
-  Every 1.0 Hours
-  Proposed Service Changes

Potential Project Partners:

- Neighborhood groups
- Business owners
- Major employers
- MARC
- KCATA
- RideKC
- UG

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT & RESIDENT & INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION** driven

Timeline:

2 - 5 years

Potential Funding Sources:

CMAQ, Major employers

Expand Carpooling, Shared Mobility, & Transit Incentives

Not having a private vehicle or access to a vehicle creates a substantial barrier to jobs and/or to reach other key destinations. Developing strong partnerships between major employers and government departments is an effective way to develop programs aimed to help people make it to their jobs, all of which yield mutual benefits to foster a growing community and economy. The following recommendations are specific commuter programs that the UG, MARC, major employers, and other regional agencies can develop to increase access to jobs, attract and retain employees, and ultimately to transport people to and from employment destinations in the most efficient, affordable, and equitable manner.

TRANSIT PASS SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Universal transit pass programs are different from traditional financial incentives because the employer purchases a pass for each employee, regardless of whether they currently ride transit or not. These passes typically provide unlimited transit rides on local or regional transit providers for a low monthly fee; a fee that is lower than the individual cost to purchase a pass as a bulk discount is given. Such programs are highly cost-effective subsidies. In addition, by providing all employees this pass, those who currently do not use transit will often try taking transit since there is no cost barrier to do so.

The UG, MARC, and KCATA can work with employers to promote the RideKC Employer Pass Program, which allows for a reduced cost to employees for a 31-day pass. To help promote this program, employers can provide new employees with a "transportation packet" that provides the necessary information about how to sign up for the program; this can also be distributed to existing employees as well.

LEFT: Carpool networks already exist in the Central Area. Helping to market and support these networks will bring more people to the table (source: MARC, RideshareKC)

RIGHT: Subsidized rideshare services are often an effective way to improve transit options (source: mobindustry.net)



GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

The program provides commuters who regularly carpool, van-pool, bike, walk or take transit to work with a no-cost and reliable ride home when one of life's unexpected emergencies arise. Commuters that participate in these programs can use these services to make it home during an unexpected emergency such as a personal illness or a sick child or a family member. These services can also be used for unscheduled overtime when your employer mandates that you must stay late.

It is encouraged that major employers in Kansas City develop and promote a Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program. Employers can assign a Transportation Coordinator to assist employees in identifying a local program and support them in the process of signing up for services.

Such actions will require coordination between the UG, MARC, KCATA and major employers to identify GRH services, which may include a subsidized shuttle bus, van, or passenger vehicle to take employees home within the Central Area and nearby locations within Kansas City.

RIDE-MATCHING SERVICES

One of the greatest impediments to carpool and van-pool formation can be finding suitable riders with similar work schedules, origins, and destinations. Facilitated rideshare matching can overcome this obstacle by enabling commuters, who are interested in ride-sharing, to enter their travel preferences into a database and receive a list of potential rideshare partners. The success of these programs is largely determined by the number of participants and, in turn, the number of potential matches that can be made.

An employer-designated Transportation Coordinator can facilitate ride-matching for employees and have participants simply sign up for the program and share contact information between employees. Employees can also participate in ride-matching services on their own and coordinate their own schedules and pick-up/drop-off times and location during each workday.

RIDESOURCING FARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

To transport residents to jobs, this program would provide a subsidized credit for using rideshare services, such as Uber and Lyft. Each user would be provided a set amount or capped line of credit to their personal account and they can use rideshare services within a specific geographic location and time of day.

This program will require coordination between the UG, MARC, community organizations and rideshare providers. Establishing these programs are not uncommon throughout the U.S., as Uber and Lyft have developed partnerships with major employers (such as hospitals and office campuses) and local governments to transport residents that do not own a car or do not live near high-quality transit to their jobs or major transportation centers. For the subsidy program to be efficient, the program will be specific to the Central Area boundary and residents with an account with Uber or Lyft (or both), will be able to participate in a trip subsidy only when the trip is from their place of residence to the KCK Transit Center or downtown Kansas City, KS.



Improve regional connections

Implementation:

Action Item: **12A**

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Parks and Recreation
- MARC

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
2-5 years

Potential Funding Sources:
UG, CMAQ

Plug in the Central Area to the Regional Trail Network

Off street trails are an integral piece of the overall bike infrastructure but can accommodate a variety of different modes (runners, strollers, skate boarders, etc.) and can tap into larger regional networks. They also provide a higher level of protection for users by using excess street space, introducing grade-separated bike lanes, or breaking free from streets entirely into the natural environment. The proposed trail network will require a high level of coordination and financial investment. However, tapping into larger citywide and regional resources beyond the Central Area opens the possibility of different funding mechanisms. There are three distinct opportunities to add trails to the Central Area and two potential connections to the Kansas River.

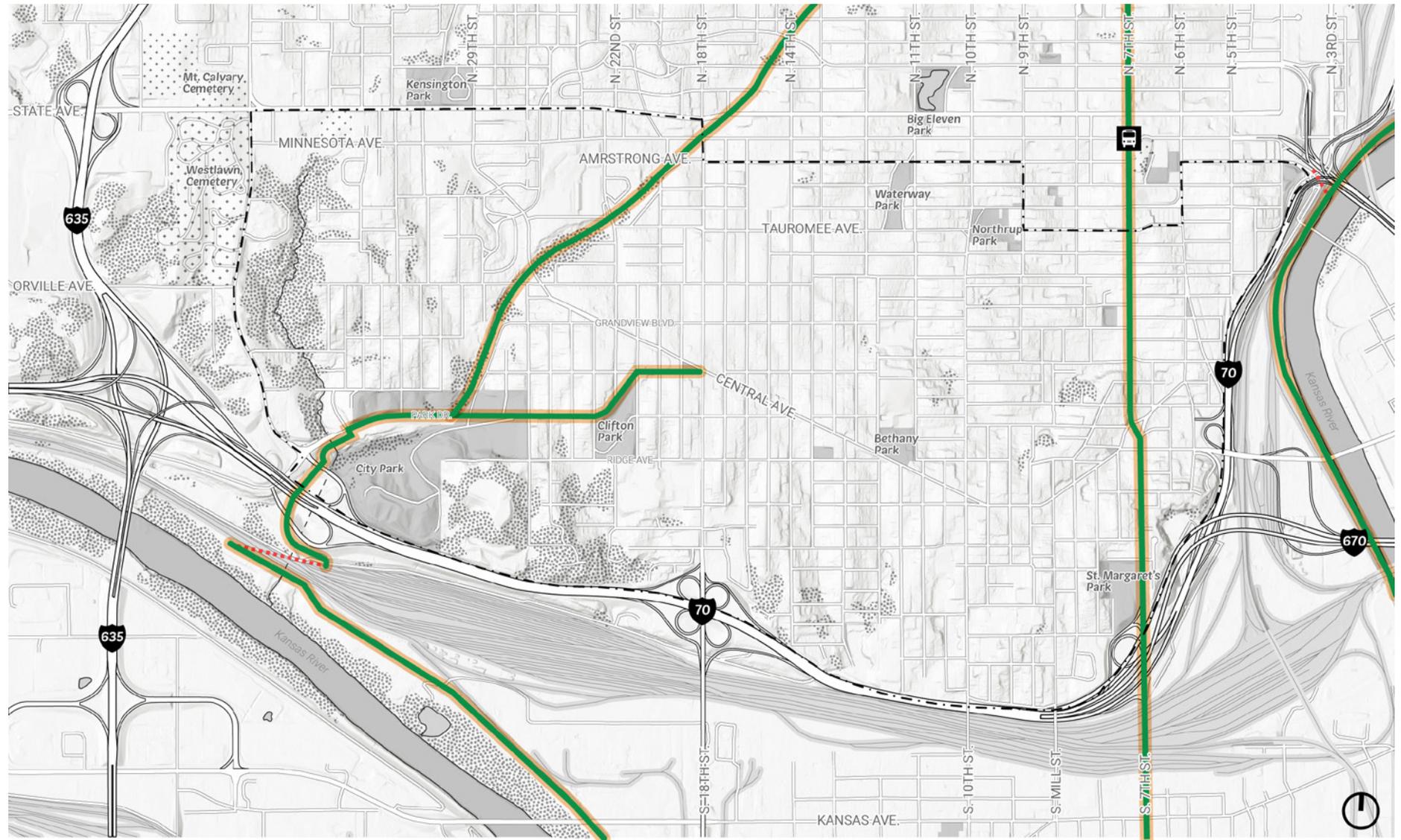
7TH STREET is an important north-south connection for automobiles with excessive space to add an off-street trail. This connection has been identified in previous planning efforts as a key piece of a riverfront trail loop.

PARK DRIVE has the excess road capacity to accommodate an off-street trail. Terminating at the key intersection of 18th and Central, this trail will connect the western end of Central Avenue into the broader network.

The former **RAIL RIGHT-OF-WAY** that cuts diagonally through the Central Area currently acts as a divider between east and west but offers a unique opportunity to incorporate a nature trail into the neighborhood. Making it an actively programmed space will help to unite the two side of the community rather than divide. It also will provide a key potential connection to the Jersey Creek Trail, City Park, and the Kansas River.

There are two potential **KANSAS RIVER CONNECTIONS**. The proposed rail right-of-way trail terminates at the CSX rail yard just beyond the Kaw Levee Trail. Bridging the railyard and uniting the two trails will take a significant piece of infrastructure but is critical to connection the Central Area to the broader trail network. An already existing connection to the Riverfront Heritage Trail can be improved through an added staircase/ramp at Levee Road to connect to the potential extension of the Kaw Levee Trail and improved riverfront access.

Figure 40: **Proposed Future Trail Network**



Proposed Future Trail Network

-  BOUNDARY
-  PROPOSED TRAIL
-  RIVER CONNECTION
-  TRANSIT CENTER

Potential Project Partners:

- UG Transit
- RideKC
- KCATA

This recommendation will be mostly **GOVERNMENT** driven

Timeline:
6-10 year

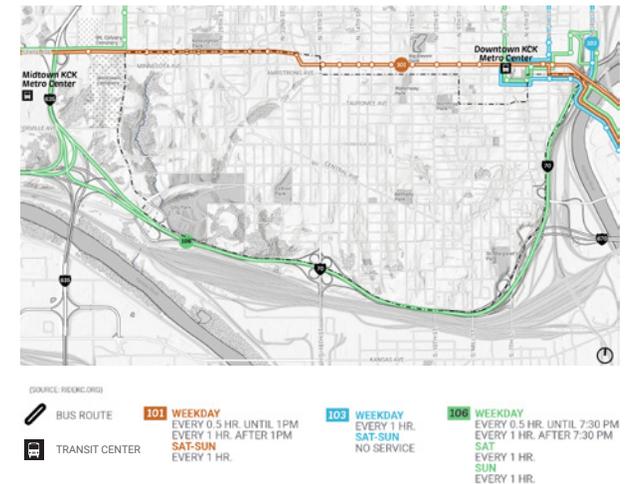
Potential Funding Sources:
UG, CMAQ

Take advantage of the proximity to Downtown Kansas City, MO

The close physical connection between the Central Area and Downtown Kansas City MO can feel much further psychologically due to infrastructure barriers and poor connections. As the center of the region both economically and culturally, the Central Area should take better advantage of their proximity. Missouri recently announced a program to make all public transit trips free, including bus routes that travel through Kansas as long as they start/end in Missouri. As the details of the program are still being determined during the writing of this plan details are subject to change. Regardless of those changes, the Central Area should look to capitalize on the existing bus routes that would be impacted, namely 101, 103, and 106 routes. The Unified Government should look to promote these routes as free and quick connections to Downtown Kansas City, MO.

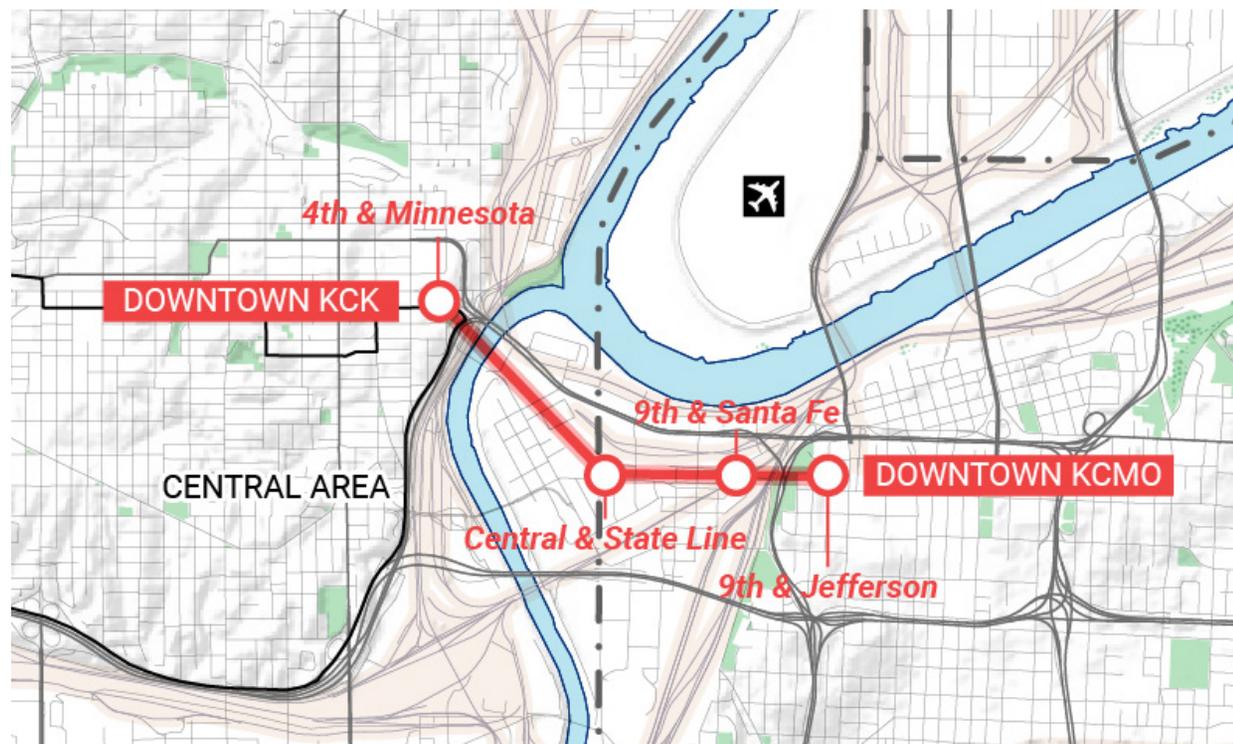
Another opportunity is to create a new direct connection between the two Downtowns of Kansas City Kansas and Missouri. Recent planning efforts identified the potential for an aerial lift or gondola as a possible solution. Although the construction of a system can

Figure 41: **KCMO Bus Network**



be perceived as expensive, the actual capital and operational costs are comparable to the Kansas City Streetcar. In terms of cost-per-mile, the aerial lift is in fact more cost-effective at \$25M per mile (depending on system design, number of stations/towers) verse \$50M per mile for the streetcar. Furthermore, a gondola can transport riders across steep terrain and rivers with a minimal physical footprint. Other benefits include energy-efficiency and resiliency during natural disasters such as floods. The aerial lift is in the early stages of planning but should be advocated for by the Unified Government. (Source: Connect Kansas City, Aug 2020)

Figure 42: **Proposed Aerial Lift**



Proposed Aerial Lift

- STUDY AREA
- POLITICAL BOUNDARY
- RAIL CORRIDOR
- PROPOSED AERIAL LIFT
- HYDROLOGY
- WOODED AREA
- PARKS/OPEN SPACE



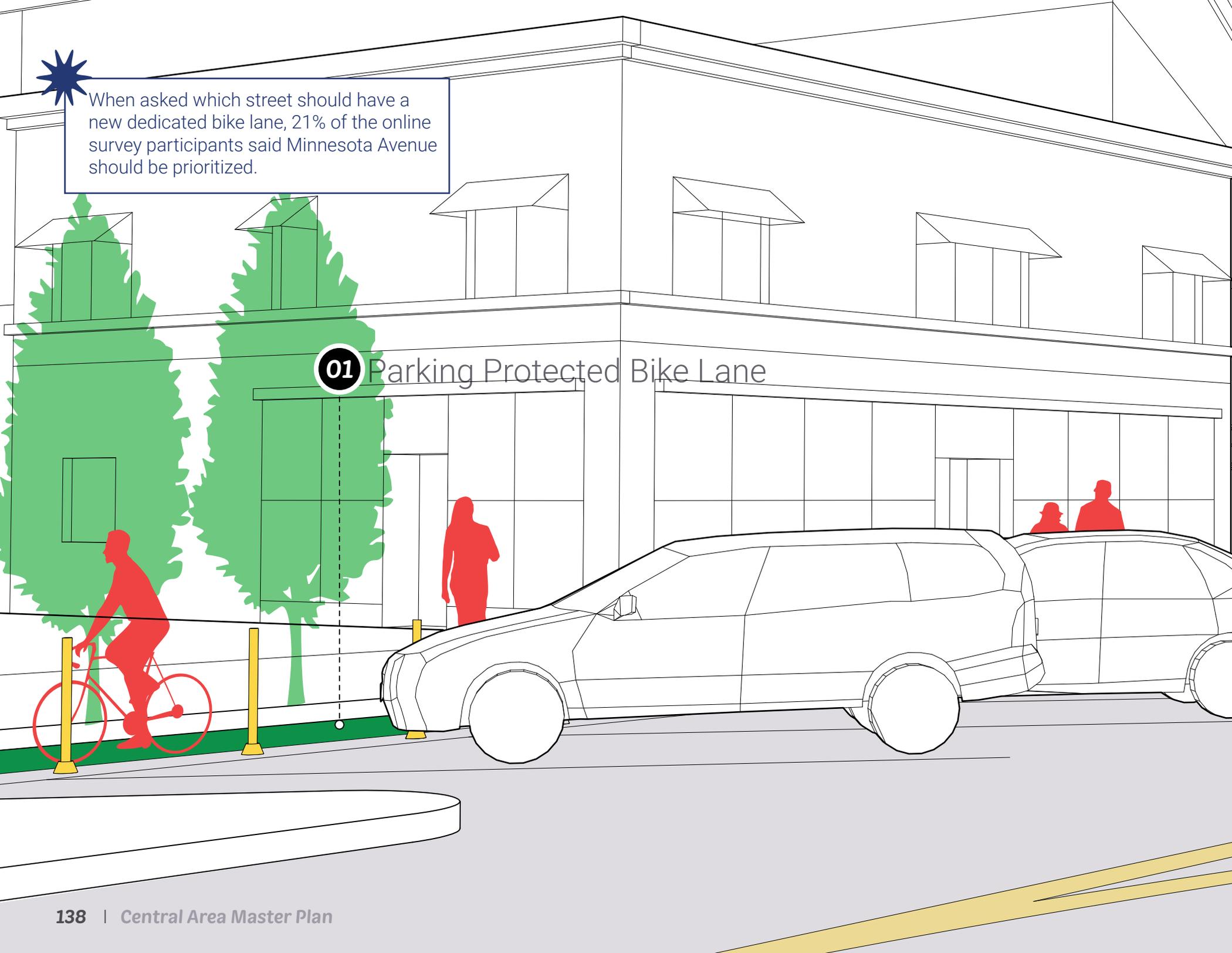
Examples from other cities with aerial lifts.
 01: Telluride, CO
 02: Portland, OR

(Source: Connect Kansas City, Aug 2020)



When asked which street should have a new dedicated bike lane, 21% of the online survey participants said Minnesota Avenue should be prioritized.

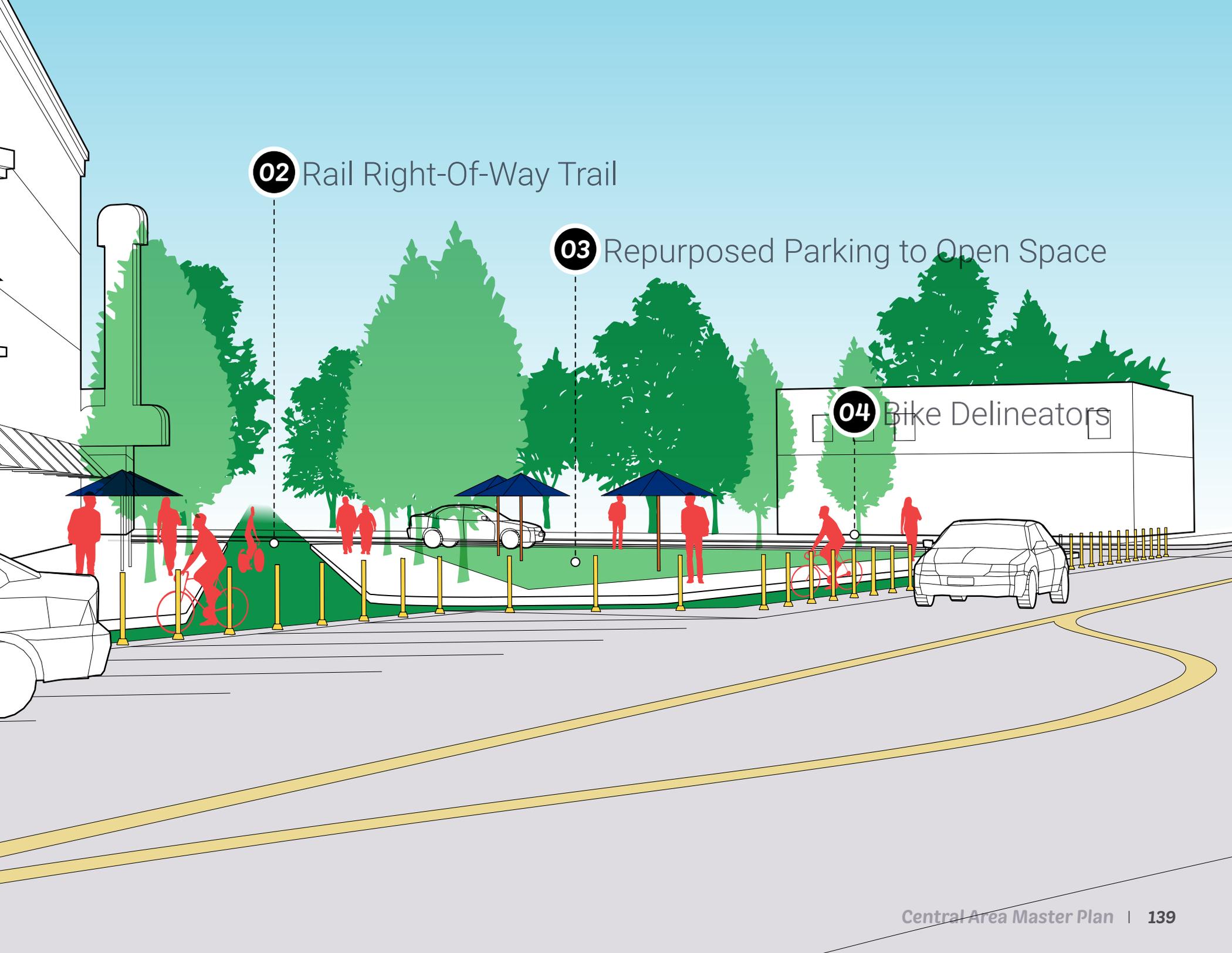
01 Parking Protected Bike Lane



02 Rail Right-Of-Way Trail

03 Repurposed Parking to Open Space

04 Bike Delineators



Future Land Use Plan

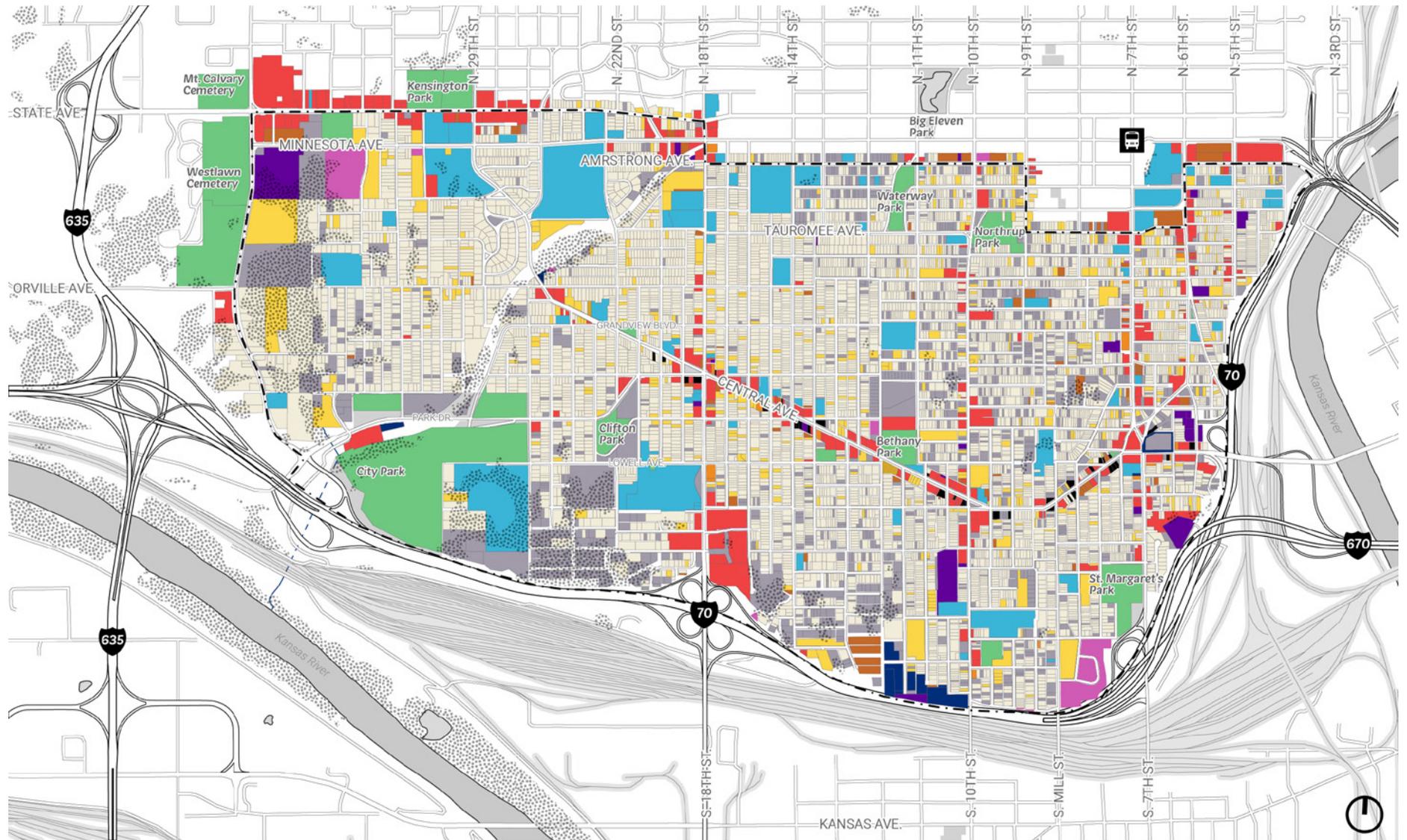
The future land use plan is the physical manifestation of the vision and goals outlined previously. The future land use designations are intended to regulate density and uses of the current condition and any future developments and investments that may occur. Each designation outlines a list of allowed building types and uses in detail to ensure that the recommendations made in this plan remain consistent with the overall development of the Central Area. These recommendations are codified in the zoning plan, which serves as the law of the land regarding future development.

While often overlooked, this is an integral piece of the planning process to ensure that the future vision of the neighborhood is structured to ensure it is represented in the future of the Central Area.

The existing land use plan as depicted on the right shows the variety of different uses prevalent in the Central Area today. The proposed Future Land Use Plan on the following page seeks to change some of these uses consistent with the Central Area Master Plan in a few important ways:

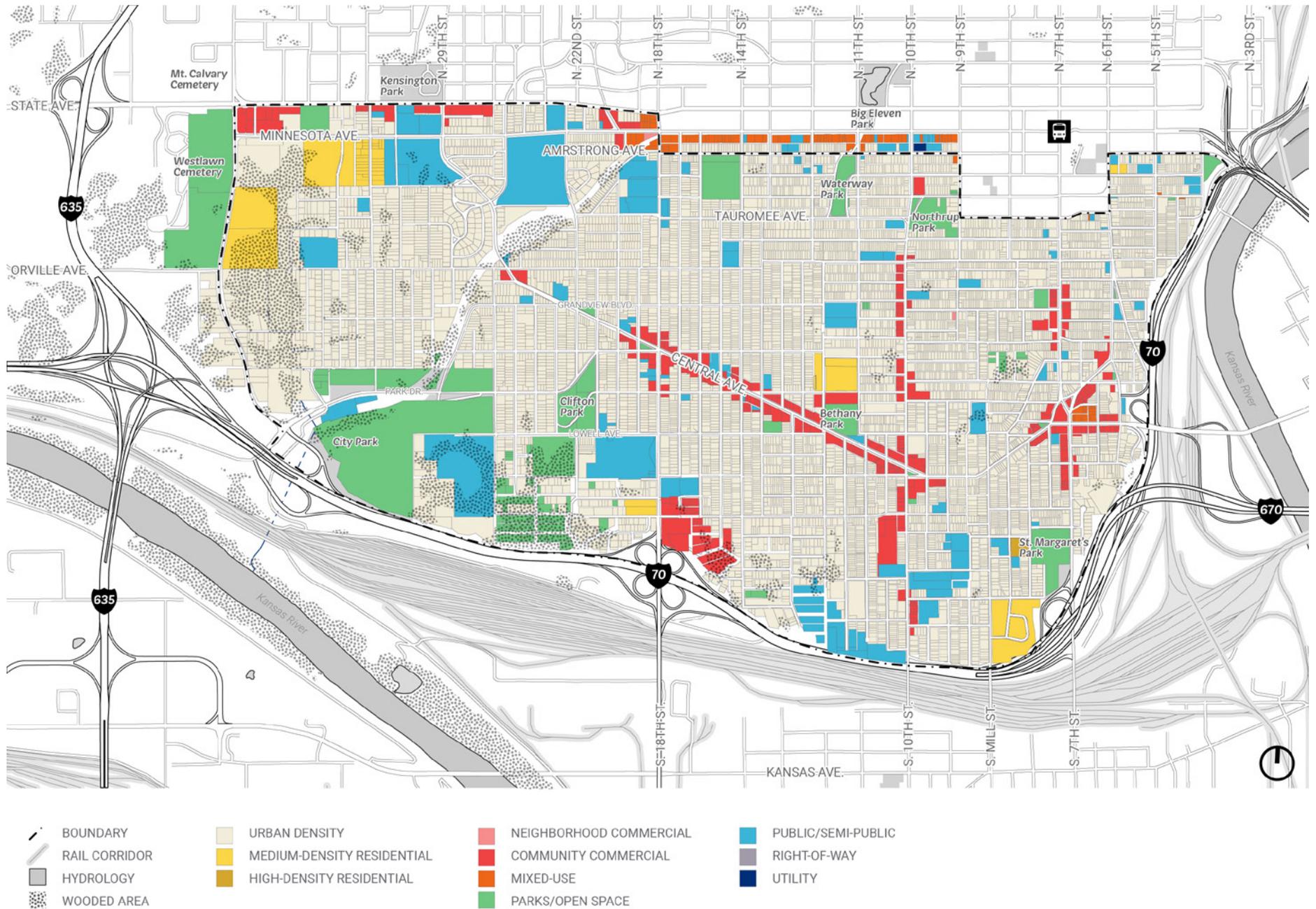
- The majority of the neighborhood will retain its residential character with commercial and mixed-use development concentrated on key corridors, including Central Avenue, Minnesota Avenue, 7th Street, and 10th Streets, much as they exist today. The Future Land Use Plan's recognition of these corridors as "Community Commercial" seeks to retain their vibrancy and to accommodate the development of more density of businesses and residents that can support the community.
- The vacant property, both land and buildings, prevalent throughout the neighborhood are targeted for change. The future land use depicts most vacant properties developed into future homes or commercial buildings. The vacant land near the southern edge of the neighborhood on steep slopes, however, will be reserved as public land consistent with the adjacent wooded properties.
- Lastly, the plan envisions the three key development sites outlined previously in Goal 3. The former Bethany Hospital site is recognized as "Medium-Density Residential", allowing for the development of apartments and multi-unit housing. The Alcott Arts Center and surrounding parcels are designated as "Urban Density", keeping the residential character of the area instead of the commercial/industrial development opposed by residents. The intersection of 7th and Central is identified as "Community Commercial", ensuring the development of that site will build off the success of the adjacent corridor.

Figure 43: Existing Land Use



- | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| BOUNDARY | COMMERCIAL | SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL | PARK | UNKNOWN |
| RAIL CORRIDOR | INSTITUTIONAL | MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL (2-4 units) | PARKING | |
| HYDROLOGY | INDUSTRIAL | MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL (+4 units) | VACANT LAND | |
| WOODED AREA | UTILITIES | MIXED USE | VACANT BUILDING | |

Figure 44: **Future Land Use Plan**



Designation	Description	Allowed Building Types
Community Commercial	These uses are intended to provide goods and services to adjacent districts and neighborhoods. Uses may include medium-sized box stores with small scale accessory commercial uses and small-scale commercial centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery stores • Medium sized (25,000 to 75,000 sq ft) box stores • Sit-down and drive-through restaurants • Banks • Drug stores • Gas stations and convenience stores
Neighborhood Commercial	Allows a wide range of small-scale commercial and office development. Uses may include commercial retail, professional offices and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas stations and convenience stores • Restaurants • Offices
Mixed-Use	Located at major arterial intersections and within traditional neighborhood design (TND) developments, these areas are ideal for integrating complimentary land uses such as retail, offices, small businesses and mixed-use residential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurants • Small and medium commercial • Professional and office services • Institutional; such as schools, churches and libraries • Mixed-density residential • Parks, plazas, and open space
High-Density Residential	These uses are intended to provide for future housing needs through the construction of attached owner and renter occupied mid-rise and high-rise residential developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings • Condominiums • Institutional; such as schools, churches and libraries
Medium-Density Residential	These uses are intended to provide for future housing needs through the construction of a wide variety of attached residential development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden apartments • Attached residences including town homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, etc. • Institutional; such as schools, churches and libraries
Urban Density	Allows a mix of detached and attached residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family homes • Attached residences including town homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, etc. • Institutional; such as schools, churches and libraries
Parks/Open Space	These uses are intended to provide both passive and active recreational opportunities throughout the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park buildings • Open space • Trails
Public/Semi-Public	These uses include publicly owned or non-profit property. When these uses are sold, the City should carefully consider alternative uses for redevelopment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • Public land and buildings • Churches • Non-profit land and buildings
Utility	This category includes provisions for public and private infrastructure and facilities related to water, sanitary sewer, electric power, natural gas, cable, telephone and mobile phone facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell phone towers • Utility substations • Electric power lines • Other utilities.
Right-of-Way	N/a	N/a

Chapter

04

Action Plan

ELEMENTS OF THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

Priority Action Items

Implementation Approach & Partners

Implementation Matrices

Priority Action Items

While implementing every strategy is achievable, there are a few key action items that should be prioritized due to the current pandemic, ability to lay the groundwork for future implementation, or they are already in motion and can be achieved in the near term.

1

IMMEDIATE COVID-19 RESPONSE ACTIONS

While implementation for planning processes can often take years, the challenges facing residents and businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic are too acute and need to be acted on immediately. The goal is to build off already in place legislation or programs which can best help residents and businesses weather the storm in the near term.

Action Item: **4B**

Improve Storefronts & Sidewalk Usage

The Unified Government passed recent legislation to allow businesses to create outdoor seating in adjacent areas including parking and sidewalk spaces. CABA should work with local businesses to implement parklets with a particular focus on Central Avenue. Coordination between businesses and local builders needs to be done to help implement in a timely and cost-effective manner. In the long term, the Unified Government should look to make the temporary legislation permanent to create a more active public realm and support local businesses

Develop a Bike Network

The Unified Government is working to create additional open space for residents through the closure of individual streets to vehicular traffic. Cities across the world are taking similar measures to great success. The benefits are twofold; first they provide an expanded public realm where families can feel safe to play and congregate when there isn't a park nearby, and secondly they can lay the groundwork for future mobility improvements.

Conversations with neighborhood groups and CABA have already started in order to determine the best streets to take immediate action.

Make La Placita the Premier Global Food Market in the Region

Due to the unease of customers as well as mandated restrictions on congregating indoors, La Placita should take immediate steps to market itself as a safe space to shop during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a great opportunity to bring new shoppers to the market as well as help support struggling businesses in the Central Area. With a newfound interest in the market, coordination should also begin on the potential for a permanent market shed within Bethany Park to solidify the importance of the market to the community and prepare for future growth.

Create a Housing Advocate for the Central Area

Due to a loss of jobs associated with COVID-19, many residents are insecure in their housing. A dedicated housing advocate can help residents navigate the various support systems in place to keep people in their homes. Through the planning process and prior to COVID-19, CHWC already expressed interest in hiring for such a position. That process should be expedited to meet the current need.

BUILD CAPACITY WITH CENTRAL AREA ORGANIZATIONS

A successful planning process seeks to build advocates who can help bring it to fruition. Within the Central Area, implementation will take a more dispersed approach so it will be important to build capacity within local organizations to ensure the plans success.

Action Item: **6C**

Potential District Manager Programs

The Central Avenue Betterment Association (CABA) is the main organization tasked with leading the revitalization of Central Avenue. CABA does great work through their annual events like the Dotteversity Parade, and recurring events like the La Placita Market. With a limited part-time staff it is difficult to scale up to the level of service that designated commercial corridor managers can provide. Many such services like business attraction, capital improvements, business financing services, and many others are all out of reach for CABA at their existing funding and capacity levels.

New revenue streams should be explored to allow CABA to hire additional staff and further support the commercial corridor.

Action Item: **1B**

Identify Neighbors that can Help Cross Cultural Divide

Neighborhood Organizations are long standing groups of dedicated individuals who have spent decades working to improve their community. The level of coordination and participation has improved with the implementation of Livable Neighborhoods. Participation comes from residents volunteering their own free time so there are inherent capacity issues. Each neighborhood group should work in coordination with the Livable Neighborhoods initiative to make a concerted effort to bring additional resident participation to these organizations. This increased capacity will take the strain off many existing residents and allow groups to take on additional neighborhood improvement projects. A particular effort should be placed on creating diverse participation which is representative of the community.

Action Item: **3A**

Create “Friends of Groups” or Designate “Adopt-A-Spot” Groups to all Neighborhood Parks

In order to have resident led improvements to neighborhood parks, adopt-a-spot organizations or “friends of groups” should be designated for individual parks within the Central Area. Having an organization whose sole focus is improving the park will lead to better outcomes than when combined with organizations who have a larger mission.

Action Item: **1C**

Organize Smaller Scale Neighborhood Functions that Allow Neighbors to Socialize

Neighborhood organizations, churches, and other institutions should collaborate on neighborhood specific gatherings that can help to bring residents together and socialize. These interactions can help to create a more engaged community who can help support plan goals. A particular effort should be placed on bringing a diverse group of residents together. Coordination of such events can be ongoing through the current pandemic with the intention of bring residents together when it is safe to do so.

MAKE PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PUBLIC REALM

Physical improvements touch on a variety of plan goals through improved park spaces, maintenance of homes, the appearance of vacant land and buildings. Residents often expressed their desire to improve the way the neighborhood looks and feels. Numerous plans are already in motion and clear priorities were determined that can and should be implemented in the near term.

Action Item: **3B**

Make Strategic Improvements To Key Parks

The Unified Government should carry through with scheduled improvements to Clifton Park in the coming year as an initial investment into park spaces in the Central Area. This will lay the groundwork for similar investments across the neighborhood.

Action Item: **2B**

Public Art That Tells The Neighborhood Story

An initial first public art piece can utilize the Unified Governments Stories for Stories project on the vacant bath house within Clifton Park. Coordinating this effort with planned park improvements will lead to a larger impact. This project can also bring new attention to the vacant building and begin the conversation about converting the bath house into a community center or neighborhood amenity in the long term.

Action Item: **2A**

Coordinate with Land Bank on how to Activate Vacant Lots

Returning the vast number of vacant properties back into productive spaces will take the course of many years. To kickstart that process, the Land Bank should commence conversations with neighborhood organizations around the future of parcels within their portfolio which are not suitable for future development. Once that process is complete, repurposing vacant lots can commence in a coordinated and thoughtful manner.

Action Item: **7B**

Targeted Code Enforcement With Assistance From Resident Advocate Groups

Poorly maintained homes play an important role in how neighborhood blocks look and feel. Code enforcement should work to build better levels of coordination with neighborhood organizations or develop citizen advisory boards where organizational support is lacking. This higher level of coordination should be done in tandem with targeted code enforcement to bring the worst-off blocks within the Central Area up to code compliance.

LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR CENTRAL AVENUE TO CONTINUE TO THRIVE

Similar to commercial corridors across the country, Central Avenue has been significantly impacted by COVID-19. A series of lower cost investments by the Unified Government can help to lay the groundwork for further private investments as the commercial corridor recovers. A series of studies and conversations can also proceed to help further support the corridor.

Action Item: **4A**

Redesign Central Avenue

Central Avenue should be redesigned on key blocks to improve its functionality as a commercial corridor. During the engagement process residents determined that the blocks between 13th-18th Streets should be the location to make an initial investment. Streetscaping improvements combined with individual property owner improvements will lead to a concentrated and noticeable level of improvement which can be replicated across the corridor. Some of these improvements can be done on an interim basis to be permanently changed as resources become available.

Action Item: **5B**

Create Major Gateways to the Corridor

Coordination between neighborhood groups, business owners, and local artist should commence on signature gateway art pieces to bookend the corridor at the intersections of 6th & Central as well as 18th & Central. As the first point of engagement for many visitors, these locations will play an important role in establishing a unique identity for the corridor.

Action Item: **6B**

Create a Central Avenue Overlay District to Better Support Businesses

In coordination with local businesses, organizations, and residents, the Unified Government should commence a study to create a Central Avenue Overlay District.

Anecdotal concerns around the challenges of parking on Central Avenue should be confirmed through additional analysis. The Unified Government should commence a Central Avenue parking management pilot program to better understand the challenges and determine potential solutions which can be codified through the overlay district.

Action Item: **4C** & **8B**

Repurpose Vacant Lots and Improve Existing Pocket Parks

Establish a Vision for Key Development Sites

The above strategies should be considered in the context of Bethany park and the former Bethany hospital sites. Numerous ideas and proposals have been identified for these sites by different organizations over the years. Conversations should begin between the involved organizations to ensure outcomes are desirable for all parties at this critical site for both the Central Avenue commercial corridor as well as the broader community.

WORK TO KEEP HOUSING AFFORDABLE

Various recommendations outlined within the plan can be implemented to ensure residents can stay in their homes in the near term and keep housing affordable as market conditions change.

Action Item: **7C**

Capitalize a Home Repair Program

Due to the importance of home repairs expressed by residents, conversations should begin to create a more robust program. The Unified Government should look beyond the Central Area to a broader citywide approach allowing for additional partnerships and funding resources. Starting conversations amongst Unified Government departments and other local organizations who already work in this space will help determine a coordinated effort going forward.

Action Item: **8A**

Support an Infill Housing Strategy

In order to determine the most appropriate infill housing strategy, the Unified Government should commence a study that takes a deeper dive into how best to lower the cost of development across the Central Area using this planning process as a guide.

Action Item: **7D**

Long-term Homeowner Protections

The Unified Government should develop a series of metrics to determine the cost of housing and how it is changing on a year-to-year basis. Tracking the cost of housing over a period of time will determine if long-term home owner protections are required to keep residents in their homes.

6

BEGIN THE TRANSITION TO A MULTIMODAL TRANSIT FUTURE

The transition away from an auto dependent culture will take a series of cumulative investments over many years. A few recommendations should start in the near term to jumpstart that transition.

Action Item: **9A**

Make Focused Sidewalk Improvements

Designated Safe Routes to School should be an initial investment in pedestrian improvements across the Central Area. The Unified Government should work with neighborhood organizations to apply for funding through the Kansas Safe Routes to School program

Action Item: **9B**

Redesign Key Intersections

During the outreach process residents identified Central, 18th, 10th, and 7th as most need of improvement. Additional outreach and coordination should be done to determine the location of new pedestrian crossings for 10th and 7th to better improve east-west access.

Action Item: **10A**

Develop a Bike Network

The first phase of building a true bike network should start by building off the already existing designs for a cycle track on 6th Street. Planning work should begin on the next phase of the network with designated bike facilities on Central Avenue west of 18th Street connecting to Kensington Park as well as Minnesota Avenue from 29th Street into the Downtown area. This initial step builds off existing bike facilities and paves the groundwork for a true network.

Action Item: **10B**

Implement Bike Share Stations at Key Locations

The Unified Governments new bike share program should install pickup/drop off stations within the Central Area. Lally Park and Bethany Park should be considered due to their central locations within the neighborhood and their connections to the existing bike network.

Action Item: **11A**

Improve the Transit Experience

New and improved bus stops should be designed for major transfer stations such as 18th and Central and 10th and Central. Implementation can be coordinated with other priority action items such as gateway improvements and bike share stations to provide a bigger impact.

Implementa- tion Approach & Partners

The Central Area Master Plan outlines a comprehensive framework for neighborhood improvement over the coming years. Particular thought was put into creating achievable goals that are within the capacity of government, local institutions, business owners, and residents. Cumulatively these groups will work to implement the Central Area Master Plan as no one group or funding source can do it alone. Coordination among organizations will be key to implement strategies going forward.

The planning process has identified a few key partners who will play an important role in implementation. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but an acknowledgment in who the key players are.

UNIFIED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Numerous agencies within the UG will play a role in implementation.

- Planning & Urban Design
- Parks & Recreation
- Public Works
- Economic Development
- Code Enforcement
- General Services/SOAR
- Community Development
- Land Bank
- Livable Neighborhoods
- Transportation

OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Coordination with additional regional agencies will be integral.

- Kansas City USD 500
- KDOT
- MARC

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

CENTRAL AVENUE BETTERMENT ASSOCIATION

CABA is a non-profit organization dedicated to the improvement of the Central Avenue business corridor in addition to the broader neighborhood. Known for the numerous events that are hosted on Central Avenue including the Dotteversity Parade, the Dia De Muertos parade, the Polska Day Parade, and the La Placita Farmers Market. Through these continued events and other programs, CABA works to improve the business environment on the Central Avenue commercial corridor.

COMMUNITY HOUSING OF WYANDOTTE COUNTY

CHWC is invested in bringing quality affordable housing to the Central Area community. Through years of work in both the renovation of homes and new construction, CHWC has built a track record of success for serving the housing needs of the Central Area community.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTHEAST KS

Catholic Charities offer a wide range of services to immigrant and refugee families in the County, including food, financial and legal assistance through La Luz Immigration Clinic. Located on Central Avenue and Grandview Boulevard, services provided by La Luz include citizenship preparation, DACA-related applications, and visa assistance.

MISSION ADELANTE

Mission Adelante was founded in 2005 as an Evangelical Church that provided numerous supportive services for the Latino immigrant community. Programs such as English as a second language classes, child & youth programming, art training, and various other programs which serve as a vital resource for the Central Area's immigrant communities.

WYEDC

Through a variety of business resources including recruitment/expansion, marketing, and workforce solutions, the Wyandotte Economic Development Council (WYEDC) is integral to the promotion of economic development across the County.

EL CENTRO

Since its founding in 1976, El Centro has been committed to serving the Hispanic/Latinx community across Wyandotte County. Through youth/elderly programming, money and home management workshops, and health education, El Centro has become an integral resource for the community.

NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

The Central Area is a collection of neighborhoods each with their own organized group of residents dedicated to the community. These neighborhood groups include:

- Wyandotte Countians Against Crime - WCAC
- Strawberry Hill
- Prescott
- Cathedral
- Riverview
- St. Joseph's Watchdogs

FUNDING SOURCES

In addition to determining who will move a strategy towards fruition, determining how it will be paid for is equally important. Listed below are but a few of the potential financial resources:

- Project SOAR – sales tax revenue bonds
- Neighborhood Revitalization Act (NRA)
- Community Improvement District (CID)
- Economic Development Exemption (EDX)
- Investment Revenue Bonds (IRB)
- UG Small Business Incentive pilot program
- LISC – Catalytic Urban Predevelopment Fund
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The implementation approach will require action from both the top down and the ground up. Larger capital-intensive projects will require government action and institutional backing, while smaller scale interventions are often best done at the resident level with institutional and government support.

Tackling implementation from both ends of the spectrum will be integral in achieving plan goals.

Implementa- tion Matrices

The following pages are a collection of all the strategies and action items found in the Central Area Master Plan. These comprehensive implementation matrices outline specific action items, and potential partners, funding resources, and time-frames.

EMPOWER RESIDENTS TO BUILD COMMUNITY THROUGH SHARED NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS

#	Strategy	Potential Partners	Leading Entity	Timeframe (year)	Funding Sources
1	Create an inclusive neighborhood that is accessible to all				
1A	Create a platform for non-profit organizations helping immigrant communities to collaborate	UG, CABA, El Centro, Catholic Charities of Northeastern Kansas, Bishop Sullivan Center, Bethel Neighborhood Center, La Luz Immigration Clinic, Mission Adelante, Livable Neighborhoods, Inc., Neighborhood groups, Residents	Organizations + Institutions	Ongoing	NRF, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant, United Way
1B	Identify neighbors that can help cross cultural divide	UG, CABA, El Centro, Catholic Charities of Northeastern Kansas, Bishop Sullivan Center, Bethel Neighborhood Center, La Luz Immigration Clinic, Mission Adelante, Livable Neighborhoods, Inc., Neighborhood groups, Residents	Resident / Organizations + Institutions	0-1	NRF, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant, United Way
1C	Organize smaller scale neighborhood functions that allow neighbors to socialize	CABA, El Centro, Livable Neighborhoods, Inc., Neighborhood groups, Residents, Mission Adelante	Resident / Organizations + Institutions	Ongoing	NRF, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant
2	Beautify neighborhood and activate vacant lots				
2A	Coordinate with Land Bank on how to activate vacant lots	UG Land Bank, Cultivate KC	Government / Resident	2-5	NRF, TIF, Kansas Recreation and Park Association Grant
2B	Public art that tells the neighborhood story	Neighborhood groups, Livable Communities, Inc., Public schools	Resident / Organizations + Institutions	0-1	NRF, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation Grant, United Way
3	Improve existing parks				
3A	Create "Friends of Groups" or designate "Adopt-A-Spot" groups to all neighborhood parks	UG Parks & Recreation, Neighborhood groups, Residents	Resident	0-1	NRF, TIF, Kansas Recreation and Park Association Grant
3B	Make strategic improvements to key parks	UG Parks & Recreation	Government	2-5	NRF, TIF, Kansas Recreation and Park Association Grant

ESTABLISH CENTRAL AVENUE AS THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND EMPLOYMENT CENTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

#	Strategy	Potential Partners	Leading Entity	Timeframe (year)	Funding Sources
4	Create a "place" on Central Avenue through physical improvements				
4A	Redesign Central Avenue	UG Public Works, UG Urban Planning & Land Use, WYEDC, Dotte Agency	Government	2-5	TIF, STAR
4B	Improve storefronts & sidewalk usage	Business owners, CABA, WYEDC, Dotte Agency, KCK Chamber of Commerce, UG Urban Planning & Land Use	Government / Business Owners	2-5	NRF, UG Small Business Grant, TIF, STAR, Private capital
4C	Repurpose vacant lots and improve existing pocket parks	UG Parks & Recreation, Roots for Refugees, WYEDC, Dotte Agency, CABA	Government / Organizations + Institutions	2-5	NRF, Artplace National Creative Placemaking Fund, TIF, STAR
5	Leverage diversity to create a unique identity and market opportunity				
5A	Make La Placita as the premier global food market in the region	CABA, KCK Chamber of Commerce, WYEDC, Downtown KCK shareholders, KCCG - Kansas City Community Gardens, UG Parks & Recreation, KCK Farmer's Market, Mission Adelante	Organizations + Institutions	0-5	NRF, Artplace National Creative Placemaking Fund, Kansas Strategic Investment Program Grant
5B	Create major gateways to the corridor	KCK Chamber of Commerce, CABA, Downtown KCK shareholders, WYEDC, UG Urban Planning & Land Use, UG Streets Department	Government / Organizations + Institutions	0-5	NRF, National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant, Artplace National Creative Placemaking Fund, Kansas Strategic Investment Program Grant
5C	Ensure diversity has an outward presence on the corridor	KCK Chamber of Commerce, CABA, Downtown KCK shareholders, WYEDC	Organizations + Institutions / Business Owners	0-1	NRF, National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant, Artplace National Creative Placemaking Fund, Kansas Strategic Investment Program Grant

ESTABLISH CENTRAL AVENUE AS THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND EMPLOYMENT CENTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

#	Strategy	Potential Partners	Leading Entity	Timeframe (year)	Funding Sources
6	Provide resources for existing businesses and those looking to start new enterprises				
6A	Jumpstart a business incubator on Central Avenue	Forward Cities, Business owners, KCK Chamber of Commerce, WYEDC, UG Urban Planning & Land Use	Organizations + Institutions	2-5	LISC, Private funding, UG Small Business Grant
6B	Create a Central Avenue Overlay District to better support businesses	UG Parking Control, Planning & Urban Design, Public Works	Government / Business Owners	2-5	UG
6C	Potential district manager programs	CABA, WYEDC, KCK Chamber of Commerce, UG Urban Planning & Land Use	Organizations + Institutions	Ongoing	NRF, UG Small Business Grant, TIF

PROVIDE HOUSING THAT IS SUITABLE FOR A RANGE OF LIFE STAGES AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

#	Strategy	Potential Partners	Leading Entity	Timeframe (year)	Funding Sources
7	Provide support & resources for existing homeowners & renters				
7A	Create a housing advocate for the Central Area	CHWC, KCK Housing Authority, UG Community Development, Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.	Organizations + Institutions	0-1	UG, Community groups, NRF
	Targeted code enforcement with assistance from resident advocate groups	CHWC, UG, Habitat for Humanity Kansas City, Livable Neighborhoods, Inc.	Residents / Government	2-5	UG, Community groups, NRF
7B	Capitalize a home repair program	CHWC, UG SOAR Program, Habitat for Humanity Kansas City, Livable Neighborhoods, Inc., NeighborWorks	Government / Organizations + Institutions	2-5	CDBG, TIF, Greater Kansas City LISC, Local banks, USDA Home repair program
7C	Long term homeowner protections	UG, City Commissioners	Government	6-10	CDBG, TIF, Greater Kansas City LISC, Local banks, USDA Home repair program
8	Add to the housing stock to diversify options and support broader community goals				
8A	Support an infill housing strategy	UG, CHWC, Area Agency on Aging, Kansas Housing Resources Corporation, Private developers, Local banks	Government	6-10	CDBG, TIF, Greater Kansas City LISC, Local banks, USDA Home repair program
8B	Establish a vision for key development sites	Property owners, UG Land Bank & SOAR Program, KCK Housing Authority, CHWC, CABA, UG Planning, Alcott Arts, Neighborhood Groups, Livable Neighborhoods	Government / Residents / Organizations + Institutions	6-10	CDBG, TIF, STAR

DESIGN A MOBILITY NETWORK THAT GIVES OPTIONS AND PROMOTES A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

#	Strategy	Potential Partners	Leading Entity	Timeframe (year)	Funding Sources
9	Improve the comfort and safety of the pedestrian network				
9A	Make focused sidewalk improvements	UG Public Works, UG Transit	Government	0-5	CMAQ, MARC, Safe Routes to School
9B	Redesign key intersections	UG Public Works, Property owners, US Bank, KDOT	Government	0-5	CMAQ, MARC, TA
10	Develop a bike and trail network to connect the community				
10A	Develop a bike network	BikeWalkKC, KCATA, RideKC, UG Public Works, UG Transit, MARC, KDOT	Government	Ongoing	National Recreational Trails Program, CMAQ, TA, Rails to Trails
10B	Implement bike share stations at key locations	BikeWalkKC, UG Transit, Urban Planning and Land Use, Parks & Recreation, Property owners	Government	0-1	CMAQ, STP, TA
11	Increase transit & shared mobility ridership through improved connection & collaboration				
11A	Improve the transit experience	KCATA, RideKC, UG Transit, MARC	Government	0-1	CMAQ, STP
11B	Decrease bus headways through the Central Area	KCATA, RideKC, UG Transit, MARC	Government	2-5	CMAQ
11C	Expand carpooling, shared mobility & transit incentives	Neighborhood groups, Business owners, Major employers, MARC, KCATA, RideKC, UG	Government / Institution + Organizations / Residents	2-5	CMAQ, Major employers
12	Improve regional connections				
12A	Plug in the Central Area to the regional trail network	UG Parks and Recreation, MARC	Government	2-5	UG, CMAQ
12B	Take advantage of the proximity to Downtown Kansas City, KS	KCATA, RideKC, UG Transit	Government	6-10	UG, CMAQ

The graphics on the adjacent pages further breakdown responsibility for each strategy and action item, generally grouped by the main implementation differentiators; government, local institutions/organizations, business owners, and residents.



Business Owner-led

GOAL 2: CENTRAL AVE.

- ▶ Improve storefronts & sidewalk usage *
- ▶ Ensure diversity has an outward presence on the corridor *
- ▶ Create a Central Avenue Overlay District to better support businesses *



Resident-led

GOAL 1: COMMUNITY

- ▶ Create “Friends of Groups” or designate “Adopt-A-Spot” groups to all neighborhood parks
- ▶ Coordinate with Land Bank on how to activate lots not suitable for development *
- ▶ Public art that tells the neighborhood story *
- ▶ Identify neighbors that can help cross cultural divide *
- ▶ Organize smaller scale neighborhood functions that allow neighbors to socialize *

GOAL 3: HOUSING

- ▶ Targeted code enforcement with assistance from resident advocate groups *
- ▶ Establish a vision for key development sites *

GOAL 4: MOBILITY

- ▶ Expand carpooling, shared mobility & transit incentives *



Government-led

GOAL 1: COMMUNITY

- ▶ Make strategic improvements to key parks
- ▶ Coordinate with Land Bank on how to activate lots * not suitable for development

GOAL 2: CENTRAL AVE.

- ▶ Redesign Central Avenue
- ▶ Improve storefronts & sidewalk usage *
- ▶ Repurpose vacant lots and improve existing pocket park *
- ▶ Create major gateways to the corridor *
- ▶ Create a Central Avenue Overlay District to better support businesses *

GOAL 3: HOUSING

- ▶ Capitalize a home repair program *
- ▶ Resident advocate group for code enforcement *
- ▶ Long term homeowner protections
- ▶ Support an infill housing strategy
- ▶ Establish a vision for key development sites *

GOAL 4: MOBILITY

- ▶ Make focused sidewalk improvements
- ▶ Redesign key intersections
- ▶ Develop a bike network
- ▶ Implement bike share stations at key locations
- ▶ Improve the transit experience
- ▶ Decrease bus headways through the Central Area
- ▶ Expand carpooling, shared mobility & transit incentives *
- ▶ Plug in the Central Area to the regional trail network
- ▶ Take advantage of the proximity to Downtown Kansas City, KS



Institution/ Organization-led

GOAL 1: COMMUNITY

- ▶ Public art that tells the neighborhood story *
- ▶ Create a platform for non-profit organizations helping immigrant communities to collaborate
- ▶ Identify neighbors that can help cross cultural divide *
- ▶ Organize smaller scale neighborhood functions that allow neighbors to socialize *

GOAL 2: CENTRAL AVE.

- ▶ Repurpose vacant lots and improve existing pocket parks *
- ▶ Ensure diversity has an outward presence on the corridor *
- ▶ Create major gateways to the corridor *
- ▶ Make La Placita as the premier global food market in the region
- ▶ Jumpstart a business incubator on Central Avenue
- ▶ Potential district manager programs

GOAL 3: HOUSING

- ▶ Create a housing advocate for the Central Area
- ▶ Capitalize a home repair program *
- ▶ Establish a vision for key development sites *

GOAL 4: MOBILITY

- ▶ Expand carpooling, shared mobility & transit incentives *

* : Led by multiple entities





