

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

Task 2: Draft Master Plan

# **Armourdale Area Master Plan (DRAFT)**

Prepared by:

**port**

with

**MVRDV +  
Borderless Studio**

September 14th, 2021

**DRAFT RENDERING**

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Wyandotte County and  
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# ARMOURDALE

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# STRONG FUERTE

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# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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<i>Full Community Outreach Overview in Site Analysis Report</i>	

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This Master Plan Report (Draft) defines the Armourdale Area Master Plan (hereafter, simply the 'Master Plan') for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas (hereafter, simply the 'UG'). The Master Plan is an important, official document of the Unified Government that guides future investment in the Armourdale area over the next 10 years through zoning, strategic initiatives, partnerships with the Armourdale community and businesses, and other measures.

This report briefly summarizes an extensive Community Outreach and Planning Process, Armourdale History, Current Conditions, and Future Investments study that is titled "Site Analysis Report" and included as an Appendix to this report.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors of this report are indebted to our Armourdale community partners, members of the Armourdale Area Master Plan Steering Committee colleagues from across the UG, and others who have contributed to this planning effort. In particular, we would like to thank Monica Mendez, and Claudine Sanders from the Armourdale Renewal Association; Beto Lugo and his colleagues at Clean Air Now; Susila Jones of Cross-Lines Community Outreach; Vladimir Krstic and Mariah Randell of Kansas City Design Center; Daniel Serda and Gene Chavez; Mayor David Alvey as well as Commissioners Brian McKiernan, Tom Burroughs, and Melissa Bynum; as well as Gunnar Hand, Kimberly Portillo, and Tom Meyer from the Unified Government Planning + Urban Design Department, without whom we would not be able to do our work.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

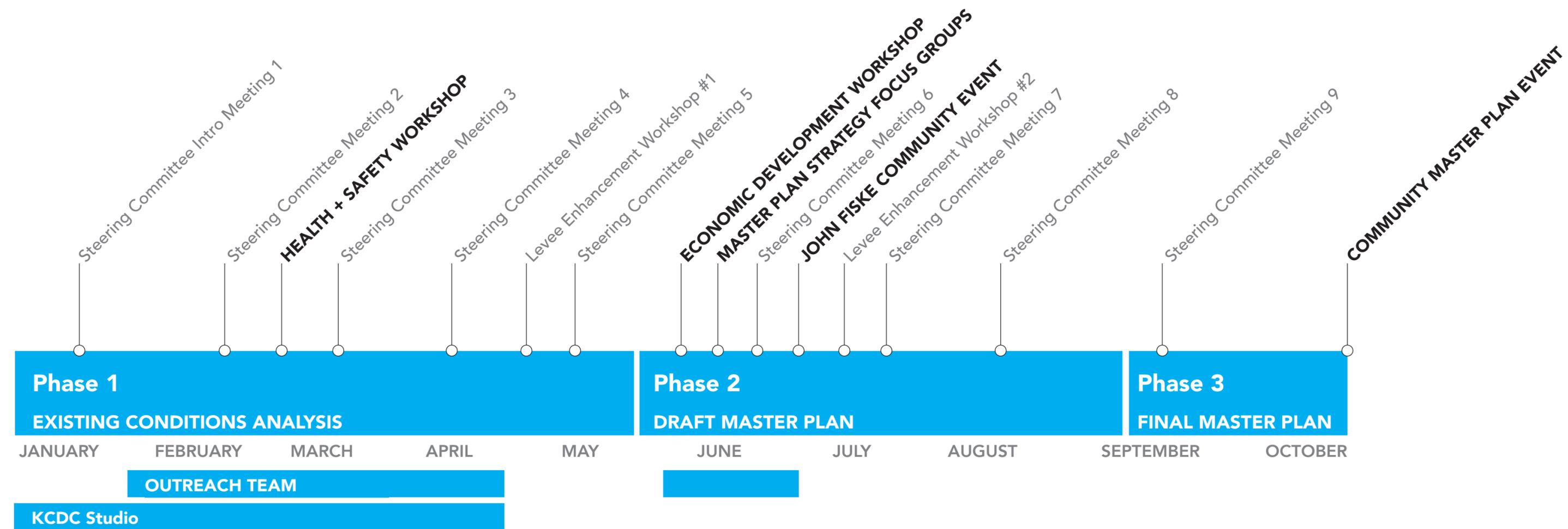
Joe Graham	Principal, John Fiske Elementary	Tom Jacobs	Mid America Regional Council
Susila Jones	Director, Cross-lines	Troy Shaw	Unified Government Public Works Department
Yvonne Lopez Pastor	UGFBH Church, ARA Board Member	Justice Welker	Unified Government Transportation Department
Claudine Sanders	Vice President, ARA	Wesley McKain	Unified Government Public Health Department
Marc Lonesk	Board Member, ARA	Jeff Fisher	Unified Government Public Works Department
Rebecca Sprang	Board Member, ARA and Armourdale Resident	Angel Obert	Unified Government Parks and Recreation Department
Mike Zeller	Flying Truss	Katherine Carttarment	Unified Government Economic Development Department
Blake Willhite	Premier Investments	Jesus Casas	Unified Government Community Policing
Bill Haw		Wilba Miller	Unified Government Community Development Development
Mariah Randell	Kansas City Design Center	Andrea Generaux	Unified Government Livable Neighborhoods
Vladimir Krstic	Kansas City Design Center	Phil Donnellan	Kansas City Boat Club
Ben Walker	Kaw Beautiful Coalition	Tim Berger	All American Catfish
Beto Lugo	Clean Air Now	Stefan White	Friends of the River
Rick Behrens	Levee Trail	Tom Burroughs	Unified Government At-Large Commissioner
Scott Brown	Historic West Bottoms	Brian McKiernan	Unified Government Commissioner, District 2
Scott Mensing	Army Corp of Engineers		

## SCHEDULE + PROCESS

Prior to the start of the project in January 2021, the UG assembled a robust steering committee composed of community leaders, advocates, public workers, business owners, and residents. The planning team met with the committee monthly to provide project updates and initiate discussion around issues and assets of Armourdale. The planning team spent the first several weeks of the project meeting individually with a majority of the stakeholders. These discussions proved to be an incredible benefit to helping the planning team gain a better understanding of the existing conditions in Armourdale, from how it is experienced by a resident or business owner to a developer to a city official.

4 Also during the first 5-months of the planning effort, the PORT team researched and assembled an existing conditions analysis and historical inventory of Armourdale; Borderless Studio worked with Monica Mendez from the Armourdale Renewal Association to recruit 4 residents of Armourdale to join our team for our community outreach effort; and MVRDV organized and led the Health and Safety Workshop and Economic Development Workshop. Upon completion of these tasks, the team issued the Task 1: Site Analysis Report. This report is attached the Master Plan as an Appendix and includes all existing conditions analysis, community engagement and input, as well as detailed workshop summary reports.

In summer 2021, the planning team pivoted to developing the vision and implementation strategies outlined in this report based upon the site history, existing conditions research and future goals for Armourdale identified by the community and stakeholders during Task 1.



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH ECOSYSTEM

The community outreach ecosystem is rooted in active engagement with community groups, public audiences, and stakeholders through ongoing conversations and interventions, rather than an occasional meeting followed by weeks or months of no information. This requires a multi-pronged approach that accommodates people with different comfort levels for interacting and engaging in a planning process.

Our community engagement approach relies on 3 core strategies: an Outreach Team, constant dialogue with community experts, and continuous engagement:

Outreach Team: The planning team worked with the Armourdale Renewal Association to recruit and train 4 residents from the neighborhood to work closely with the planning and client teams on outreach efforts.

Community Leaders: We initiated a dialogue with leaders of community-based organizations and community experts interested in playing a more active role in the planning process.

Continuous Engagement: The planning team developed an overall strategy of continuous engagement, rather than occasional meetings staggered over the course of the project.

Each community is unique and will have different responses to engagement strategies; this is why it is vital to provide a variety of ways to interact and provide insights on the project. This approach—the combination of close partnerships with community members and organizations and a robust set of tools—grounds this planning effort in real community needs.

Together, the ambition of these strategies is to gain enthusiasm and feedback during the planning process and build capacity that empowers the community to push for change and investment in Armourdale.

- PEOPLE**
- 1 OUTREACH TEAM
  - 2 PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
  - 3 COMMUNITY EXPERTS
  - 4 STEERING COMMITTEE

- TOOLS**
- 1 SURVEY
  - 2 POSTERS + POSTCARDS
  - 3 VOICEMAIL
  - 4 WEBSITE

## INSIGHTS

## FINDINGS

### Input #1: Survey

Specific questions to create data sets to better understand the community's needs & concerns.

- MindMixer Online Survey
- Printed Survey
- Outreach Team

### Input #2: Personal Story

Open-ended platform for community members to share stories of inspirations and challenges.

- Armourdale Strong Website
- Postcards
- Voicemail Recordings



## THE OUTREACH TEAM



### Gohan Mendez

I attend Sumner Academy High School as Junior, where I am also a Football player. I'm currently part of the VERA Institute of Justice to become a Certified Community Researcher.



### Luis Alvarado

I am a student at Donnelly College, freshman year, and I have been living here in Armourdale for 11 years. I volunteer for the Food Pantry at the Armourdale Community Center and enjoyed going to camps there while growing up in Armourdale.



### Jessica Jimenez

I am a part-time student at Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC) and part-time worker taking care of the elderly. I am a resident of Armourdale, and grew up in this area playing with other kids past 8pm, riding our bikes, and participating in the Armourdale Summer Camp program.



### Rosa Chavez

I have worked the past 24 years for the School District, in the Armourdale community. I like to listen to people in the community, so I can get to know them and help them to find resources so they can fulfill their needs and goals. I have always loved volunteering and serving the community by participating in food drives and helping the Hispanic community in the Armourdale area.

**Health + Safety Workshop**  
March 29th, 2021 - Zoom

The workshop aimed to refine our understanding of the public health landscape in Armourdale, and to collectively review potential strategies and initiatives to improve public health and community quality of life. The session convened government and non-profit public health experts and Armourdale stakeholders to review public health issues and causalities; existing assets and future ambitions for improved public health; and possible actions to provide increased public health resources and outcomes. A full detailed workshop summary is included in the Armourdale Area Master Plan Site Analysis Report.

**Community + Economic Development Workshop**  
June 8th, 2021 - Zoom

The workshop stimulated a dialogue between Armourdale residents, stakeholders, and UG Economic Development Department staff related to economic growth in Armourdale. The conversation centered upon the historic and current economic forces shaping the relationship between industrial and residential uses in the neighborhood. Discussions spanned topics including: the quality, maintenance and future of Armourdale housing stock; vacant land turnover from residential to industrial uses; local job and training availability; as well as public space and walkability for employees and residents. A detailed workshop summary is included in the Armourdale Area Master Plan Site Analysis Report.

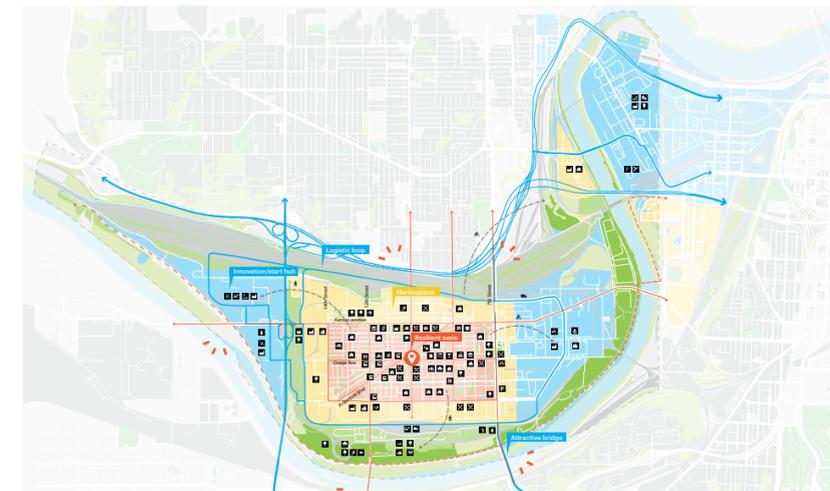
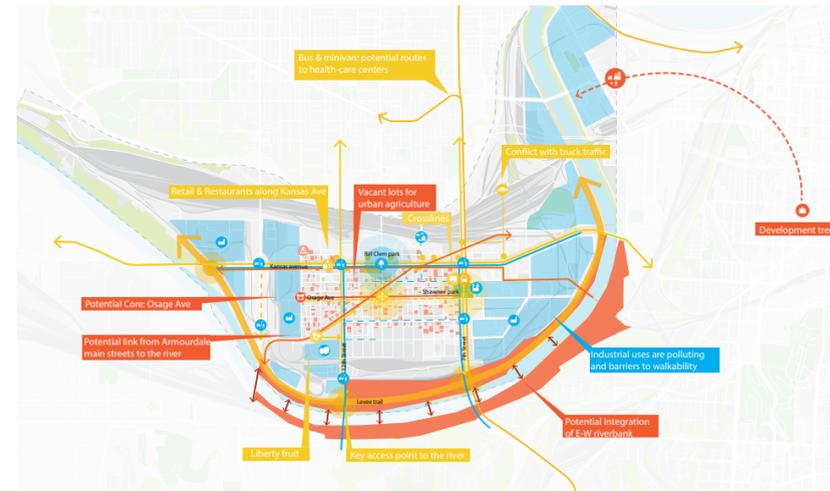
**Neighborhood Resident Focus Group**  
June 19th, 2021- John Fiske Elementary School

Following the two Zoom workshops that convened Unified Government staff, Armourdale residents and stakeholders, the Unified Government Dept. of Planning and Urban Design Department and consultant team hosted two in-person events over back-to-back weekends at John Fiske Elementary School in Armourdale. The first event, held in the school gym, convened a small focus group comprised of Armourdale Residents invited by the Outreach Team. In this more informal setting, an open dialog -- primarily in Spanish -- was focused around outlining a list of neighborhood resident priorities for the ongoing Armourdale Area Master Plan.

**Neighborhood Block Party**  
June 26th, 2021 - John Fiske Elementary School

Following the Focus Group, the team hosted an Armourdale Block Party at the John Fiske Elementary School playground. The event was staffed by English and Spanish speaking members of the outreach and planning team to facilitate informal discussions around large neighborhood plans and image boards. Over two hours, approximately 75 people visited the event (and ate nearly 100 hot dogs!). There was also a COVID-19 vaccination team at the event.

8



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# OUTREACH TAKEAWAYS

Determining what issues are most important to the community and recognizing its ideas for the future of Armourdale will help the planning process base its priorities and goals upon the community's vision. Ranging from having a safer neighborhood to creating more accessible activities and programs, the findings are closely tied with ideas about preserving community assets and addressing challenges.

Challenges in Armourdale are a product of decades of neglect, disinvestment, and isolation. They vary greatly in terms of complexity and immediacy. This planning effort attempts to take on both long and short-term challenges equally, as many of the issues—such as traffic safety and street, sidewalk, and lighting conditions— could be resolved through the provision of basic services. Meanwhile, there are more complex issues— such as safety, security, vandalism, and blighted properties— that will require a comprehensive strategy that operates on multiple fronts.

English + Spanish Poster

Your name | Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

How long you have been in the neighborhood? | Cuanto tiempo lleva usted en la comunidad?: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about an activity or place in your community that made you proud | Cuéntenos sobre una actividad o lugar de su comunidad que lo enorgullezca: \_\_\_\_\_

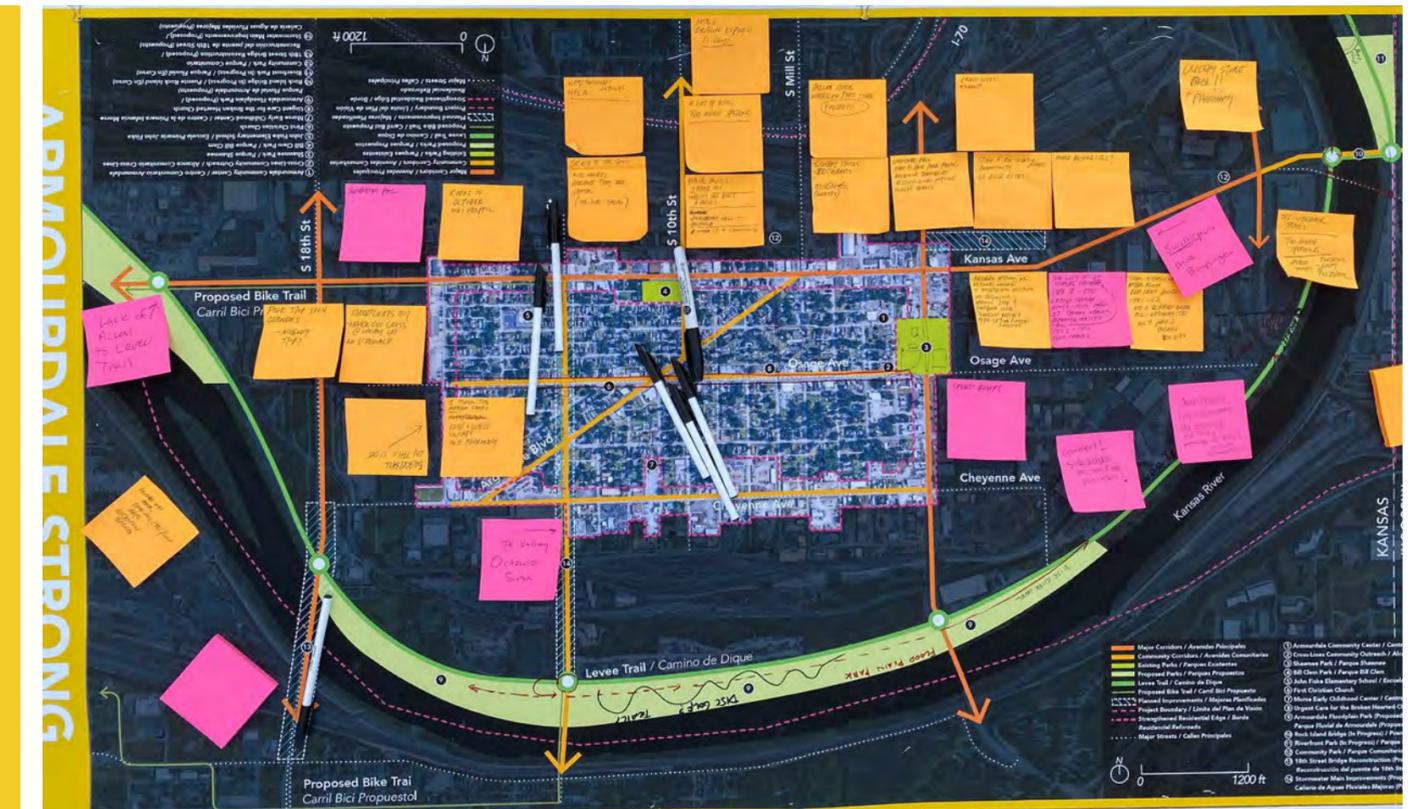
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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To take the survey, visit [armourdalestrong.com](http://armourdalestrong.com)  
To leave a voicemail [Para completar la encuesta, visite: armourdalestrong.com](http://armourdalestrong.com)  
Para dejar un mensaje de voz, llame: xxx.xxx.xxx

Postcard



# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

## 2. A FUTURE FOR ARMOURDALE

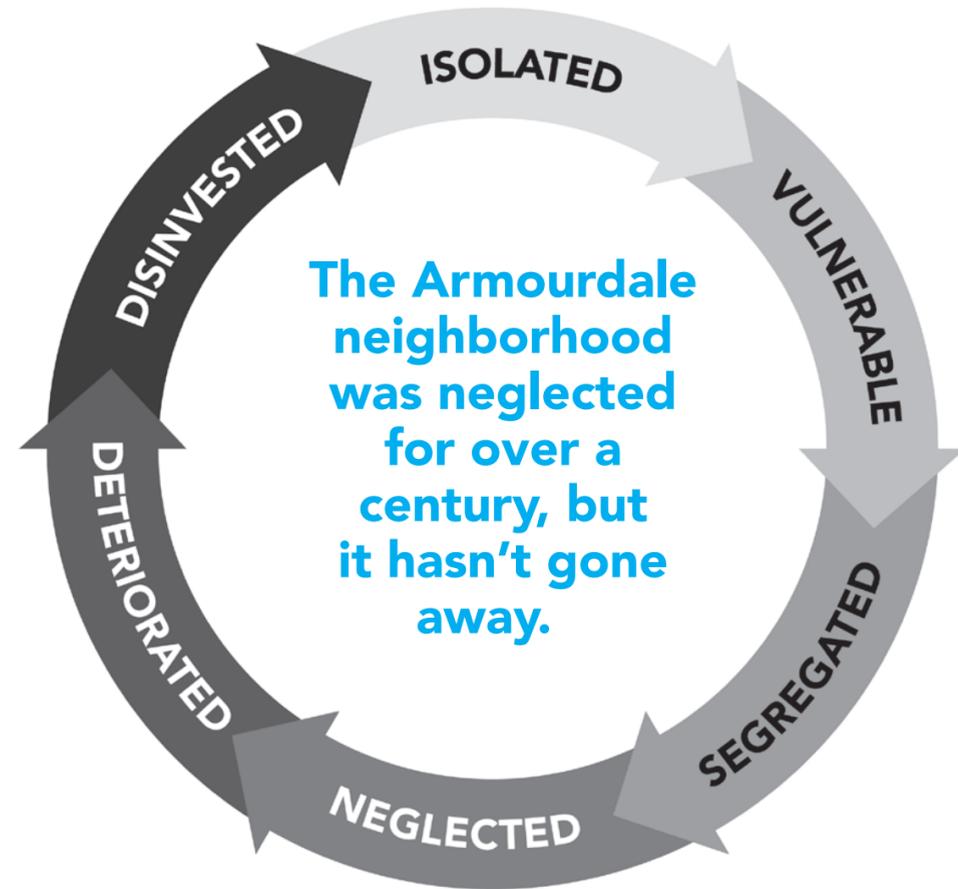
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# A CENTURY OF DISINVESTMENT

Armourdale must be understood through the lens of the forces that shaped it. Those forces have geological, hydrological, economic, social, racial, and ecological roots. Only by understanding those forces can we construct a more equitable and prosperous future for Armourdale.

First and foremost, Armourdale has been **ISOLATED** from the rest of Kansas City by the Kansas River, as well as the rail yards and historically industrial areas that grew up around them. Because of its position in the floodplain of the Kansas River, Armourdale has been **VULNERABLE** to flooding since it was first platted in the late 1800's. This vulnerability and the migration of large numbers of Mexican immigrants to the neighborhood beginning in the 1910's led to the **SEGREGATION** of the neighborhood, first within itself by the informal but enforced division of the district into white and Latino sections and then later as an entire neighborhood by the enforcement of redlining and discriminatory lending practices.

The redlining practices after the Second World War, coupled with repeated flood events in the early part of the 20th century, led to Armourdale's infrastructure and public resources being increasingly **NEGLECTED** or converted to serve a growing industrial district. Existing resources like the storm sewer system **DETERIORATED**, and investments in the levee system, while protecting the neighborhood from catastrophic flooding, did little to improve the day to day lives of residents. These forces combined to produce decades of **DISINVESTMENT** in Armourdale's residential areas and a rise in the economic vulnerability of its residents.

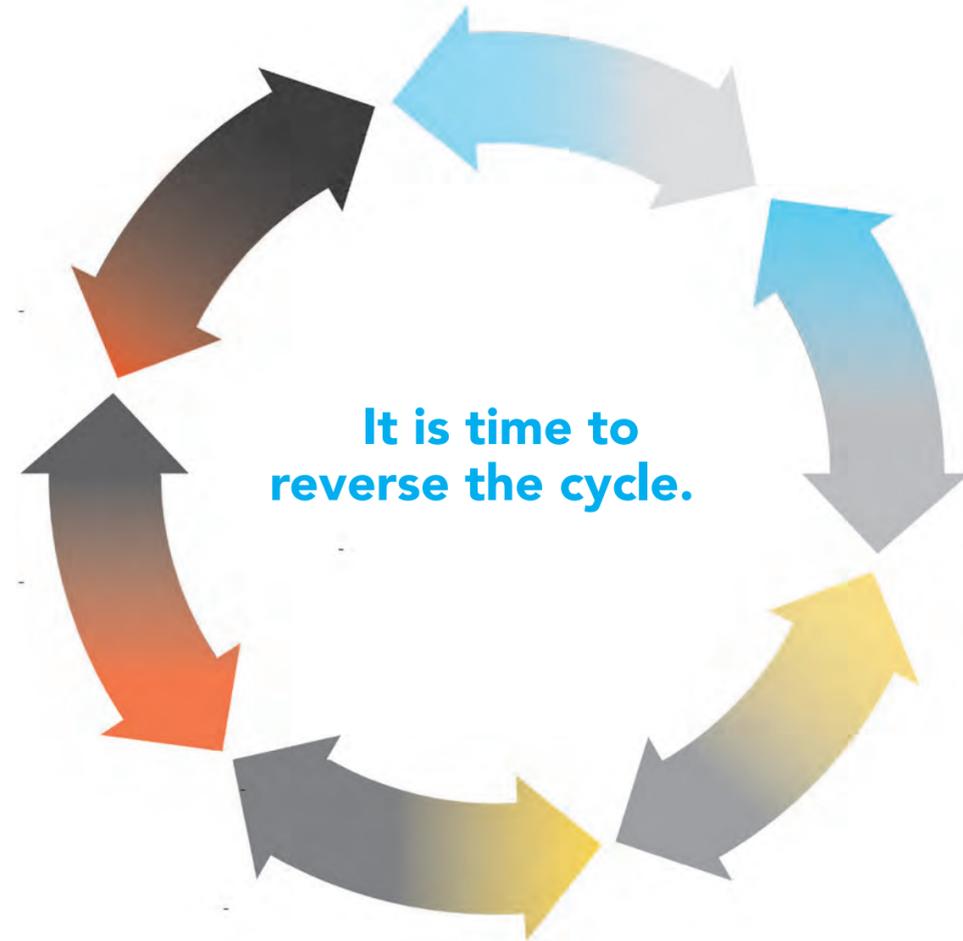


## ARMOURDALE ENDURES

Armourdale has endured this cycle of disinvestment for over a century. For the last 70 years, Armourdale further persisted under the looming possibility that one day the entire neighborhood would be erased—not by flood, but by government decree.

*This is the first Master Plan for Armourdale since 1979.*

Armourdale is not destined to endlessly repeat the cycles of isolation and disinvestment that have defined its history until now. Armourdale now demands the investment, equity and stability that has been withheld from it for over 100 years. This Master Plan is meant to empower the Armourdale Community and the Unified Government to create a healthier, more prosperous, and more equitable Armourdale.



## ARMOURDALE IS STRONG / FUERTE

Armourdale must become more **CONNECTED** to the rest of Kansas City and to the Kansas River, overcoming the historical and physical challenges of so much infrastructural and social isolation. Armourdale must become more **SAFE** to ensure the stability and long-term health of its residents.

The Armourdale and its community must become **EMPOWERED** to advocate for what it needs to the Unified Government, and to continuously organize itself to make sure it has access to those resources and investments.

This is not just the responsibility of the Armourdale residents, however. The Unified Government must ensure that Armourdale residents and community leaders are **INCLUDED** and that their interests are represented fully when major decisions that impact the future of the district are made.

These principals must be directed toward supporting investments that make Armourdale a more **ATTRACTIVE** home for current and future residents by improving their quality of life and the physical condition of the public realm and public resources. Taken together, these efforts will lead to a **STIMULATED** and dynamic future for the district.



Armourdale deserves the resources and investment it has been historically denied.

The future of Armourdale is strong.

# ARMOURDALE

# STRONG FUERTE

# A VISION FOR ARMOURDALE: ARMOURDALE STRONG / FUERTE

The neighborhood core of Armourdale has been underserved and under represented for decades, despite the fact that it has persisted even after years of flooding, disinvestment, urban renewal, and displacement.

The goals of this Master Plan are to protect the existing residential fabric of Armourdale, improve the quality of life for Armourdale residents, and open up more opportunities for people to live in Armourdale.

The vision for Armourdale is Armourdale Strong.

**A Stronger Community:** The Master Plan prioritizes neighborhood-focused strategies for strengthening the Armourdale community for those that live in Armourdale, or will in the future. These strategies range from new housing, rent assistance, job training, community policing to after school programs.

**Stronger Connections:** By focusing on the street corridors that serve the Armourdale neighborhood and connect it Kansas City beyond, the Master Plan aims to expand business opportunities along each corridor, create dense community-focused development that is walkable and scaled appropriately to the neighborhood, and increase the amount, quality, and performance of public space along each corridor.

**Stronger Opportunities:** Reversing the cycle of disinvestment begins with action! When the first new policy is adopted; when the first initiative is launched; or when the first shovel breaks ground--*action* will unlock new opportunities and a stronger Armourdale.



# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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## FIVE FOCUS AREAS + ACTIONS

The strategies and actions outlined in the Armourdale Area Master Plan are centered upon five primary focus areas:

### The Neighborhood Core:

Strategies and actions to direct resources - financial resources, human capital resources, and municipal resources - to serving the Armourdale community.

### The Corridors:

Strategies and actions to direct investment and improvements along three principal corridors that form the main current and potential commercial corridors.

### The Industrial Ring:

Strategies and actions to guide the Industrial Ring become a net contributor to Armourdale's economic, environmental and social health as well as a site for the incubation of smaller, locally-owned businesses.

### The Kansas River:

Strategies and actions to open up new opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the Kansas River as an everyday community resource.

### The West Bottoms:

Strategies and potential scenarios for redeveloping the West Bottoms as a mixed-use district centered on the restored Kansas River.

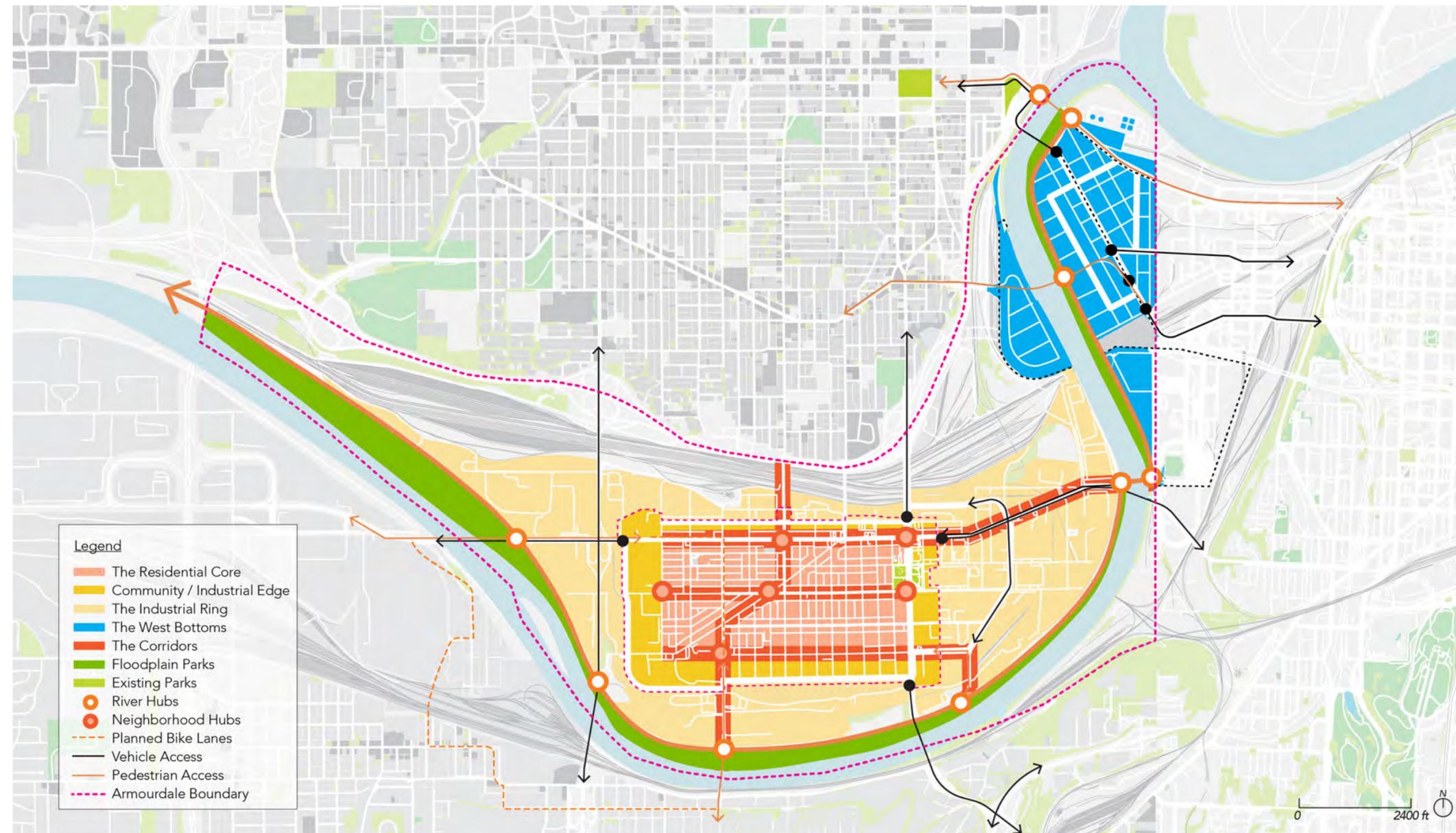
## THE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE

## THE CORRIDORS

## THE INDUSTRIAL RING

## THE KANSAS RIVER

## THE WEST BOTTOMS



## THE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE

**Introduction:** The residential core of Armourdale is an area of primarily one-story single family homes that extends over approximately 350-acres between Kansas Avenue and Cheyenne Avenue on the north and south and 18th Street and 7th Street on the west and east. The area is served by a single school, John Fiske Elementary, Morse Early Childhood Education Center and two public parks: Bill Clem Park at 10th Street and Shawnee Park on 7th Street.

Homes in Armourdale are generally on narrow and deep lots that reflect the original platting of the neighborhood in the 1870's, when the residential areas encompassed almost the entire Armourdale district. Since successive floods in the first half of the 20th Century decimated the neighborhood, there has been little widespread or systematic reinvestment or rehabilitation of the housing stock, and as a result the district as a whole has a wide range of levels of repair to its homes.

In summary, the neighborhood core of Armourdale has been underserved and under represented for decades, despite the fact that it has persisted even after years of flooding, disinvestment, urban renewal, and displacement.

**Master Plan Goals:** The goals of this Master Plan are to protect the existing residential fabric of Armourdale, improve the quality of life for Armourdale residents, and open up more opportunities for people to live in Armourdale. To achieve these goals, this Master Plan adopts two policies for the Neighborhood Core of Armourdale. The first policy is that the area of Armourdale between Kansas Avenue on the north, Cheyenne

Avenue on the south, 7th Street on the East and 18th Street on the West should remain a residential neighborhood with neighborhood-scale commercial uses within it. There has always been an unproductive ambiguity about the future of the residential areas of Armourdale, and this policy should clarify that Armourdale should remain a residential neighborhood in the future.

The second policy is that industrial uses within the Neighborhood Core should be phased out, to be replaced by quality, affordable housing. Based on the 1979 Master Plan these uses should never have been approved in the first place, and represent an ad-hoc and arbitrary approach to planning that stemmed from the ambiguity about the neighborhood's future described above. These industrial uses, many of which are surrounded on all four sides by residences, detract from the value of resident's homes and the community character of the Neighborhood Core, and should be redeveloped as housing or community facilities.

The context for this Master Plan's policies and recommendations are the more than sixty years of disinvestment and displacement that Armourdale residents have experienced. The resilience of the Armourdale community in spite of these challenges should be celebrated, and these recommendations should all be understood as directing resources - financial resources, human capital resources, and municipal resources - to serving the community that already exists and that will be there in the future.



## THE CORRIDORS

**Introduction:** Armourdale's commercial areas are centered around Kansas Avenue and Osage Avenue, where there is a wide variety of small grocery and convenience stores, dining establishments, small-scale auto repair, sales, installation, and other neighborhood businesses. Most of these cater to the district's Latino population, advertising their services in Spanish and English.

Although almost all corridor buildings have street frontages, most clearly service a car-based customer base. Cartways are generally unnecessarily wide, building setbacks and parking in front of buildings is common, and there are numerous vacant lots along each corridor.

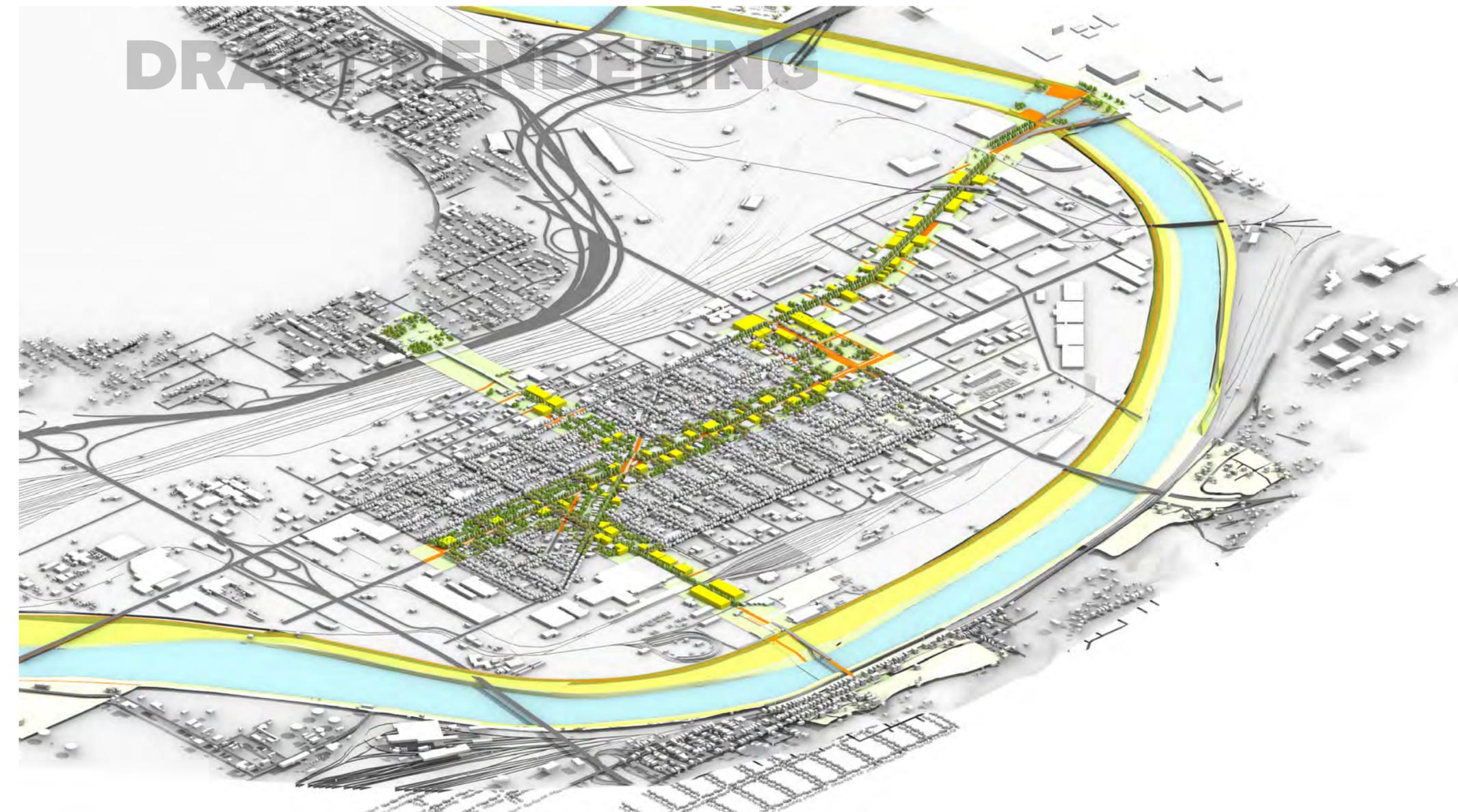
Further, numerous factors deter pedestrian use, including high-voltage power lines hovering over tree-less segments of poorly maintained (or non-existent) sidewalk often blocked by illegally parked cars, adjacent to crumbling curbs and clogged stormwater drains. Streetlights are also commonly out for extended periods of time. Bus stops are located by signage only, with no shelter available and sometimes without adjacent sidewalks.

Despite the current condition of key Armourdale corridors, they historically functioned as vibrant, walkable retail streets. While heavy truck use will most likely continue to characterize large existing thoroughfares like 7th St, and Kansas Ave. to a slightly lesser extent, Osage Avenue on the other hand, located in the geographic heart of Armourdale, has the potential to once again become the focal point of the neighborhood as a walkable retail street defined by local retail, restaurants and new mixed-use buildings.

**Master Plan Goals:** This Master Plan calls for investment and improvements along three principal corridors that form the main current and potential commercial corridors. The first of these is a north-south corridor leading south from 10th Street over the rail yards, to Argentine Boulevard and then further south on 12th Street over the Kansas River. The second corridor is Osage Avenue in the heart of the Neighborhood Core, and the third is Kansas Avenue east of 7th Street as far as the Rock Island Bridge.

The goal for the investment in the Corridors is to enhance business opportunities along each corridor, create dense development that is walkable and scaled appropriately to the neighborhood, and increase the amount, quality, and performance of public space along each corridor. We have also identified two corridors of significant importance which should be developed along similar lines: Kansas Avenue west of 7th Street and Cheyenne Ave.

These goals will be supported by two policies to be implement across each corridor. First, improvements to stormwater infrastructure should emphasize Green Stormwater Infrastructure improvements, including raingardens, swales, and infiltration areas to both increase the amount of infiltration and provide Armourdale with additional tree canopy and green space. Second, improvements to these corridors should reduce the width of cartways to 12 feet maximum and parking spaces to 8 feet maximum and use the addition width to install dedicated or separated bike lanes.



# THE INDUSTRIAL RING

**Introduction:** Armourdale has always been home to both industry and the homes of the workers that live there. Armourdale is also home to a diverse array of light and heavy industrial firms, from manufacturing to logistics and distribution to small-scale firms like auto body shops, storage yards, and equipment rental. It also includes a number of scrap yards, rendering plants, and other industries that should not be located close to residential neighborhoods because of the effects of their byproducts or pollution on resident quality of life.

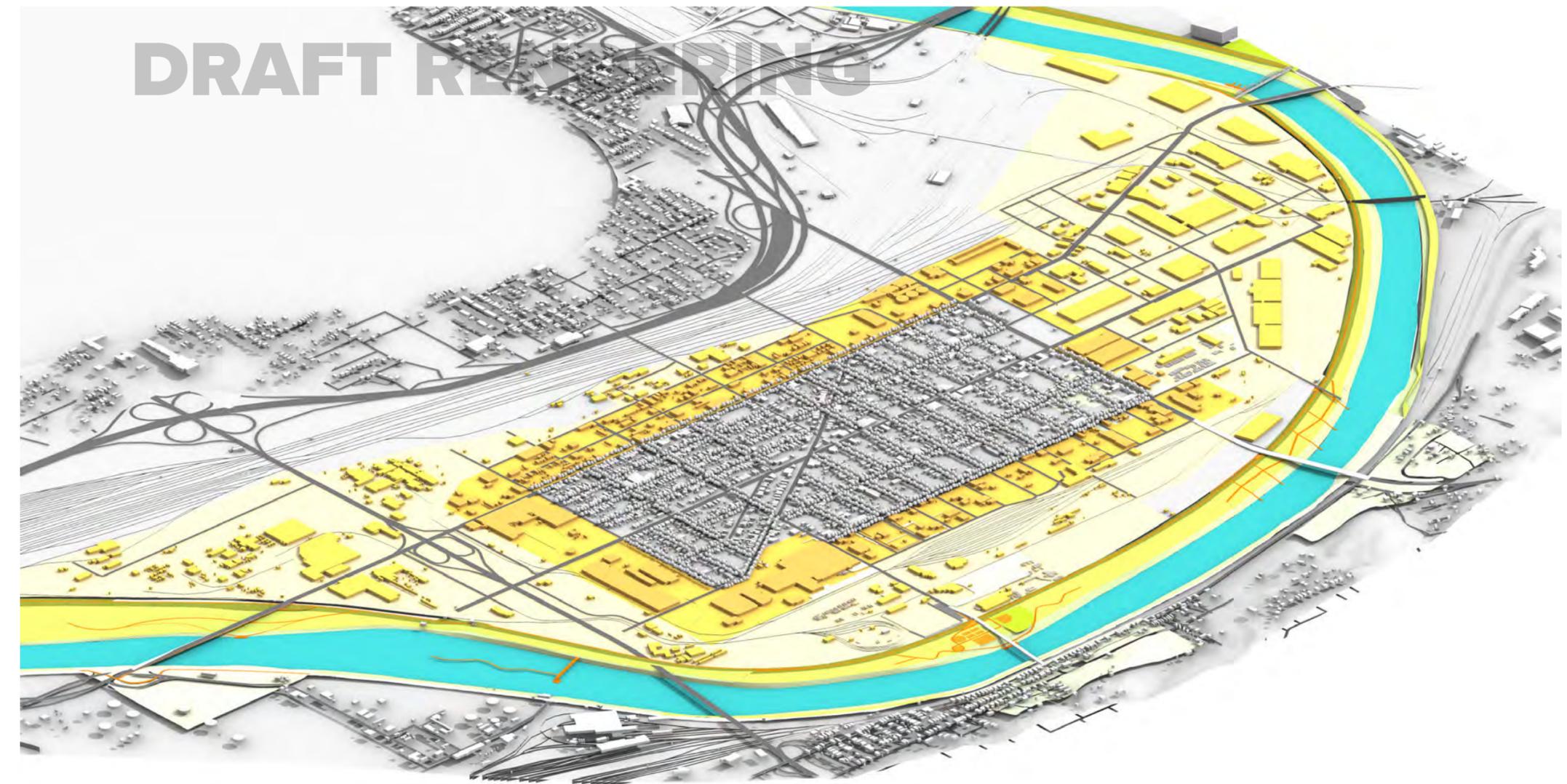
Armourdale is rendered a site of environmental inequality, where people who live and/or work there are disproportionately subject to industrial pollution and environmental hazards. The fact that a significant number of Armourdale’s population are recent immigrants and lack access to environmental policy making, leaves this community especially vulnerable to environmental racism.

In recent years, and especially after the 1951 flood, people who work in Armourdale have become increasingly isolated from people who live there. According to the most recent American Community Survey, only 1% of people who work in Armourdale also live in Armourdale. Further, driven by “market dynamics,” industry has continued to expand towards the residential core of Armourdale during the past century—risking its community’s health and contaminating its live, work, and play spaces.

**Master Plan Goals:** This Master Plans’ goals for the Industrial Ring are to first and foremost to help the Industrial Ring become a net contributor to Armourdale’s economic, environmental and social health. Second, Armourdale should become a site for the incubation of smaller, locally-owned businesses that need greater flexibility or smaller spaces than those commonly available. Finally, the Unified Government should work with polluting or other industries with detrimental impact on quality of life to relocate to areas of Wyandotte county that are not adjacent to residential communities.

To support this, this Master Plan recommends two policies for adoption:

First, truck traffic should be diverted away from the Neighborhood Core. Second, polluting or nuisance industries should be encouraged to relocate away from Armourdale.



DRAFT REMAINING

## THE RIVER

**Introduction:** Armourdale’s long relationship to the Kansas River is on the cusp of major transformation as several large-scale projects will soon begin implementation simultaneously. Most significant is the raising of the Kansas River Levees by 4 feet to meet the increasing pressure and intensity of the spring and summer floods. Led by the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) this effort includes a parallel effort led by the Unified Government to include public realm improvements in and around the levees themselves. These ‘betterments’ include the establishment and opening of the Levee Trail, the provision of parking and other access amenities, benches, and wayfinding.

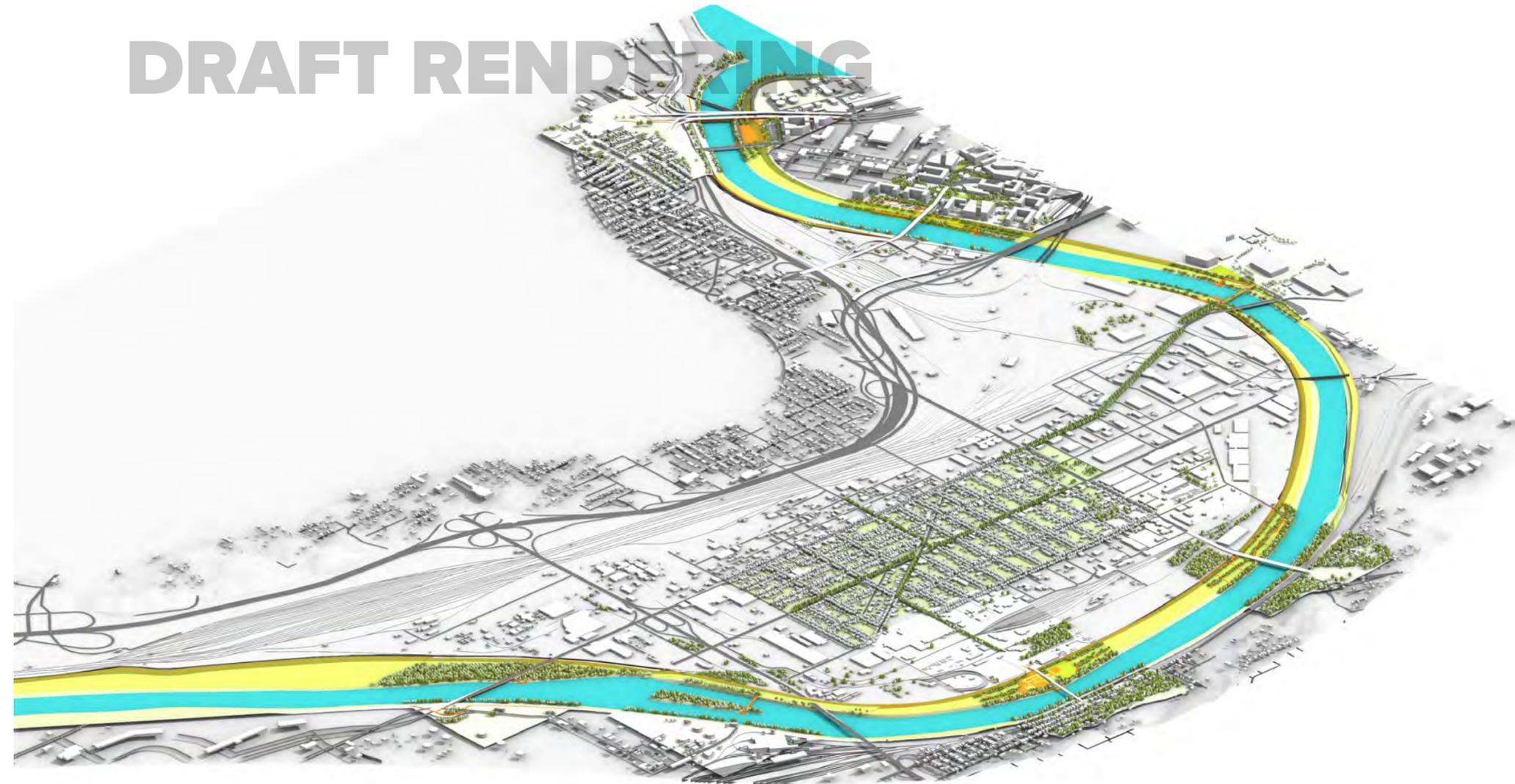
In anticipation of the initial levee enhancement and associated betterments, this Master Plan calls for additional investment the Kansas River to build its ecological health and its service to the Armourdale and Kansas City community.

**Master Plan Goals:** First and foremost, this Master Plan aims to help people enjoy the Kansas River as an everyday community resource. This means thinking of the river as more than just a way to move water from one place to another. The river and its floodplain as parks, fishing spots, hiking trails, recreational fields, and other assets.

This Master Plan’s second goal is to improve access from the Armourdale community both to and along the Kansas River. Although the forthcoming levee improvements will have access points to the levee trail, this Master Plan calls for significantly investing in and expanding them.

Finally, this Master Plan’s third goal is to increase the ecological performance of the Kansas River through restoring native ecologies in the existing floodplain. This will benefit both the ecological health of the river and provide increased recreational opportunities for Armourdale and the rest of Kansas City.

# DRAFT RENDERING



## THE WEST BOTTOMS

**Introduction:** The West Bottoms encompasses the historic stockyards area east of the Kansas River. Primarily industrial in character, it is adjacent to two developing mixed-use districts. The Missouri Historic West Bottoms is an area with a historic building fabric that has slowly been adapted into apartments, offices, breweries, and other amenities. The Stockyards District is rapidly grown area around the historic Livestock Exchange building and includes the Yards II development and the Rock Island Bridge.

As a rapidly developing mixed-use district, the Stockyards District is highly dependent on the amenities it can offer potential residents and the audience that its entertainment and hospitality destinations will attract. Central to this effort are improvements to the Kansas River Levee Trail, which offers residents an outdoor experience along the river that isn't available in other parts of the Kansas City region. The potential to use the riverfront experience as an anchor for Kansas City residents and visitors has the most potential for near-term success in this area, where the Rock Island Bridge is under development and where the Kansas City Boat Club has operated from for years.

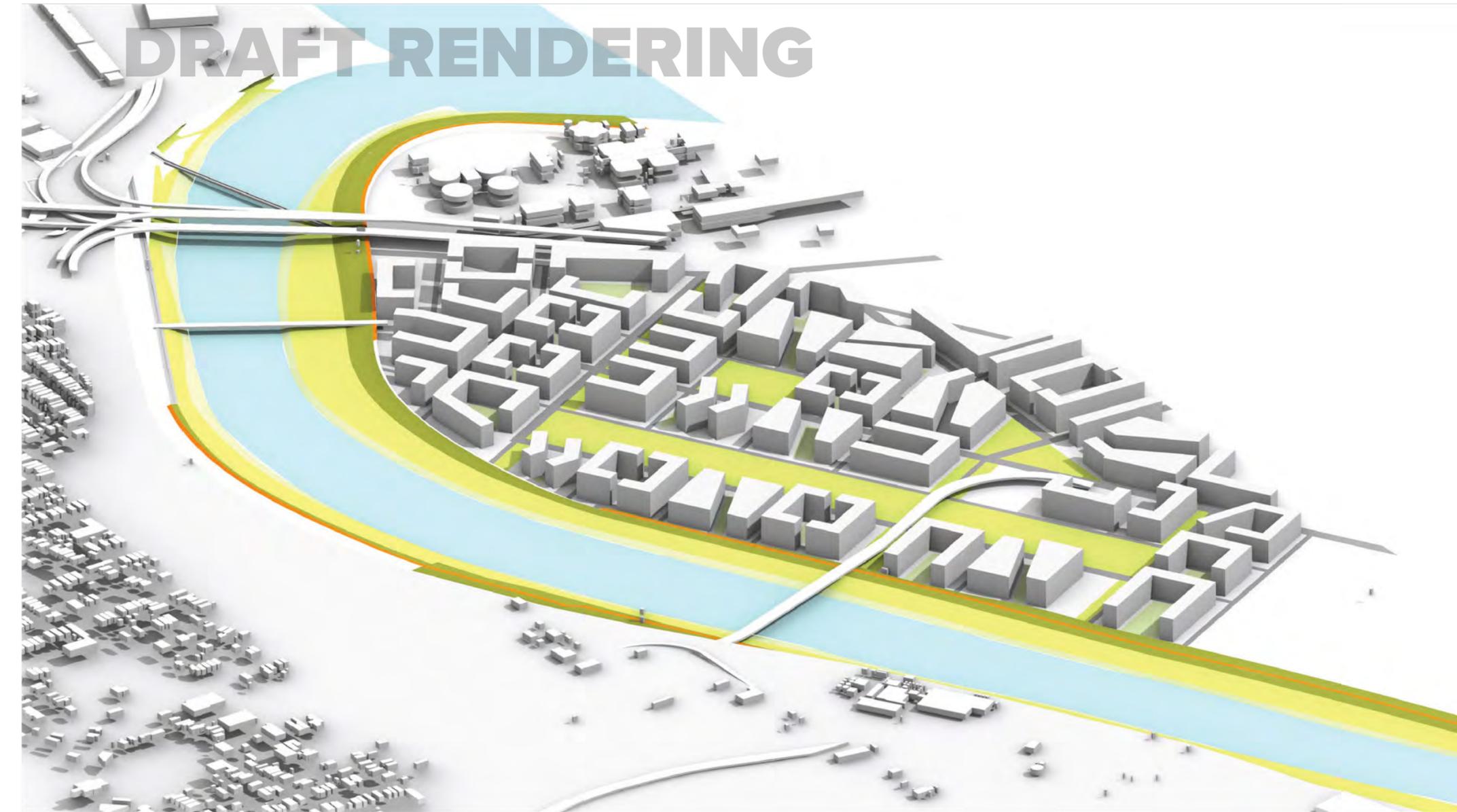
As a district, however, the Historic West Bottoms is far from built out, and even in the areas where residential and commercial development has taken hold there are large areas of empty or industrial properties that do little to add to (or actively detract from) the district's future as a mixed-use area of residential and commercial spaces. In the Kansas area of the district north of 670 there is almost no residential or commercial development at all, and the economics of development mean that this area, if it does see the kind of transformation happening in the Stockyards district to the south, will experience that cycle after the rest of the district does so.

**Master Plan Goals:** This Master Plan proposed redeveloping the West Bottoms as a mixed-use district centered on the restored Kansas River. It proposed developing a specific District Plan for the West Bottoms itself, which would study the future land use, market products, and financing strategy for the district.

The three proposals included in this Master Plan are meant to show the range of potential options for the future district, but are studies only. A final decision for the future of the district should be the product of the District Plan itself.

The three scenarios presented in this Master Plan all use the Kansas River as the central spine for development. Each district should be oriented to the Kansas River, and the river itself and its banks should be restored to make their public realm central to the identity of the West Bottoms.

The first scenario calls for a mixed-use district of residential and commercial uses with generous public realm for the local community. The second scenario calls for the creation of destination spaces financed using Sales Tax and Revenue (STAR) bonds. The third scenario calls for a combined logistics and innovation hub centered on commercial uses.



# ARMOURDALE

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# STRONG FUERTE

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE

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## NEIGHBORHOOD CORE INTRODUCTION

The Neighborhood Core of Armourdale has been underserved and under represented for decades, despite the fact that it has persisted even after years of flooding, disinvestment, urban renewal, and displacement. The goals of this Master Plan are to protect the existing residential fabric of Armourdale, improve the quality of life for Armourdale residents, and open up more opportunities for people to live in Armourdale.

To achieve these goals, this Master Plan adopts two policies for the Neighborhood Core of Armourdale. The first policy is that the area of Armourdale between Kansas Avenue on the north, Cheyenne Avenue on the south, 7th Street on the East and 18th Street on the West should remain a residential neighborhood with neighborhood-scale commercial uses within it. There has always been an unproductive ambiguity about the future of the residential areas of Armourdale, and this policy should clarify that Armourdale should remain a residential neighborhood in the future.

The second policy is that industrial uses within the Neighborhood Core should be phased out, to be replaced by quality, affordable housing. Based on the 1979 Master Plan these uses should never have been approved in the first place, and represent an ad-hoc and arbitrary approach to planning that stemmed from the ambiguity about the neighborhood's future described above. These industrial uses, many of which are surrounded on all four sides by residences, detract from the value of resident's homes and the community character of the Neighborhood Core, and should be redeveloped as housing or community facilities.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CORE GOALS

**GOAL 1: PROTECT THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL FABRIC OF ARMOURDALE**

**GOAL 2: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ARMOURDALE RESIDENTS**

**GOAL 3: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE IN ARMOURDALE**



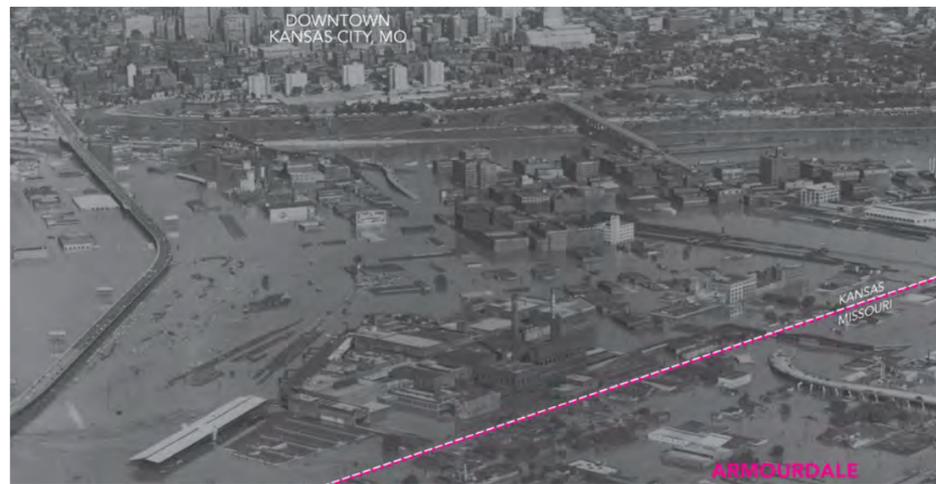
# CONTEXT AND STRATEGIES

The context for this Master Plan's policies and recommendations are the more than sixty years of disinvestment and displacement that Armourdale residents have experienced. The resilience of the Armourdale community in spite of these challenges should be celebrated, and these recommendations should all be understood as directing resources - financial resources, human capital resources, and municipal resources - to serving the community that already exists and that will be there in the future.

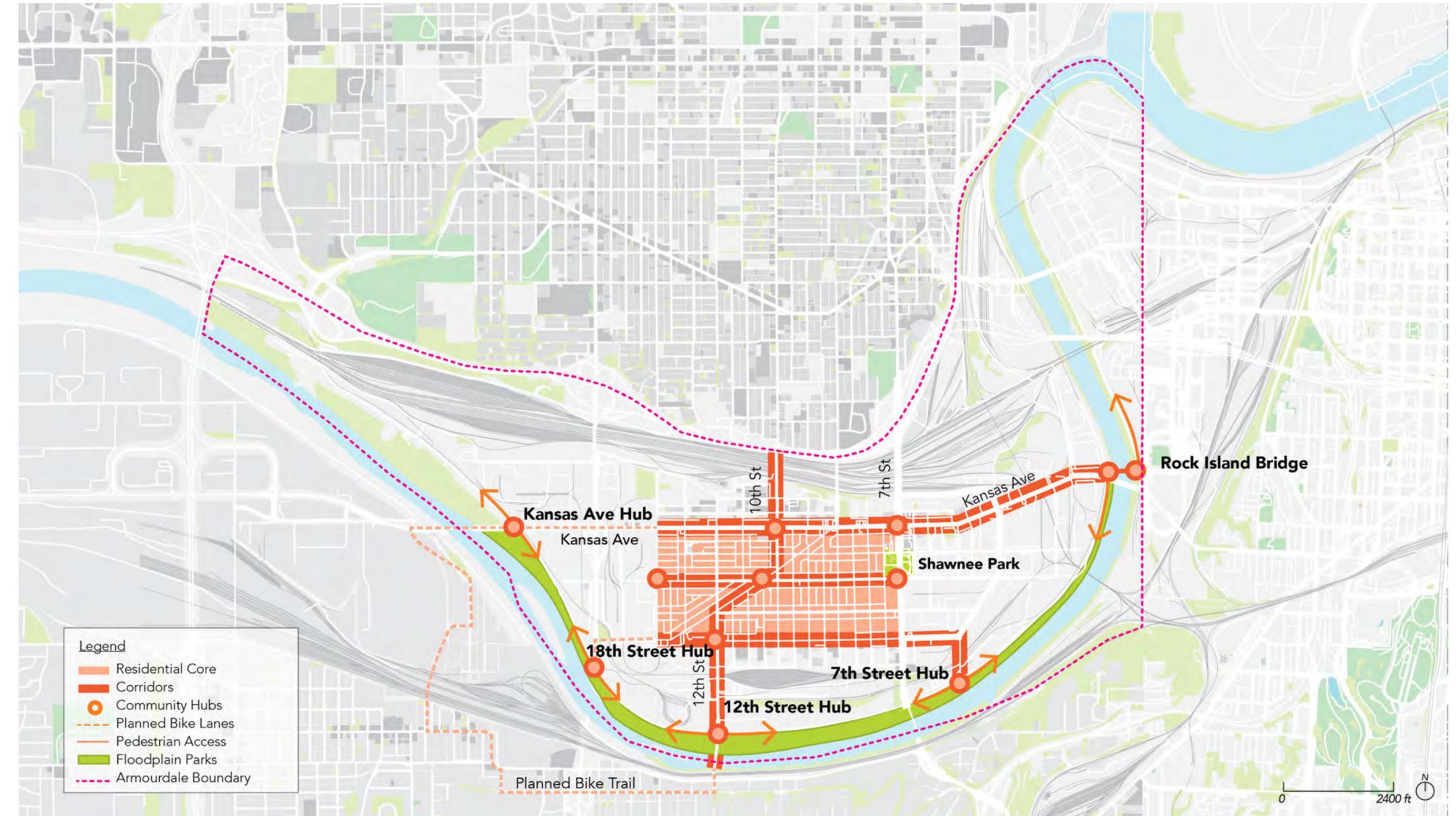
These recommendations fall into three general categories. The first set of strategies ensure Armourdale's residential development is robust, community-oriented and enhances resident's equity and quality of life.

The second set of strategies ensure that Armourdale receives the municipal resources and investments that it needs to thrive.

The third set of strategies place resources directly in the hands of Armourdale residents and community organizations so that they can continue to strengthen the identity and the vitality of the neighborhood.



Above: The Berry's Company Map, 1910 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)  
Below: Kansas River Flood, 1951 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



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### STRATEGY 01: SUPPORT INFILL HOUSING

**Goal:** Increase opportunities for homeownership in Armourdale.

**Context:** Armourdale has a high vacant property rate. Recently more people have been moving to Armourdale for its affordability.

**Target:** Ensure 80% of single-family vacant lots in Armourdale are occupied by homeowners by 2031.

**Action Items:**

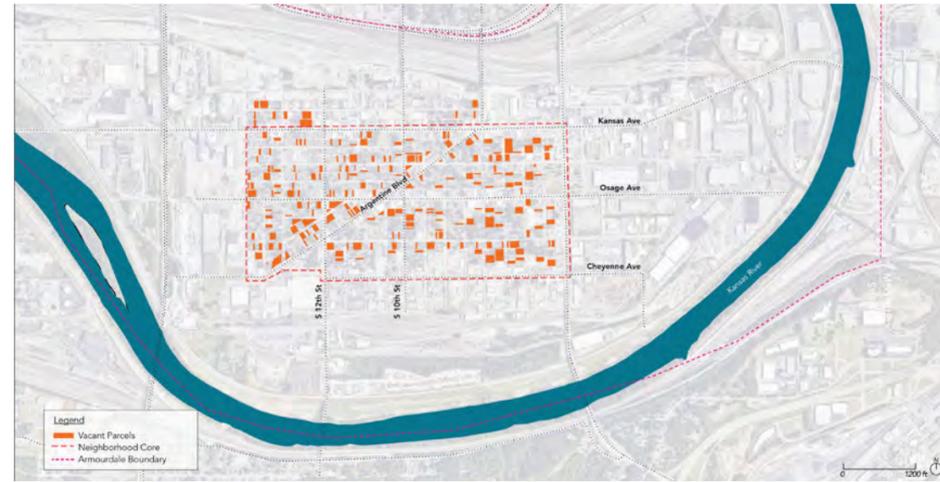
- 1) Working with Armourdale Renewal Association and other community groups, develop a list of potential home buyers and builders with community ties.
- 2) Develop a process to transfer landbanked, vacant, or abandoned parcels to home buyers. Study the consolidation of adjacent parcels to meet contemporary housing needs.

**Partners:**

- Habitat for Humanity** should facilitate building single family homes on some lots.
- The Unified Government SOAR Program** and land bank should be able to rehabilitate existing homes and help Armourdale residents improve their own homes
- Community groups** like Armourdale Renewal Association and others should be able to support potential homebuyers apply for support.

**Funding:** FHA loans and other first-time homebuyer incentives from the federal government should be targeted toward Armourdale residents.

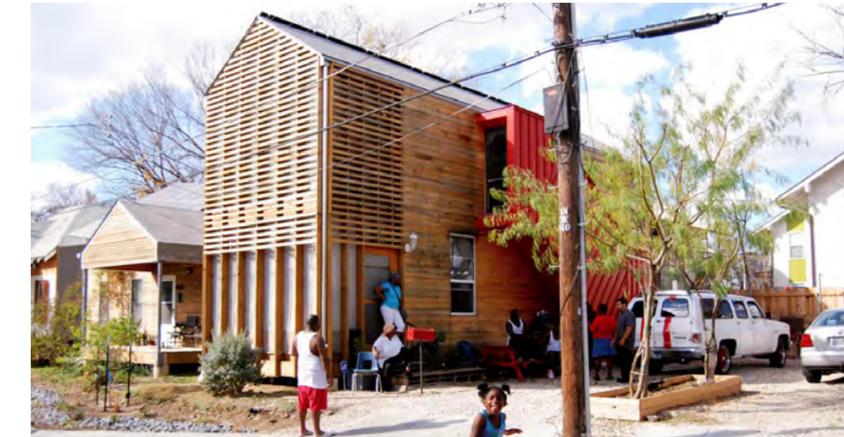
**Process:** Year 1: Develop initial process for identifying eligible properties, recruitment of potential homebuyers and transfer of lots. Year 2: Roll-out program more widely, develop contract with implementing agency.



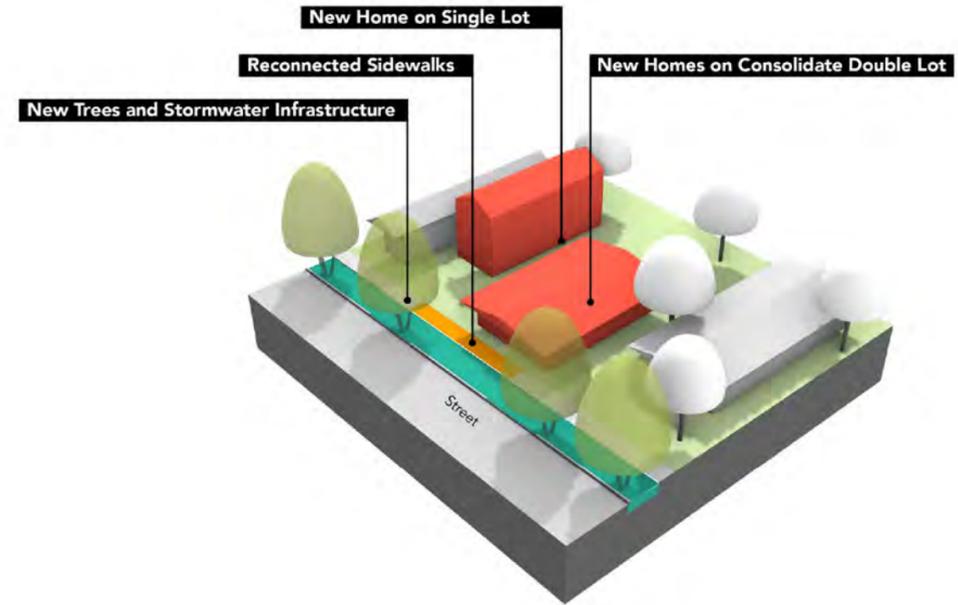
Above: Vacant Residential Properties in the Neighborhood Core  
Below: Kansas River Flood, 1951 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)

### INFILL HOUSING PRECEDENT CONGO STREET INITIATIVE DALLAS, TX

A local community design center led a participatory design process to improve a block of privately owned homes. Funded in part by the local real estate council, the Congo Street Initiative was a model for how to support a community through building new housing while keeping them in place in temporary housing on the same block while their homes were reconstructed. Design and construction quality were both high priorities for the program. This program also partnered with University of Texas Architecture Students to both design and build the houses.



Congo Street Initiative, Dallas, TX



Proposed Condition: New Residential Infill Development

### STRATEGY 02: CONVERT LARGE INDUSTRIAL SITES TO RESIDENCES

**Goal:** Increase the amount of quality affordable housing in Armourdale.

**Context:** Armourdale has both a high homeless population and a number of underutilized industrial parcels wholly contained within the residential core.

**Target:** Ensure 80% of total industrial acreage within the neighborhood core is converted to residential use by 2031.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Working with Armourdale Renewal Association and other community groups, develop a list of potential home buyers and builders with community ties.
- 2) Develop a process to transfer landbanked, vacant, or abandoned parcels to home buyers. Study the consolidation of adjacent parcels to meet contemporary housing needs.

**Site:** Vacant or underutilized residential parcels in the Neighborhood Core.

**Partners:**

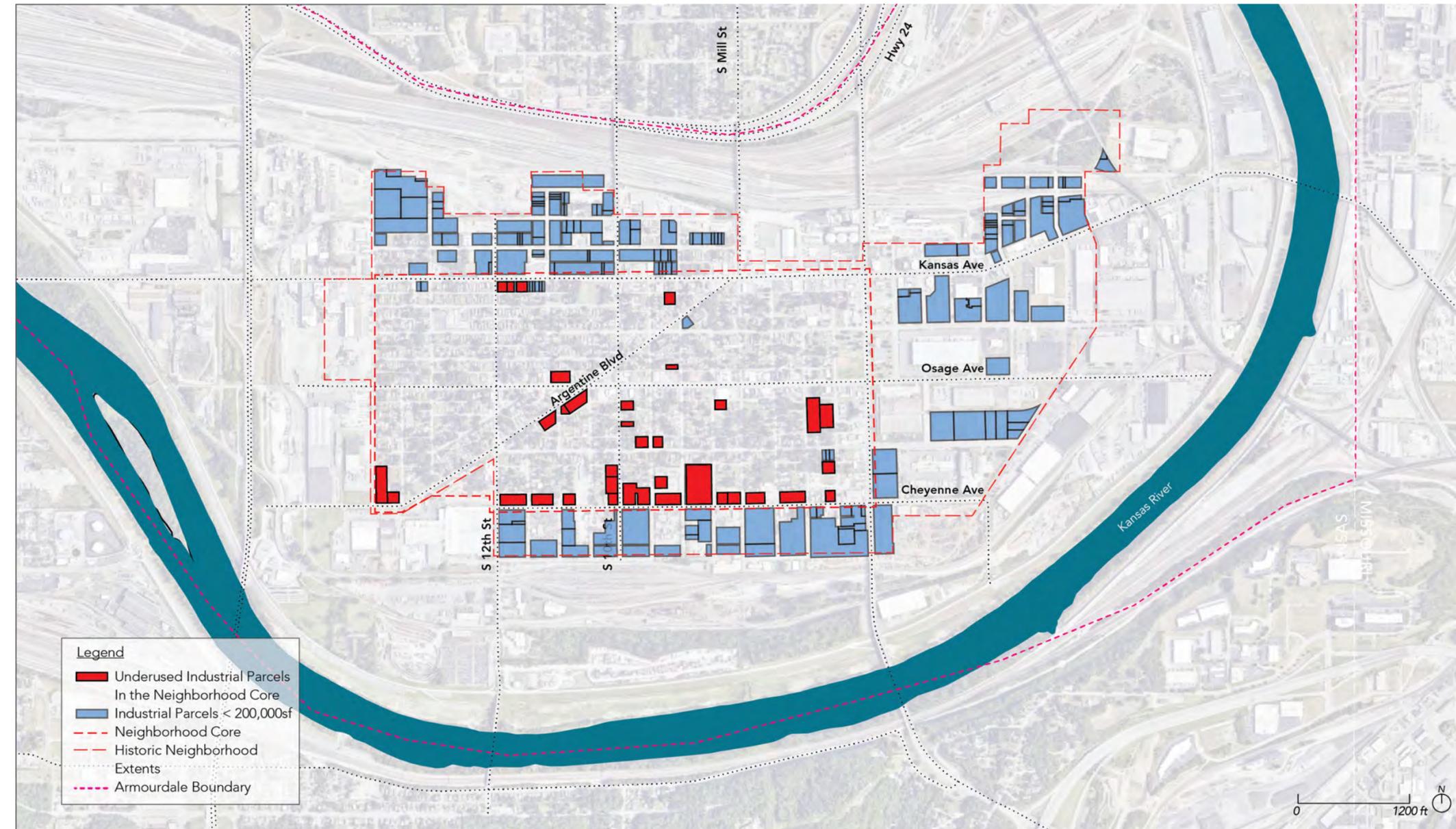
- Habitat for Humanity** should facilitate building single family homes on some lots.
- The Unified Government** stabilization program and land bank should be able to transfer properties to eligible homeowners.
- Community groups** like Armourdale Renewal Association and others should be able to help potential homebuyers apply for support.

**Funding:** Low Income Housing Tax Credits; Philanthropic Partners; Housing First Subsidies.

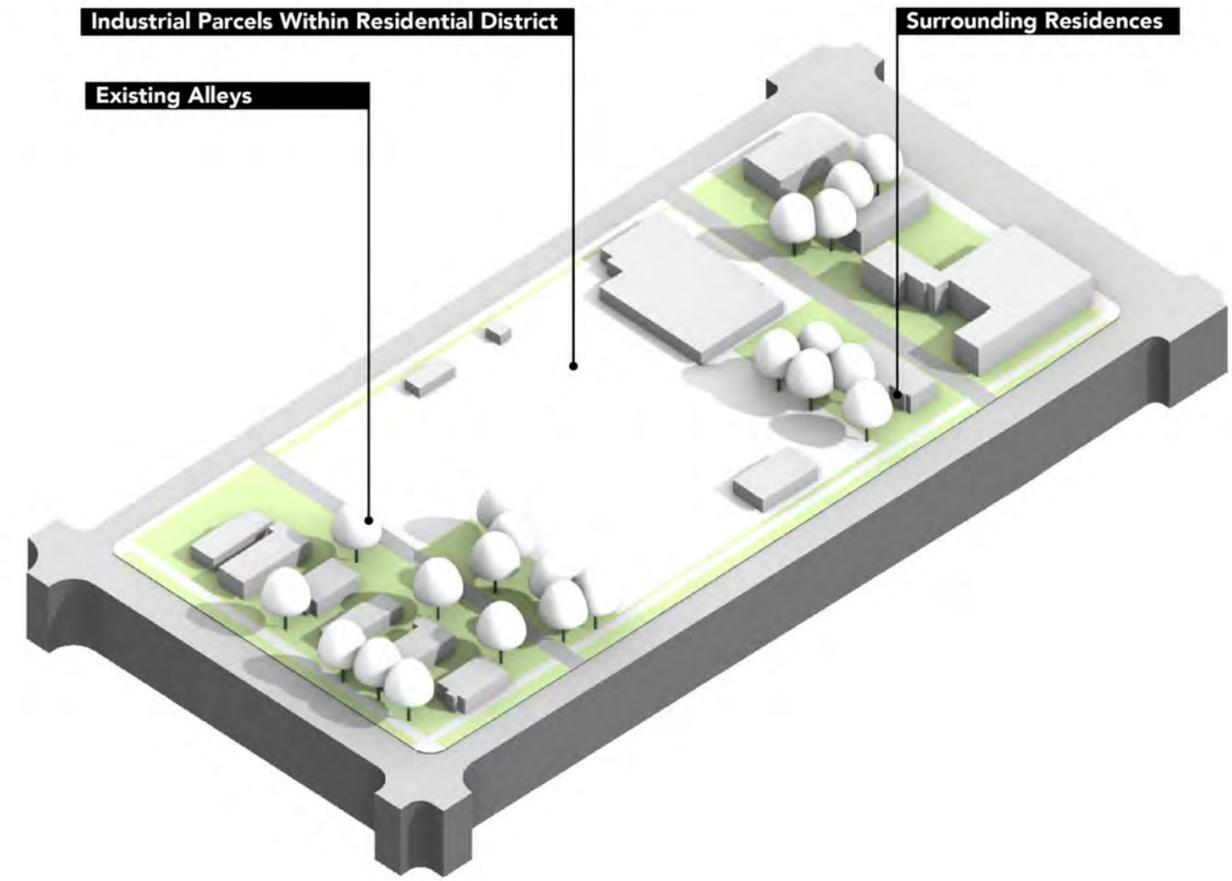


Above: Typical underused industrial parcel within the Neighborhood Core

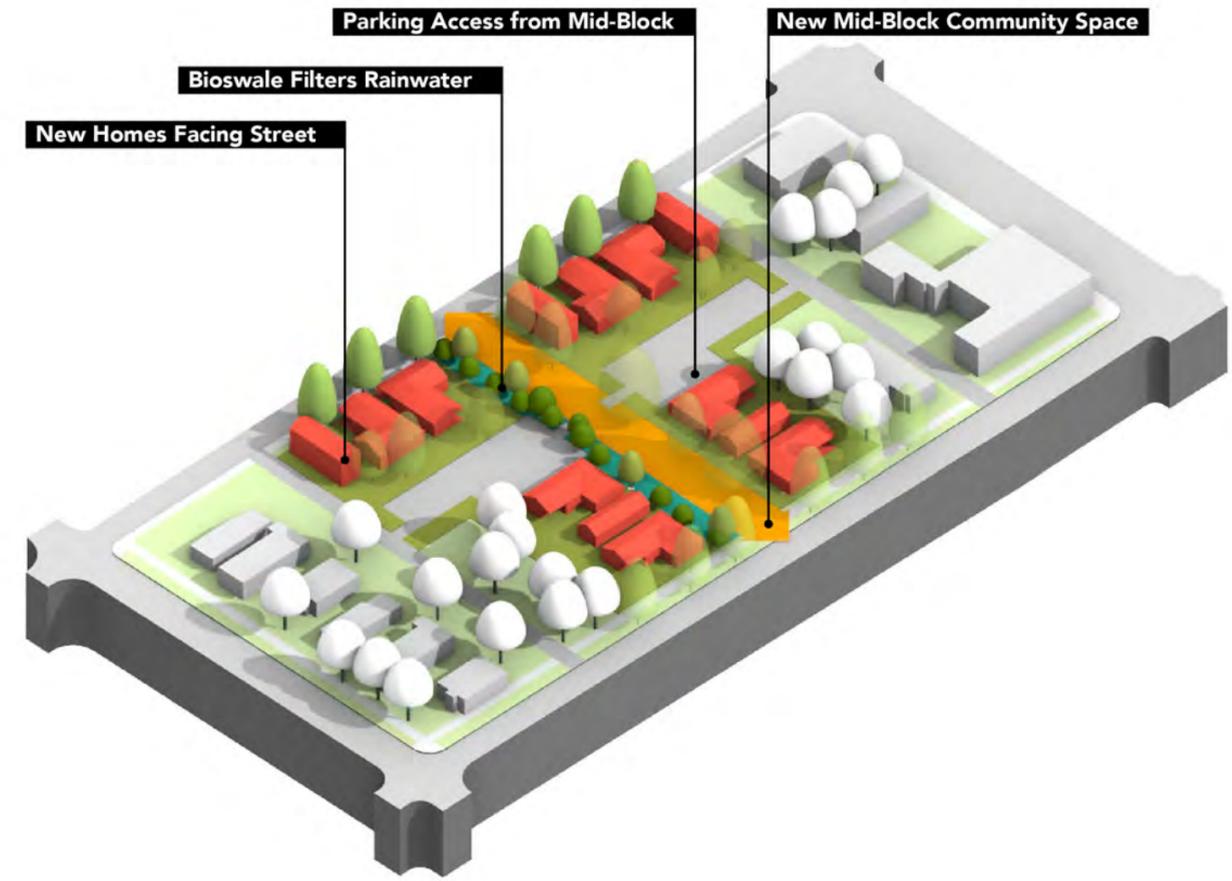
**Timeframe:** Year 1: Develop initial process for recruitment of implementation partners and transfer of property. Conduct feasibility study for high-priority sites. Year 2: Issue development RFP for initial phase of sites. Develop a list of potential sites for second phase. Years 3 to 10: Roll-out program more widely, aiming to have all sites within the development pipeline by year 8.



### LARGE INFILL HOUSING SITE - ILLUSTRATION



Existing Condition: Low-Value Industrial Parcel in Neighborhood Context



Proposed Condition: Single-Family or Affordable Housing Residential Infill Development

CONVERTING LARGE SITES PRECEDENT  
**PROJECT ROW HOUSES**  
HOUSTON, TX

Project Row Houses began as a series of artist residencies in vacant row homes in Houston’s Third Ward. In latter phases, the nonprofit developed an adjacent lot into affordable housing and attached community spaces, ensuring that the residents of the neighborhood had ample places to live as the neighborhood gentrified.



Project Row Houses, Houston, TX

CONVERTING LARGE SITES PRECEDENT  
**LORAIN STOVEWORKS**  
LORAIN, OH

The City of Lorain, Ohio acquired a large former industrial site in its historically underinvested Second Ward. The plan calls for a dense mix of single-family owner-occupied houses and apartments for the aging population of Lorain. Also included in the plan are community facilities, open public spaces, a community garden, and an off-street walking loop that connects the neighborhood together. The City of Lorain then recruited a developer with experience in affordable housing to deliver this multi-phase project.



The Stoveworks, Lorain, OH

**STRATEGY 03:  
IMPLEMENT HOUSING FIRST PROJECTS**

**Goal:** Implement best practices for serving the homeless

**Context:** Armourdale has a high homeless population; Kansas City, Kansas currently has no Housing First projects.

**Target:** Implement two Housing First projects in Armourdale by 2031.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Work with Cross-Lines or other organizations that serve the homeless to determine if they want to implement a Housing First project. If not, recruit a local or national partner to do so.
- 2) Facilitate site assessment, acquisition, and financial proof of concept.

**Site:** Large underutilized or vacant parcels within the residential core

**Partners:**

**Cross-Lines Community Partners** should be the primary or secondary developer or service provider on the Housing First sites.

**Funding:** Housing First Subsidies available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Identify potential Housing First sites and recruit or expand the capacity of homeless-serving organizations. Year 2: Acquire Phase 1 sites and issue RFP to local affordable housing developers or CHDO's. Year 3+: Implement first phase of Housing First projects.

CONVERTING LARGE SITES PRECEDENT  
**THE COTTAGES AT HICKORY CROSSING  
DALLAS, TX**

The Cottages at Hickory Crossing provides an innovative union of permanent housing and support services for 50 chronically homeless citizens in Dallas. The project serves as a model for sustainable urban living by maximizing open space, incorporating on-site solar energy technologies, and integrating rainwater collection. While also producing a durable return on investment, these green strategies and activities create a supportive, healthy, and inviting environment. This project was funded using the federal Housing First program, a national best practice that provides no-prerequisite housing to the homeless and co-locates their homes with supportive and wrap-around services like health care, mental health treatment and case management.



Hickory Crossing, Dallas, TX

**STRATEGY 04:  
INCREASE CAPACITY OF ARMOURDALE  
COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

**Goal:** Increase the capacity of local organizations with local leadership to serve the Armourdale community and implement projects that benefit the community.

**Context:** Armourdale has a relative lack of community-based organizations, and existing organizations are often under resourced.

**Target:** Quadruple the resources available to Armourdale-based community organizations by 2026.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Identify specific programs to increase community organization capacity, like AmeriCorps VISTA and Americorps National staff members.
- 2) Establish a philanthropy working group from members of the Kansas City Philanthropic Community specifically dedicated to Armourdale issues.
- 3) Encourage increased programming in Armourdale by high performing service organizations from elsewhere in KCK.
- 4) Facilitate board and staff training and organization certification to help community-based organizations gain access to federal and state funding programs.

**Site:** Large underutilized or vacant parcels within the residential core.

**Potential Partners:**

- Cross-Lines Community Partners**
- Armourdale Renewal Association**
- El Centro**

**Funding:** Philanthropic and private funders; Federal programs like AmeriCorps VISTA and others.

**STRATEGY 05:  
INCREASE RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR  
ARMOURDALE RESIDENTS**

**Goal:** Provide and increase the amount of rental assistance available to Armourdale residents.

**Context:** Armourdale's residents are almost 50% renters, and majority Spanish-speaking, and likely are significantly rent-burdened.

**Target:** Implement a community-wide push to support rental assistance for Armourdale residents

**Action Items:**

- 1) Conduct a neighborhood-wide sweep of all Armourdale rental properties to recruit renters to the program.
- 2) Partner with a local community organization like the ARA or El Centro to provide support for renters to enter the Kansas Emergency Rental Assistance Program (KERA)

**Site:** Armourdale renters

**Partners:**

**Armourdale Renewal Association or El Centro** should be contracted to conduct initial outreach and case management to get residents into the program.

**Funding:** Rental Assistance is available through the CARES act, but initial recruitment and case management should be funded by private philanthropy or other discretionary dollars because of its high potential to leverage significant federal dollars.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Initial funding approach and outreach; Year 2: Continued outreach if the program remains funded at the state level.

**STRATEGY 06:  
COMPLETE SIDEWALK INSTALLATION  
AND REPAIR**

**Goal:** Improve the sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure throughout Armourdale.

**Context:** Armourdale has a significant number of cracked, broken or missing sidewalks.

**Target:** Complete replacement or installation of all problematic sidewalks by 2026.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Develop an inventory of sidewalks in Armourdale.
- 2) Develop a five-year plan for sidewalk installation and replacement

to be performed by the public works department or contractors.

**Site:** Sidewalks throughout the neighborhood core.

**Funding:** Municipal general fund or federally-funded transportation projects.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Develop a sidewalk inventory and schedule for repair. Year 2+: Begin sidewalk repair projects.

**STRATEGY 07:  
EXPAND ACCESS TO LEGAL AID AND  
OTHER TENANT SERVICES**

**Goal:** Increase the accessibility and use of tenant services for Armourdale residents.

**Context:** Armourdale tenants are especially vulnerable to exploitative landlords because of the language barrier, lack of tenant education, undocumented status, and lack of access to legal services.

**Target:** Quintuple the number of Armourdale residents taking advantage of tenant support services.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Recruit local tenant’s rights organizations to conduct or begin outreach to Armourdale residents (as part of the Rental Assistance strategy above, for instance.)
- 2) Recruit service providers, including case managers and bilingual pro bono attorneys to provide consulting services.

**Site:** Armourdale tenants within the Neighborhood Core.

**Partners:**

**Cross-Lines Community Partners** serves Armourdale residents through its food bank program and could be a first point of contact for renters.

**Armourdale Renewal Association or El Centro** should be contracted to conduct initial outreach and case management to get residents into the program, in parallel with the rental assistance programs described above.

**Kansas Legal Aid** connects vulnerable Kansas City residents to legal services.

**Funding:** Philanthropic support for the initial outreach. Long term funding TBD.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Initial funding approach and outreach; Year 2+: Continued expansion of the program if funding allows.

**STRATEGY 08:  
RIGOROUSLY PURSUE CODE  
ENFORCEMENT FOR RENTAL  
PROPERTIES**

**Goal:** Increase the safety of rental properties and reduce the number of blighted or under-maintained rental properties.

**Context:** Armourdale tenants are especially vulnerable to exploitative

landlords because of the language barrier, lack of tenant education, undocumented status, and lack of access to legal services.

**Target:** Quintuple the number of Armourdale residents taking advantage of tenant support services.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Recruit local tenant’s rights organizations to conduct or begin outreach to Armourdale residents (as part of the Rental Assistance strategy above, for instance.)
- 2) Recruit service providers, including case managers and bilingual pro bono attorneys to provide consulting services.

**Site:** Armourdale tenants within the Neighborhood Core.

**Partners:**

**Cross-Lines Community Partners** serves Armourdale residents through its food bank program and could be a first point of contact for renters.

**Armourdale Renewal Association or El Centro** should be contracted to conduct initial outreach and case management to get residents into the program, in parallel with the rental assistance programs described above.

**Kansas Legal Aid** connects vulnerable Kansas City residents to legal services.

**Funding:** Philanthropic support for the initial outreach. Long term funding TBD.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Initial funding approach and outreach; Year 2+: Continued expansion of the program if funding allows.

### STRATEGY 08: INCREASE COMMUNITY POLICING RESOURCES

**Goal:** Significantly increase the amount of community policing resources dedicated to Armourdale. Increase the police response rate for calls in Armourdale

**Context:** Public safety in Armourdale is a widespread concern among Armourdale residents.

**Target:** Double the amount of community policing resources dedicated to Armourdale, and increase the number of contacts between Kansas City Police Department leadership and Armourdale community leaders.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Double the number of community policing officers in Armourdale (to two.)
- 2) Increase the number of events and neighborhood briefings attended by KCKPD officers and leadership.

**Site:** Armourdale Neighborhood Core

**Partners:**

**Armourdale Renewal Association** has started a block captain program and should be the point of contact for KCKPD outreach efforts.

**Funding:** KCKPD Budget.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Increase the number of community policing officers in Armourdale. Year 2+: Increase the number of community meetings attended by police officers and leadership to bi-monthly at least.

### STRATEGY 09: EXPAND YOUTH PROGRAMMING AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

**Goal:** Increase the number and participation in after-school activities among Armourdale youth.

**Context:** During the COVID-19 pandemic youth programming and after school activities were severely curtailed.

**Target:** Increase the number of youth activities in Shawnee Park, Bill Clem Park, and the Armourdale Community Center.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Recruit local youth programming and service organizations to open programming in Armourdale
- 2) Partner with John Fiske Elementary to co-locate after school programming, or program specific opportunities for their students at the Armourdale Community Center or Bill Clem Park.
- 3) Develop summer activities for Armourdale Youth in Shawnee Park or Bill Clem Park.
- 4) Work with Kansas City Rowing Club to expand access to rowing for Armourdale residents

**Site:** Armourdale Community Center, John Fiske Elementary School, Shawnee Park, Bill Clem Park, Kansas River

**Partners:**

**John Fiske Elementary School**

**Kansas City Rowing Club** is located near the Rock Island Bridge and wants to expand its outreach to Armourdale residents.

**Armourdale Parks and Recreation Department** administers the Armourdale Community Center

**Funding:** After school programs programs are funded by Kansas After School Enhancement Grants available through the Kansas State Department of Education. The Kauffman Foundation also funds after school programs.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Recruit seed funding from potential area funders and recruit organizations to John Fiske Elementary and the Community Center. Year 2+: Continue to expand programming as funding and timing allows.

### STRATEGY 10: INSTALL BUS SHELTERS ON 7TH STREET

**Goal:** Increase the number of bus shelters along the 7th Street corridor.

**Context:** KCATA is upgrading bus shelters in the area.

**Target:** Complete installation of bus shelters along 7th Street

**Action Items:**

- 1) Facilitate bus shelter installation

**Site:** Along 7th Street at existing bus stops

**Partners:**

**Kansas City Area Transportation Authority** is the lead agency for installation.

**Funding:** Already funded.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Finalize installations

### STRATEGY 11: EXPAND ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

**Goal:** Improve the health of Armourdale residents by increasing their access to quality, affordable health care

**Context:** Armourdale has significantly higher morbidity and rates of heart disease, diabetes, and kidney disease than the rest of Wyandotte County, pointing to lower rates of health care access among Armourdale residents.

**Target:** Increase access and health care coverage among Armourdale residents by 50%. Lower the severity of the public health indicators by 50%.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Develop partnerships with local health care providers to launch clinics in Armourdale.
- 2) Increase the percentage of Armourdale residents participating in

Medicaid and other federally-funded health care programs.

3) Develop partnership with the University of Kansas Medical Center or other health care provider to develop a clinic within Armourdale. Ensure Armourdale residents have easy access to specialty care at UKMC or another health care system.

Site: Armourdale Neighborhood Core

Partners:

- University of Kansas Medical Center
- Unified Government Department of Public Health

Funding: Medicaid and other reimbursable should be enough to cover the development of a health and dental clinic in Armourdale, potentially as part of the redevelopment of one of the larger sites for housing. Other outreach programs should be funded either through reimbursements for wraparound services or as pilot projects by the philanthropic community.

Timeframe: Year 1: During the outreach to Armourdale renters and others, conduct a survey of how Armourdale residents receive their health care and where they go to receive it. Year 2: Recruit a health care partner to begin outreach in the Armourdale community, with the long-term goal of developing a health care clinic in the area. Year 3: Develop an Armourdale-focused health care clinic and ensure that there is sufficient multi-lingual outreach to ensure Armourdale residents know about the clinic.

### STRATEGY 12: EXPAND ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD

Goal: Improve Armourdale residents' access to quality, fresh food.

Context: Some of Armourdale's public health indicators - including high rates of heart disease and diabetes - point to a lack of fresh food availability for Armourdale residents.

Target: Increase the amount of fresh food available to Armourdale residents by 50% by

Action Items:

- 1) Consider acquiring the former Paul's Drive-In site on Osage Avenue and developing it as a public farmer's market site.
- 2) Partner with community groups working on similar issues throughout Kansas City to expand access to fresh food.
- 3) Consider expanding the Cross-Lines Community Garden
- 4) Consider funding a mobile fresh food van that can operate in Armourdale (as well as other neighborhoods throughout KCK) on a regular basis.

Site: Armourdale Neighborhood Core

Partners:

To Be Determined

Funding: Funding for expanding access to fresh food could be tied in to funding to support initial outreach to expand access to health care. Long term, partnering with established food banks or other service providers

will be more feasible than creating new programs.

Timeframe: Year 1: Establish partnerships for delivering fresh food with other organizations working on similar issues throughout Wyandotte County. Year 2+: Roll out programs gradually and increase their footprint as necessary.

### STRATEGY 12: ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY MURAL PROGRAM

Goal: Increase opportunities for community expression and identity in Armourdale.

Context: Armourdale already has a number of community murals, and community murals can celebrate local Armourdale identity and culture.

Target: Install three murals per year through 2031.

Action Items:

- 1) Recruit property owners with blank facades to a mural program through partnerships with the ARA or other allied groups.
- 2) Develop relationships with artists willing and interested in working closely with the community to create the murals.
- 2) Establish a philanthropic fund to support the creation of the murals as a full set, rather than as one-off projects
- 4) Partner with youth organizations doing after school or other programming to design and implement the murals.

Site: Blank building facades throughout the Neighborhood Core.

### COMMUNITY MURAL PROGRAM PRECEDENT MURAL ARTS PROGRAM PHILADELPHIA, PA

Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia is one of the country's longest-serving and best-established community murals programs. Begun as a way to activate and establish community pride using the city's blank facades, the program has evolved into a quasi-city agency, responsible for workforce development, community organizing and engagement, and youth programming.



"The Only Way Out Is Through," Philadelphia, PA

**Partners:**

**Artist Jose Faus** partnered with neighborhood youth to create a mural in Armourdale and may be interested in organizing further murals.

**Funding:** Mural programs are generally funded through a combination of public art funding and private philanthropy.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Recruit property owners with potential mural sites and secure funding for first phase of projects. Year 2+: Begin implementing projects and continue to develop a pipeline of potential sites.

**2)** Work with Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department to source and install trees during the spring and fall each year.

**3)** Conduct a long-term bilingual educational campaign to help residents water and care for the trees. Monitor trees for the first three years they are planted.

**Site:** Armourdale Neighborhood Core

**Partners:**

**To Be Determined**

**Funding:** Planting street trees is relatively inexpensive and so can likely be drawn from the general fund. Private philanthropic resources can also support outreach and education

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Establish a list of sites and potential neighborhood residents interested in sponsoring a tree. Year 2+: Continue to plant trees extensively in bi-annual cycles.

**STRATEGY 14:  
INCREASE TREE CANOPY**

**Goal:** Improve the district’s overall canopy cover to reduce the urban heat island effect and raise property values across the district.

**Context:** While some areas of Armourdale are densely planted, areas with significant industrial parcels or with vacant lots often lack street trees.

**Target:** Double the number of street trees in Armourdale by 2031.

**Action Items:**

**1)** Develop an inventory of potential tree sites throughout the neighborhood core. Recruit neighborhood members as tree ‘sponsors’.

**POLICY 01:  
THE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE  
OF ARMOURDALE SHOULD BE  
RESIDENTIAL**

The area of Armourdale between Kansas Avenue on the north, Cheyenne Avenue on the south, 7th Street on the East and 18th Street on the West should remain a residential neighborhood with neighborhood-scale commercial uses within it.

**POLICY 02:  
INDUSTRIAL USES IN THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD CORE SHOULD BE  
PHASED OUT**

Industrial uses within the Neighborhood Core should be phased out, to be replaced by quality, affordable housing.

# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

### THE CORRIDORS

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## CORRIDORS INTRODUCTION

Although Armourdale is a relatively small neighborhood with a recognizable neighborhood scale, its commercial corridors are generally geared exclusively for automobile use. Cartways are generally unnecessarily wide, building setbacks and parking in front of buildings is common, and there are numerous vacant lots along each corridor.

This Master Plan calls for investment and improvements along three principal corridors that form the main current and potential commercial corridors. The first of these is a north-south corridor leading south from 10th Street over the rail yards, to Argentine Boulevard and then further south on 12th Street over the Kansas River. The second corridor is Osage Avenue in the heart of the Neighborhood Core, and the third is Kansas Avenue east of 7th Street as far as the Rock Island Bridge.

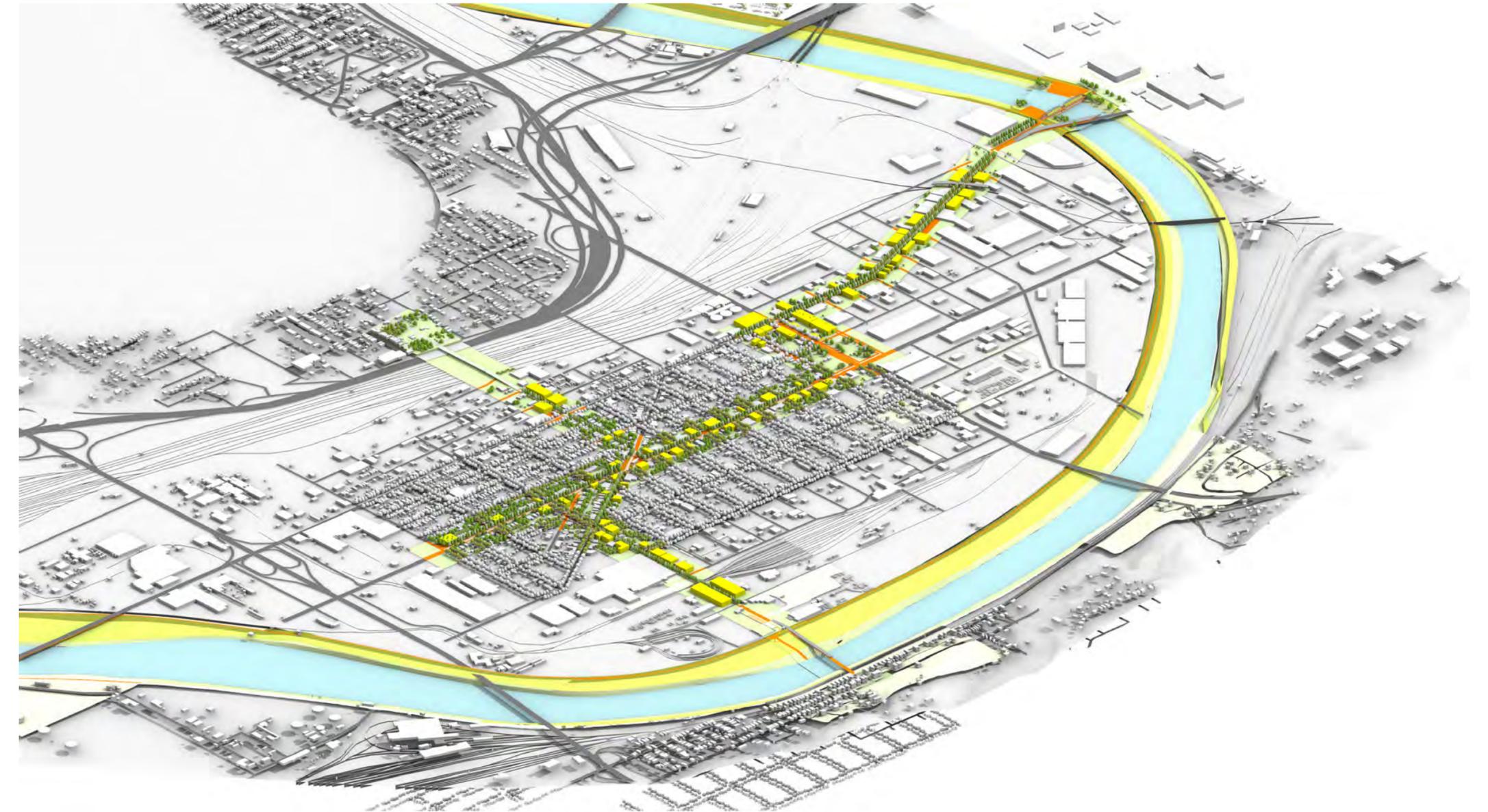
The goal for the investment in the Corridors is to enhance business opportunities along each corridor, create dense development that is walkable and scaled appropriately to the neighborhood, and increase the amount, quality, and performance of public space along each corridor. We have also identified two corridors of significant importance which should be developed along similar lines: Kansas Avenue west of 7th Street and Cheyenne Ave.

These goals will be supported by two policies to be implement across each corridor. First, improvements to stormwater infrastructure should emphasize Green Stormwater Infrastructure improvements, including raingardens, swales, and infiltration areas to both increase the amount of infiltration and provide Armourdale with additional tree canopy and green space.

Second, improvements to these corridors should reduce the width of cartways to 12 feet maximum and parking spaces to 8 feet maximum and use the addition width to install dedicated or separated bike lanes.

## MAJOR CORRIDOR GOALS

- GOAL 1: ENHANCE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES ALONG EACH CORRIDOR**
- GOAL 2: CREATE DENSE DEVELOPMENT ALONG EACH CORRIDOR**
- GOAL 3: INCREASE THE AMOUNT AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC SPACE ALONG EACH CORRIDOR**



## CONTEXT AND STRATEGIES

Armourdale has been isolated from its surrounding neighborhoods by both the Kansas River and by the railroad yards to its north. Within Armourdale itself, the central commercial corridors are established but have little continuous character and are affected by vacancy, a mix of inappropriate industrial and non-commercial uses, and often have little shade or space for pedestrians or visitors.

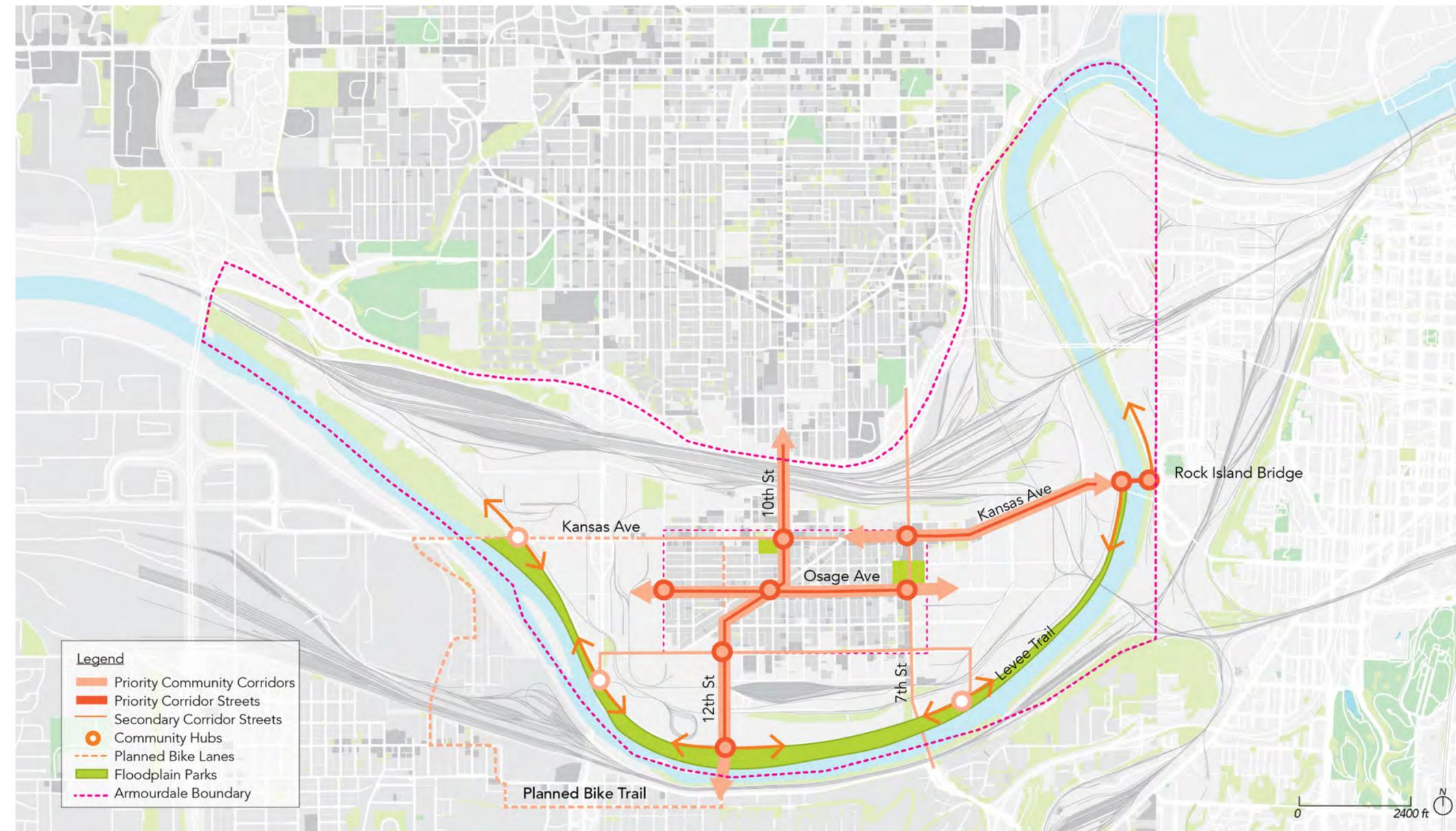
This Master Plan's recommendations build on several ongoing projects within or supported by the Unified Government. The first of these is the planned reconstruction of the 18th Street Bridge, for which the Kansas Department of Transportation must provide adequate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure connecting Armourdale with Argentine. This should include a separated bicycle lane along 12th Street connecting to Kansas Avenue to ensure bicycle safety is prioritized.

The second planned project is the upcoming implementation of the WIFIA stormwater infrastructure grant, which will both create new green stormwater infrastructure and public space in Armourdale. This will fund the new increased capacity and separated storm drains that will reduce flooding, as well as increase the neighborhood tree canopy and provide more public space along each corridor.

The final major project on the boards are the coming enhancements to the Rock Island Bridge, which will strengthen the connection from Armourdale to the West Bottoms and serves as a natural anchor for the east end of the Kansas Avenue Corridor.



Above: Argentine Boulevard  
Below: Kansas Avenue at 7th Street



# 12TH / 10TH STREET

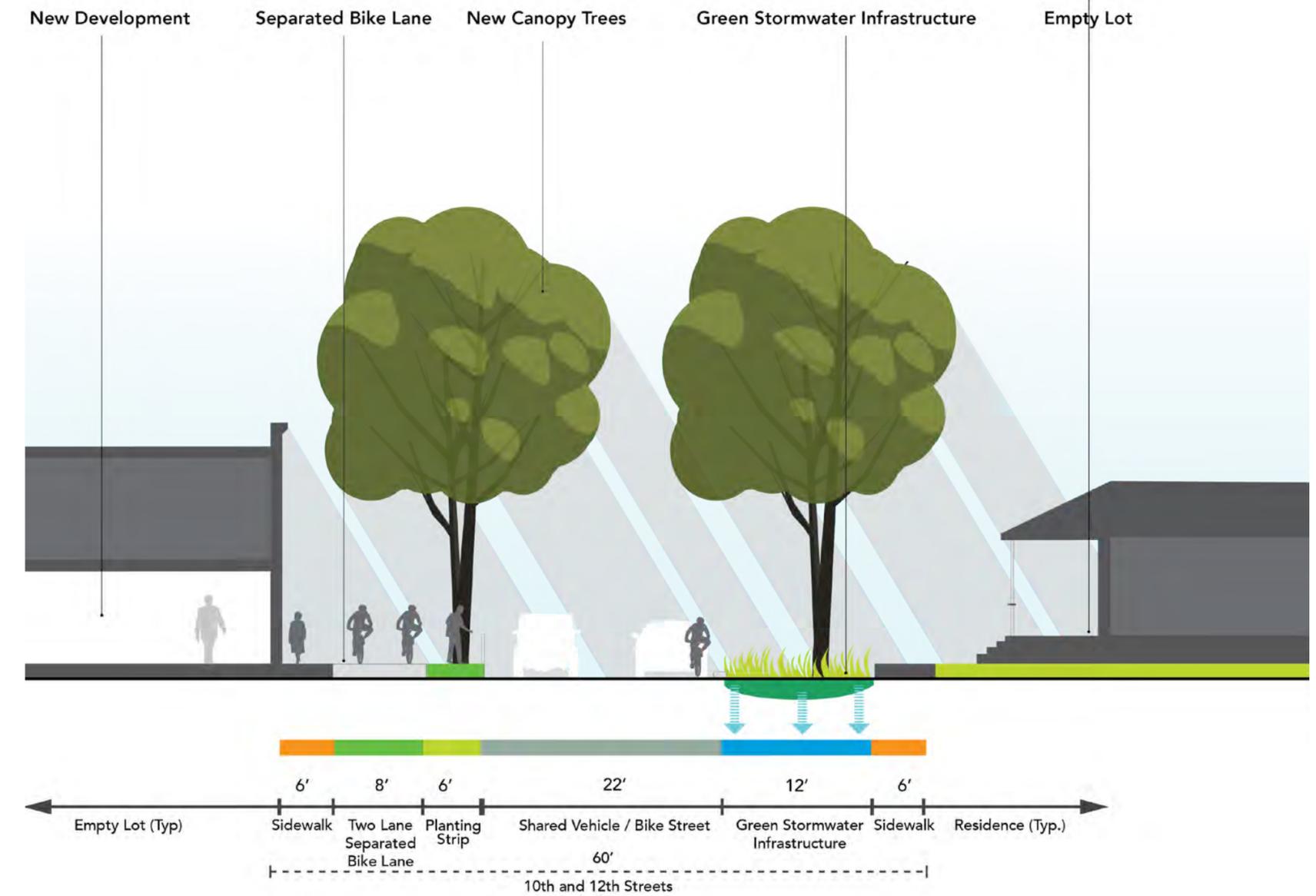
The 12th and 10th Street Corridor forms the main north-south connection between central Kansas City, Armourdale, and Argentine to the south. This corridor will be partially reconstructed using resources from the WIFIA grant and partially during the planned reconstruction of the 18th Street Bridge led by KDOT.

As a result, the improvements to this corridor include creating a separated bike lane along its entire length. This will partially complete the creation of the bike lane by KDOT over the Kansas Avenue Bridge and the 12th Avenue Bridge.

This approach will be supplemented by increasing the amount of green stormwater infrastructure along the corridor, principally through the implementation of planted infiltration beds. This will serve several goals simultaneously. First, it will absorb more rainwater, reducing flooding of adjacent streets and homes. Second, it will increase the value of adjacent property. Finally, it will lessen the urban heat island effect through increasing the amount of canopy trees along the corridor.

# MAJOR CORRIDOR ACTION ITEMS

- CREATE SEPARATED BIKE LANE
- INVEST IN GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SPACE
- CREATE MORE DENSITY BY MINIMIZING BUILDING SETBACKS AND DEVELOPING UNDERUSED PARCELS





### 10th Street North

This northern section of the corridor runs south from the 10th Street Bridge through a primarily industrial and mixed use district until it reaches Kansas Avenue. This area is dominated by large setbacks and vacant lots. These vacant lots should be redeveloped as mixed-use lots with a commercial or neighborhood character, in addition to the investments made in the streetscape itself.



Above: View of 10th Street above Kansas Avenue  
Below: Aerial View of Kansas Avenue and 10th Street

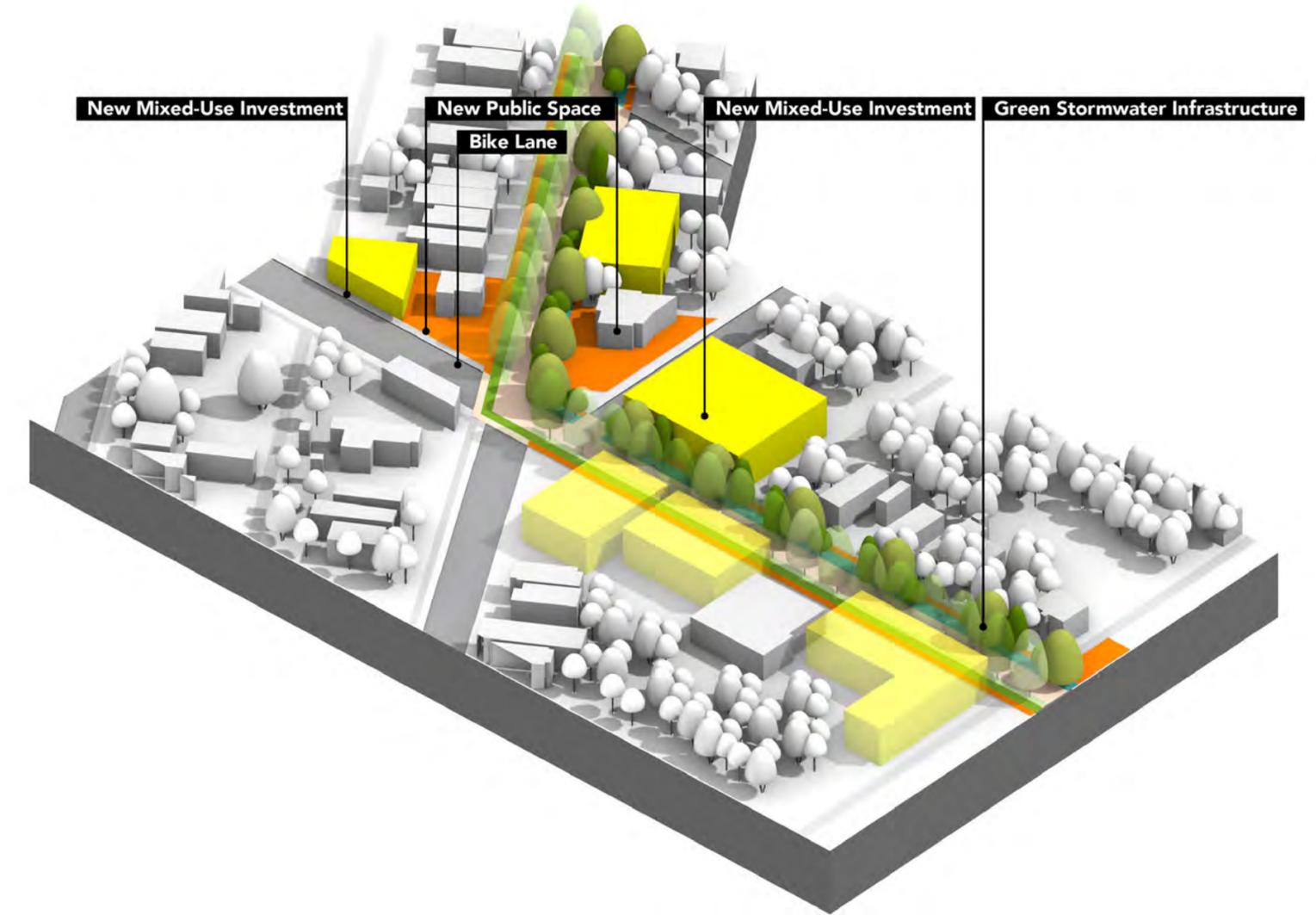


### 12th Street and Argentine Blvd

The intersection of 12th Street and Argentine Boulevard, where this corridor turns south, is capped by two existing restaurants with large parking lots that dominate the street edge. In addition to installing green stormwater infrastructure in these areas and creating the separated bike lane, this Master Plan proposed partnering with these businesses to devote some of their parking areas to public space to create a community focal point here.



Above: View of Argentine Boulevard and Street above Kansas Avenue  
Below: Aerial View of Kansas Avenue and 10th Street



New Mixed-Use Investment    New Public Space    New Mixed-Use Investment    Green Stormwater Infrastructure

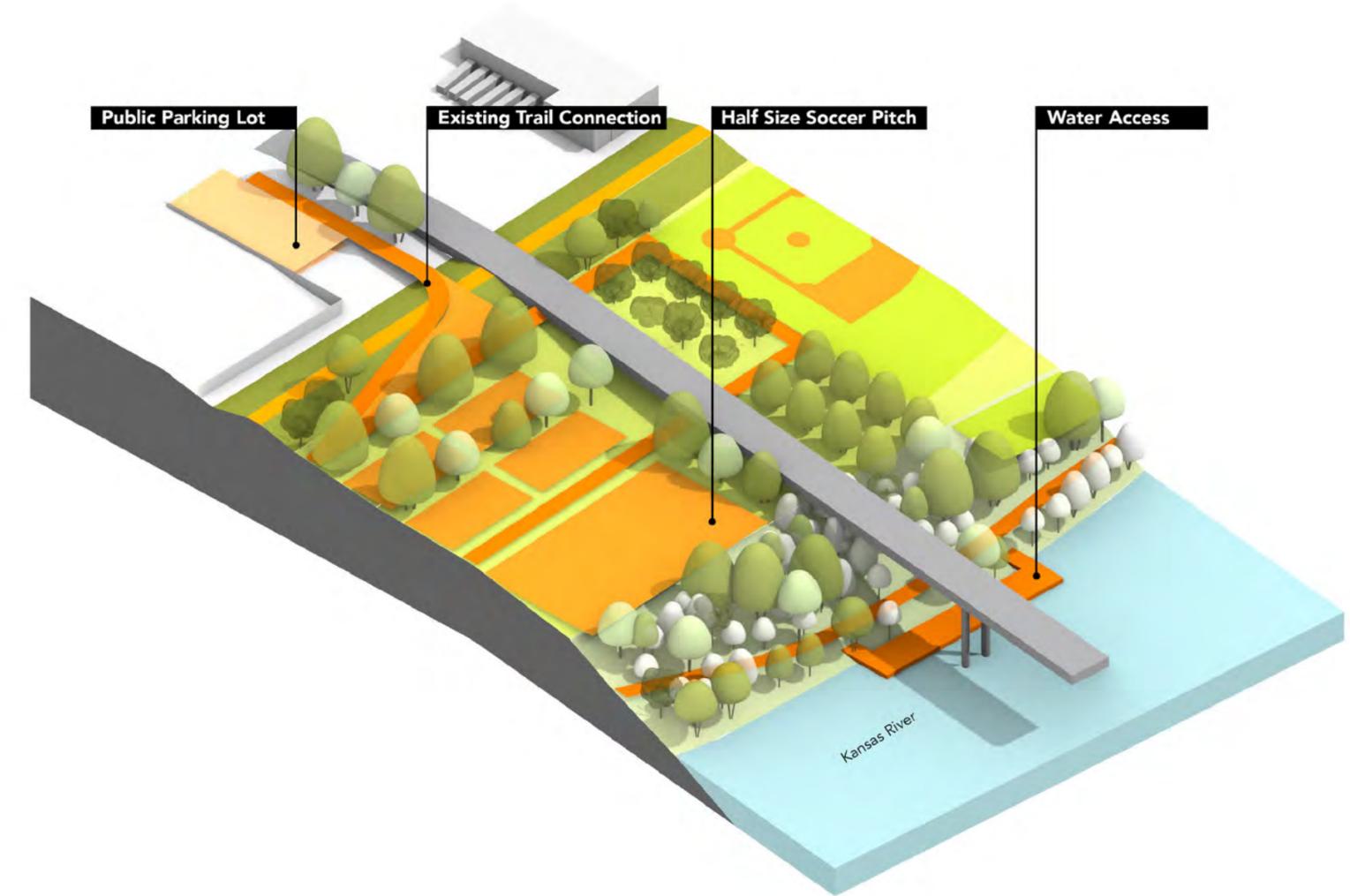
Bike Lane

### 12th Street South

At this point, the corridor intersects with the 12th Street Community Hub along the Kansas River. This Master Plan proposes acquiring or leasing the underutilized parking lot adjacent to 12th Street as a parking lot for the community hub, which will include playing fields, water access and connections to the levee trail. The separated bike lane will at this point become a protected bike lane that crosses the 12th Street Bridge to Argentine.



Above: View of Underused Private Parking Lot Adjacent to Levee Trail  
Below: Aerial View of 12th Street Bridge and the Kansas River Floodplain



## OSAGE AVE

Osage Avenue is the main commercial street at the heart of Armourdale, and offers the best opportunity to invest in public space, green stormwater infrastructure, and canopy trees in the Neighborhood Core. Osage Avenue is only two lanes of traffic with parking on both sides, but its current paved and sidewalk width of 80 feet is much wider than necessary to accommodate this. This Master Plan calls for reclaiming much of this paved area for pedestrian and stormwater improvements as well as a dedicated bike lane along its entire length.

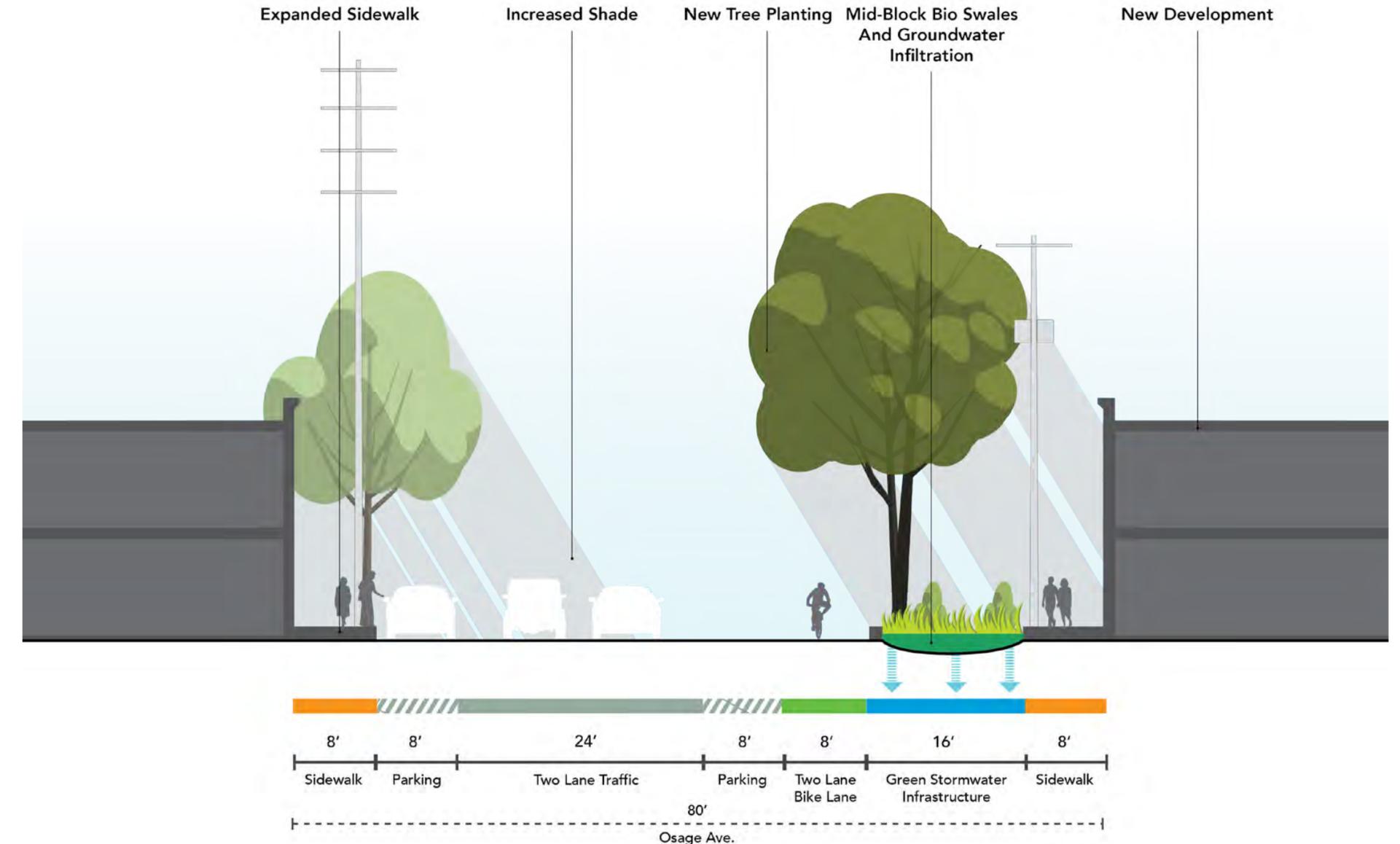
The Osage Avenue should be anchored by three public realm investments. The first should be an investment in the public space outside the Armourdale Community Center to support outdoor programming at that facility. The second public realm investment should be the study of acquiring the former Paul's Drive In site and use it for a community market. The third investment should be the acquisition and redevelopment of the parcels at 18th and Osage avenue to create a community clinic or other facility as well as significant outdoor public space.

## MAJOR CORRIDOR ACTION ITEMS

**NARROW THE SPACE FOR VEHICLES**

**INVEST IN GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SPACE**

**CREATE MORE DENSITY BY MINIMIZING BUILDING SETBACKS AND DEVELOPING UNDERUSED PARCELS**





- New Development
- New Public Space
- Two-Way Bike Lane
- Parking
- Cartway
- New Trees
- Bioswales



### Osage Ave East

The east end of the Osage Avenue Corridor includes the Armourdale Community Center and several vacant properties that are appropriate for mixed use commercial / residential development. This Master Plan calls for redesignating several of these properties for mixed-use development, as well as for investing in new public space around the Community Center to allow for more daily use and the ability to stage outdoor events next to the community center.

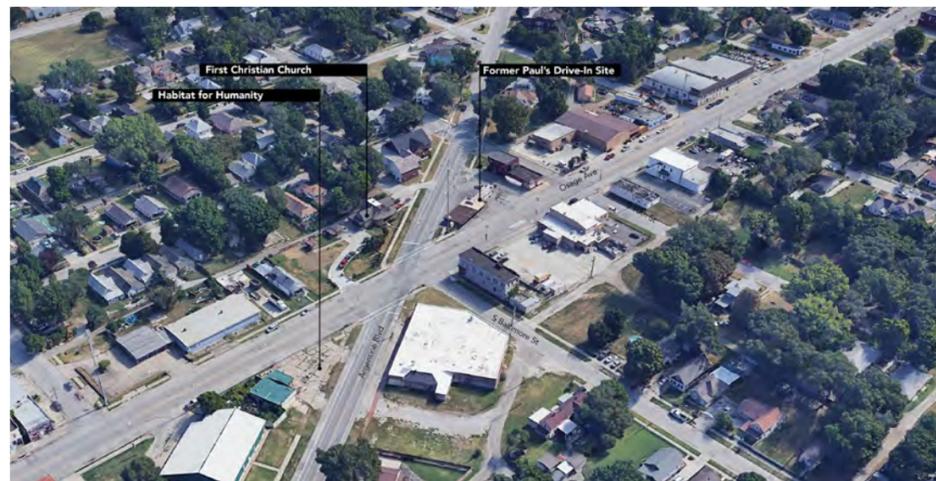


Above: View of From Armourdale Community Center Looking West  
Below: Aerial View of Armourdale Community Center and Osage Avenue



### Osage Ave Central

The central section of Osage is also where the 10th / 12th Street Corridor intersects with the Osage corridor. At this intersection, this Master Plan calls for the acquisition and redevelopment of Paul's Drive In, a beloved local landmark that recently closed, as a community market. This will allow the Unified Government to not only maintain an important piece of local heritage, but also create a new resource to serve the Armourdale community.



Above: View of the Paul's Drive In  
Below: Intersection of Argentine Boulevard and Osage Avenue

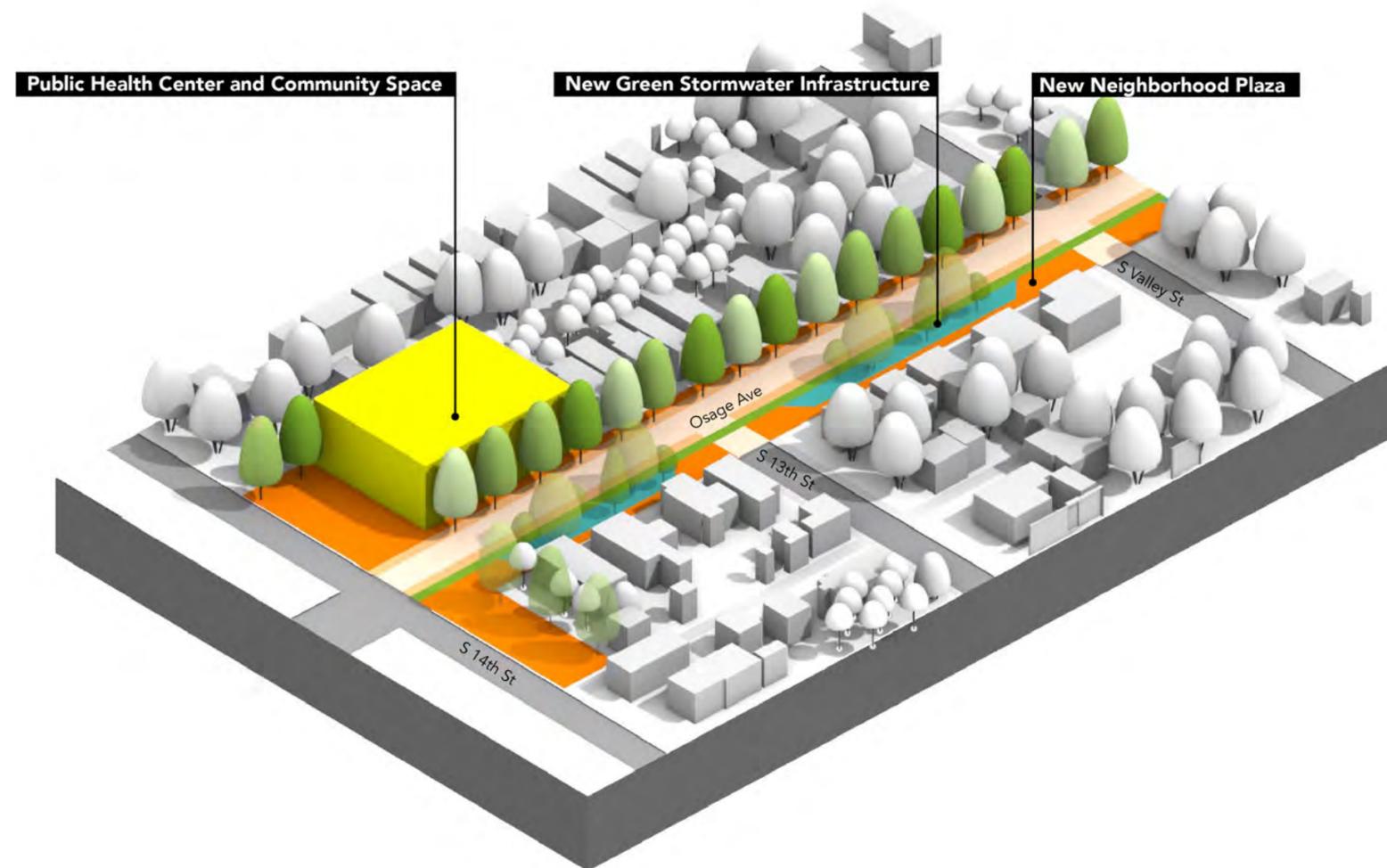


### Osage Ave West

The west end of Osage is bordered by large-scale industrial parcels at 18th Street. The vacant lots at the corner of Osage and 18th Street should be acquired and developed as a community clinic or other facility and include significant public space as an 'end cap' to this corridor.



Above: View of Underused Private Parking Lot Adjacent to Levee Trail  
Below: Aerial View of 12th Street Bridge and the Kansas River Floodplain



# KANSAS AVE

Kansas Avenue offers the only east-west connection through Armourdale that also connects with the West Bottoms and downtown Kansas City, Missouri. It connects the Neighborhood Core of Armourdale to the Rock Island Bridge, and is also used to service many of the industrial properties in the Industrial Ring, especially those east of 7th Street.

Kansas Avenue should be reconstructed to reflect this dual identity as both an important community connection and an important thoroughfare for adjacent commercial areas. As there is already ample parking in the area, this Master Plan calls for the elimination of parking along Kansas Avenue itself and the corresponding widening of sidewalks, increased tree planting, and new dedicated bike lanes.

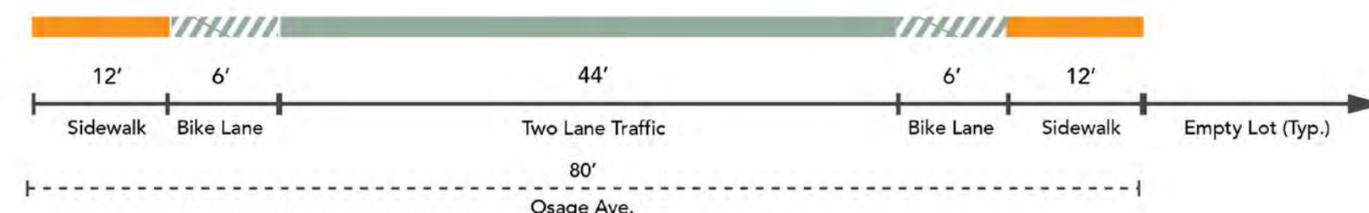
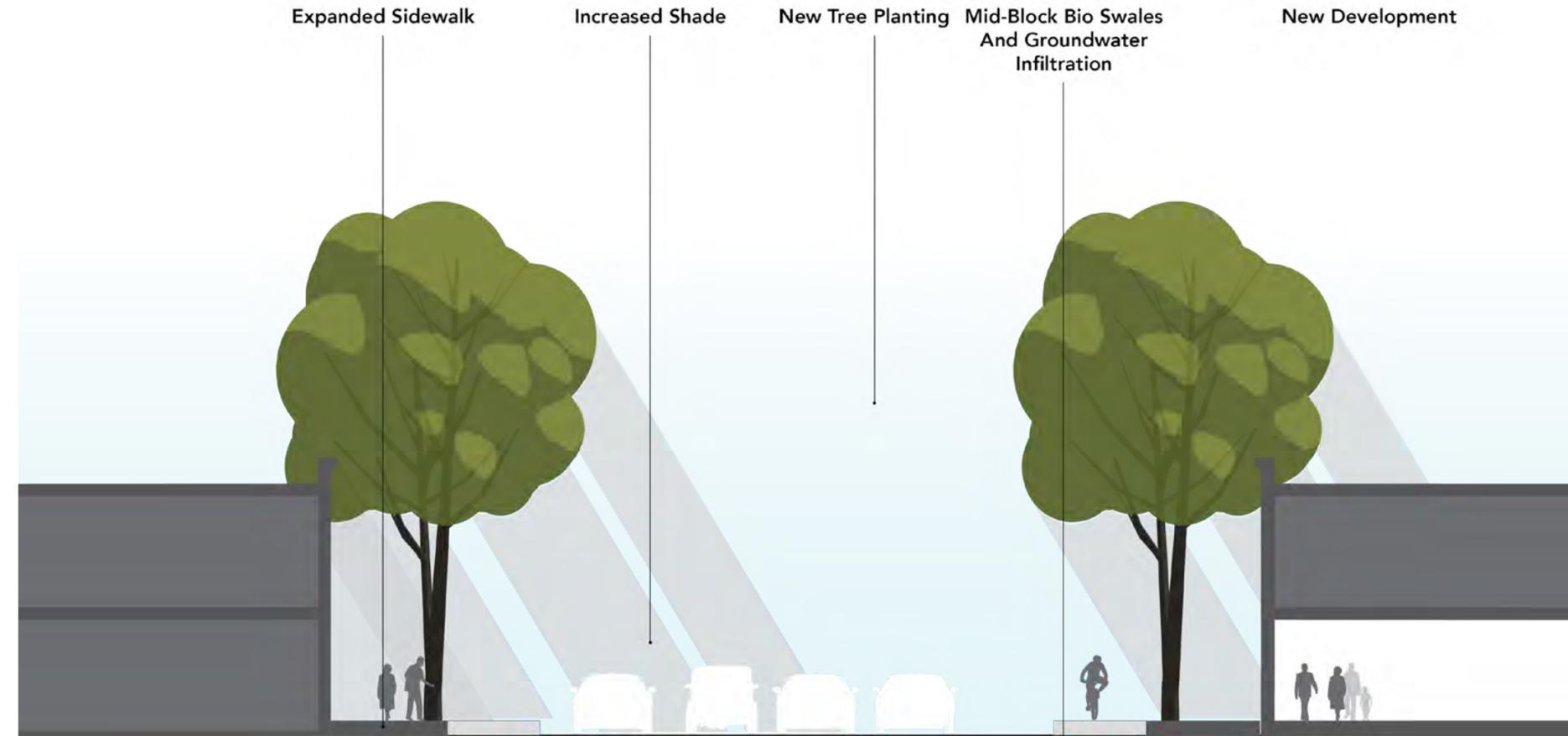
This Master Plan also calls for the densification of the corridor, reducing setbacks and re-designating many of the adjacent parcels to mixed-use commercial areas. These recommendations should also extend west of 7th Street in subsequent phases of development.

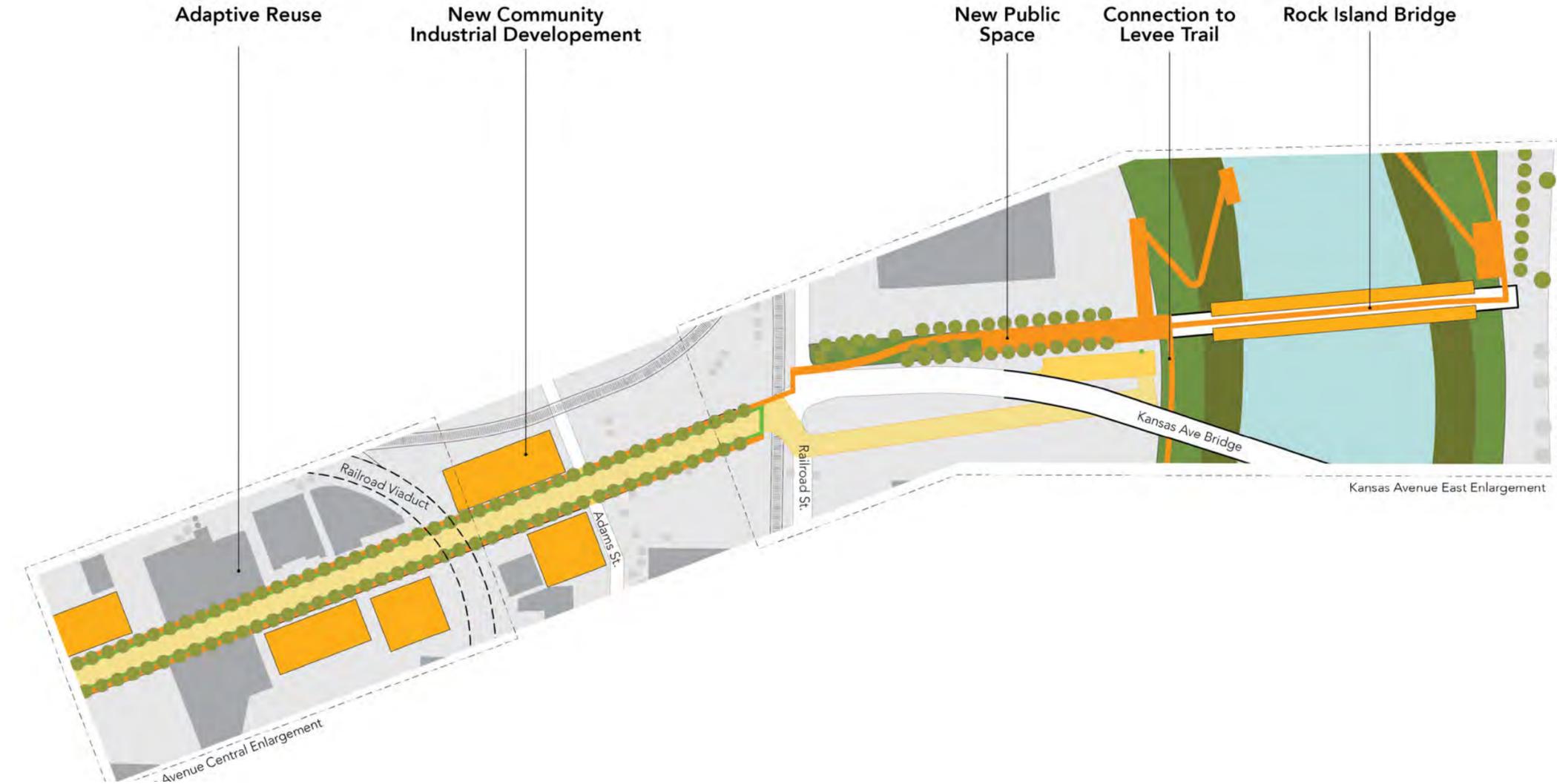
## MAJOR CORRIDOR ACTION ITEMS

**WIDEN SIDEWALKS AND INSTALL BIKE LANES**

**DENSIFY MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE CORRIDOR**

**CONNECT ARMOURDALE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE TO ROCK ISLAND BRIDGE**





- New Development
- New Public Space
- Two-Way Bike Lane
- Parking
- Cartway
- New Trees
- Bioswales

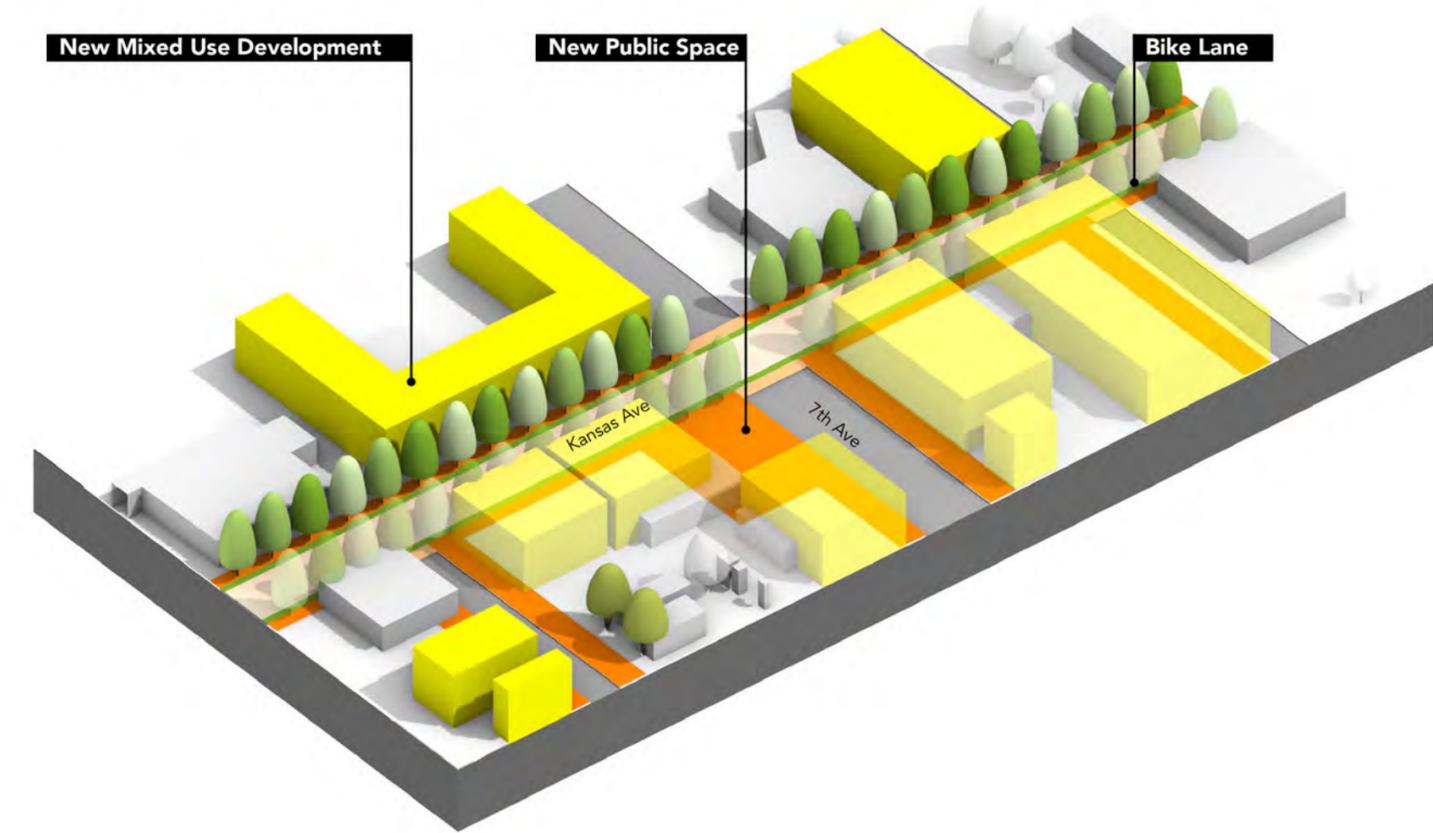
### Kansas Ave West

The western end of the Kansas Avenue corridor is dominated by large commercial parcels geared toward car traffic. This corner is the gateway to the Armourdale neighborhood from points north and should be re-planned to reduce setbacks and enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety. Commercial properties should be re-oriented to the street with parking behind, and industrial properties should be re-oriented to serve a mix of uses.



Above: View of the Intersection of 7th Street and Kansas Avenue

Below: Aerial View of the Intersection of 7th Street and Kansas Avenue

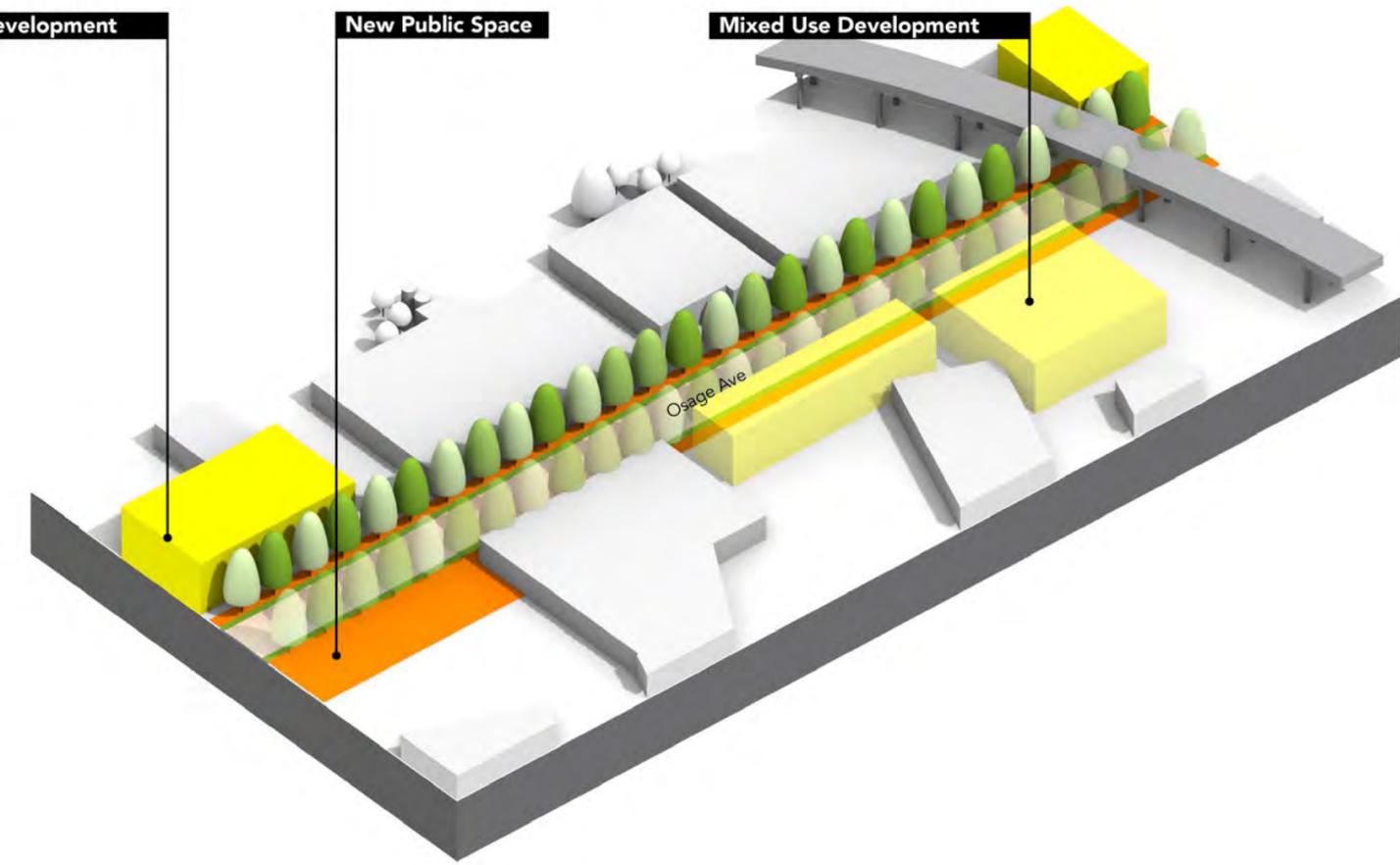


### Kansas Ave Central

The central stretch of Kansas Avenue includes several historic structures with limited setbacks that are ripe for redevelopment. The large scale parking lots and underused industrial spaces between them should also be densified and redirected to combine dense residential and commercial development.



Above: Looking East Along Kansas Avenue  
Below: Aerial View of the Central Section of Kansas Avenue



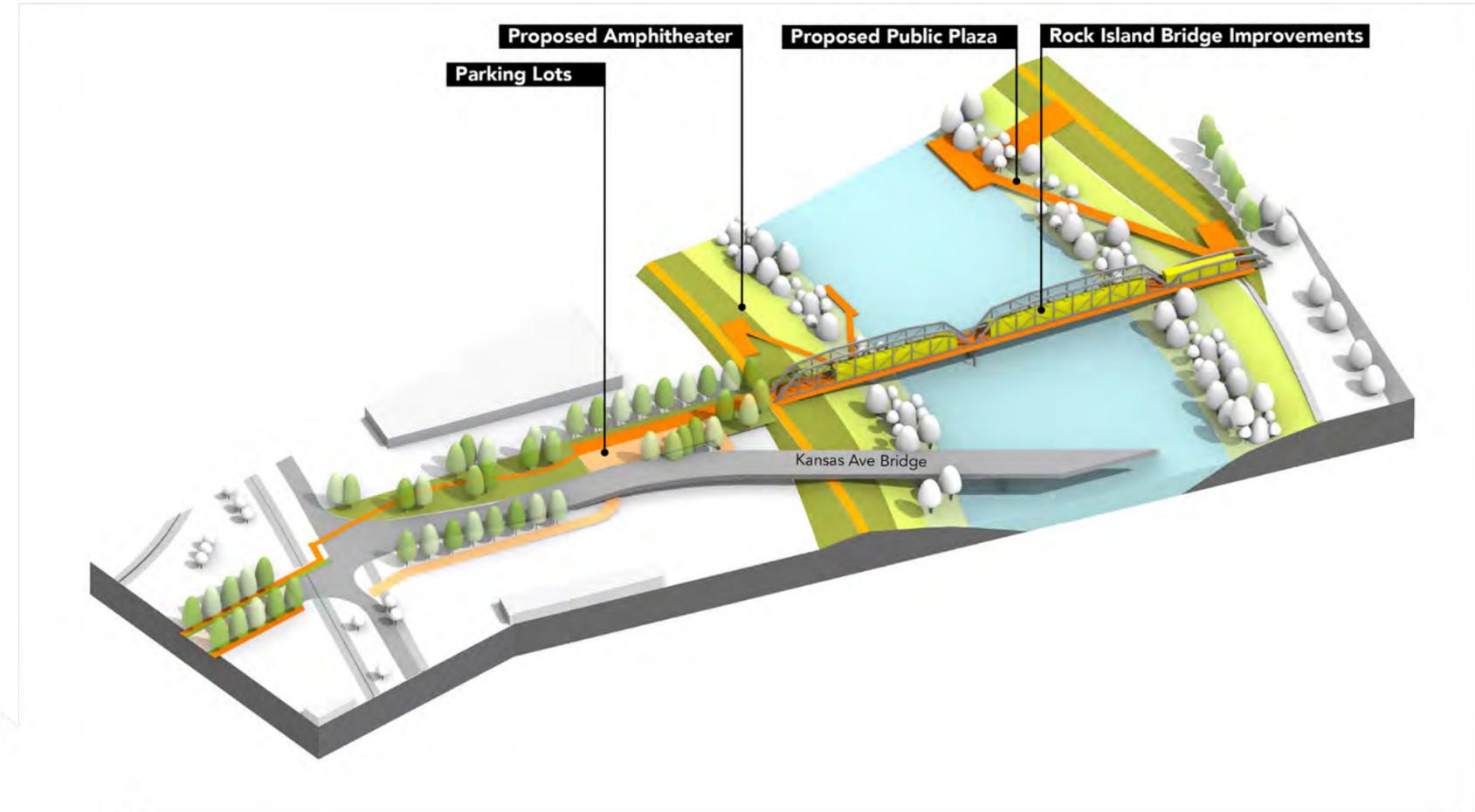
### Kansas Ave East / Rock Island Bridge

At the eastern end of the Kansas Avenue Corridor, Kansas Avenue crosses the Kansas River and the corridor itself terminates at the Rock Island Bridge. This mixed-use destination space is currently being implemented, and the Unified Government plans include providing bike trail access, parking, an amphitheater, and water access in this location. These betterments will together form part of the 'Rock Island Bridge Community Hub' described in the River section.

Improvements to the corridor itself in the section should include the connection of the separated bike lane to the Rock Island Bridge, the extensive planting of canopy trees to provide shade, and wayfinding and other improvements to help the public navigate this relatively industrial area of the district.



Above: View of the Intersection of 7th Street and Kansas Avenue  
Below: Aerial View of the Intersection of 7th Street and Kansas Avenue



### STRATEGY 01: CREATE MORE PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

**Goal:** Offer a greater amount and variety of public space to Armourdale residents.

**Context:** Armourdale has two well-used but underinvested parks - Shawnee Park and Bill Clem Park - and two small spaces owned by the Armourdale Renewal Association, but these are generally not in the center of the community.

**Target:** Develop at least two new public spaces along Osage Avenue by 2031.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Develop a site acquisition strategy for the parcels listed below and issue an RFP for site planning.
- 2) Secure funding for the project from state grants or private philanthropy, or from proceeds from the development of the West Bottoms.

**Site:** The former Paul's Drive-In site at Argentine Boulevard and Osage; Armourdale Community Center, and the vacant parcels at 18th and Osage.

**Partners:**

**Unified Government Parks and Recreation** should be the primary or secondary developer for the new public spaces, in coordination with the Armourdale Renewal Association and the Unified Government Planning Department.

**Funding:** State grant programs for funding parks and open space, proceeds from the West Bottoms development, or private funding sources.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Develop an RFP for programming and concept design for the three spaces; Develop an acquisition strategy for the parcels. Year 2: Conduct spatial planning and design. Year 3+ Begin implementation.

### STRATEGY 02: EXPAND THE AMOUNT OF MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE CORRIDORS

**Goal:** Increase the density and amount of mixed residential and commercial development along the corridors.

**Context:** What little mixed-use development exists in Armourdale is spread out along Kansas and Osage Avenue.

**Target:** Create a walkable, dense neighborhood core.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Encourage the acquisition of vacant and underused parcels along the corridor by developers interested in creating dense, mixed-use development.
- 2) Ensure new development reduces setbacks and increases the walkability and density of the neighborhood.

**Site:** Underutilized or vacant parcels along the corridors.

### STRATEGY 03: CONNECT TO THE ROCK ISLAND BRIDGE

**Goal:** Establish a clear connection between the Neighborhood Core and the Rock Island Bridge.

**Context:** The Rock Island Bridge will be a new, unique destination space along the Kansas River, but it lacks a clear connection to the Neighborhood Core of Armourdale.

**Target:** Implement the Kansas Avenue Corridor scheme.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Using state or federal transportation dollars, redevelop Kansas Avenue to provide dedicated bike lanes and shaded pedestrian areas for its entire length from 7th Street to the Rock Island Bridge.
- 2) Implement the levee betterments providing parking and access at the Rock Island Bridge itself.

**Site:** Kansas Avenue East of 7th Street.

**Partners:**

**Flying Truss** is developing the Rock Island Bridge and should offer support for any efforts to connect their project to the Neighborhood Core.

**Funding:** State or federal transportation funding.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Issue an RFP for redevelopment of the Kansas Avenue corridor. Year 2+: Implement project.

### STRATEGY 04: ENSURE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ALONG CORRIDORS

**Goal:** Reduce the speed of cars traveling along the corridors; enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety.

**Context:** Cars routinely speed along all the major Armourdale streets because of their width and the distance between lights.

**Target:** Reduce the average speed of cars traveling along the corridors by 50%.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Implement the recommendations calling for the narrowing of cartways.
- 2) Implement the dedicated bike lanes and the enhanced public spaces.

**Site:** All corridors

**Partners:**

**Unified Government Public Works Department** administers the municipal roads and will be primarily responsible for implementing this.

**Funding:** State or federal transportation funding.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Issue an RFP for redevelopment of the corridors. Year 2+: Implement project.

**POLICY 01:  
IMPLEMENT GREEN STORMWATER  
INFRASTRUCTURE WHEN IMPROVING  
ARMOURDALE'S STORM SEWER**

The planned improvements to Armourdale's stormwater infrastructure should include implementing green stormwater infrastructure improvements along the corridors to ensure that Armourdale residents both experience less flooding but also see increased green space and canopy cover in their neighborhood.

**POLICY 02:  
IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CORRIDORS  
SHOULD LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF ROAD  
SPACE DEDICATED TO TRAFFIC AND  
EXPAND SIDEWALKS AND PUBLIC  
SPACE**

Cartways in Armourdale, especially along Osage Avenue, are overly wide for the amount of traffic they carry. When reconstructing these streets, vehicle lanes should be limited to 12 feet in width, and parking lanes to 8 feet in width. The remaining public right of way should be dedicated to bike lanes, planted areas, green stormwater improvements, and improved sidewalks.

**POLICY 03:  
CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD  
INCLUDED PROTECTED BIKE LANES.**

Improvements to the corridors should include protected bike lanes throughout the length of the corridors, and separated bike lanes as part of the 18th Street Bridge Reconstruction.

**POLICY 04:  
BUILDING SETBACKS ALONG THE  
CORRIDORS SHOULD BE ELIMINATED.**

Eliminating building setbacks will create a more walkable, neighborhood-scale corridor. If parking is necessary for a particular use, it should be behind the building or development.

# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

## THE INDUSTRIAL RING

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## INDUSTRIAL RING INTRODUCTION

Armourdale has always been home to both industry and the homes of the workers that live there. Armourdale is also home to a diverse array of light and heavy industrial firms, from manufacturing to logistics and distribution to small-scale firms like auto body shops, storage yards, and equipment rental. It also includes a number of scrap yards, rendering plants, and other industries that should not be located close to residential neighborhoods because of the effects of their byproducts or pollution on resident quality of life. In recent years, and especially after the 1951 flood, people who work in Armourdale have become increasingly isolated from people who live there. According to the most recent American Community Survey, only 1% of people who work in Armourdale also live in Armourdale.

This Master Plans' goals for the Industrial Ring are to first and foremost to help the Industrial Ring become a net contributor to Armourdale's economic, environmental and social health. Second, Armourdale should become a site for the incubation of smaller, locally-owned businesses that need greater flexibility or smaller spaces than those commonly available. Finally, the Unified Government should work with polluting or other industries with detrimental impact on quality of life to relocate to areas of Wyandotte county that are not adjacent to residential communities.

To support this, this Master Plan recommends two policies for adoption. First, truck traffic should be diverted away from the Neighborhood Core. Second, polluting or nuisance industries should be encouraged to relocate away from Armourdale.

## INDUSTRIAL RING GOALS

**GOAL 1: BECOME A NET CONTRIBUTOR TO ARMOURDALE'S SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC HEALTH**

**GOAL 2: INCUBATE AND INCENTIVIZE MORE LOCALLY-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES TO LOCATE IN ARMOURDALE**

**GOAL 3: RELOCATE POLLUTING OR NUISANCE INDUSTRIES AWAY FROM ARMOURDALE**



# CONTEXT AND STRATEGIES

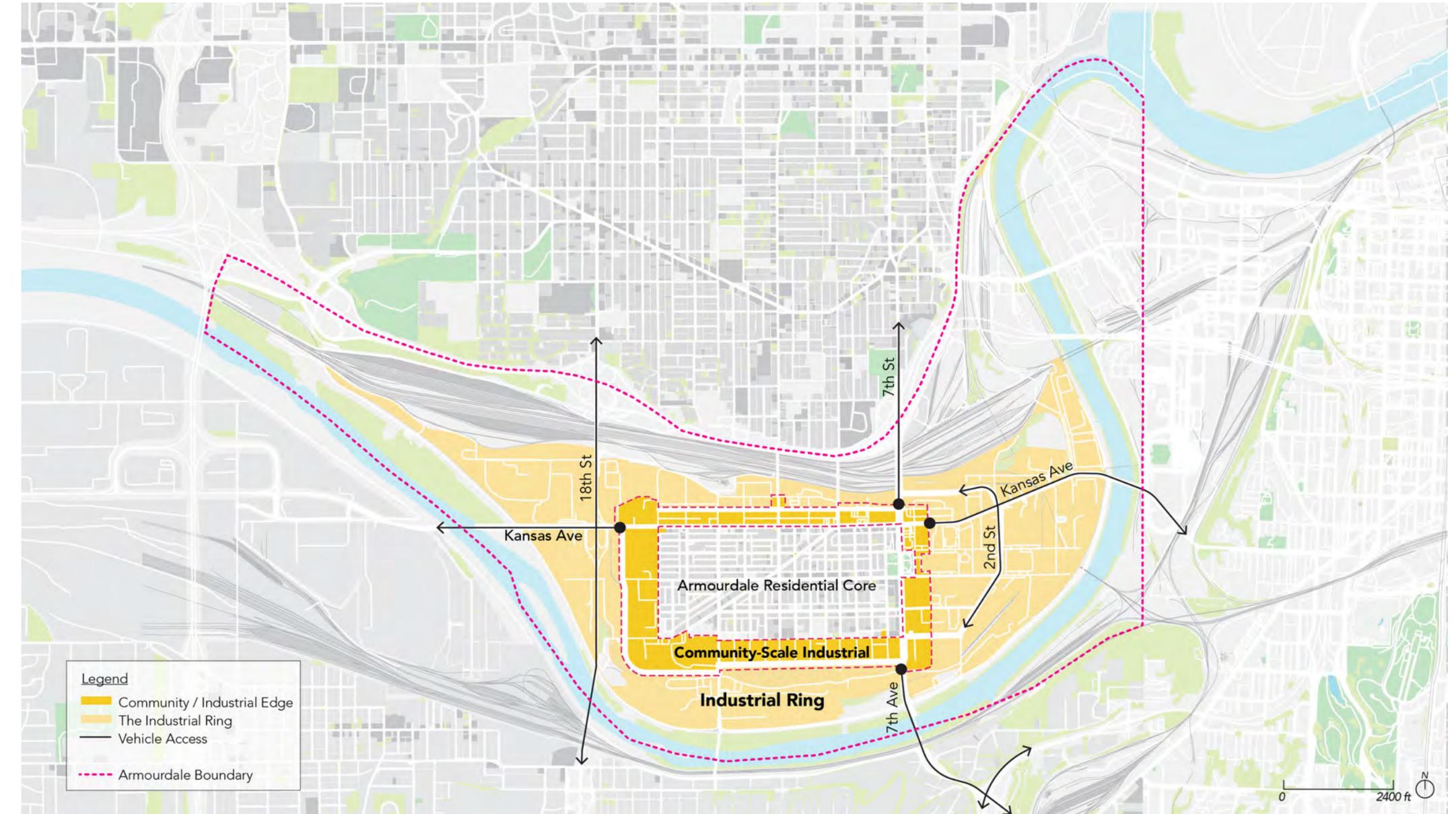
Armourdale's Industrial Ring is comprised of a diversity of light and heavy industries. Although it is difficult to unify recommendations for such a diversity of firms, the strategies this Master Plan outlines do recognize several general principals that might be applied across the district, no matter the specific type of firm or land use associated with them.

First and foremost, light industries that have severe externalities - ie pollution (airborne, noise, odor, or other) should not be permitted in the Industrial Ring, and the Unified Government should work with firms that are already there to relocate elsewhere in the county.

Second, businesses development in Armourdale should be built on its natural advantages - principally its proximity to both downtown KCK and KCMO. Businesses that are simply for the long-term storage of materials should be de-emphasized or encouraged to relocate, and businesses that serve both downtowns should be prioritized.

Third, closer ties and employment of Armourdale residents in Armourdale businesses should be encouraged. Very few Armourdale residents work at businesses in Armourdale, and the Unified Government should partner with Kansas City Kansas Community College and Armourdale businesses to create educational an job training pipelines specifically for Armourdale residents.

Finally, the infrastructure of the industrial ring itself must be made more efficient. From requiring greater stormwater retention and infiltration to encouraging a greater mix of uses to increase the density of the district itself, planning new development must follow best practices for industrial buildings in urban environments.

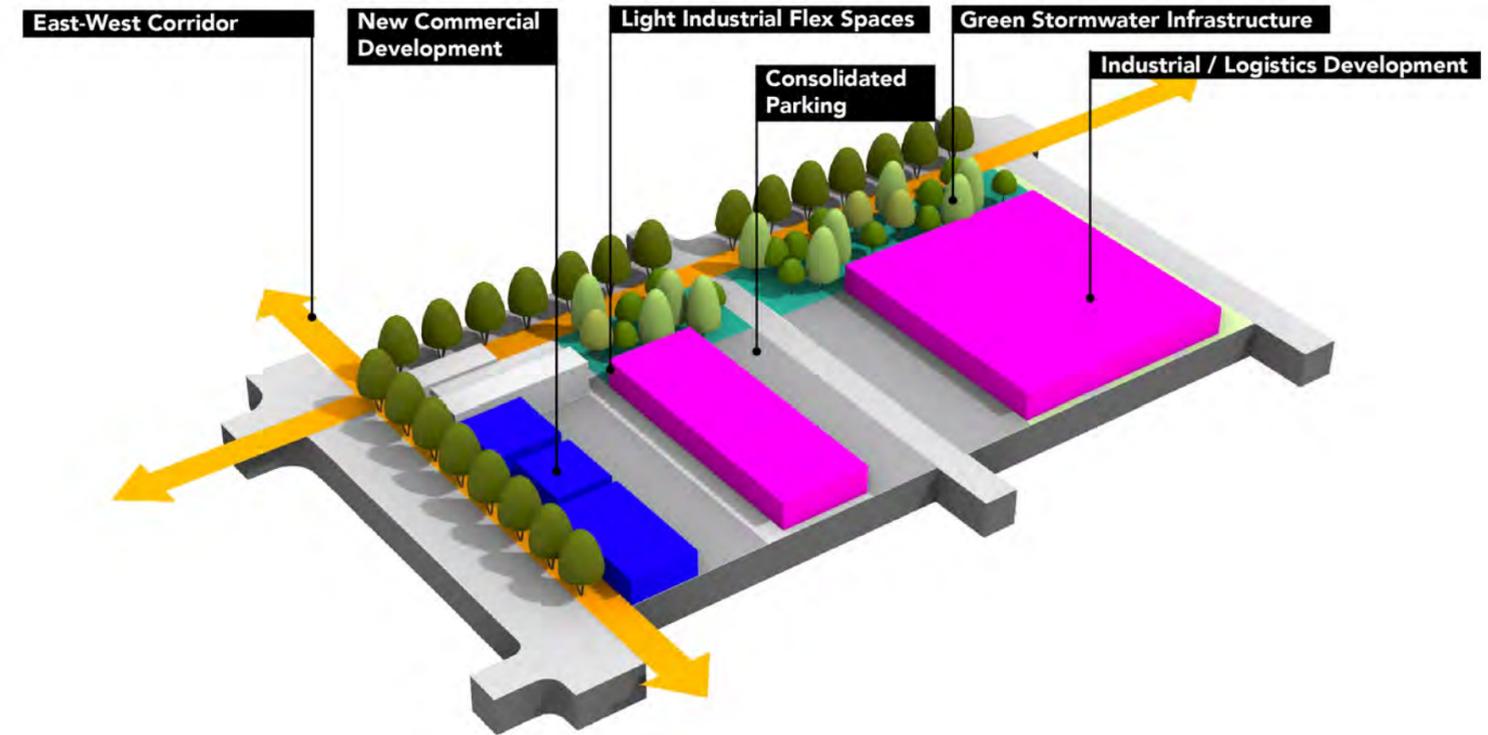
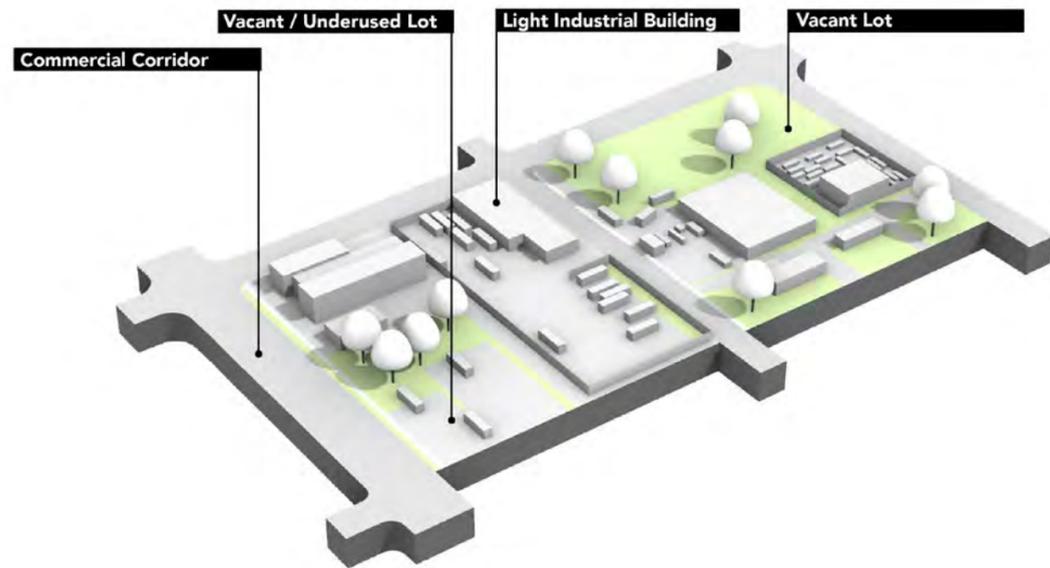


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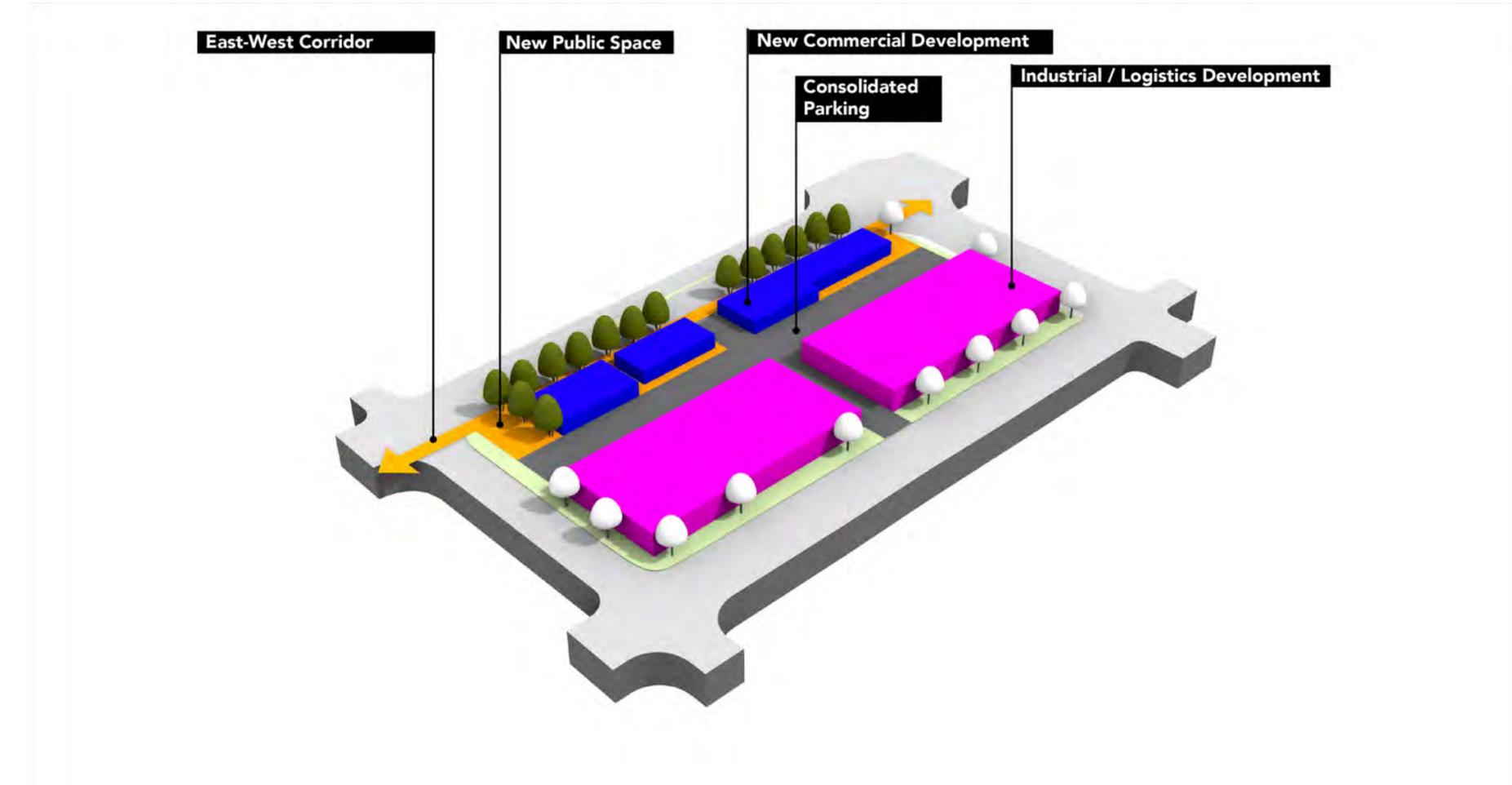
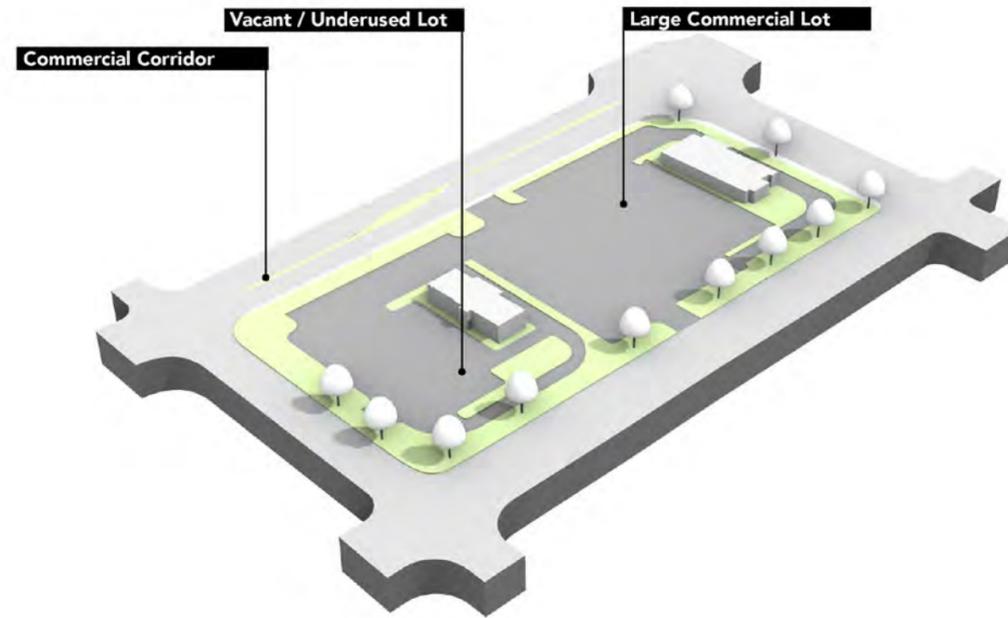
### High-Performing Industrial Parcels

Industrial parcels in Armourdale should be net-contributors to the social, economic, and environmental health of the district. This means that such parcels should capture and allow for the infiltration of their stormwater, rather than allow it all to run off into the already overburdened storm sewer system. It means that industrial parcels must minimize the amount of hardscape, and install extensive tree planting to minimize the urban heat island effect.



### Reduce Impact of Industrial Parcels Along Commercial Corridors

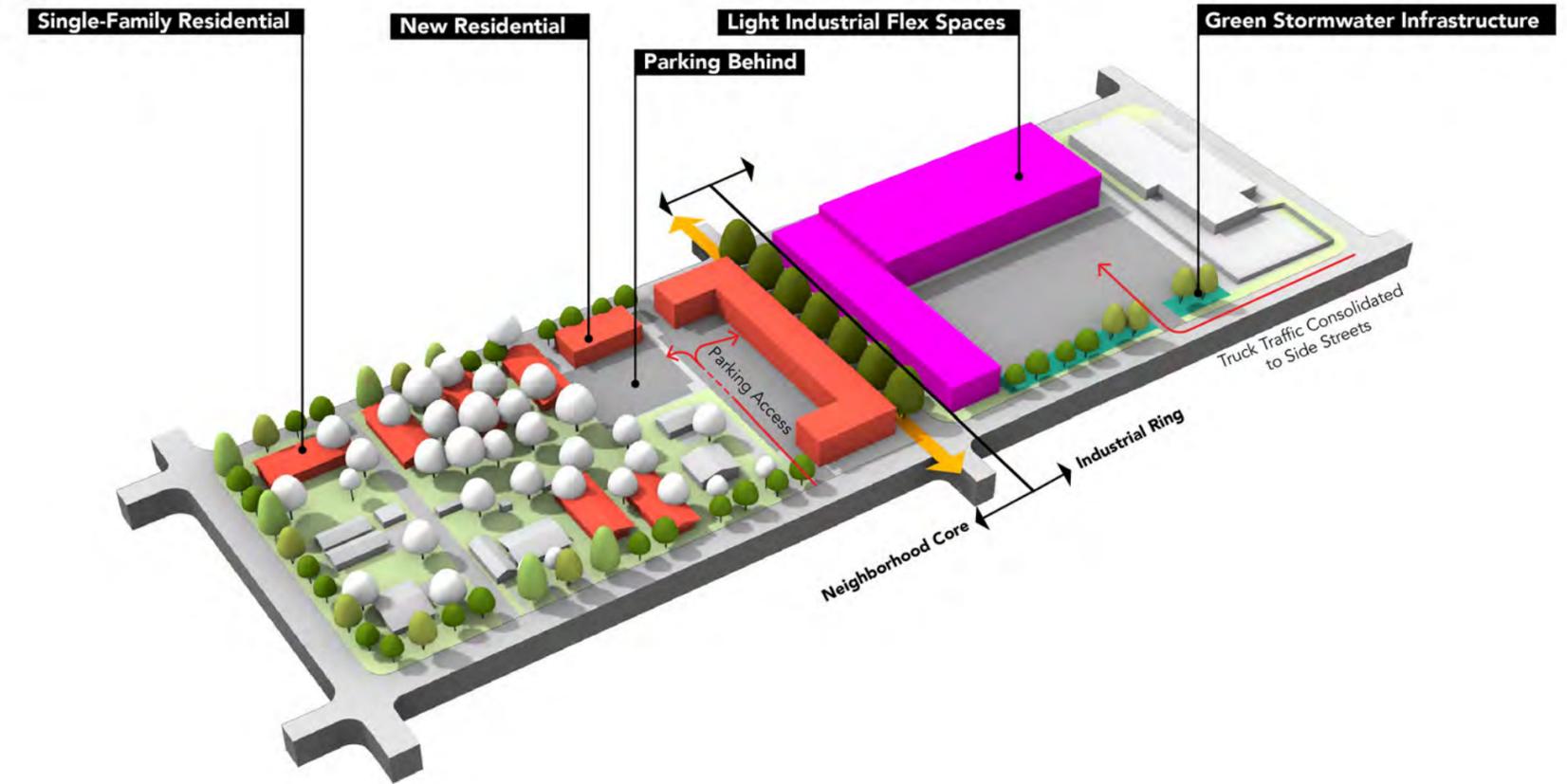
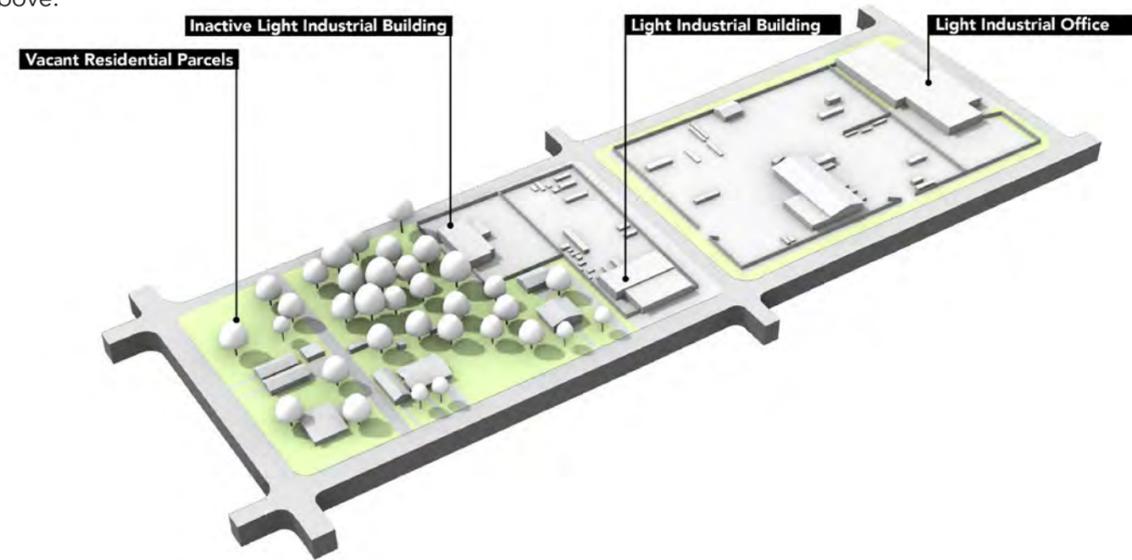
The Unified Government should require maximum density for industrial parcels, activated or commercial building frontage minimal setbacks along the major corridors forming the bou between the Neighborhood Core and the Industrial Ring. Tl are Kansas Avenue, 7th Street, Cheyenne Avenue, and 18th



### Dense, Mixed-Use Industrial Parcels

The Unified Government should explore the potential of creating a mixed-use industrial / commercial land use type for industrial businesses that also operate with significant retail or commercial presences. This flexibility would allow a greater variety of firms to be recruited.

This strategy should be particularly successful when employed along the four major streets bordering the Armourdale neighborhood listed above.



## STRATEGY 01: EXPAND ACCESS TO UG BUSINESS RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

**Goal:** Create more opportunities for Armourdale residents and small business owners to open and expand their businesses in Armourdale.

**Context:** Armourdale has a growing population of small-scale entrepreneurs, many of whom are recent immigrants or new to the area, that are attracted by Armourdale's inexpensive land and access to downtown.

**Target:** Double the number of locally-owned Armourdale businesses receiving assistance and support from the Unified Government.

### Action Items:

- 1) Create a Spanish-speaking outreach program to local businesses.
- 2) Create a locally-owned business working group that can be a conduit between the UG and target businesses in the area.
- 3) Recruit Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs to serve as mentors to Armourdale residents seeking to open or expand businesses.

**Site:** Throughout the Industrial Ring

### Partners:

**Unified Government Economic Development Department** should coordinate all the business development services of the UG.

**Wyandotte Economic Development Council** should leverage its business recruitment and development expertise to target entrepreneurs in Armourdale or who are interested in locating in Armourdale.

**Armourdale Renewal Association** should create the small business working groups and be partners in outreach to local business owners and the creation of mentorship programs and other activities that directly impact Armourdale residents.

**Funding:** The ARA should work with the Unified Government to secure funding for the initial outreach. Other funding for the programming itself should come from the agency's' standard budgets.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Develop a working group of local business owners and a pipeline of potential entrepreneurs to target. Year 2+ Begin rolling out the mentorship program.

## STRATEGY 02: EXPAND THE AMOUNT OF SPACE AVAILABLE TO SMALL- AND MEDIUM- SIZED BUSINESSES

**Goal:** Increase the amount of flexible start up space available to Armourdale (and other) businesses.

**Context:** Wyandotte County in general lacks the kind of 'in-between spaces' of 15,000 to 25,000 square feet that small firms need to grow.

**Target:** Increase the amount of flexible hybrid light industrial /

commercial space that small businesses need to grow sustainably while keeping them in Armourdale.

### Action Items:

- 1) Study the 'Business Park' Land Use designation and consider amending it to lessen the requirements for adjacent transportation routes and other requirements that might be a barrier to development in Armourdale.
- 2) Work with industrial developers to study the viability of neighborhood-scale industrial development, or hybrid industrial / commercial development.

**Site:** Underutilized or vacant parcels bordering the Neighborhood Core.

### Partners:

**Wyandotte Economic Development Council** should lead the assessment of the market viability for smaller-scale industrial products.

**Unified Government Planning Department** should study the 'Business Park' designation and propose adjustments that could better serve the Armourdale context.

**Funding:** State or federal transportation funding.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Study the viability of creating a new 'industrial commercial mixed use' land use designation. Begin assessing the market for smaller-scale industrial or industrial / commercial uses.

## STRATEGY 03: RECRUIT BUSINESSES THAT THRIVE ON PROXIMITY TO DOWNTOWN

**Goal:** Take advantage of the Industrial Ring's proximity to downtown to recruit entertainment and lifestyle businesses.

**Context:** The Rock Island Bridge will be a new, unique destination space along the Kansas River, and the dynamics that make it viable - a compelling space and proximity to downtown - should apply to the rest of Armourdale. Breweries, distilleries, food service, climbing gyms, and music venues are all spaces that thrive in formerly industrial settings, and are especially good targets for areas along the corridors to be developed above.

**Target:** Recruit lifestyle, entertainment, or retail businesses that have unusual spatial needs or that need more space than is available in downtown.

### Action Items:

- 1) Develop a pipeline of small business owners or others looking to expand, relocate, or start new businesses.
- 2) Develop a catalog of vacant or underutilized properties in Armourdale that could be easily repurposed.

**Site:** Throughout the Industrial Ring but especially adjacent to the Corridors described above.

## STRATEGY 05: STUDY EXISTING EASEMENTS TO INCREASE PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE KANSAS RIVER THROUGH THE INDUSTRIAL RING

**Goal:** Increase the amount of public access points and routes from the Neighborhood Core to the Kansas River through the Industrial Ring.

**Context:** Numerous streets, especially those adjacent to bridges over the Kansas River, appear to be closed off or incorporated into the private parcels adjacent to them. Armourdale also has a number of underutilized rail road tracks, and an inventory of vacant or underutilized track that might be converted to trails to offer better access to the Kansas River.

**Target:** Reclaim public right of ways where possible.

### Action Items:

- 1) Study any existing public right of ways that might have been privatized on an ad-hoc basis.

**Site:** Industrial Ring

### Partners:

**Unified Government Planning Department** should take the lead on these initial studies.

## POLICY 01: INCREASE THE GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENT FOR ALL INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES

New industrial development in Armourdale should retain and infiltrate 50% of the stormwater generated by a site's impermeable surfaces, or contribute to a fund supporting green stormwater infrastructure in Armourdale.

## POLICY 02: POLLUTING OR NUISANCE INDUSTRIES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO RELOCATE AWAY FROM ARMOURDALE

Firms in Armourdale with significant environmental footprints, pollution concerns, or that negatively impact quality of life should be encouraged to relocate elsewhere in Wyandotte County, away from residential neighborhoods.

# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

## THE KANSAS RIVER

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## THE KANSAS RIVER INTRODUCTION

The Kansas River has historically been ignored as both a community asset and an important part of the local ecology. Only when a catastrophic flood event threatens the community and industry that borders it are major investments made in the river. This is a missed opportunity to make the Kansas River central to the identity of Kansas City.

This Master Plan calls for a major investment in the Kansas River to increase its ecological health and its service to the Armourdale and Kansas City community. First and foremost, this Master Plan aims to help people enjoy the Kansas River as an everyday community resource. This means thinking of the river as more than just a way to move water from one place to another. The river and its floodplain as parks, fishing spots, hiking trails, ball courts, and other assets.

This Master Plan's second goal is to improve access from the Armourdale community both to and along the Kansas River. Although the forthcoming levee improvements will have access points to the levee trail, this Master Plan calls for significantly investing in and expanding them.

Finally, this Master Plan's third goal is to increase the ecological performance of the Kansas River through restoring native ecologies in the existing floodplain. This will benefit both the ecological health of the river and provide increased recreational opportunities for Armourdale and the rest of Kansas City.

## THE KANSAS RIVER GOALS

- GOAL 1: HELP PEOPLE ENJOY THE KANSAS RIVER**
- GOAL 2: IMPROVE ACCESS TO AND ALONG THE KANSAS RIVER**
- GOAL 3: IMPROVE THE ECOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE OF THE KANSAS RIVER**

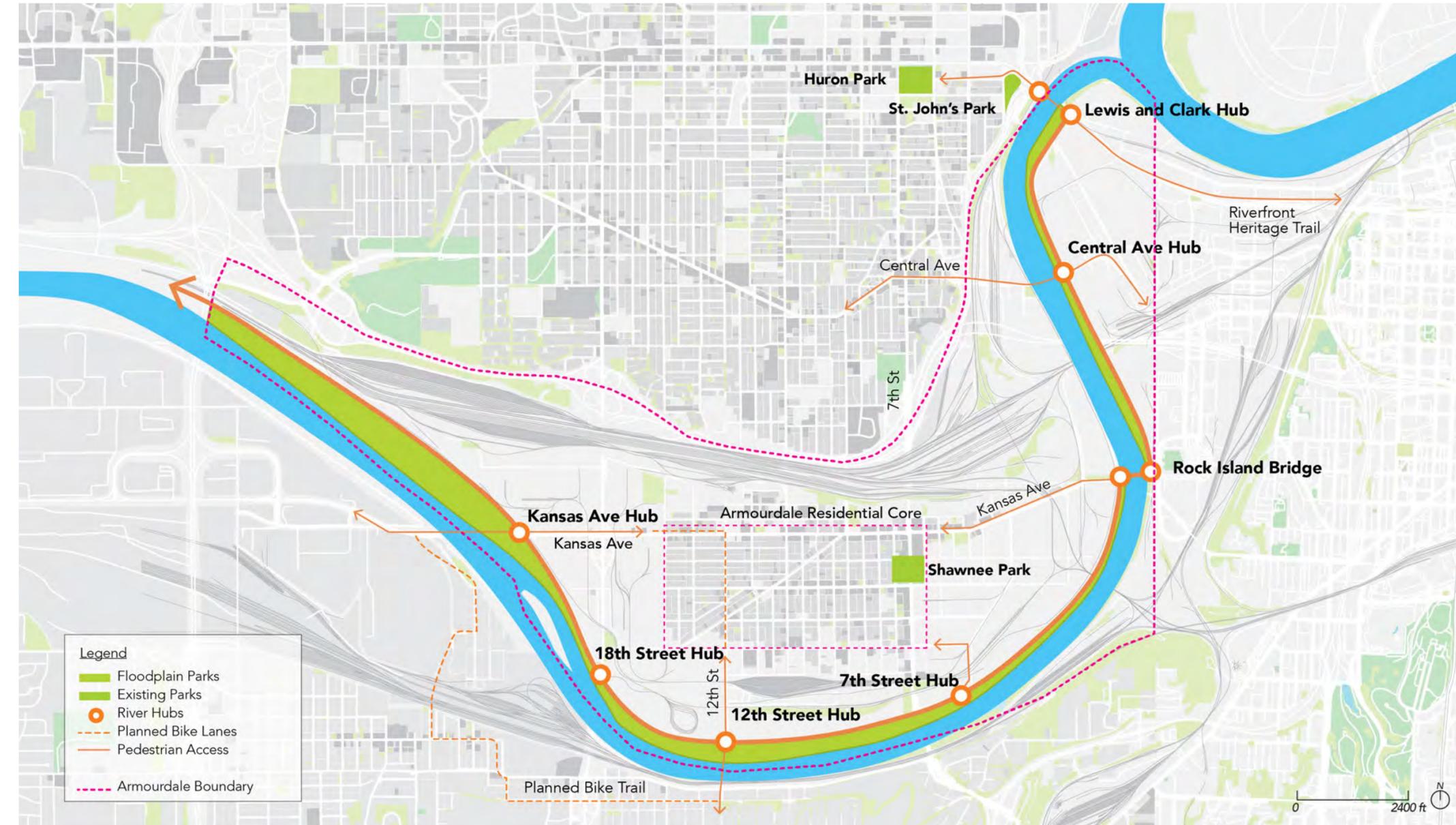


## CONTEXT AND STRATEGIES

This Master Plan calls for several strategies to meet these goals. First, it calls for investing in a number of key sites where the community can access the Kansas River. These Community Hubs will be more than just a trailhead and a welcome sign. They should be robust public facilities with parking, water access, trail access, and other amenities. Some are already moving forward through innovative public-private partnerships, like the Rock Island Bridge. Others, like the Central Avenue Hub, should be considered in tandem with the master planning of the West Bottoms. Whatever the next step in their development, each Community Hub should be developed over the next ten years so that it has been built out by 2031.

The floodplain of the Kansas River itself should be improved. For too long, the floodplain has been scoured of all ecological and community value. Public access, ecological health, and community use have all been sacrificed to move water as efficiently as possible from one point to another. Beginning with a pilot project and later continuing across the floodplain, the ecology of the Kansas River should be improved through best practices environmental restoration. There should be trails, boat and canoe ramps, fishing spots, sports fields and other amenities in the floodplain.

Finally, public access to the Kansas River should be guaranteed. Private development must always allow access through its property to the river, and the levee trail itself must be open to the public within this entire study area.

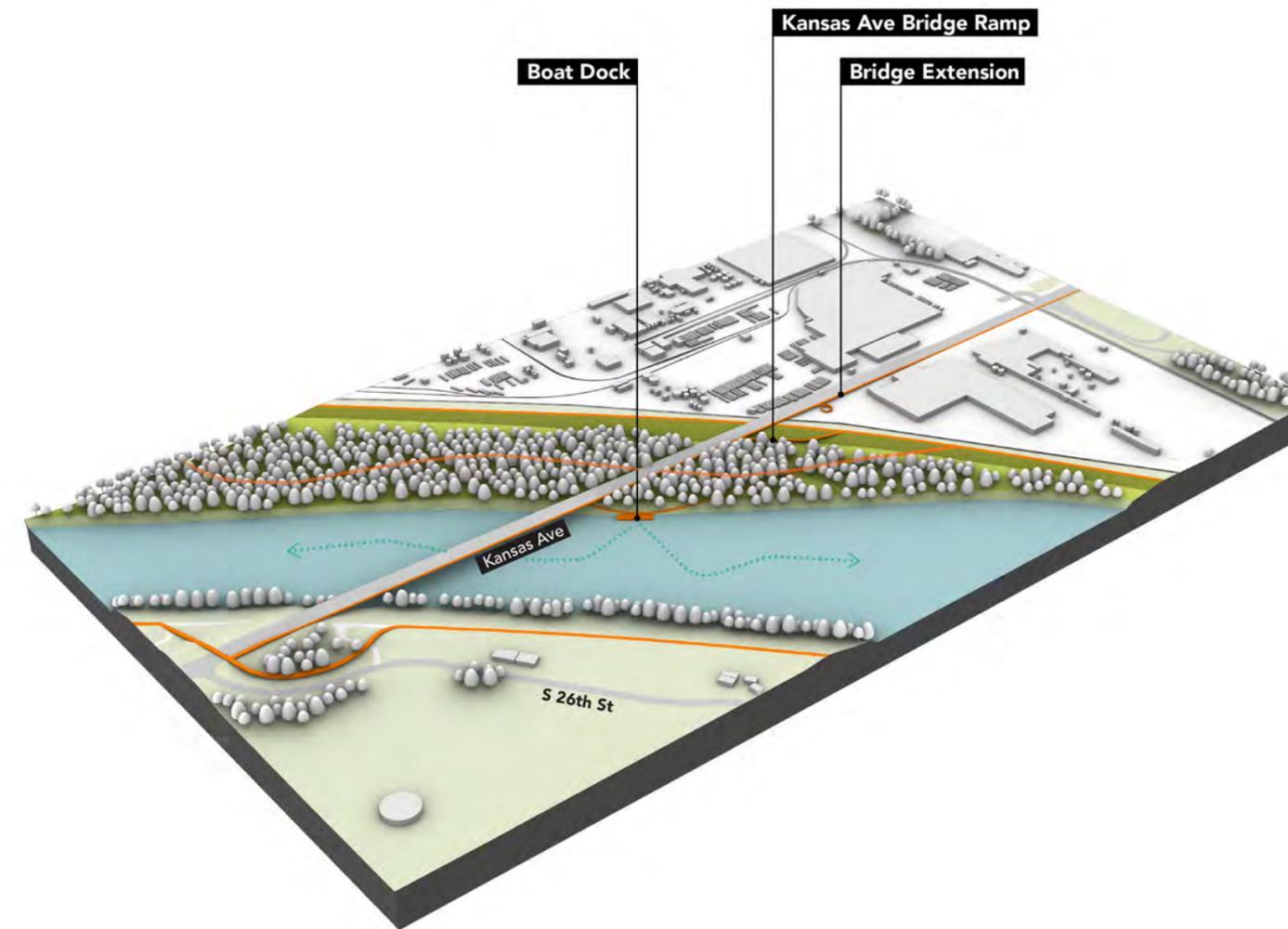


### Kansas Ave Community Hub

The Kansas Avenue Community Hub is part of the reconstruction of the 18th Street Bridge, a Kansas Department of Transportation Project that is also installing a bike loop from Armourdale across the Kansas River at Kansas Avenue and 12th Street.

The Kansas Avenue Community Hub has the lightest touch of any of the hubs. It is primarily an access point from the Kansas Avenue Bridge and its bike lane to the Levee Trail. This Master Plan also calls for the installation of a trail through the floodplain of the Kansas River extending to the north west of the site. This area is already well-forested, and a nature trail would offer opportunities for bird-watching and easy walking. There is also a simple water access point for fishing or launching a canoe.

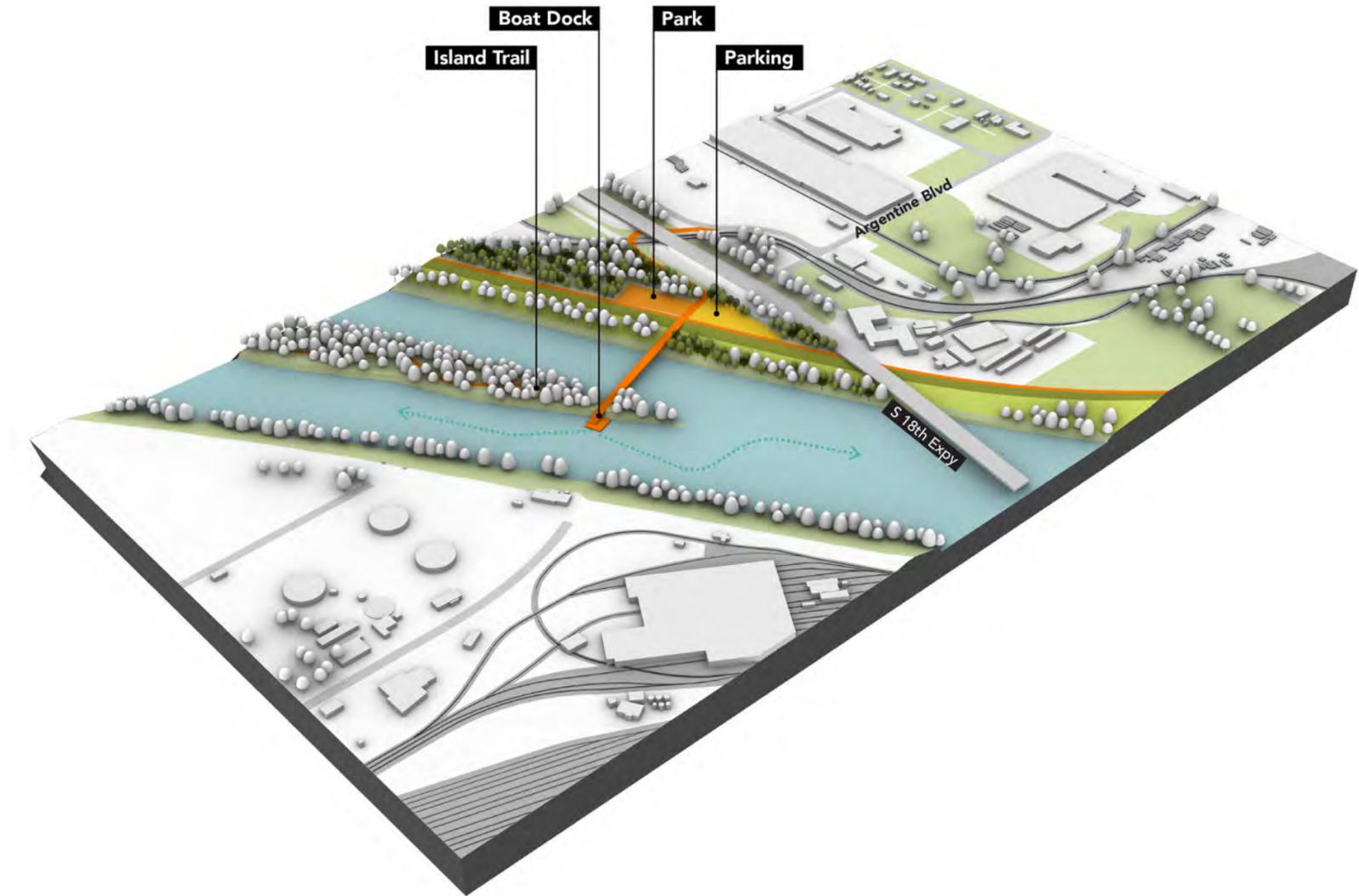
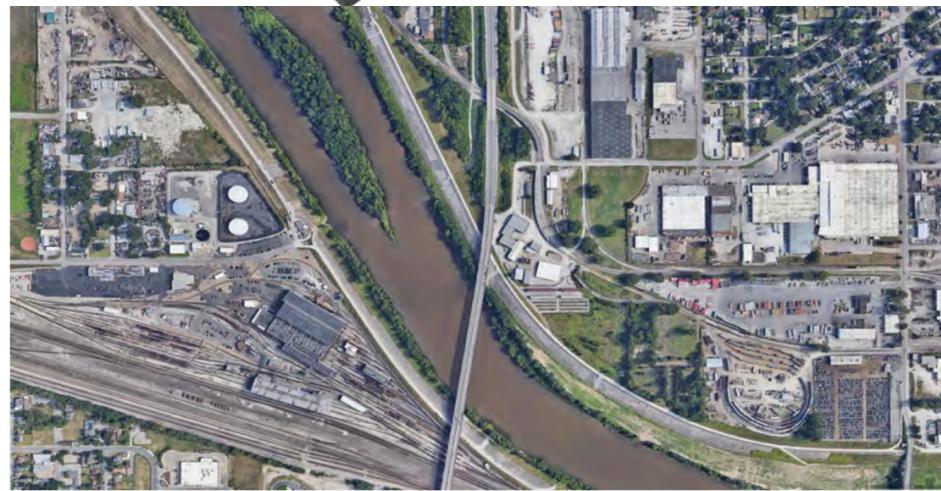
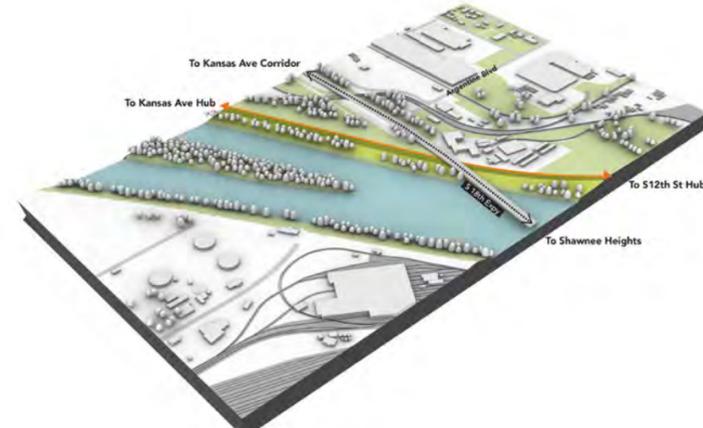
This Community Hub should be planned and constructed as part of the 18th Street Bridge Reconstruction.



### Kaw Island Bridge Community Hub

The Kaw Island Bridge Community Hub includes access points, parking, and modest community amenities to allow Armourdale residents and others to access the Kansas River. It also calls for a new bridge connecting to a formerly inaccessible island. 'Kaw Island' is a low-lying island within the floodplain that would offer plentiful river access and walking opportunities.

Implementation of this hub should be studied as part of the reconstruction of the 18th Street Bridge.

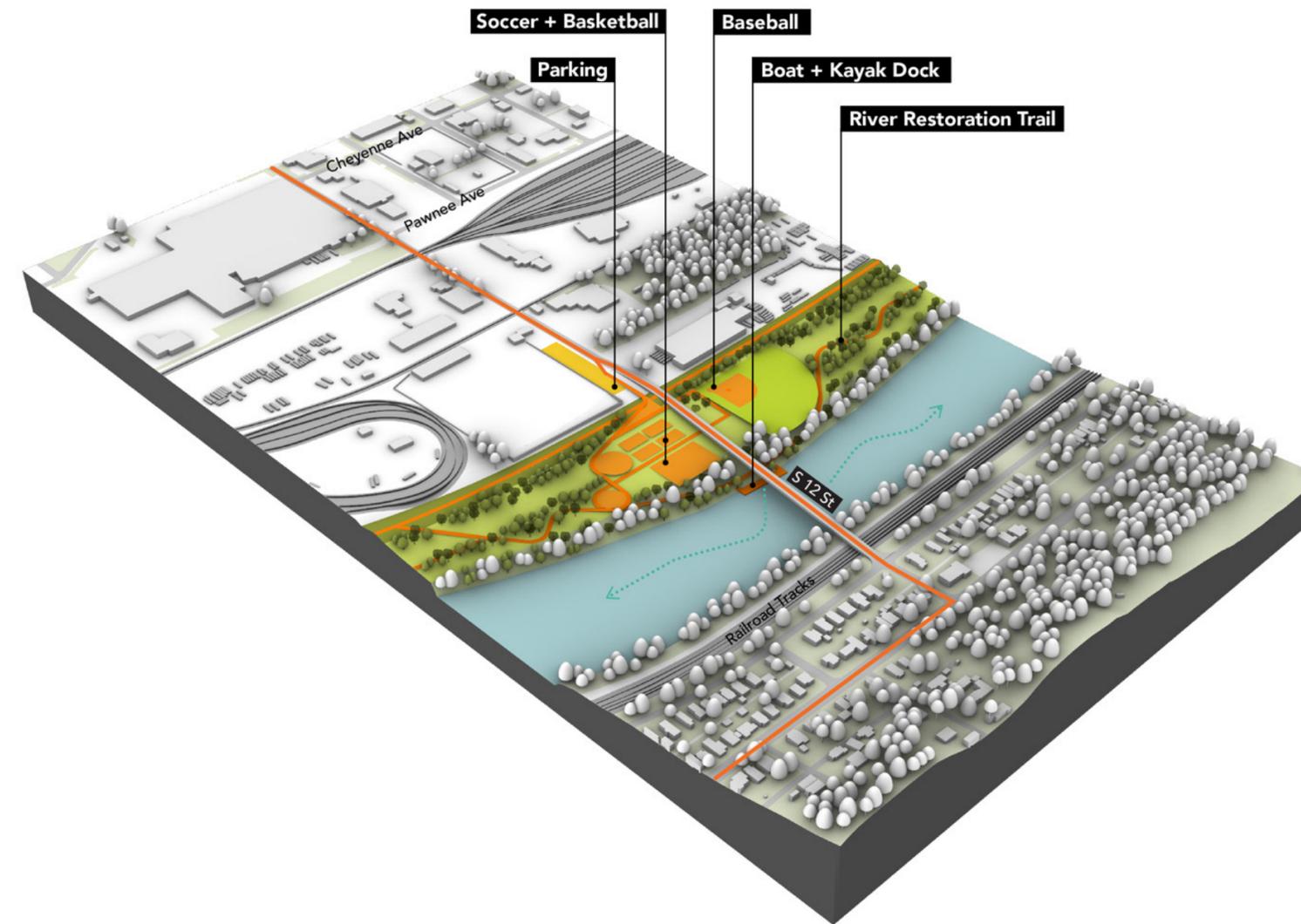
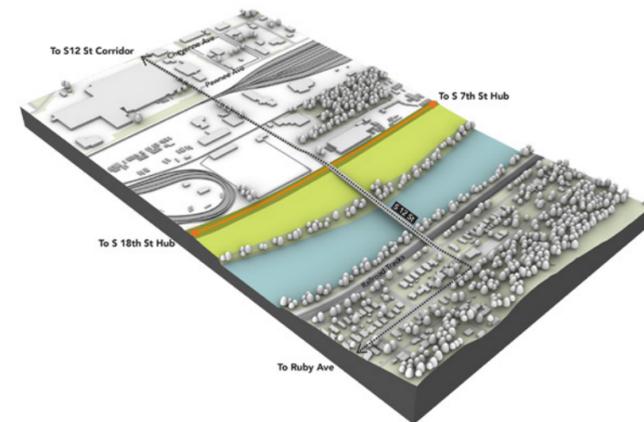


### 12th Street Community Hub

The 12th Street Community Hub is one of the most intensively programmed hubs within this Master Plan. With simple, direct, at-grade access up 12th Street to the Armourdale Neighborhood Core and a wide floodplain, the 12th Street Community Hub should become a magnet for recreation and trail and river access. This Master Plan calls for the creation of a new softball field, a number of basketball and small-scale soccer fields, as well as picnic areas and new points for river access.

The Kansas River floodplain is also at its widest point here, making the 12th Street Community Hub the perfect place to pilot the ecological restoration of the Kansas River. This restoration requires further study to conform with best practices for ecological restoration of floodplains. This Master Plan calls for the regrading of the floodplain to create more topographic variety and more areas that can periodically flood to mimic the natural ecology that existed here before the channelization of the river.

This project should be funded and implemented through the 18th Street Bridge reconstruction proposed by KDOT. It is also a potential site for the Kaw River Restoration Pilot Project.



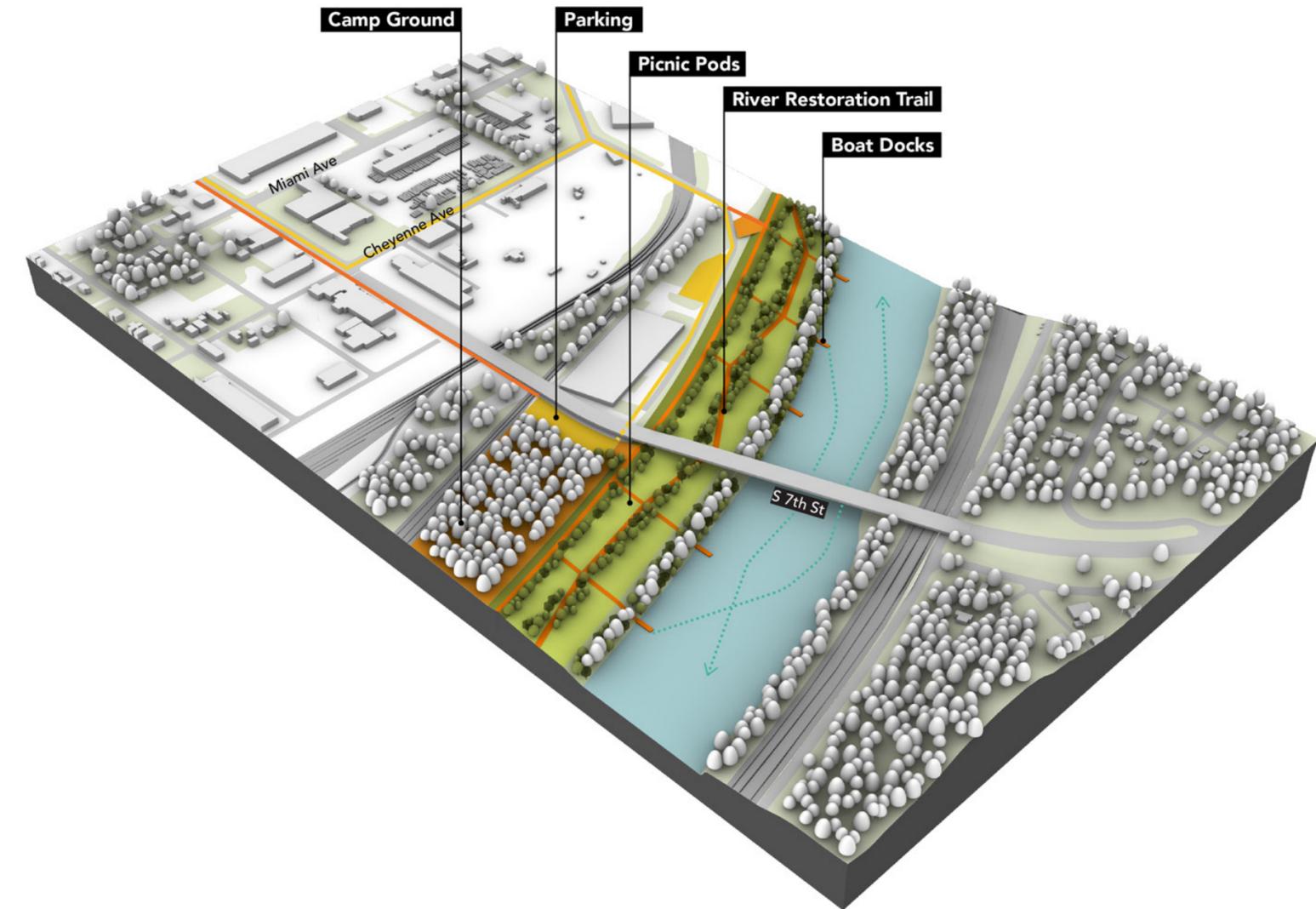
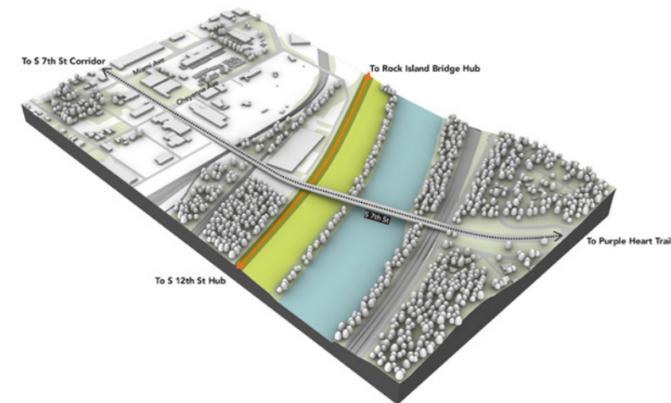
### 7th Street Community Hub

Although 7th Street is another intuitive connection point and site for a community hub. Until 12th Street, however, there are spatial and jurisdictional challenges to providing access in to this area. There is no existing at-grade connection along 7th Street to the Levee trail, and the 7th Street Bridge is not conducive to providing safe pedestrian and bike access.

This Master Plan calls for studying the creation of an at-grade pedestrian connection next to the 7th Street Bridge. This would connect to the city-owned parcel adjacent to (but still behind) the levee, which would be incorporated into the Floodplain Park. Vehicle access would extend to 5th Street, where leasing a private, underused parking lot next to an at-grade connection would also provide easy (albeit less intuitive access.)

The floodplain here is almost as wide as at 7th Street, so it would see a similar ecological restoration strategy. This Master Plan also calls for the creation of areas for barbecuing and community events. These would be spaced widely enough to take advantage of the full width of the floodplain and connected with a floodplain walking path.

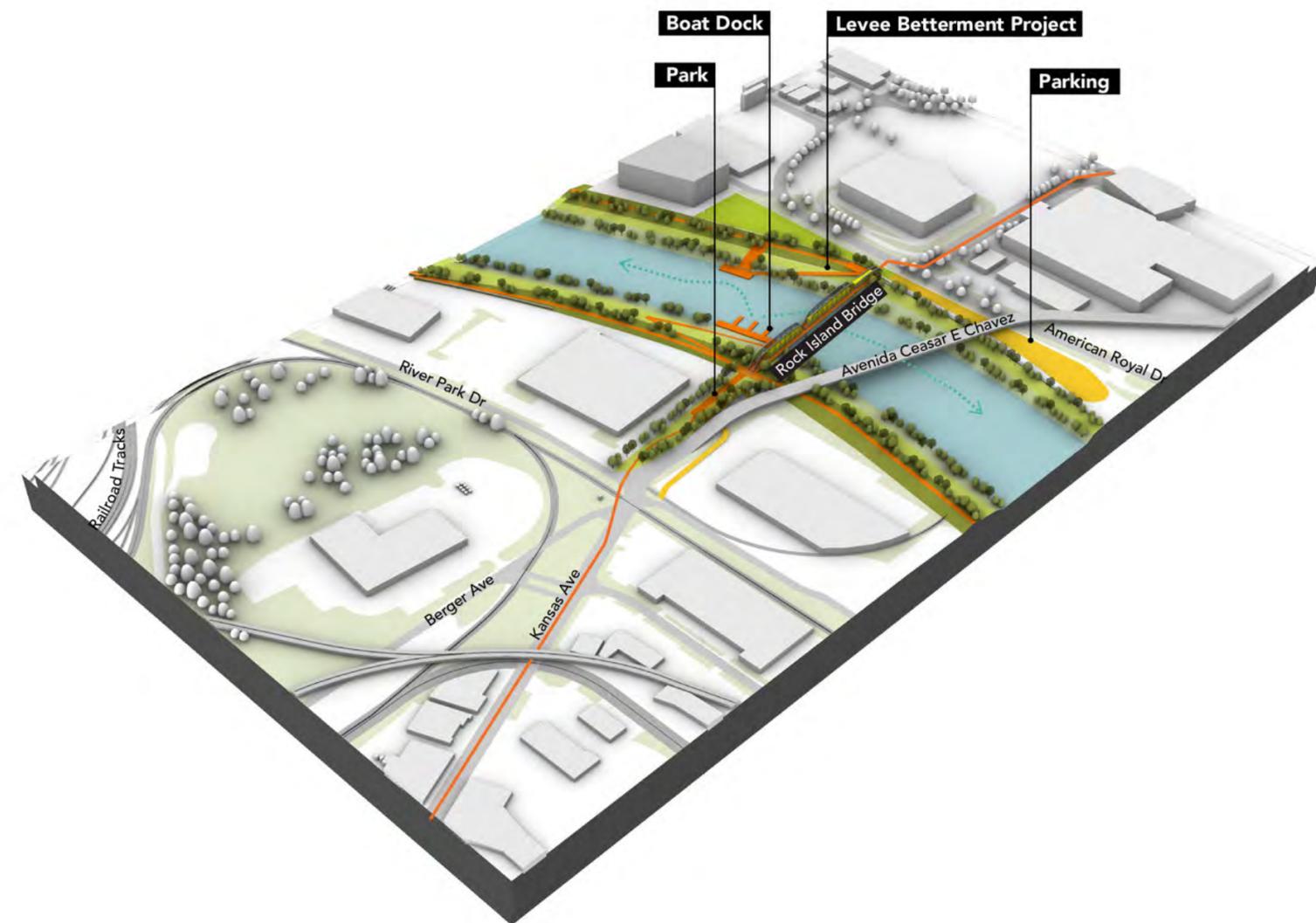
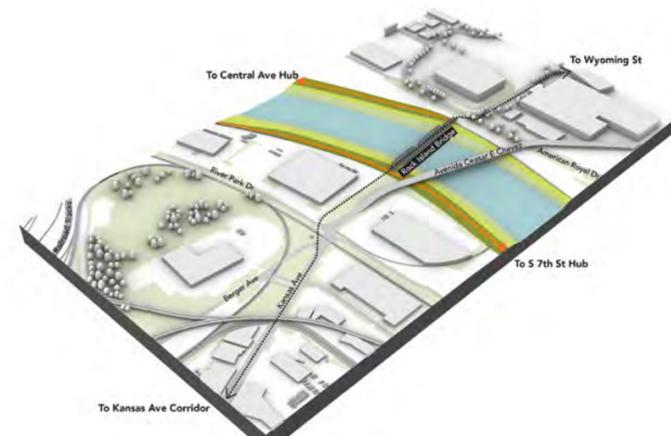
This is another potential site for the Kaw River Restoration Pilot Project.



### Rock Island Bridge Community Hub

The Rock Island Bridge is the centerpiece of an ongoing public-private partnership creating a destination space along the Kansas River. This project is ongoing, and the recommendations here reflect the current recommendations and plans developed as part of the levee enhancements and betterments coordinated by the Unified Government.

This community hub is about creating a special experience for Kansas City residents. Visitors will be able to dine or attend events and the bridge, access the water, and access the Levee trail all from this hub. There will be parking on both sides of the river, and this space will also connect to a planned public park between the Rock Island Bridge and the Yards II project.

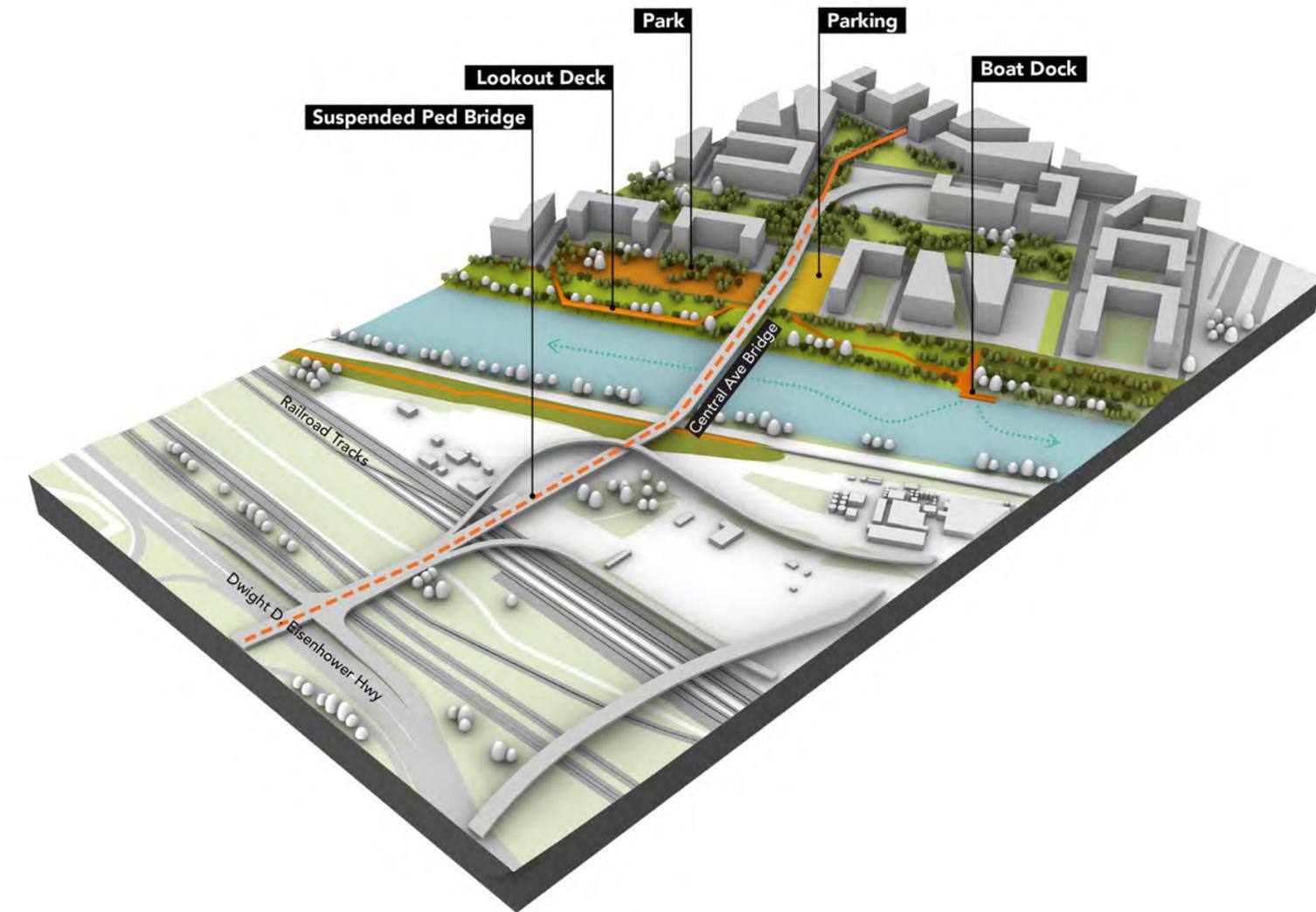
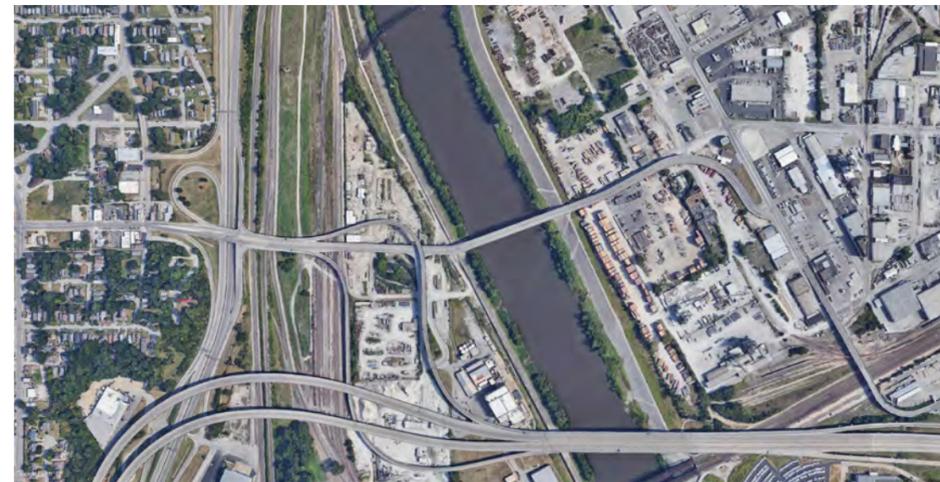
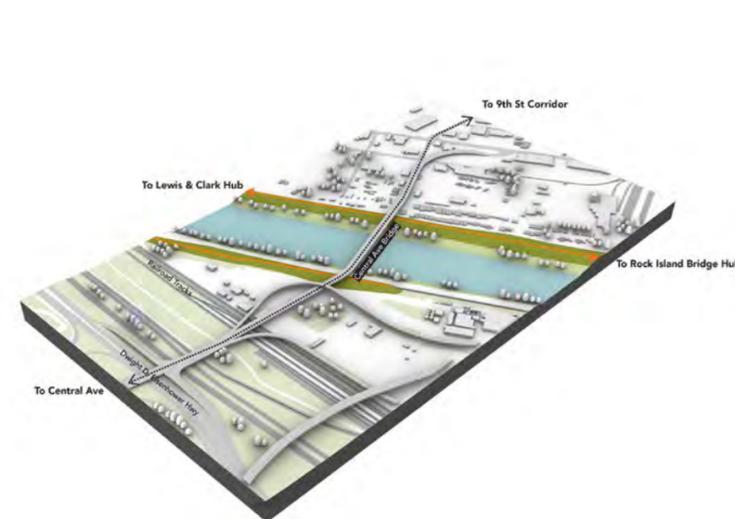


### Central Ave Community Hub

The Central Avenue Community Hub is the central hub for the West Bottoms. It should connect to the West Bottoms development both at grade along Central Avenue as well as connect to the Central Avenue bridge, which is currently at the end of its planned lifespan. The bridge is being studied for possible conversion to solely pedestrian and bicycle use.

This Master Plan calls for the extensive redesign and reconstruction of the east bank of the Kansas River as part of the West Bottoms Master Plan. Public access, generous plazas and areas for gathering, restoration of the river bank, and other developments to center the West Bottoms on the river itself.

The Central Avenue Community Hub should be included in the scope of the West Bottoms Master Plan.

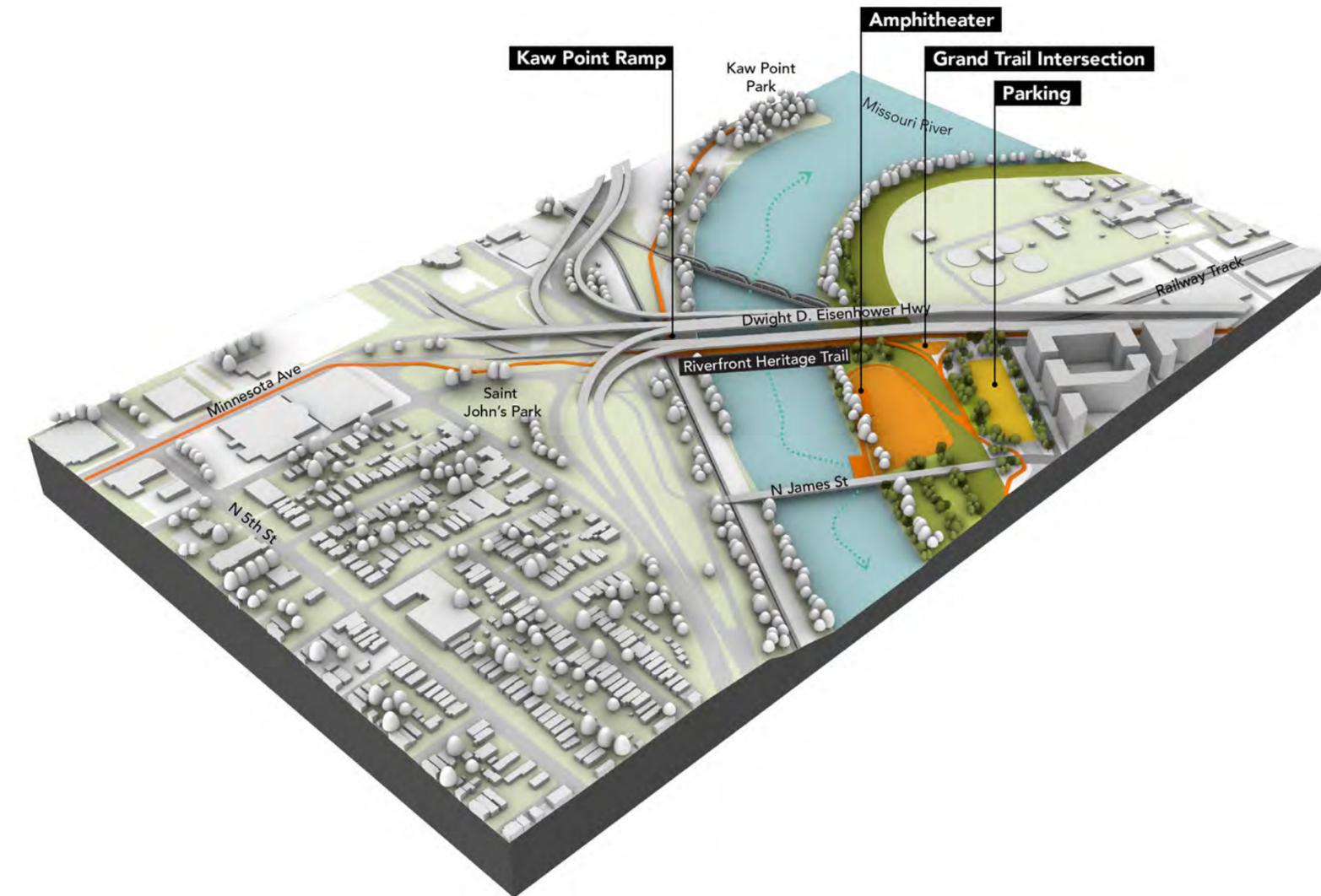
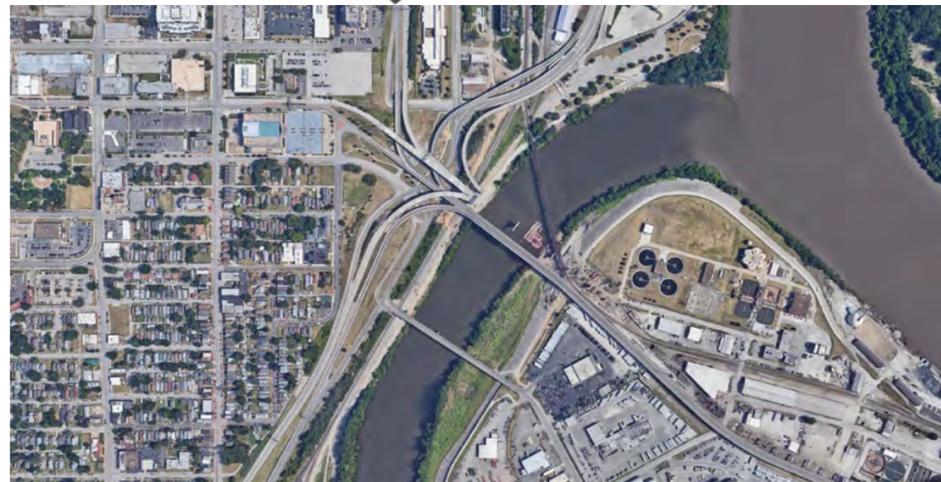
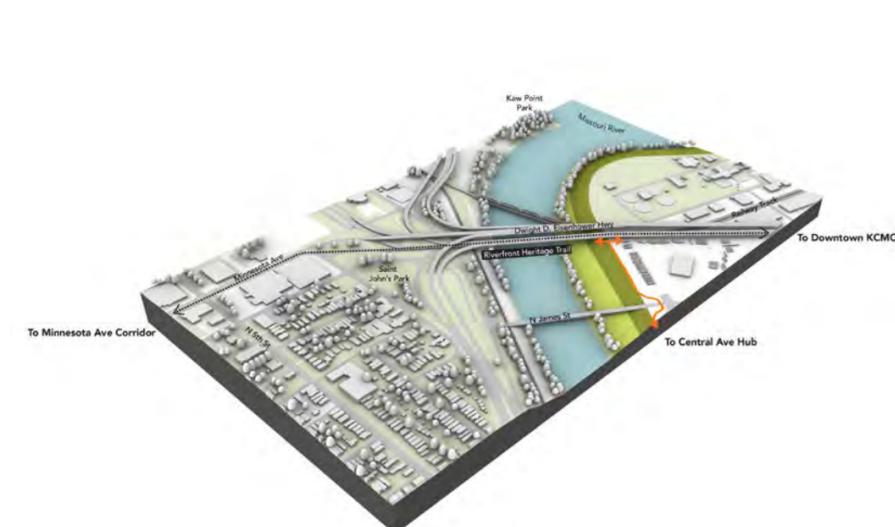


### Lewis and Clark Community Hub

The Lewis and Clark Community is also central to the success of the West Bottoms District. It connects directly to the River Heritage Trail as well as the crossing point to downtown Kansas City, Kansas.

This Master Plan calls for placing a large event venue with the bridge as a backdrop, along with generous parking, restoration of the river bank, and other developments to center the West Bottoms on the river itself.

The Central Avenue Community Hub should be included in the scope of the West Bottoms Master Plan.



### RIVER RESTORATION PRECEDENT **TRINITY RIVER PROJECT DALLAS, TX**

The Trinity River project is the restoration of an US Army Corps of Engineers-administered floodplain adjacent to downtown Dallas. This project not only maintains the Trinity River’s viability as a floodplain. It also restores much of the native floodplain ecology, weaves through substantial public amenities like playgrounds and walking paths. This project transforms a previously underused and underloved area into a world-class public park at the center of Dallas.



The Trinity River Project, MVVA

### **STRATEGY 01: CREATE A MASTER PLAN FOR THE KANSAS RIVER**

**Goal:** Develop a metro-scale vision for the Kansas River, focusing on recreation and ecological restoration.

**Context:** The Kansas River has not been seen as an ecological resource or central to the identity of Kansas City.

**Target:** Develop a Master Plan by the end of 2024.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Work with MARC and communities adjacent to Wyandotte County to develop the scope and funding stream for the Master Plan
- 2) Issue an RFP for Master Plan development no later than 2022.

**Site:** The Kansas River

**Partners:**

- Mid-America Regional Council** would be an important partner for developing a regional vision for the Kansas River
- Kaw River Drainage District** administers the Kansas River floodplain and should be involved in any planning project.

**Funding:** Private foundations or planning grants.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Develop the scope and funding source for the RFP.

### **STRATEGY 02: IMPLEMENT THE KAW RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT**

**Goal:** Develop a pilot project for the restoration and community use of the Kansas River.

**Context:** The Armourdale community does not think of the Kansas River as an asset. There are few demonstrations of how the Kansas River might be restored. This is pilot project will implement best practice, natural river restoration strategies to help clean the Kaw River upstream from increased residential development and recreational activity. This project will have positive public health impacts that lead to greater recreational and tourism opportunities on the River, promote further community development and economic regeneration of adjacent areas, enhance levee trail access, restore biological diversity and stormwater functionality of the floodplain, and serve as a learning lab for future deployment efforts.

**Target:** Deliver the Kaw River Restoration Project by the end of 2024.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Develop an RFP for the project for issuing by the end of 2021 or beginning of 2022.

**Site:** The Kansas River

**Partners:**

- Armourdale Renewal Association** would be an important partner for developing a community space along the Kansas River.

**Kaw River Drainage District** administers the Kansas River floodplain and should be involved in any pilot project on the river.

**Funding:** Already appropriated.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Develop the scope and funding source for the RFP. Year 2-5: Recruit firm and deliver project.

**STRATEGY 03:  
WORK WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS  
TO EXPAND PROGRAMMING AND  
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ALONG  
AND ON THE KANSAS RIVER**

**Goal:** Develop more opportunities for Armourdale residents to experience the Kansas River.

**Context:** Armourdale residents by and large do not have a relationship with the Kansas River.

**Target:** Consistent, monthly or more frequent activations of the riverfront, especially in parallel with the planning for the pilot project above.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Work with Armourdale community groups to develop potential programming opportunities along the waterfront.
- 2) Recruit recreation and other organizations that center their

activities on the river.

- 3) Recruit funding partners to fund pilot programs along the river.

**Site:** The Kansas River

**Partners:**

**Kansas City Rowing Club** would be a good partner to expand programming for Armourdale Youth.

**Armourdale Renewal Association** would be a partner in programming along the river.

**Funding:** Private foundations or planning grants.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Working with local youth groups and community organizations like the ARA, start holding cleanups, recreation opportunities and other activations along the riverfront. Year 2+: Stage activation events along the riverfront in parallel with the master planning process and implementing the pilot project.

**STRATEGY 04:  
RESTORE THE ECOLOGICAL HEALTH  
AND PERFORMANCE OF THE KANSAS  
RIVER FLOODPLAIN**

**Goal:** Create more biodiversity and support for native ecologies along the Kansas River.

**Context:** The floodplain for the Kansas River is not an ecologically healthy environment, which limits both its public use and its long-term health

**Target:** Create a master plan for restoration and implement the Kaw River Restoration Project by 2031.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Work with the Kaw Valley Drainage District to create a vision for the river that combines ecological restoration with flood protection.
- 2) Develop a master plan for restoration and public use in line with Strategy 1.

**Site:** The Kansas River

**Partners:**

**Mid-America Regional Council** would be an important partner for developing a regional vision for the Kansas River

**Kaw River Drainage District** administers the Kansas River floodplain and should be involved in any planning project.

**Funding:** Private foundations or planning grants.

**Timeframe:** See Strategy 01.

**POLICY 01:  
THE PUBLIC SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO  
THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE KANSAS  
RIVER**

The public should have continuous access to the Kansas River from the Levee Trail. Access to the Levee Trail should be made at every future Community Hub site as well as anywhere else that is feasible. The public should also have regular access to the river itself through boat ramps, floating docks, or other facilities.

# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG *FUERTE*

## THE WEST BOTTOMS

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## THE WEST BOTTOMS

The West Bottoms encompasses the historic stockyards area east of the Kansas River. Primarily industrial in character, it is adjacent to two developing mixed-use districts. The Missouri Historic West Bottoms is an area with a historic building fabric that has slowly been adapted into apartments, offices, breweries, and other amenities. The Stockyards District is rapidly grown area around the historic Livestock Exchange building and includes the Yards II development and the Rock Island Bridge.

This Master Plan proposed redeveloping the West Bottoms as a mixed-use district centered on the restored Kansas River. It proposed developing a specific District Plan for the West Bottoms itself, which would study the future land use, market products, and financing strategy for the district. The three proposals included in this Master Plan are meant to show the range of potential options for the future district, but are studies only. A final decision for the future of the district should be the product of the District Plan itself.

The three scenarios presented in this Master Plan all use the Kansas River as the central spine for development. Each district should be oriented to the Kansas River, and the river itself and its banks should be restored to make their public realm central to the identity of the West Bottoms. The first scenario calls for a mixed-use district of residential and commercial uses with generous public realm for the local community. The second scenario calls for the creation of destination spaces financed using Sales Tax and Revenue (STAR) bonds. The third scenario calls for a combined logistics and innovation hub centered on commercial uses.

## THE WEST BOTTOMS GOALS

- GOAL 1: MAKE THE KANSAS RIVER CENTRAL TO THE IDENTITY OF THE WEST BOTTOMS**
- GOAL 2: CREATE A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BOTTOMS**
- GOAL 3: ENSURE THE BENEFITS OF WEST BOTTOMS DEVELOPMENT FUND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE OF ARMOURDALE**



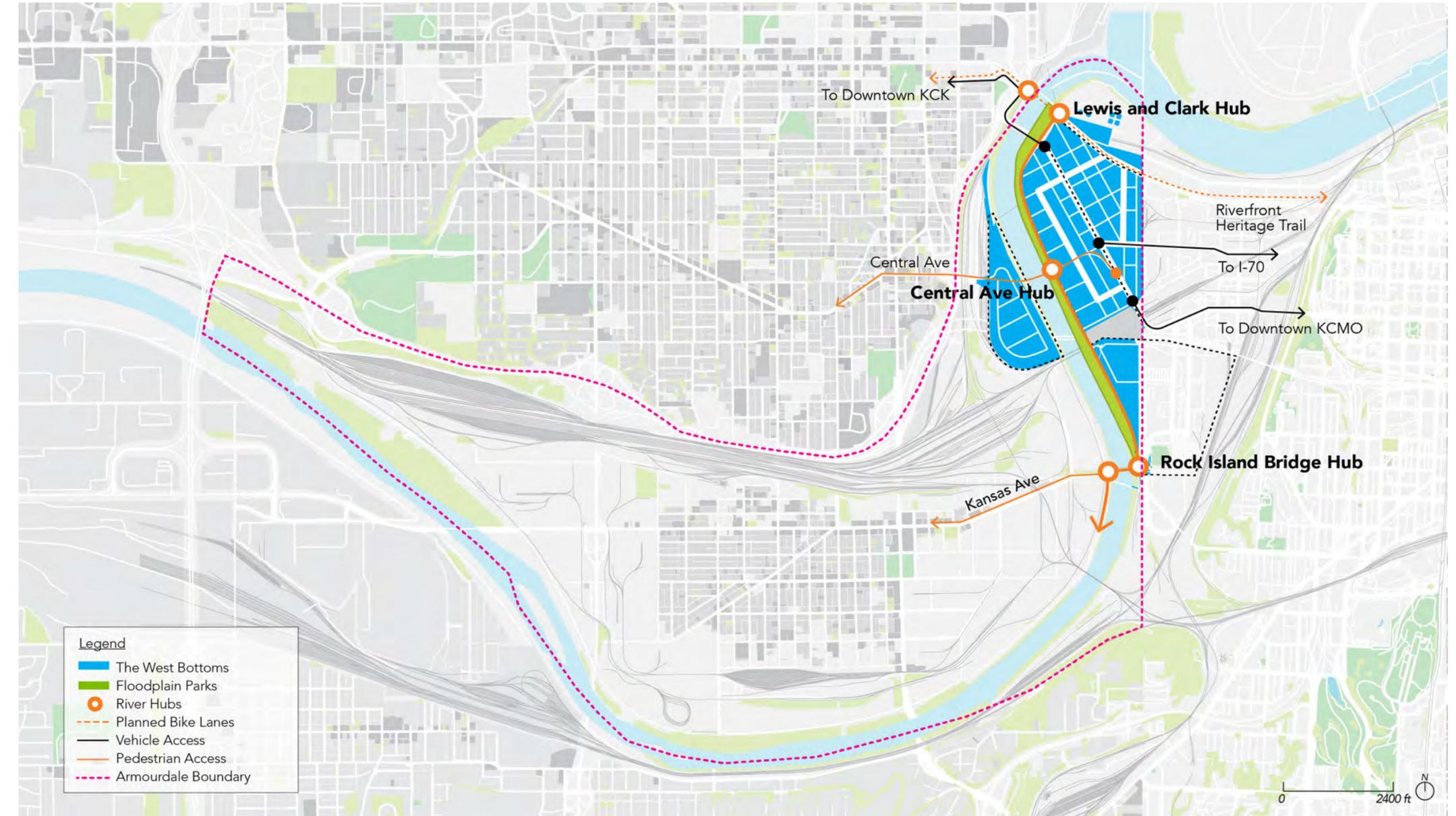
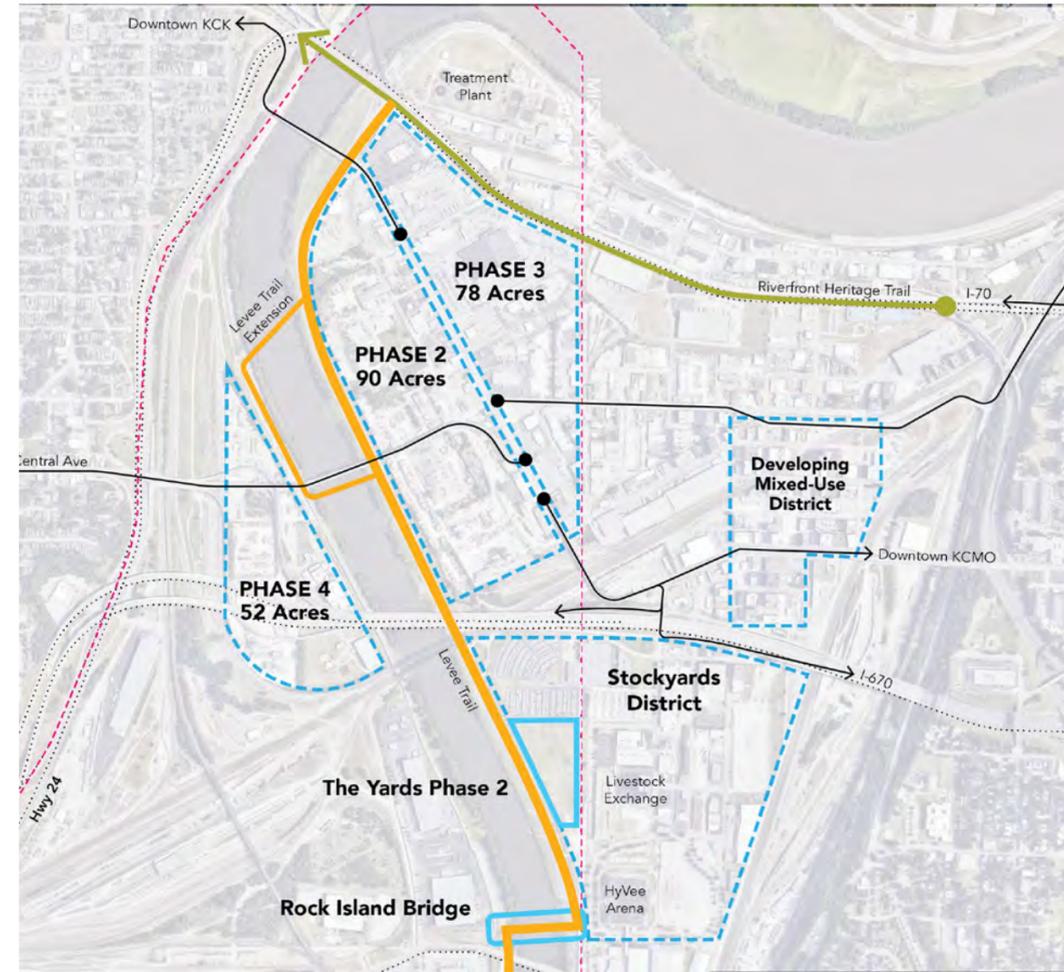
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# CONTEXT AND STRATEGIES

The West Bottoms has almost more than a mile of uninterrupted riverfront and excellent access to downtown KCK and KCMO. The levee trail connects to both the Riverfront Heritage Trail and the Rock Island Bridge, and the Central Avenue Bridge offers direct access to the Central Area of Kansas City Kansas and is slated to be pedestrianized in the future.

For the purposes of this Master Plan, the West Bottoms is divided into four 'phases' that are reasonably-sized areas for development. The District Plan should address each area but that phasing is not set in stone. The Stockyards District, encompassing The Yards II development and the Rock Island Bridge, is Phase 1. Phase 2 encompasses the area north of the railroad tracks and between James Street and the Kansas River. Phase 3 includes everything east of James Street. Phase 4 includes the area between I-70 and the Kansas River.



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# SCENARIO 1: MIXED USE DISTRICT

The first scenario calls for the creation of a mixed-use district comprised primarily of residential, commercial, and some entertainment uses. New residential districts like this rely on creating a distinct district identity. With more than 1 mile of riverfront, this district should rely on an improved edge to the Kansas River with a wide diversity of walking paths, river access points, plazas, overlooks, and other amenities to create a truly special experience on the Kansas River.

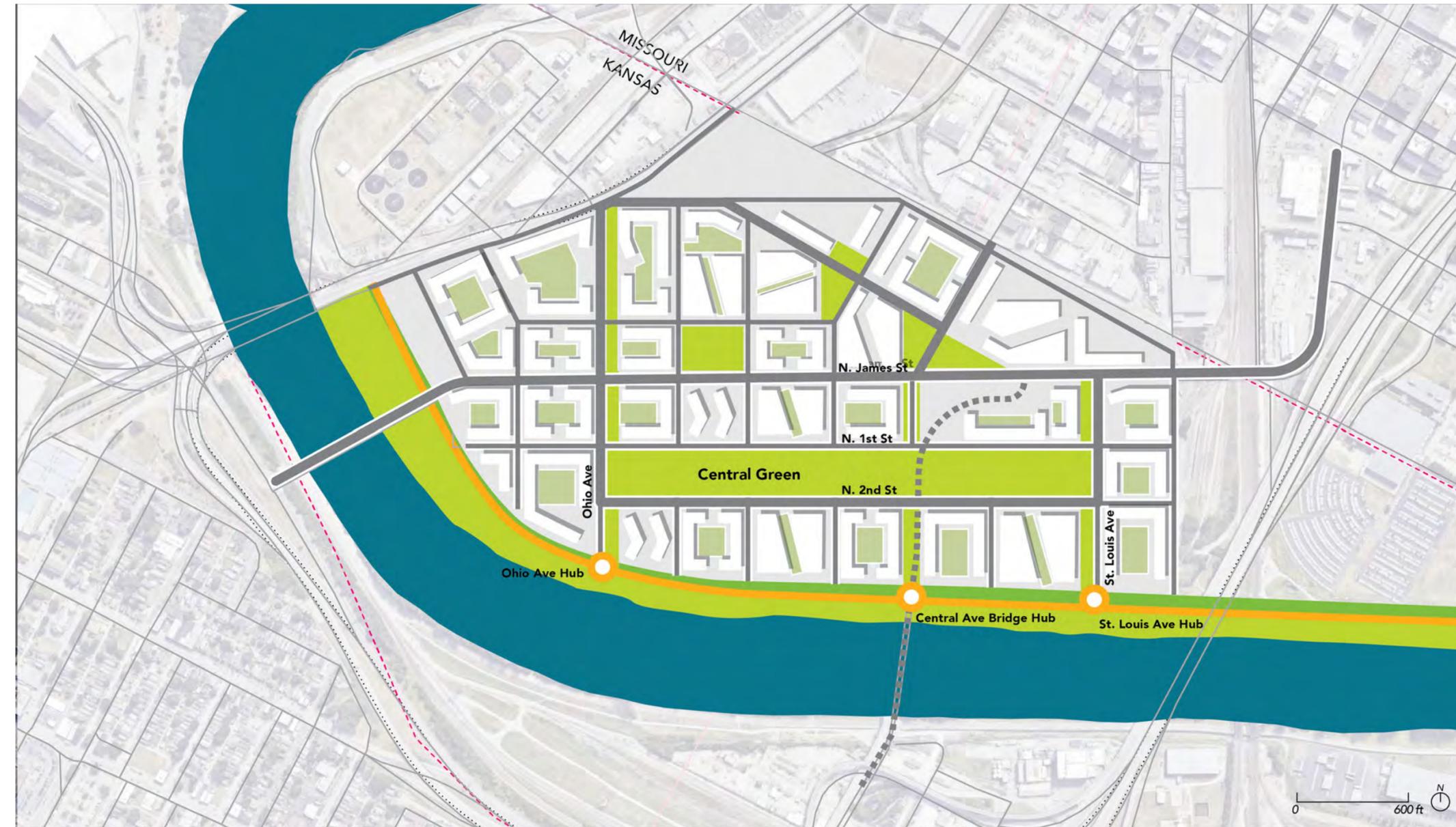
This district also has generous new public realm areas within the district itself. The Central Green is a large open space that could be programmed and offer numerous passive and active recreation opportunities. There are numerous wide boulevards connecting the easternmost area of the district directly with the Kansas River. Finally, this district includes two of the Community Hubs described in the previous chapter.

## SCENARIO 1 PRECEDENT RIVER NORTH DISTRICT NASHVILLE, TN

The River North district is a new neighborhood in Nashville, Tennessee that is currently under development. The site's current uses are, similar to the West Bottoms, a mix of industrial and logistics areas. The master plan calls for a mix of residential and office uses, but its most important lesson for the west bottoms is that it prioritizes improvements to the riverfront as central to the identity and viability of the district.



Hickory Crossing, Dallas, TX



## SCENARIO 2: RIVERFRONT DESTINATION

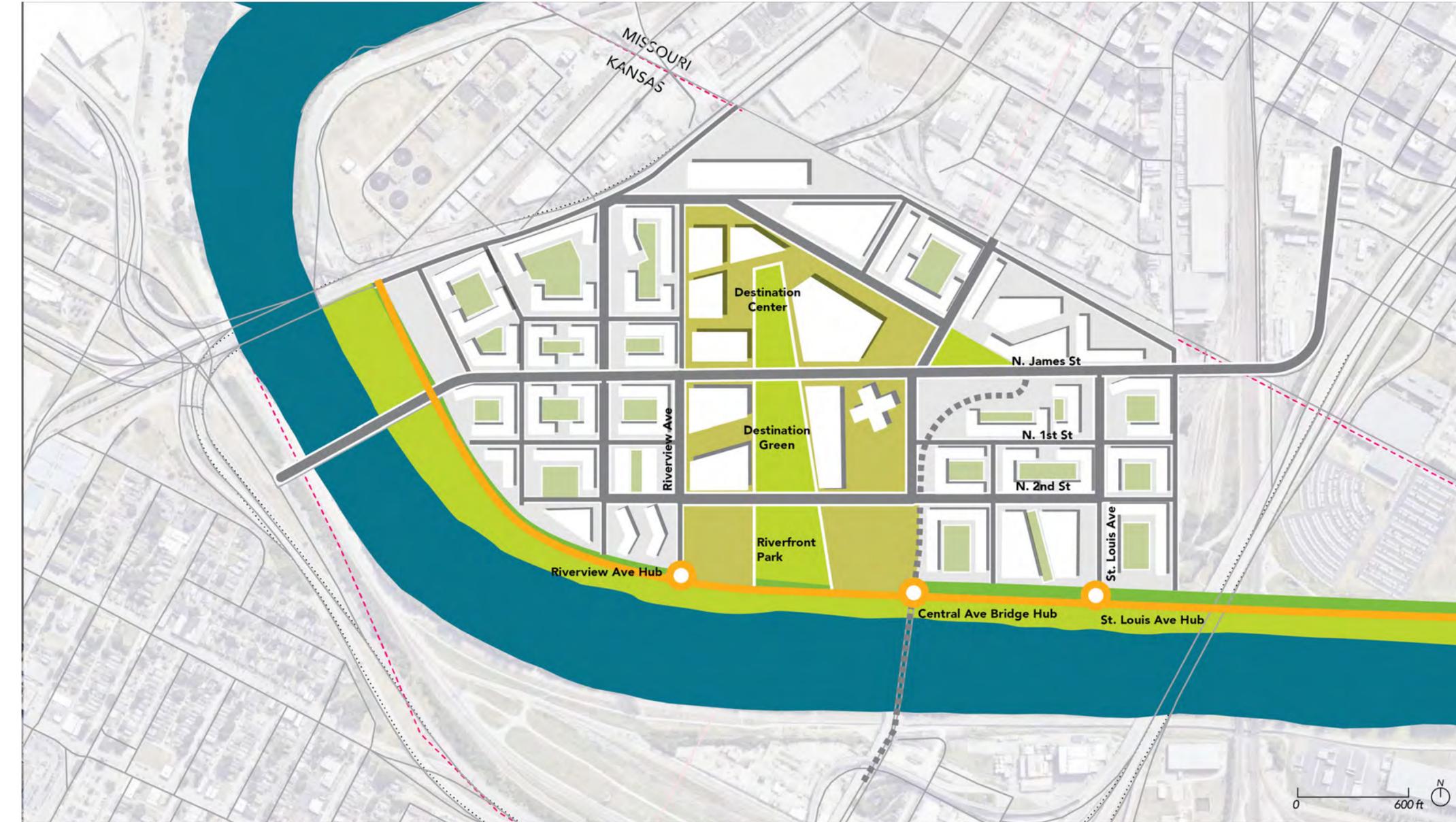
The second scenario calls for the creation of a new destination district adjacent to the Kansas River, surrounded by extensive mixed-use development. Financed using Kansas' unique STAR bonds, which rely on sales tax revenue for destination or tourism projects, this scenario could accommodate a number of destinations within its large central space.

Like Scenario 1, the creation of this destination relies on generous new public realm amenities to form the identity of the district. There are new walking paths, plazas and amenities along the riverfront. The heart of the project is the 'Destination Green,' a large public open space bordered by the destination facilities themselves.

Although the precise types of destinations themselves - be they performing arts venues, stadia, retail, or others - have not been studied. However, this plan has the flexibility to accommodate a number of potential types of destinations as part of an overall District Plan.

### SCENARIO 2 PRECEDENT EAST BANK DISTRICT WICHITA, KS

The East Bank District is a new destination district adjacent to the Kansas River in Wichita. It includes some residential and mixed-use areas, but its principal uses are for a new performing arts venue, convention center, and hotels. Like the West Bottoms, its identity is centered on the Arkansas River. This project is in the planning phase, but its current plans call for the financing of the project using STAR Bonds.

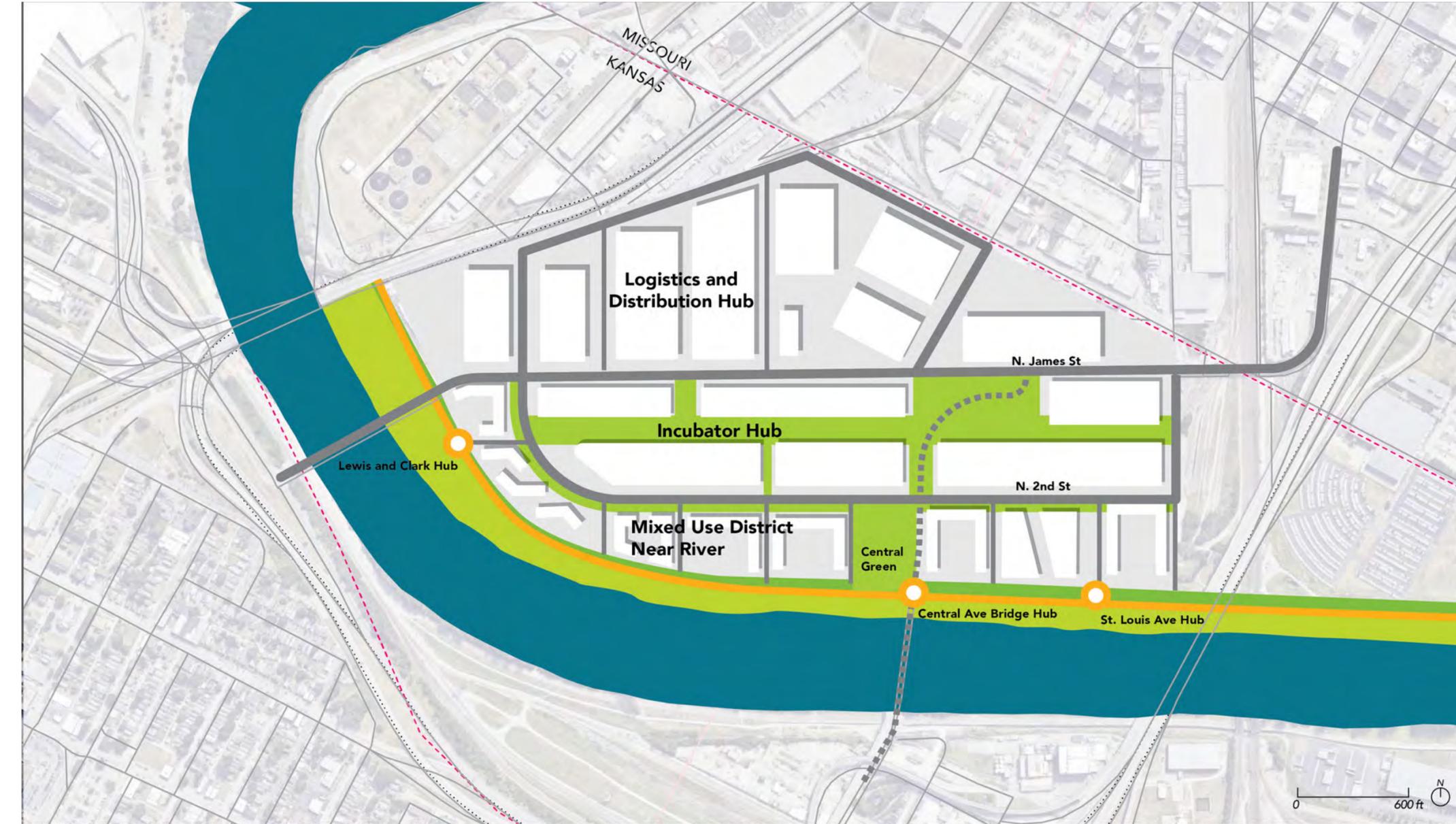


### OPTION 3: LOGISTICS AND INDUSTRIAL HUB

The third scenario calls for the creation of a new incubation and logistics hub within the heart of the West Bottoms, with a smaller mixed use district comprising a balance of commercial residential uses adjacent to the Kansas River. The Incubator Hub could offer large, flexible spaces to research start up or other companies that need a combination of light industrial and office space. The logistics and distribution hub would take advantage of the West Bottoms' proximity to Downtown KCK and KCMO to build significantly more warehouse and 'last mile' distribution than is currently available elsewhere in the area.

### SCENARIO 3 PRECEDENT SCHIPHOL TRADE PARK AMSTERDAM, NL

The Schiphol Trade Park is a combination of distribution hub and office park located near the Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam. It combines an innovative water management strategy with commercial office space and large-format industrial and logistics buildings.



**STRATEGY 01:  
CREATE A DISTRICT PLAN FOR THE  
WEST BOTTOMS**

**Goal:** Develop a district-wide plan to guide the development of the West Bottoms for the next ten years.

**Context:** As a rapidly changing district, the West Bottoms needs smart, high-level planning to ensure the Kansas City community takes full advantage of the opportunity.

**Target:** Develop a District Plan by the end of 2024.

**Action Items:**

- 1) Work to develop the scope and funding stream for the District Plan
- 2) Issue an RFP for Master Plan development no later than 2022.

**Site:** The West Bottoms

**Partners:**

**Armourdale Renewal Association** should be the community partner in developing any future district plan for the West Bottoms.

**Funding:** Private foundations or planning grants.

**Timeframe:** Year 1: Develop the scope and funding source for the RFP. Issue the RFP no later than Year 2.

**STRATEGY 02:  
CONVERT THE CENTRAL AVENUE BRIDGE  
TO PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE USE**

**Goal:** Provide a dedicated bicycle and pedestrian connection from downtown Kansas City, Kansas to the West Bottoms.

**Context:** The central avenue bridge is nearing the end of its useful life, and there is currently not the demand for traffic in the area to justify replacing it.

**Target:** Develop a plan for pedestrianization by the end of 2022.

**Action Items:**

- 1) In parallel with the development of the West Bottoms District Plan, develop a plan for phasing out traffic from using the Central Avenue Bridge.
- 2) During the district planning process, develop a vision for improvements to the bridge that will enhance district identity and pedestrian connectivity.

**Site:** The Central Avenue Bridge

**Partners:**

TBD

**Funding:** Should be rolled into the implementation of the West Bottoms District Plan

**Timeframe:** See Strategy 1.

**POLICY 01:  
IMPROVE THE EDGE OF THE KANSAS  
RIVER WITH PUBLIC REALM AMENITIES**

No matter what the future of the West Bottoms itself, the Kansas River and its banks should be improved with robust public realm enhancements, including water access, public plazas, green spaces, and amenities for the general public.

**POLICY 02:  
REVENUE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE WEST BOTTOMS SHOULD  
BE DIRECTED TOWARD PUBLIC  
IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ARMOURDALE  
NEIGHBORHOOD CORE.**

Revenue from the development of the West Bottoms should support improvements to public parks, facilities, and other projects that benefit the Armourdale Neighborhood Core.

# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

### 4. ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

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## THE NEIGHBORHOOD CORE

### Strategy

### Action Items

#### 1+2. Support Infill Housing + Convert Large Industrial Sites to Residences

1) Working with Armourdale Renewal Association and other community groups, develop a list of potential home buyers and builders with community ties.

2) Develop a process to transfer landbanked, vacant, or abandoned parcels to home buyers. Study the consolidation of adjacent parcels to meet contemporary housing needs.

#### 3. Implement Housing First Projects

1) Work with Cross-Lines or other organizations that serve the homeless to determine if they want to implement a Housing First project. If not, recruit a local or national partner to do so.

2) Facilitate site assessment, acquisition, and financial proof of concept.

#### 4. Increase Capacity of Armourdale community-based organizations

1) Identify specific programs to increase community organization capacity, like AmeriCorps VISTA and Americorps National staff members.

2) Establish a philanthropy working group from members of the Kansas City Philanthropic Community specifically dedicated to Armourdale issues.

3) Encourage increased programming in Armourdale by high performing service organizations from elsewhere in KCK.

4) Facilitate board and staff training and organization certification to help community-based organizations gain access to federal and state funding programs.

#### 5. Increase Rental Assistance for Armourdale Residents

1) Conduct a neighborhood-wide sweep of all Armourdale rental properties to recruit renters to the program.

2) Partner with a local community organization like the ARA or El Centro to provide support for renters

#### 6. Complete Sidewalk Installation and Repair

1) Develop an inventory of sidewalks in Armourdale.

2) Develop a five-year plan for sidewalk installation and replacement

#### 7. Expand Access to Legal Aid and Other Tenant Services

1) Recruit local tenant's rights organizations to conduct or begin outreach to Armourdale residents (as part of the Rental Assistance strategy above, for instance.)

2) Recruit service providers, including case managers and bilingual pro bono attorneys to provide consulting services.

#### 8. Rigorously Pursue Code Enforcement for Rental Properties

1) Recruit local tenant's rights organizations to conduct or begin outreach to Armourdale residents (as part of the Rental Assistance strategy above, for instance.)

2) Recruit service providers, including case managers

#### 9. Increase Community Policing Resources

1) Double the number of community policing officers in Armourdale (to two.)

2) Increase the number of events and neighborhood briefings attended by KCKPD officers and leadership.

#### 10. Expand Youth Programming and After-School Activities

1) Recruit local youth programming and service organizations to open programming in Armourdale

2) Partner with John Fiske Elementary to co-locate after school programming, or program specific opportunities for their students at the Armourdale Community Center or Bill Clem Park.

3) Develop summer activities for Armourdale Youth in Shawnee Park or Bill Clem Park.

4) Work with Kansas City Rowing Club to expand access to rowing for Armourdale residents

#### 11. Install Bus Shelters on 7th Street

1) Facilitate bus shelter installation.

Strategy

Action Items

12. Expand Access to Quality Health

1) Develop partnerships with local health care providers to launch clinics in Armourdale.

2) Increase the percentage of Armourdale residents participating in Medicaid and other federally-funded health care programs.

3) Develop partnership with the University of Kansas Medical Center or other health care provider to develop a clinic within Armourdale. Ensure Armourdale residents have easy access to specialty care at UKMC or another health care system.

13. Expand Access to Fresh Food

1) Consider acquiring the former Paul’s Drive-In site on Osage Avenue and developing it as a public farmer’s market site.

2) Partner with community groups working on similar issues throughout Kansas City to expand access to fresh food.

14. Establish A Community Mural Program

3) Consider expanding the Cross-Lines Community Garden

4) Consider funding a mobile fresh food van that can operate in Armourdale (as well as other neighborhoods throughout KCK) on a regular basis.

1) Recruit property owners with blank facades to a mural program through partnerships with the ARA or other allied groups.

2) Develop relationships with artists willing and interested in working closely with the community to create the murals.

2) Establish a philanthropic fund to support the creation of the murals as a full set, rather than as one-off projects

4) Partner with youth organizations doing after school or other programming to design and implement the murals.

15. Increase Tree Canopy

1) Develop an inventory of potential tree sites throughout the neighborhood core. Recruit neighborhood members as tree ‘sponsors’.

2) Work with Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department to source and install trees during the spring and fall each year.

3) Conduct a long-term bilingual educational campaign to help residents water and care for

# THE CORRIDORS

## Strategy

## Action Items

### 1. Create More Public Open Spaces

1) Develop a site acquisition strategy for the parcels listed below and issue an RFP for site planning.

2) Secure funding for the project from state grants or private philanthropy, or from proceeds from the development of the West Bottoms.

### 2. Expand the Amount of Mixed-Use Development Along the Corridors

1) Encourage the acquisition of vacant and underused parcels along the corridor by developers interested in creating dense, mixed-use development.

2) Ensure new development reduces setbacks and increases the walkability and density of the neighborhood.

### 3. Connect to the Rock Island Bridge

1) Using state or federal transportation dollars, redevelop Kansas Avenue to provide dedicated bike lanes and shaded pedestrian areas for its entire length from 7th Street to the Rock Island Bridge.

2) Implement the levee betterments providing parking and access at the Rock Island Bridge itself.

### 4. Ensure Pedestrian Safety Along Corridors

1) Implement the recommendations calling for the narrowing of cartways.

2) Implement the dedicated bike lanes and the enhanced public spaces.

# INDUSTRIAL RING

## Strategy

## Action Items

### 1. Expand Access to UG Business Recruitment And Development Services

1) Create a Spanish-speaking outreach program to local businesses.

2) Create a locally-owned business working group that can be a conduit between the UG and target businesses in the area.

3) Recruit Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs to serve as mentors to Armourdale residents seeking to open or expand businesses.

### 2. Expand the Amount of Space Available to Small - and Medium- Sized Business

1) Study the 'Business Park' Land Use designation and consider amending it to lessen the requirements for adjacent transportation routes and other requirements that might be a barrier to development in Armourdale.

### 3. Recruit Businesses That Thrive on Proximity to Downtown

2) Work with industrial developers to study the viability of neighborhood-scale industrial development, or hybrid industrial / commercial development.

1) Develop a pipeline of small business owners or others looking to expand, relocate, or start new businesses.

2) Develop a catalog of vacant or underutilized properties in Armourdale that could be easily repurposed.

### 4. Study Existing Easement to Increase Public Access to the Kansas River

1) Study any existing public right of ways that might have been privatized on an ad-hoc basis.

# THE RIVER

## Strategy

## Action Items

### 1. Create a Master Plan for the Kansas River

1) Work with MARC and communities adjacent to Wyandotte County to develop the scope and funding stream for the Master Plan

2) Issue an RFP for Master Plan development no later than 2022.

### 2. Implement The Kaw River Restoration Project

1) Develop an RFP for the project for issuing by the end of 2021 or beginning of 2022..

### 3. Work with Community Groups to Expand Programming and Recreational Opportunities Along and on the Kansas River

1) Work with Armourdale community groups to develop potential programming opportunities along the waterfront.

2) Recruit recreation and other organizations that center their activities on the river.

### 4. Restore the Ecological Health and Performance of the Kansas Floodplain

3) Recruit funding partners to fund pilot programs along the river.

1) Work with the Kaw Valley Drainage District to create a vision for the river that combines ecological restoration with flood protection.

2) Develop a master plan for restoration and public use in line with Strategy 1.

# THE WEST BOTTOMS

## Strategy

## Action Items

### 1. Create a District Plan for the West Bottoms

1) Work to develop the scope and funding stream for the District Plan

2) Issue an RFP for Master Plan development no later than 2022.

### 2. Convert The Central Avenue Bridge to Pedestrian and Bicycle Use

1) In parallel with the development of the West Bottoms District Plan, develop a plan for phasing out traffic from using the Central Avenue Bridge.

2) During the district planning process, develop a vision for improvements to the bridge that will enhance district identity and pedestrian connectivity.

# APPENDIX

- Appendix 1 Master Plan Task 1 Site Analysis Report - September 14th, 2021  
*Including Full Community Survey Results*
- Appendix 2 UG Existing Conditions Report - April 29th, 2021
- Appendix 3 Clear Air Now Report - May 2021

# APPENDIX 1

- Appendix 1 Master Plan Task 1 Site Analysis Report - Sepember 14th, 2021  
*Including Full Community Survey Results*
- Appendix 2 UG Existing Conditions Report - April 29th, 2021
- Appendix 3 Clear Air Now Report - May 2021



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

Task 1: Site Analysis Report

# **Armourdale Area Master Plan**

Prepared by:

**port**

with  
**MVRDV +  
Borderless Studio**

Draft Issued: May 6th, 2021

Revised: September 13th, 2021

Unified Government of  
Wyandotte County and  
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Task 1: Site Analysis Report

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**ARMOURDALE**  
**STRONG FUERTE**

**Armourdale Area Master Plan  
Site Analysis Report**

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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This Site Analysis Report documents the history, current conditions, and known future investments in the Armourdale neighborhood of Kansas City, Kansas. Its purpose is to support the development of the Armourdale Area Master Plan (hereafter, simply the 'Master Plan') for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas (hereafter, simply the 'UG'). The Master Plan is an important, official document of the Unified Government that guides future investment in the Armourdale area over the next 10 years through zoning, strategic initiatives, partnerships with the Armourdale community and businesses, and other measures.

This report is divided into four chapters: Community Outreach and Planning Process, Armourdale History, Current Conditions, and Future Investments. The Community Outreach and Planning Process outlines the overall planning process and goals, as well as our community engagement efforts that include the essential work of the Armourdale Resident Outreach Team. Armourdale History examines the roots of Armourdale's status as a unique industrial and residential district within Kansas City; its position in the Kansas River floodplain; and the historical effects of redlining, labor history, race, and urban renewal on the area. Current Conditions seeks to document as much of the district's present status as possible, paying particular attention to the residential and commercial core of Armourdale and the industrial areas that surround it.

Finally, the Future Investments section details infrastructure and private projects that we know will impact the Armourdale area in the next 10 years. This report further includes a complete review of the results of the Online Survey and a supplementary Existing Conditions Report produced in collaboration with the Kansas City Design Center (hereafter, simply the "KCDC") as an appendix.

Cover: Aerial Photo of Armourdale - February 2021 (PORT)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors of this report are indebted to our Armourdale community partners, members of the Armourdale Area Master Plan Steering Committee colleagues from across the UG, and others who have contributed to this planning effort. In particular, we would like to thank Monica Mendez, and Claudine Sanders from the Armourdale Renewal Association; Beto Lugo and his colleagues at Clean Air Now; Susila Jones of Cross-Lines Community Outreach; Vladimir Krstic and Mariah Randell of Kansas City Design Center; Mayor David Alvey as well as Commissioners Brian McKiernan, Tom Burroughs, and Melissa Bynum; as well as Gunnar Hand, Kimberly Portillo, and Tom Meyer from the Unified Government Planning + Urban Design Department, without whom we would not be able to do our work.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Joe Graham	Principal, John Fiske Elementary	Tom Jacobs	Mid America Regional Council
Susila Jones	Director, Cross-lines	Troy Shaw	Unified Government Public Works Department
Yvonne Lopez Pastor	UGFBH Church, ARA Board Member	Justice Welker	Unified Government Transportation Department
Claudine Sanders	Vice President, ARA	Wesley McKain	Unified Government Public Health Department
Marc Lonesk	Board Member, ARA	Jeff Fisher	Unified Government Public Works Department
Rebecca Sprang	Board Member, ARA and Armourdale Resident	Angel Obert	Unified Government Parks and Recreation Department
Mike Zeller	Flying Truss	Katherine Carttarment	Unified Government Economic Development Department
Blake Wihlte	Premier Investments	Jesus Casas	Unified Government Community Policing
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Mariah Randell	Kansas City Design Center	Andrea Generaux	Unified Government Livable Neighborhoods
Vladimir Krstic	Kansas City Design Center	Phil Donnellan	Kansas City Boat Club
Ben Walker	Kaw Beautiful Coalition	Tim Berger	All American Catfish
Beto Lugo	Clean Air Now	Stefan White	Friends of the River
Rick Behrens	Levee Trail	Tom Burroughs	Unified Government At-Large Commissioner
Scott Brown	Historic West Bottoms	Brian McKiernan	Unified Government Commissioner, District 2
Scott Mensing	Army Corp of Engineers		

## ARMOURDALE IN KANSAS CITY

Armourdale sits just across the Kansas River from downtown Kansas City, Missouri and is separated from downtown Kansas City, Kansas by the extensive railroad tracks of the Union Pacific Yards and Interstate 70. It is uniquely positioned within the larger Kansas City metro – a hybrid residential / industrial neighborhood that is relatively cut off from its neighboring communities. The core of Armourdale is bordered on the north by I-70 and the railroad yards, both cutting east-west and dividing Armourdale from Strawberry Hill, Riverview, and Kensington. On the west, south, and east, the core of Armourdale is bordered by the Kansas River, which terminates into the Missouri River at the far norther tip of the study area. The study area also includes an area east of the Kansas River but still part of Wyandotte County. Although known by different names (including the 'Central Industrial District' or 'CID') this area was historically known as the 'West Bottoms' and will be referred to as such in this document.

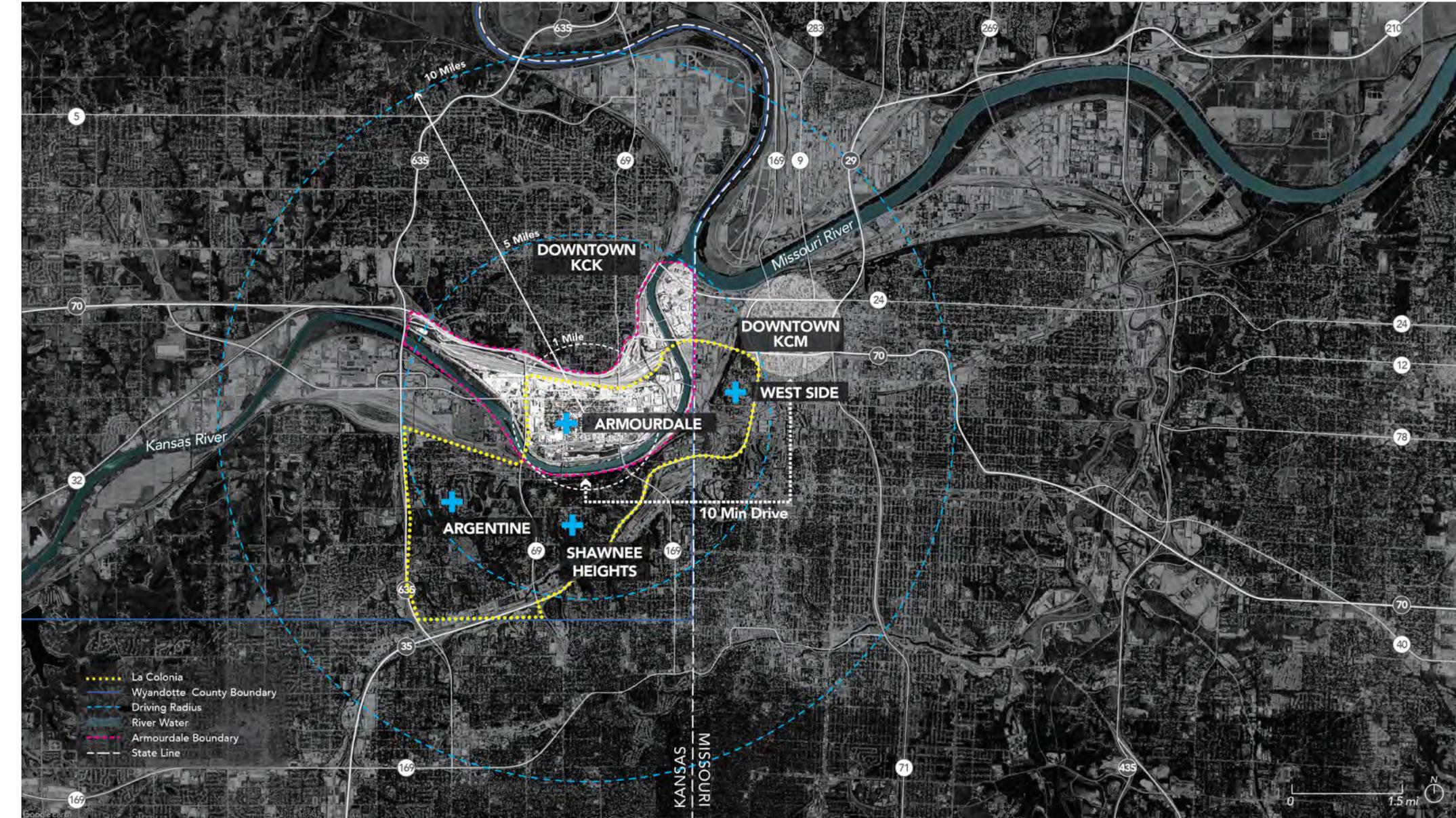
Armourdale is distinguished by containing one of the only residential neighborhoods in the Kansas City area that lies in the historical floodplain of the Kansas River. This, coupled with its relative isolation from other residential areas, results in an island-like quality for residents there. Armourdale is accessed from the east and west by Kansas Avenue and from the north and south by 7th Street and 18th Street. These major roads divide Armourdale and roughly bound the residential neighborhood. Kansas Avenue and Osage Avenue also have the highest concentration of commercial businesses in the district.

East of 7th Street, south of Osage, east of 18th Street, and north of Kansas Avenue is a mostly industrial lots of various sizes. Many of

Opposite: Armourdale Position within Kansas City (PORT)

these lots are distribution and storage facilities that take advantage of the district's proximity to I-70 and I-35, as well as downtown Kansas City Missouri. Armourdale is also home to a number of manufacturers, including a large Proctor & Gamble facility on the west side of the district and a Sealy manufacturing building on the east side of the district.

On the east bank of the Kansas River is the West Bottoms, an area of Wyandotte County that is adjacent to Kansas City Missouri. The technical boundaries of this district include only the area within the state of Kansas, but it is contiguous with larger area of the West Bottoms. This was the historic center of the Kansas City Stockyards. It includes a core of tall former industrial buildings that are currently being converted to lofts, restaurants, retail areas and other markers of an emerging mixed-use district. This includes the planned Rock Island Bridge, a project that will transform the existing railroad bridge over the Kansas River into a cultural destination complete with an event space and connection between the Kansas River levees on the east and west side of the river.



## COMMUNITY PROFILE

Armourdale is a residential community of more than 2,500 people<sup>1</sup> surrounded by a large industrial district that extends to the east side of the Kansas River. Since a large influx of Mexican immigrants began in the 1910 and accelerated in 1920's the area has been a mixed neighborhood of white and Latino residents, although since the 1954 flood the neighborhood's population has steadily declined<sup>2</sup> while the proportion of Latino residents has steadily increased.

Armourdale has always been defined by the close proximity of its residences and the industrial areas served by the adjacent railroads and the Kansas City Stockyards. A 1919 report by the University of Kansas titled 'A City Within a City' summarized that the district's rapid growth and industrial character "offers people who come there to dwell a good place to work, but not a good place to live."<sup>3</sup> Homes were developed on narrow lots and had limited access to sewer or water connections.<sup>4</sup> The low assessed value of housing in Armourdale has persisted to this day – one of the most striking statistics is the median value of owner-occupied housing units. In Armourdale, the median value of owner-occupied houses is \$34,400, about one-third of the value for Wyandotte County<sup>5</sup> and less than one-sixth of the median value for the MSA as a whole.<sup>6</sup>

Armourdale residents have significantly lower incomes and higher poverty rates, lower educational attainment and higher social vulnerability than the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The median household income in Armourdale is \$34,226,<sup>7</sup> less than half of the \$70,215 median family income for the entire MSA.<sup>8</sup> 26.9% of Armourdale residents, and 44% of children, are below the poverty line,<sup>9</sup> compared with 10% of residents and 15% of children in the MSA<sup>10</sup>. More than half of Armourdale has less than a high school diploma, while only 14% have some college education or higher.<sup>11</sup> This is compared to 93% of residents in the MSA with a high school degree or higher, and 38% with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Armourdale is also home to a significant Latino community, which reflects the historical growth of the district as part of 'la colonia' – a loose amalgamation of Latino neighborhoods that were the epicenter of Mexican migration to the Kansas City metro area beginning in the 1910's. Today Armourdale is more than 70% Hispanic, with the remainder being White (24%) or of other races (5%).<sup>12</sup> 38% of the district is foreign-born<sup>13</sup> while more than half of households speak Spanish as their primary language at home.<sup>14</sup>

**54%** LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

**29%** HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

**14%** SOME COLLEGE AND HIGHER

**MEDIAN HOME VALUE**

**\$34,400**

(for owner-occupied homes)

57% OWNED, 43% RENTED

**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

**\$34,226**

49% OF AMI

**TOTAL POP:**

**2,479**

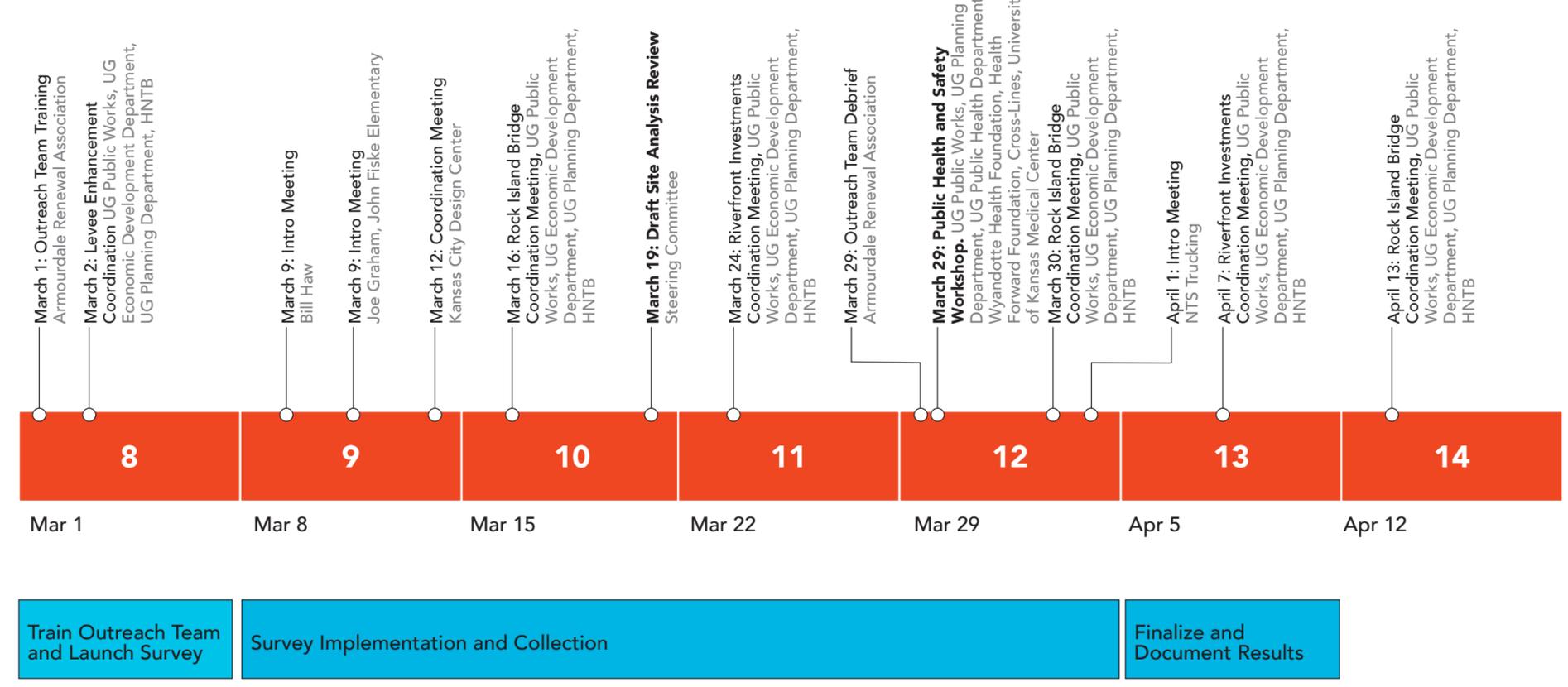
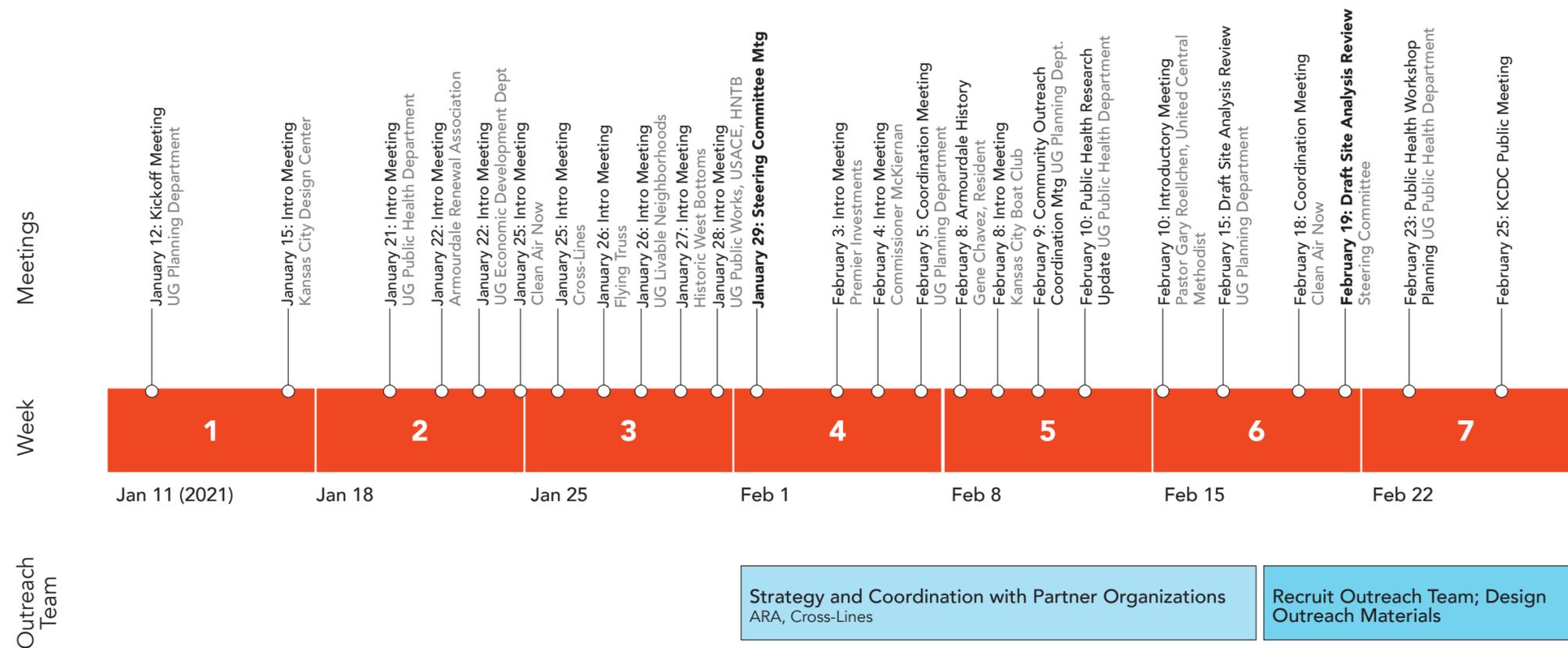
653/sq mile

**71% HISPANIC**

**24% WHITE**

**5% OTHER**

# PLANNING + OUTREACH SCHEDULE



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# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG *FUERTE*

11

## ARMOURDALE HISTORY

Isolation and Disinvestment	12
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## ISOLATION AND DISINVESTMENT

Armourdale must be understood through the lens of the forces that shaped it. Those forces have geological, hydrological, economic, social, racial, and ecological roots. Only by understanding those forces can local leaders understand the historical context that they work in and construct a more equitable and prosperous future for the Armourdale district.

First and foremost, Armourdale has been **ISOLATED** from the rest of Kansas City by the Kansas River, as well as the rail yards and historically industrial areas that grew up around them. Because of its position in the floodplain of the Kansas River, Armourdale has been **VULNERABLE** to flooding since it was first platted in the late 1800's. This vulnerability and the migration of large numbers of Mexican immigrants to the neighborhood beginning in the 1910's led to the **SEGREGATION** of the neighborhood, first within itself by the informal but enforced division of the district into white and Latino sections and then later as an entire neighborhood by the enforcement of redlining and discriminatory lending practices.

The redlining practices after the Second World War, coupled with repeated flood events in the early part of the 20th century, led to Armourdale's infrastructure and public resources being increasingly **NEGLECTED** or converted to serve a growing industrial district. Existing resources like the storm sewer system **DETERIORATED**, and investments in the levee system, while protecting the neighborhood from catastrophic flooding, did little to improve the day to day lives of residents. These forces combined to produce decades of **DISINVESTMENT** in Armourdale's residential areas and a rise in the economic vulnerability of its residents. This report will, in part, summarize those forces and show how they might be re-oriented in Armourdale's future.



### ISOLATED

RAIL YARDS  
RIVER  
HIGHWAYS  
INDUSTRY

### VULNERABLE

FLOODING  
POLLUTION  
CRIME

### SEGREGATED

RACE  
INCOME  
LAND USE

### NEGLECTED

AMENITIES  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
SAFETY

### DETERIORATED

HEALTH  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
BUILDINGS

### DISINVESTED

PROPERTY  
RESOURCES  
AMENITIES

## INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Armourdale is not destined to endlessly repeat the cycles of isolation and disinvestment that have defined its history until now. This document, like the planning process it supports, is meant to empower the community to work closely with the Unified Government to create a healthier, more prosperous, and more equitable Armourdale.

Armourdale must become more **CONNECTED** to the rest of Kansas City and to the Kansas River, overcoming the historical and physical challenges of so much infrastructural and social isolation. Armourdale must become more **SAFE** to ensure the stability and long-term health of its residents. The Armourdale and its community must become **EMPOWERED** to advocate for what it needs to the Unified Government, and to continuously organize itself to make sure it has access to those resources and investments. This is not just the responsibility of the Armourdale residents, however. The Unified Government must ensure that Armourdale residents and community leaders are **INCLUDED** and that their interests are represented fully when major decisions that impact the future of the district are made.

These principals must be directed toward supporting investments that make Armourdale a more **ATTRACTIVE** home for current and future residents by improving their quality of life and the physical condition of the public realm and public resources. Taken together, these efforts will lead to a **STIMULATED** and dynamic future for the district.



## ARMOURDALE TIMELINE

1880

**Township of Armourdale** was laid out in June by the Kaw Valley Town Site and Bridge Company.

1881

**The first addition to Armourdale** was platted in June, extending from Fourth to Tenth streets.

1882

**Armourdale incorporated** in the spring of 1882, with the first election held on May 5th of the same year.

1883

**Street railway extended** to connect Kansas City, MO, Kansas City, KA, Armourdale, and Wyandotte.

1886

**“New” Kansas City, KS** was formed, combining Kansas City, Armstrong, Armourdale, Riverview, and Wyandotte.

1893

**Workers in the factories pushed back** against owner attempts to reduce wages and speed up production.

1903

**Kansas City flood** Affected Armourdale.

1903

**\$1,750,000 spent to build dykes in Armourdale** in response to the 1903 flood to protect it from future flooding.

1904

**Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union called a nationwide strike** and more than 7,000 Amalgamated members, black and white, walked off the job in July. The 1904 strike did not last, and workers returned to the factories without the wage guarantees and union protection they desired.

1915

**Armourdale and other west-side areas of Kansas** City become a destination for Mexican immigrants, which will continue for years to come.

1917

**Child labor laws are passed**, including a resolution forbidding children under the age of 14 from working in meat packing factories and other industries.

1917

**2000 black, white, and female workers protested** gaining higher wages and better working conditions.

1918

**A strike under similar circumstances less than a year later**, which led to even more gains for black stockyard workers in Kansas City, including an eight-hour day and equitable rules for overtime.

1921-1925

**Strikes in both years ended poorly** for the union, and throughout the rest of the decade, labor struggled in Kansas City.

1922

**The Armourdale Community Bath House** opens, offering amenities to only the white community; being barred from it, the Mexican American community later founded its own recreational club, the Pan-American Club.

1924

**Local Hispanic communities found the Aztecas baseball team**, a response to not being allowed to play with corporately sponsored white leagues in the rest of Kansas City.

1930

**The 7th Street Viaduct** is built.

1938

**Workers strike and take over the Armour packing plant**; the union solidifies and gains power. The Kansas City Star broke the news of “An Armour Sit Down.” Reflecting the new emphasis on a single labor movement, the paper quoted a strike organizer who declared, “A grievance of one worker is a grievance of the entire union.”

1940

**The Kansas City Azteca women’s baseball team played** at Brenneison Ballpark located at St. Paul and Scott Streets in Armourdale, Kansas where a large Mexican immigrant community lived and worked.

1951

**Kansas City flood** effected Armourdale.

1979

**Armourdale Master Plan** was published.

1989

**Kansas City Land Use Plan** was published.

1993

**Kansas City flooded** again, but the floodwalls prevented water from reaching Armourdale.

2020

**Armourdale Area Master Plan** was commissioned by the Unified Government.

## PLATTING OF ARMOURDALE

The original platting of Armourdale was in direct response to the poorly planned amalgamation of industry and housing in the West Bottoms. What little housing there was in the West Bottoms surrounding the stock yards and railroad yards was generally of very low quality. The haphazard planning resulted in close proximity of squatters camps and tents, railroad infrastructure, and livestock yards and slaughterhouses.<sup>15</sup>

The developers of Armourdale, Charles Francis Adams Jr and Charles F. Morse, were Boston-based businessmen that sought to expand across the Kaw River from the West Bottoms. In 1879, seeking to avoid replicating the poor conditions of squatters huts in the West Bottoms, they commissioned William B. Knight to plat a more coherent town for workers in the adjacent stockyards and packing plants.<sup>16</sup> Knight's plan is more enlightened than most railroad company towns in the area, prioritizing shared common space like Shawnee Park and preserving the existing public school.<sup>17</sup> Adams and his business partners simply platted the land into streets and sold the lots to individuals or builders. They built no infrastructure, sidewalks, sewage or water systems<sup>18</sup>. Even Shawnee Park had to be improved before it was usable.<sup>19</sup>

Armourdale's initial population was more broadly based than simple low-wage industrial workers. By 1882 its population had grown to 1,500, including merchants and skilled laborers, and its surrounding industries focused primarily on productive use of the byproducts of meat slaughtering, including a cooperage, soap factories, and desiccating works.<sup>20</sup> The 1903 resulted in many of the middle-class residents fleeing to higher ground, and subsequent flood events did little to persuade them to return. The lack of basic infrastructure did little to support the people that did live there, and in the decades following the 1903 and 1908 floods Armourdale became known for the poor quality of its housing and ser-



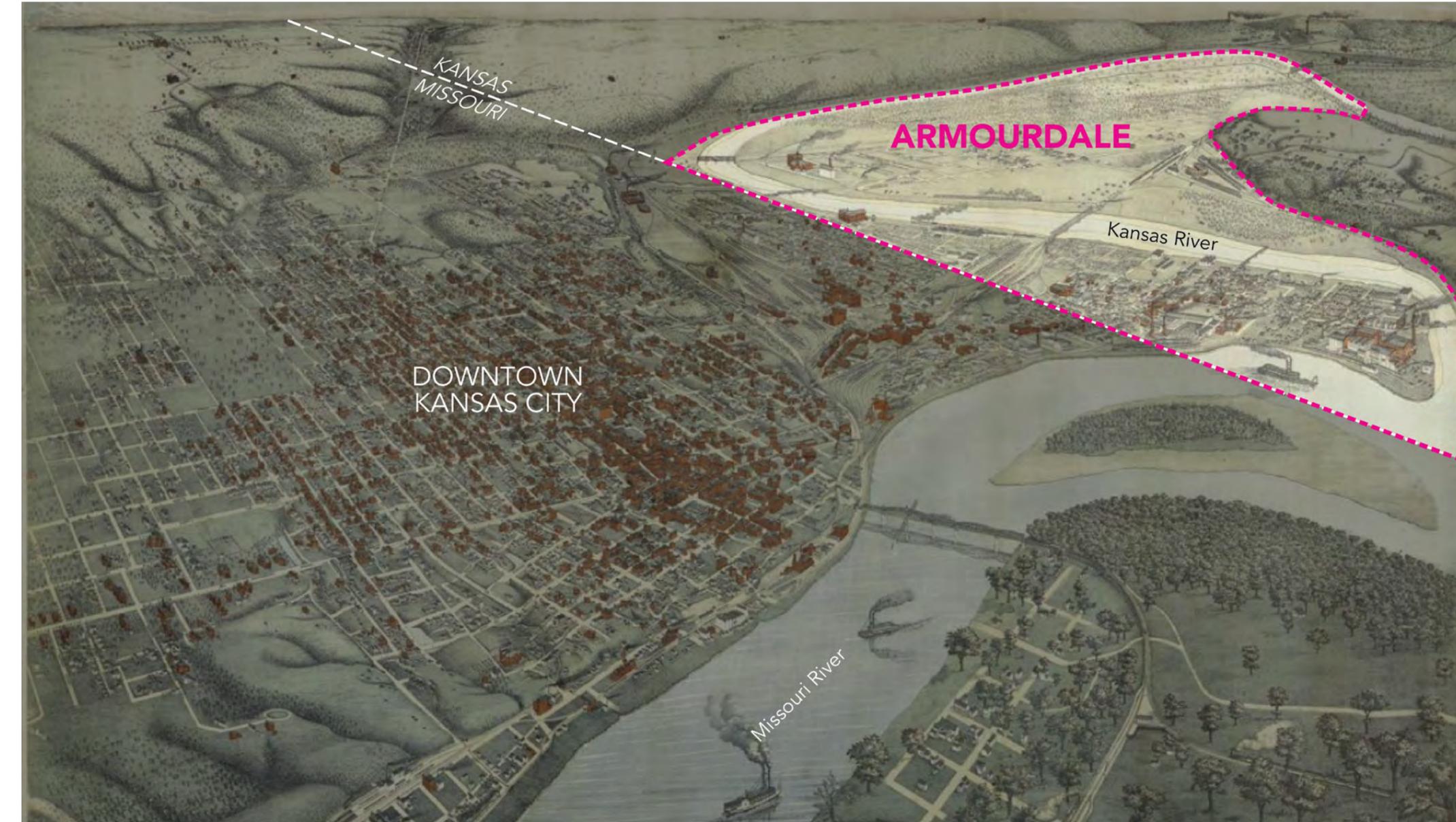
vices. Immigrants fleeing the Mexican Civil War and poor quality of life in northern Europe still found homes there, and the nearby railroad yards and industrial areas still provided employment to low-skill laborers.<sup>21</sup>



Above: The Berry's Company Map, 1910 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)

Below: Armourdale Today (Google Earth)

Opposite: Aerial View of Kansas City, 1885 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



## FLOODPLAIN AND HIGH GROUND

The Armourdale study area sits at the confluence of the Missouri and Kansas Rivers, part of Mississippi River basin. The Missouri and Kansas rivers were, for most of their recorded history, known for their large spring and summer floods, for their meandering river channel that moved freely across its floodplain, and for their massive transport of sediment.<sup>22</sup>

These hydrologic and geomorphological phenomena resulted in the flood pulse, in which the massive influx of water into the system from snowmelt or rainfall raised the height of the river to the point where it overflowed its channel, depositing sediment across the width of its floodplain. The flood pulse supported important ecological processes, including the deposit of particulate organic matter in the floodplain itself, the support of native plant species like cottonwood and willow that evolved to rely on rapid inundation, and species of fauna that rely on high plant and microbial density within the floodplain.<sup>23</sup>

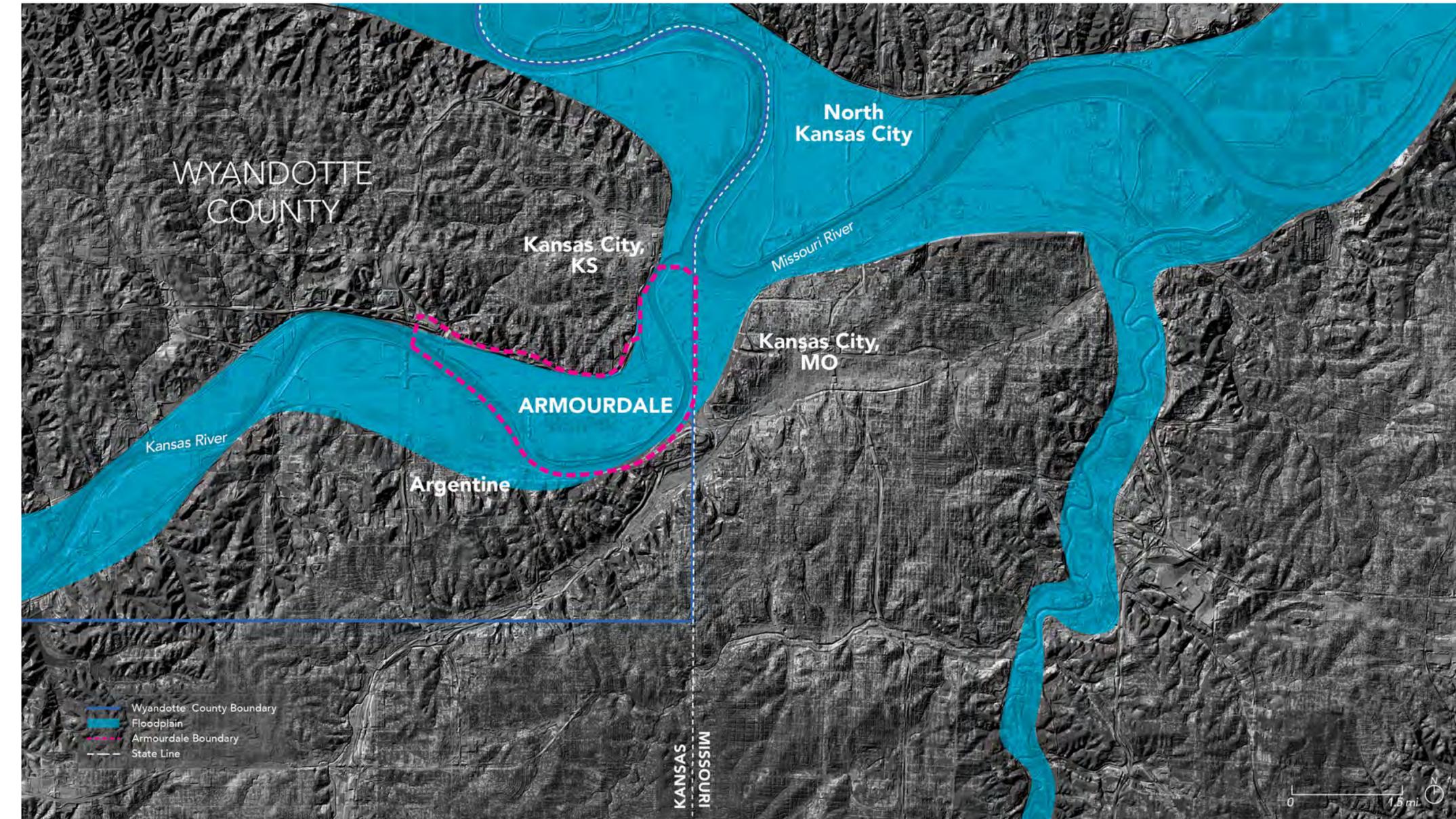
Armourdale was initially settled by the Wyandotte Nation, who had been forced from their native Ohio River Valley in 1843 into an area that was outside the nation's borders and considered unfit for settlement. The Wyandot settled on the bluffs overlooking the river valley, and farmed the land in the floodplain.<sup>24</sup> After the Civil War, as Kansas City became a hub for railroads and the cattle and other livestock they carried, the wide and flat floodplain became the logical site for railroad yards and industrial uses, which could be laid out in the floodplain with little topography.



Above: 1903 Flood from 5th Street Looking North (Wyandotte County Museum)

Below: View of the Armourdale Floodplain, 1982 (Wyandotte County Museum)

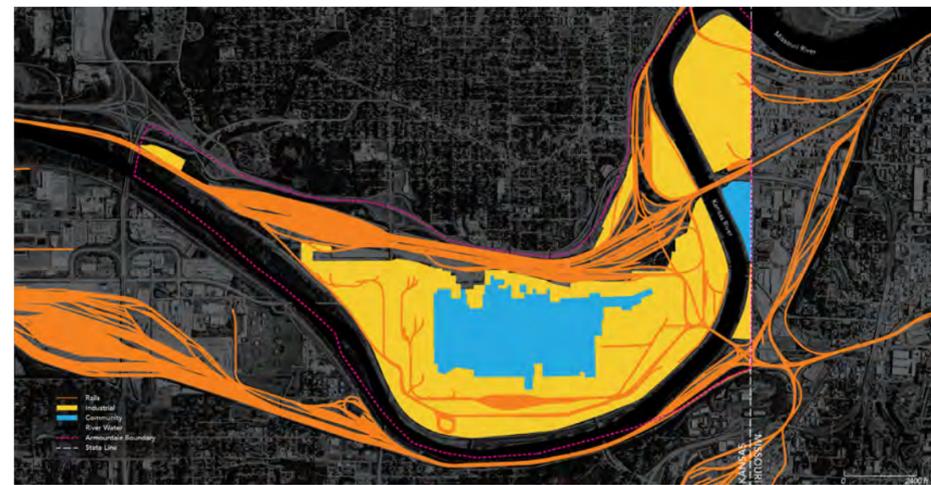
Opposite: Floodplain and High Ground (PORT)



## FLOODPLAIN AND HIGH GROUND

Downtown Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City Missouri and the residential neighborhoods that surrounded them mostly developed on the high ground – the rolling hills outside of the flood plain – where residents were both further from the increasingly squalid districts around the stockyards and relatively safe from the spring and summer floods. This is where the majority of Kansas City's parks, libraries, civic buildings, commercial districts, and residences were constructed. There were even efforts to turn the edge of the high ground opposite the stockyards, at the intersection of Summit and 10th Streets into an area known as the Palisades, complete with processional staircases and overlooks, that opened up onto a view of the stockyards below.

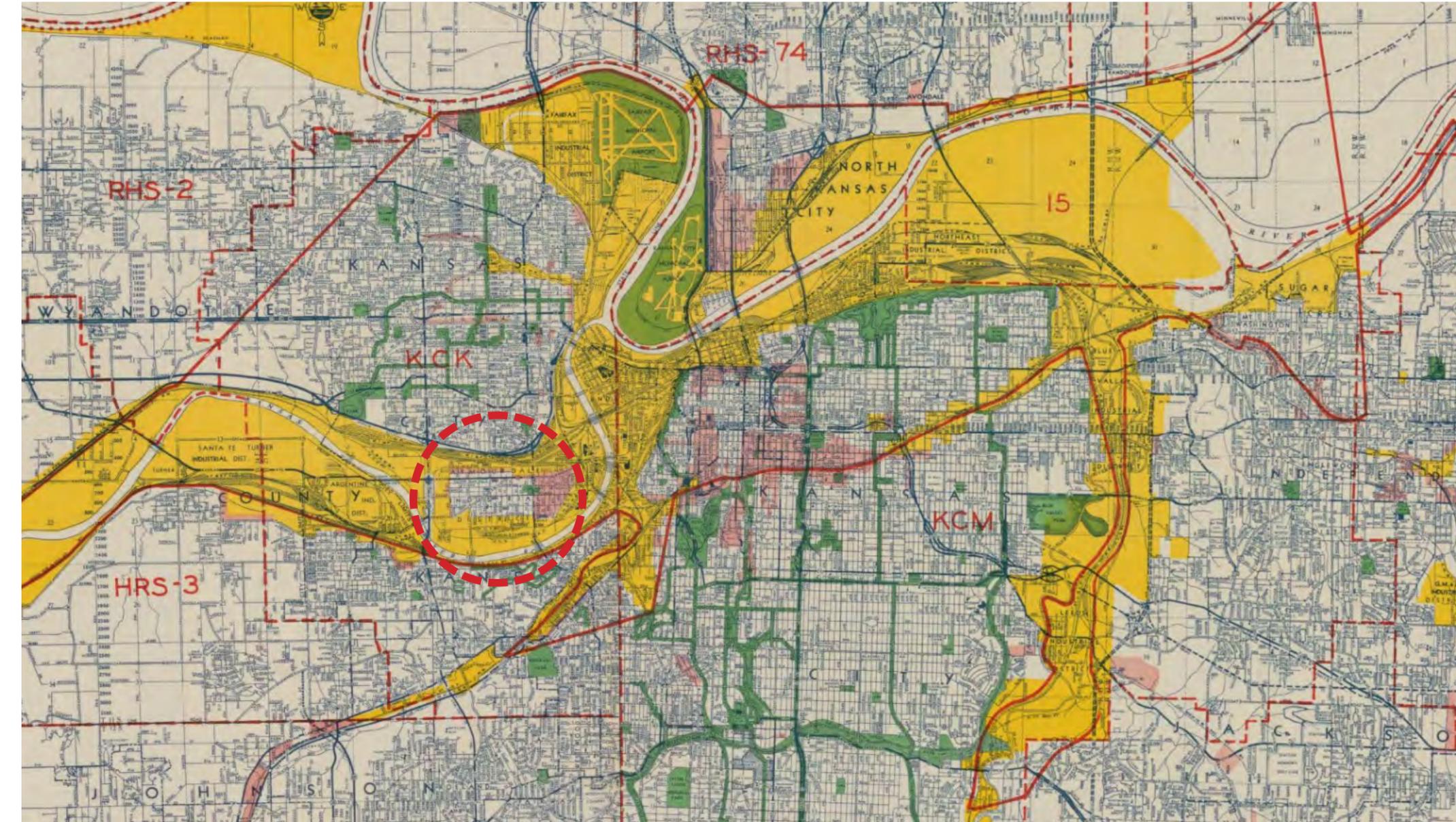
Those stockyards sat in a floodplain that was almost continuously flooded between 1870 and 1950. A devastating flood in 1903 led to Kansas City spending \$1.75 Million to widen the river channel and construct a system of dikes surrounding Armourdale. The belief at the time was that this system, locally controlled and locally funded, was sufficient to protect Armourdale and its industry, especially the rail links on which so much of Kansas City's economy depended.<sup>25</sup> The Kaw Valley Drainage District, under the authority of the State of Kansas, was founded to administer the new flood protections, and at the time Kansas City leaders thought the 1903 flood was an anomaly that they had adequately protected against. By 1934, numerous smaller flood events that more or less continuously damaged Armourdale and the West Bottoms convinced local leaders that the millions of dollars they had spent on flood protection were not sufficient, and local leaders began lobbying Congress for federal money based on the economic importance of protecting the manufacturing and distribution networks within the floodplain. By 1938, Congress had passed two Flood Control Acts nationalizing flood protection, and 1944 saw the adoption of the Pick-Sloan Plan, which proposed the wholesale re-engineering of the Missouri River basin.<sup>26</sup>



Above: Approximate Location of Railroads, Residential and Industrial Areas, 1888 (PORT)

Below: Approximate Location of Railroads, Residential and Industrial Areas, 2020 (PORT)

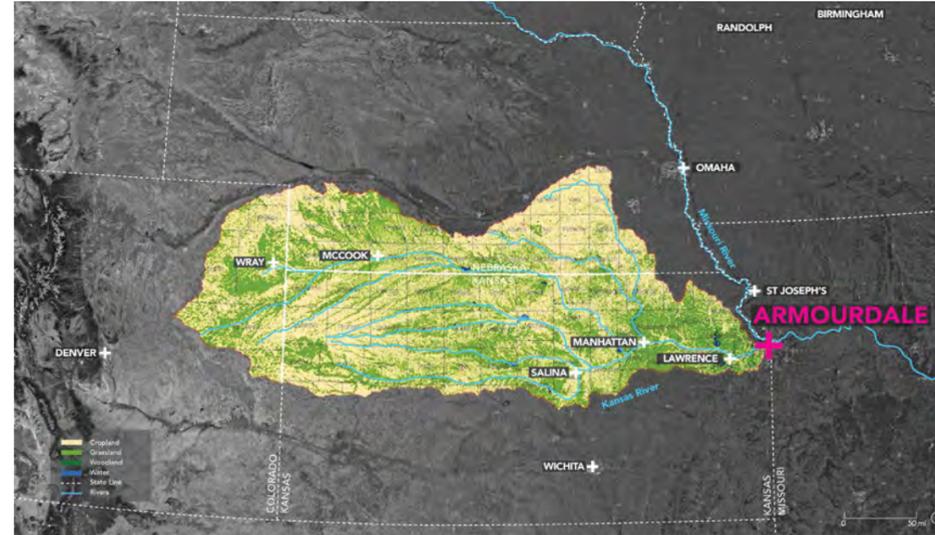
Opposite: Metropolitan Kansas City, Gallup (Detail) (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



## FLOODPLAIN AND HIGH GROUND

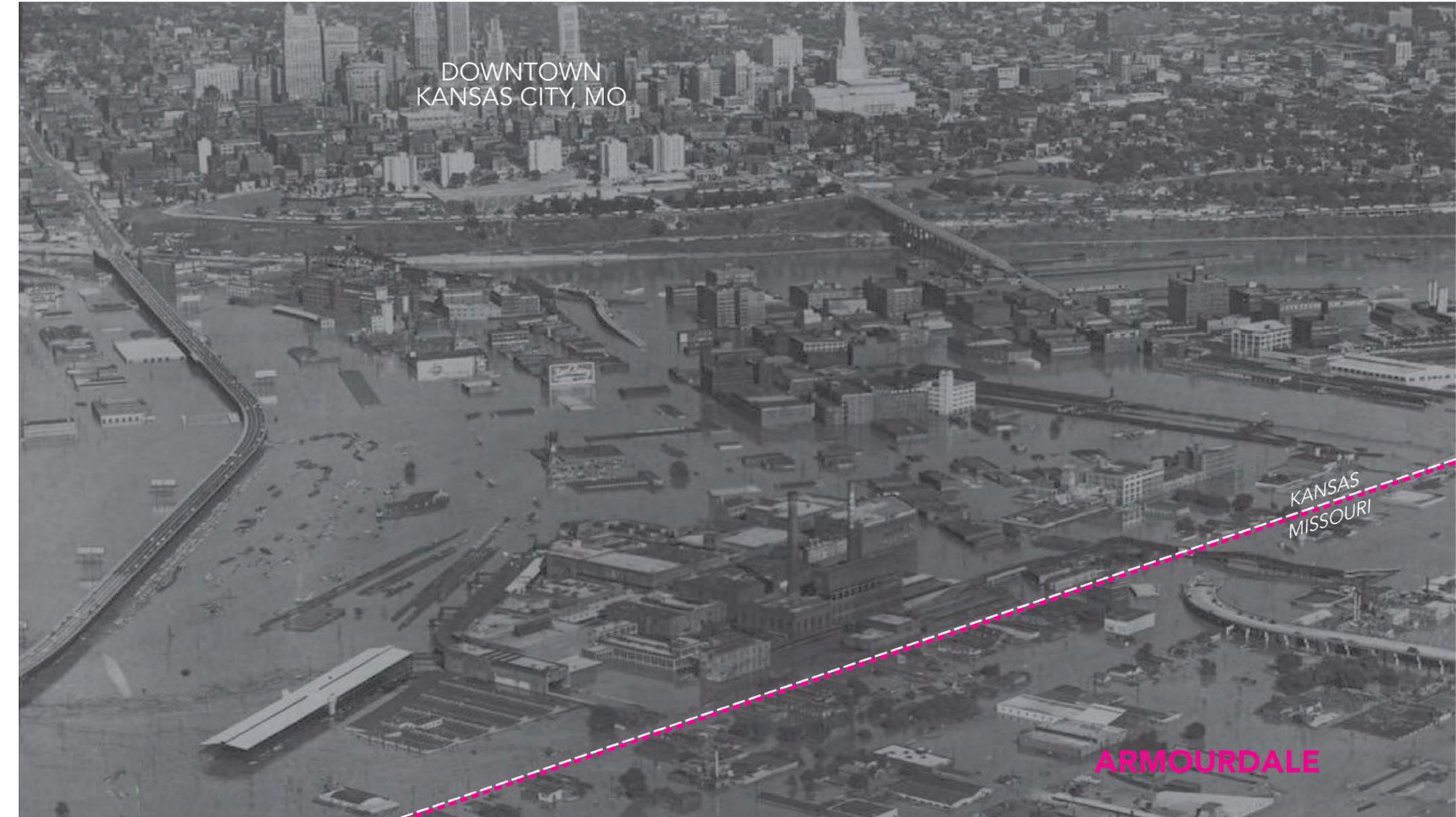
While the Pick-Sloan Plan was being implemented, the Kansas River overtopped its levees once again in 1951, producing the most devastating flooding event in the city's history and devastating Armourdale. The River's first overtopping came on July 13, 1951, just east of the Colgate-Palmolive plant, and within two hours Armourdale was under between 12 and 30 feet of water. The existing levees actually served to trap floodwater in Armourdale, resulting in 18 Million tons of silt deposited throughout the flood area. Damages in Armourdale were estimated to be \$120 Million, almost all its residents were evacuated, and most of the district's wood-frame homes were destroyed.<sup>27</sup> The 1951 flood was no different than other flooding events that happened in the Kansas River Valley for millennia, but with the devastation of the stockyards, the displacement of Armourdale residents and the near-complete halt of commerce in the floodplain united civic support around flood protection and channelization of the river.<sup>28</sup>

The channelization of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers had two important ecological effects. The first was (with the creation of upstream dams to manage a consistent rate of flow) to disconnect the river from its floodplain, greatly reducing the amount of seasonal flooding that support much of the floodplain's ecological productivity. The second was to change the nature of the river itself. No longer a relatively slow-moving and meandering channel that native species had evolved for, the Kansas and Missouri rivers became more fast-moving year round, and their waters ceased to support native species and instead became breeding grounds for invasive species like Asian Carp.<sup>29</sup> The geomorphology of Kansas City and its division into clear areas of floodplain and high ground has affected every aspect of Armourdale use and history, from its initial occupation by displaced Native Americans to its reclamation by industry to its platting as an industrial town to its flooding and subsequent urban renewal. This history and geomorphology is essential to understanding Armourdale's past, present, and possible futures.



Above: Kansas River Watershed (PORT)

Opposite: Kansas River Flood, 1951 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



ARMOURDALE

## LABOR HISTORY

The Kansas City Stockyards had experienced exponential growth in the decades that followed the fencing off of 5 acres as a livestock pen by a group of local railroads in 1870. Armour built their first plant in 1874, an eight-building sprawling complex that immediately boosted Kansas City's production by a factor of 10. Those processing plants and the animal pens, railroads, and secondary processing facilities that serviced them had an almost insatiable desire for cheap, unskilled labor.<sup>30</sup>

At first, this labor was supplied by European immigrants, especially recent arrivals from Ireland, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia. Plant managers began sending recruiters to eastern Europe, which resulted in a steady flow of workers from Russia, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Slovenia, and especially Croatia. African Americans began arriving in large numbers in the 1870's, eventually comprising almost 25 percent of the meatpacking labor force by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>31</sup>

Continuous pressure from meatpacking management to speed production and lower wages led to numerous union organizing efforts, the most successful of which was in 1917 when a cross-racial group of mostly women canners in Armourdale walked off the line, an effort that quickly grew to include laborers, railroad workers, and soap producers. The strikers quickly won a series of victories, and a similar strike in 1918 led to particular gains for black stockyard workers' equitable pay and hours.<sup>32</sup>

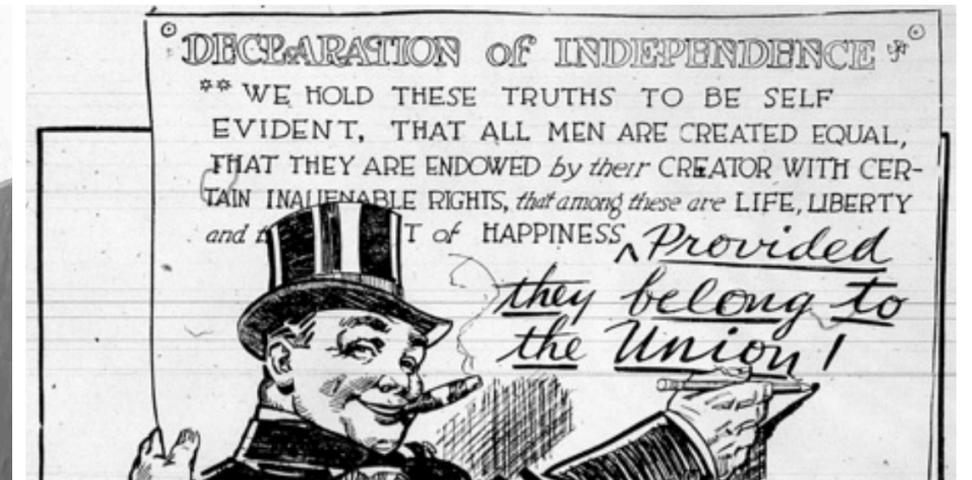
**"In the first decades of the next century, the population continued to expand on a marked pace so that by 1920, Armourdale, following a pattern recognizable in more established eastern urban centers, was overcrowded, economically depressed, and lacking in proper sanitation. A federal official from the Immigration Commission toured the community's muddy streets and closely spaced residences and described it as a 'labyrinth of narrow, dirty passageways, flanked by the most non-descript sort of shacks.'"**

John Herron, "Making Meat: Race, Labor, And The Kansas City Stockyards," 2018



Above: Meatpackers, 1921 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)

Lower: Man Cleaning Stockyards (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



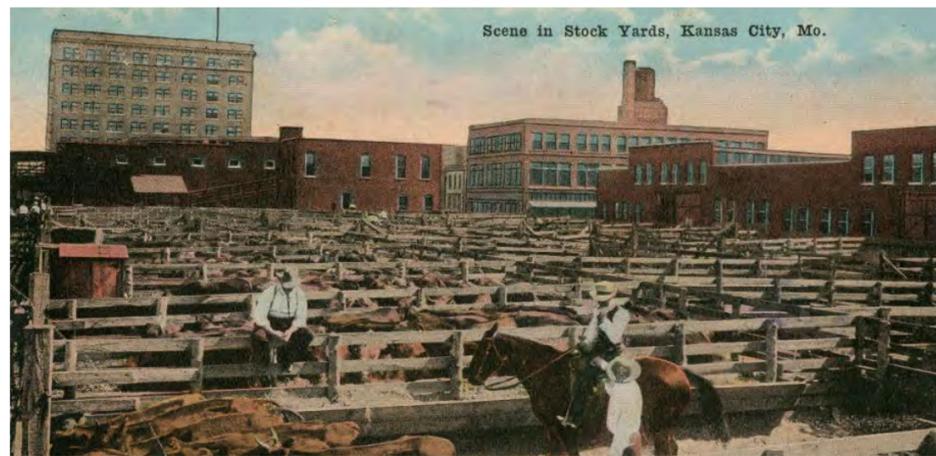
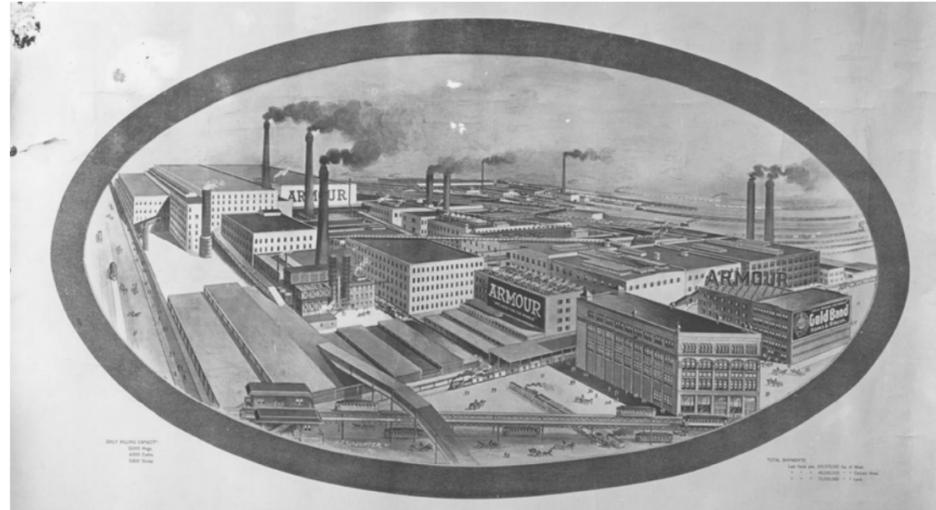
Above: Cudahy Strikers Marching to Shawnee Park, 1917 (The Post September 7, 1917, State Historical Society, microfilm)

Lower: Anti-Union Newspaper Advertisement, 1917 (State Historical Society, microfilm)

## COMMUNITY CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

The history of Armourdale as a district is impossible to separate from the history of ongoing discrimination and redlining of the Latino community that has lived there. Mexicans started immigrating to Kansas City in the 1910's after the Mexican Civil War, gravitating toward the West Side of Kansas City Missouri and the Argentine and Armourdale neighborhoods because of their proximity to both downtown (where Mexican Americans found work in the hospitality industry) and the Santa Fe and Union Pacific Railroad yards and the meatpacking and ice houses that surrounded them.<sup>33</sup>

As Mexican Americans moved into Armourdale in increasing numbers, they concentrated on the east side of 7th Street. At the time, the area's churches, schools and other institutions were heavily segregated. Even though St. Thomas Church served both Mexican Americans and white parishoners, Latinos were forced to attend at different hours, and the church parochial school moved its Latino students into the basement.<sup>34</sup> As early as 1937 there were concerns that the dwellings were not of sufficient quality, although less because of their habitability than their low property values did not support the cost of providing municipal services there. In the words of Frederic Robinson, who led the update of the Kansas City, Kansas Comprehensive Plan, "property values are beginning to depreciate, tax delinquencies are high, and the cost of governmental services is usually greater than the amount returned in taxes."<sup>35</sup> In 1948 documents redlining the neighborhood, the reasons cited were "Since [1903] ... the community has drifted to an unsightly and ill-kept neighborhood housing industrial workers entirely, including a sprinkling of foreigners of lower income brackets and many Mexicans."<sup>36</sup>



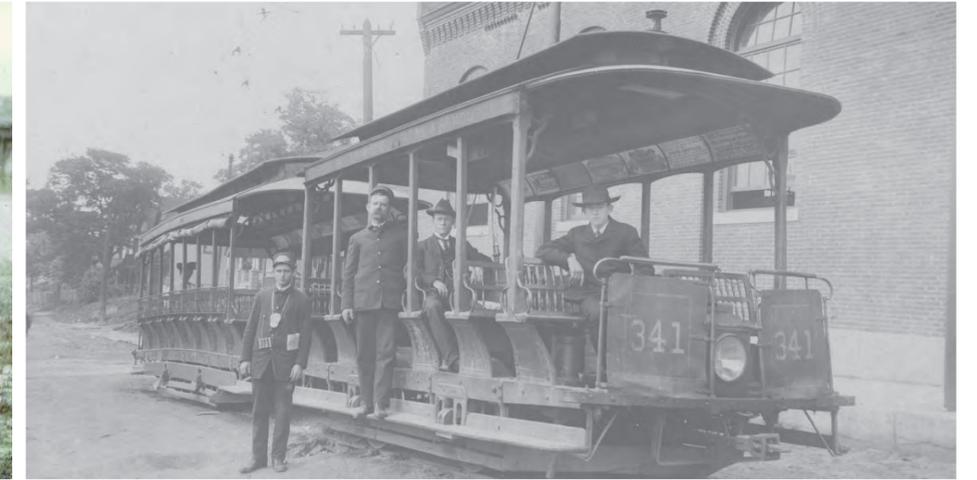
Above: Postcard of the Armour Packing Plant, 1901 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)

Below: Postcard of Cow Pens, West Bottoms Stockyards, 1921 (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



Above: Kansas City Aztecs, 1940

Below: Clearing a Field For a Baseball Diamond, 1926, (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)



Above: No. 341 Streetcar Serving Armourdale and Downtown, date unknown, (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)

Below: Children Playing Baseball, ND, (Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library)

## COMMUNITY CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

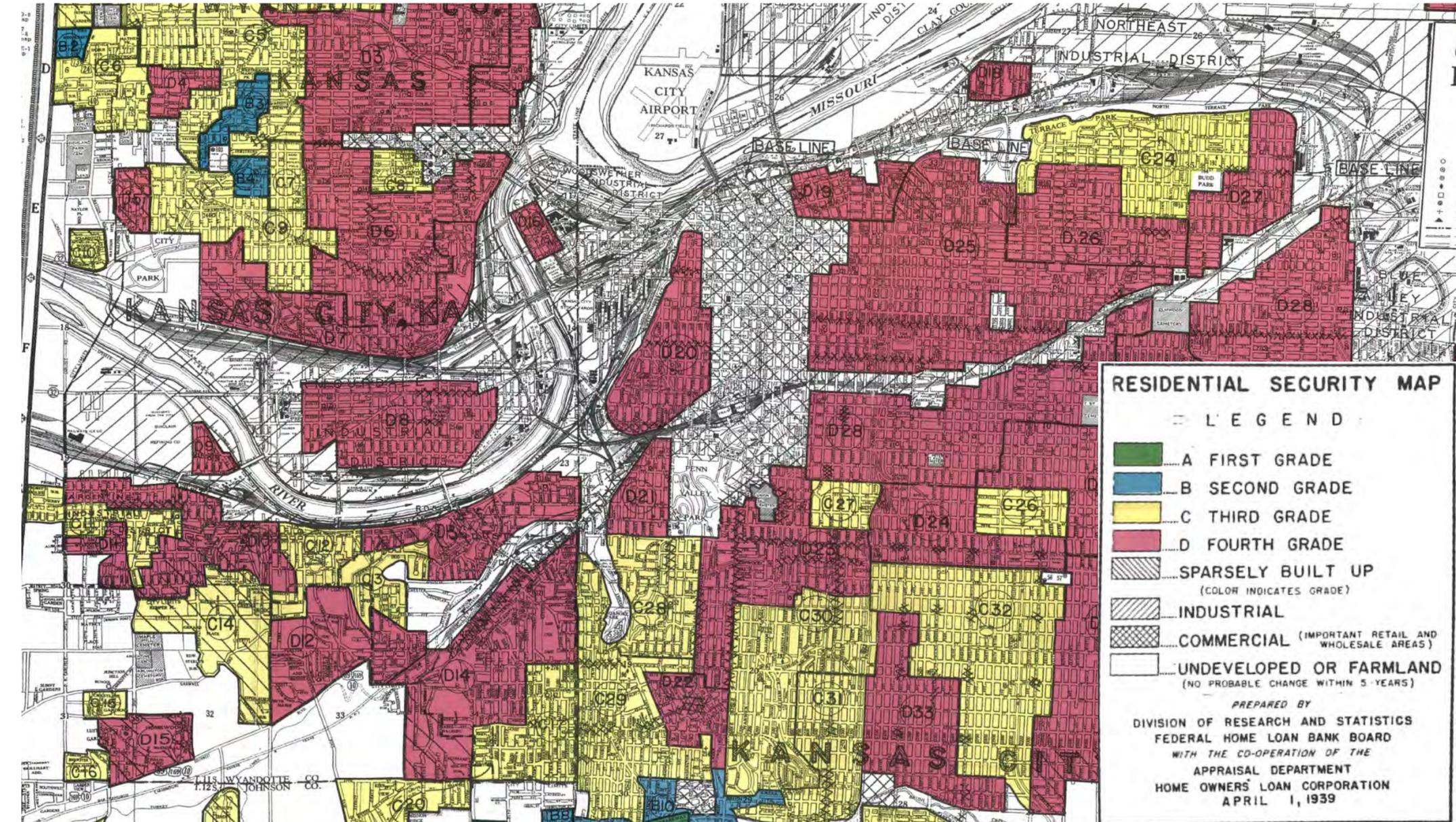
In response to this ongoing discrimination, Mexican immigrants started their own social institutions, from their own churches to their own fast pitch softball leagues. With few exceptions, Latinos were shut out of the company teams sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive, the unions, or others, so they started their own teams and leagues. Teams like the Aztecas, an all-female team based at a field later destroyed by the construction of the 7th Street aqueduct, were made up of Armourdale residents and would conduct regional tours to Iowa, Illinois, and other parts of the Midwest.<sup>37</sup> Stretching back as far as 1940, the Armourdale Neighborhood Council, a resident's group, was organizing volunteer, citizen-led clean-ups, advocating for improved housing, and lobbying for restricting the growth of industry into the residential areas.<sup>38</sup>

The 1951 flood was most devastating in the eastern half of the district, where most of the area's Mexican-American immigrants in the district lived.<sup>39</sup> Most residents in the district were evacuated with little clarity on when they would be allowed to return. Within weeks of the flood, Frederic Robinson, who had led the comprehensive planning effort and was still a consultant to the City Planning Commission, partnered with local architect John Maultsby on a redevelopment scheme to condemn almost the entire district and consolidate the district's residents into twenty-one 11-story apartment blocks. This redevelopment plan was developed so quickly because the planners saw the period before the widespread return of residents as their window to complete a district-wide redevelopment of the entire area in one fell swoop. Over the concerns of residents and property owners, the Kansas City Redevelopment Authority voted to approve the plan barely three weeks after the flood hit.<sup>40</sup> Ten days later, the City Planning Commission authorized the Redevelopment Authority to acquire and clear the project sites.<sup>41</sup>

**"Prior to 1903 it was an attractive community of well-kept homes, when the flood of that year inundated most of them. Since then there have been no new homes erected and the community has drifted to an unsightly and ill-kept neighborhood housing industrial workers entirely, including a sprinkling of foreigners of lower income brackets and many Mexicans. The outer fringe, south of Miami and east of Packard, is virtually a slum section of old-run shacks. Negroes are found in the north portion. Considered as a whole, a cheap industrial workers' area. Although houses are in poor repair, it would be poor business to rehabilitate institutionally-owned homes."**

--Description of Armourdale in Gallup's Inc, "Pocket Map of Greater Kansas City" 1938

Opposite: Detail of Gallup's Inc, "Pocket Map of Greater Kansas City" 1938 (Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America, University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab)

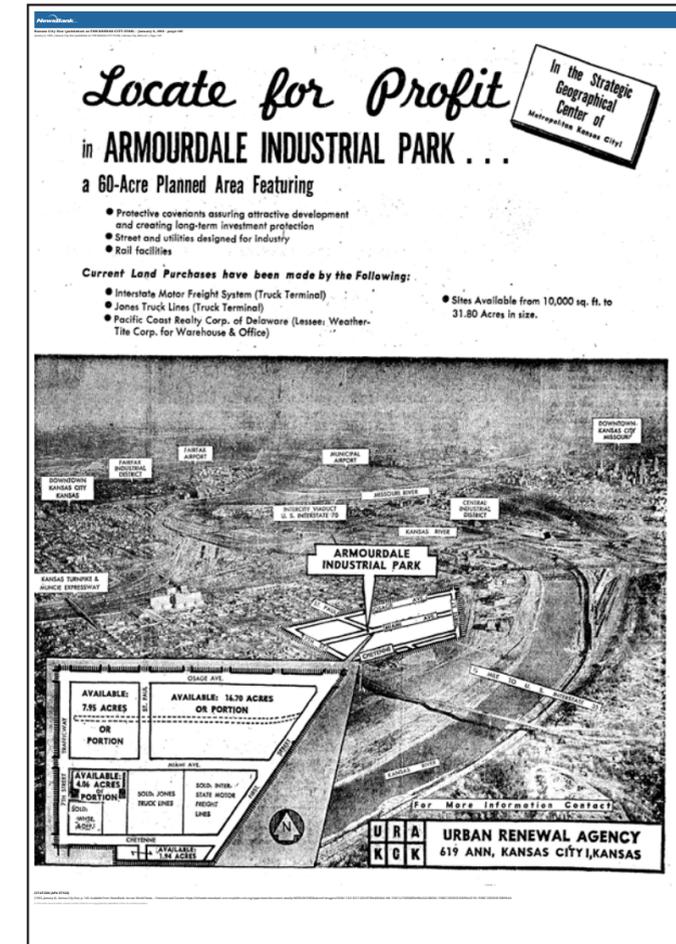


## COMMUNITY CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

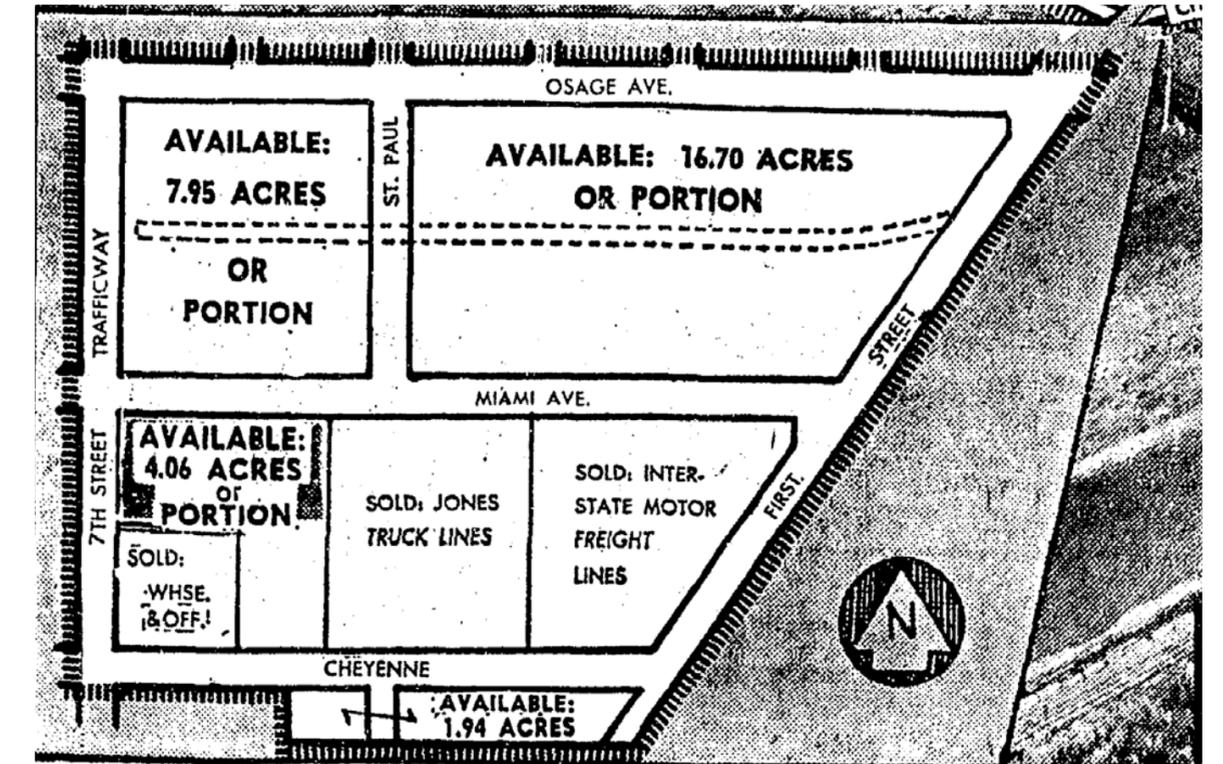
Eventually, the Redevelopment Authority's ability to implement the plan would be curtailed by the State Supreme Court, but later urban renewal efforts proved to be successful. In 1957, the entire area between Cheyenne and Osage Avenues east of Seventh Street was acquired and cleared. 800 residents of the neighborhood were relocated, and they city itself financed the construction of four warehouses and industrial facilities on three newly created three superblocks. A second urban renewal project in 1966, known at the time as Armourdale East, involved the clearance of any non-industrial parcels north of Osage and east of Fourth Street, the widening of streets and the installation of new sanitary and storm sewers to enhance industrial and commercial uses. Finally, in 1972 the City Commission designated the entire Armourdale district for urban renewal. Despite community resistance, all residents that remained east of Seventh Street were relocated, the existing elementary school and other community facilities were cleared, and the properties were redesignated for industrial use.<sup>42</sup> The 1979 Area Master Plan was supposed to give residents an official reprieve from the ongoing renewal efforts, but the community development resources promised to the residents dried up in a year and the city government has continued to grant variances to non-conforming uses within the residential areas.<sup>43</sup>

**“Hundreds of those same families would be summarily dislocated from Armourdale less than a decade later, when the city used Street Expressway for the development of an industrial business park. The project also prompted the local school district to demolish John J. Ingalls Elementary School, the city’s oldest operating school at the time, the site of which is occupied by a large industrial warehouse.”**

Daniel Serda, “Finding Latin Roots: Hispanic Heritage in Kansas City” Kansas Preservation 33:3 (2011)



Above: Urban Renewal Authority Advertisement for Armourdale Industrial Park, Jan 6, 1963, p. 140



# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

### CURRENT SITE CONDITIONS

Industrial and Residential Adjacency	36	Bill Clem Park	54
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## INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL ADJACENCY

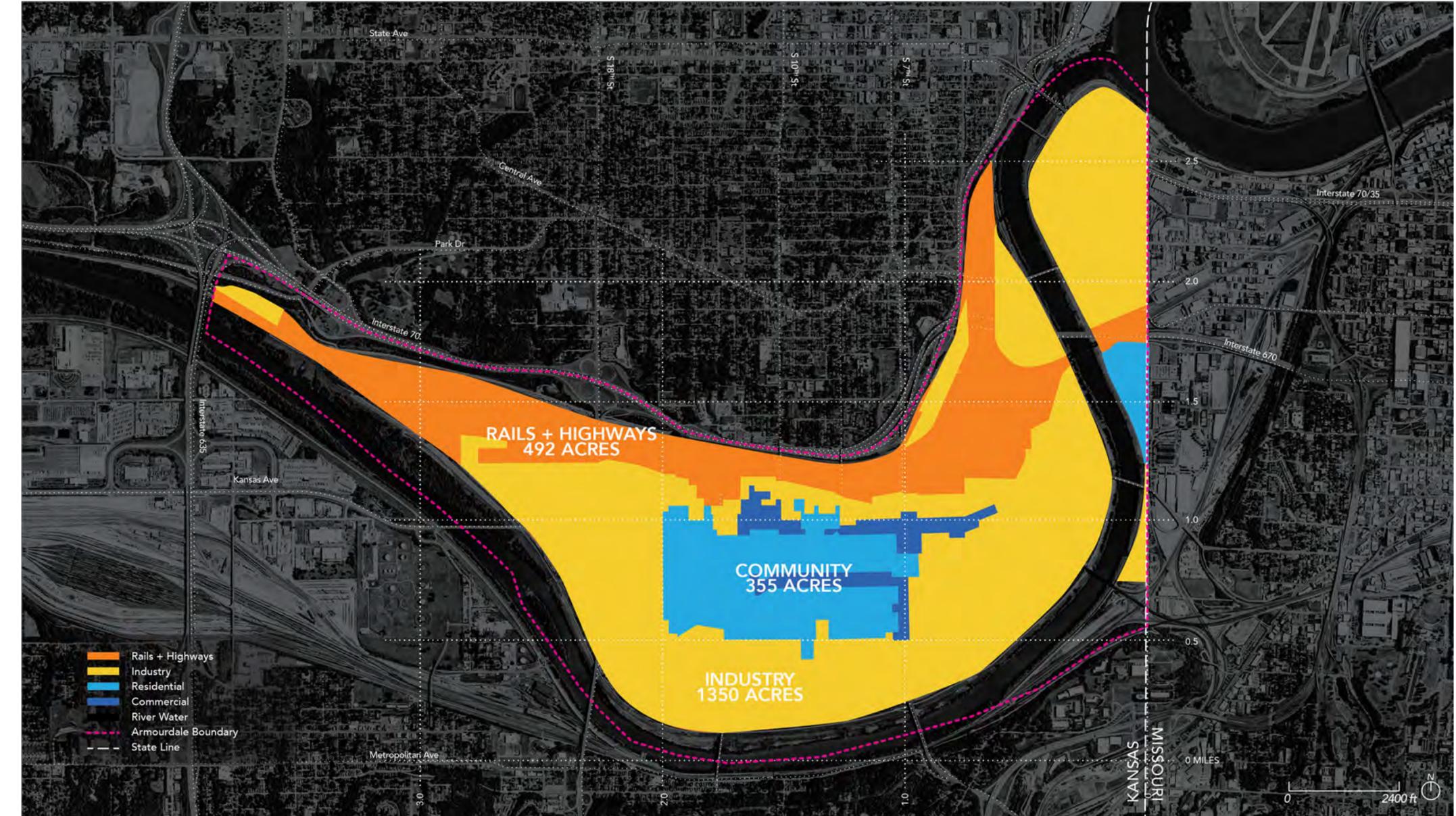
Armourdale is most characterized by the neighborhood's proximity between industrial areas and the historic low-density residential fabric. This residential fabric is predominantly one-story bungalows, many built between 1910 and 1940,<sup>44</sup> bounded between 7th and 18th streets on the east and west, and Kansas Ave and Cheyenne Ave on the north and south. This industrial enhancement of the residential neighborhood is most present North of Kansas Ave and South of Cheyenne Ave. Kansas Avenue and Osage Ave are commercial corridors with small-scale restaurants and retail businesses. Outside of these areas, the residential fabric gives way to low-density light industrial parcels and a few manufacturing facilities.

This hybrid residential-industrial character of the district is unique within Wyandotte County and to a broader extent within the larger Kansas City metro area, and demands an approach to district planning that hybridizes best practices for residential and industrial development and clarifies the relationship between the industrial and residential areas within the district.



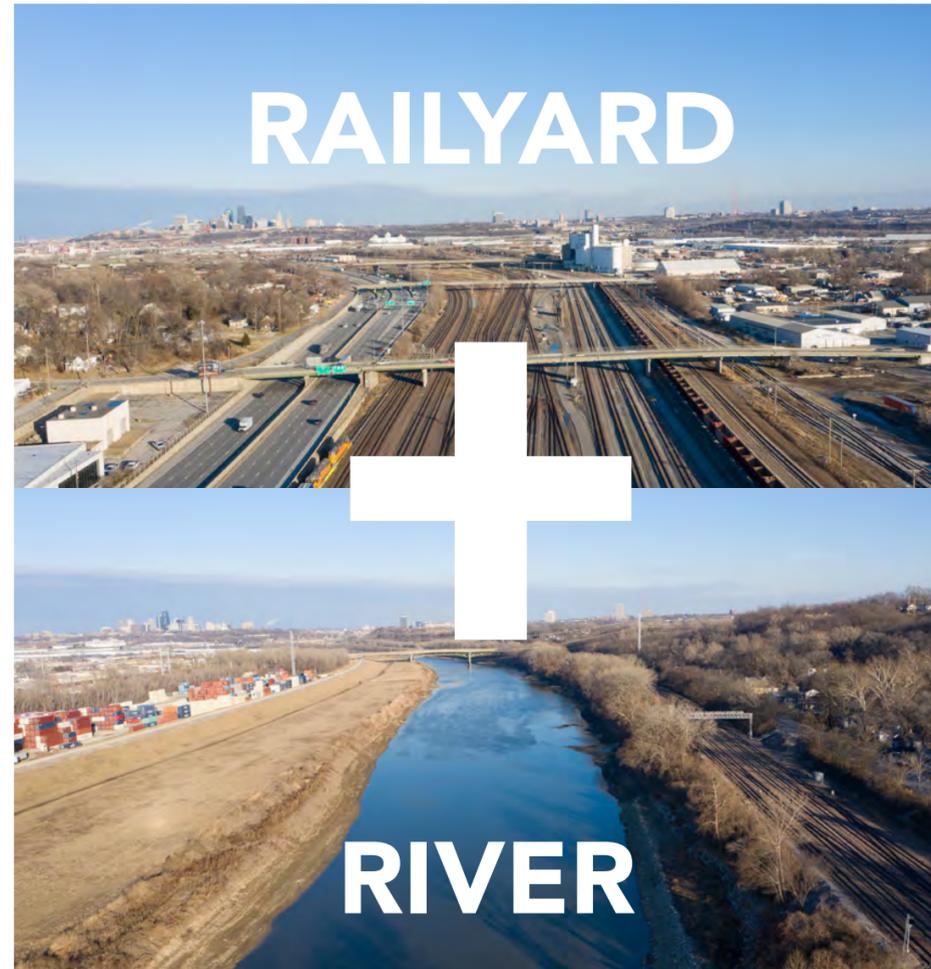
Above: View at 14th and Pennsylvania, Looking North (PORT)

Opposite: Industrial, Commercial, Rail, and Residential Land Use (PORT)



## ISOLATED BY RIVER AND RAIL

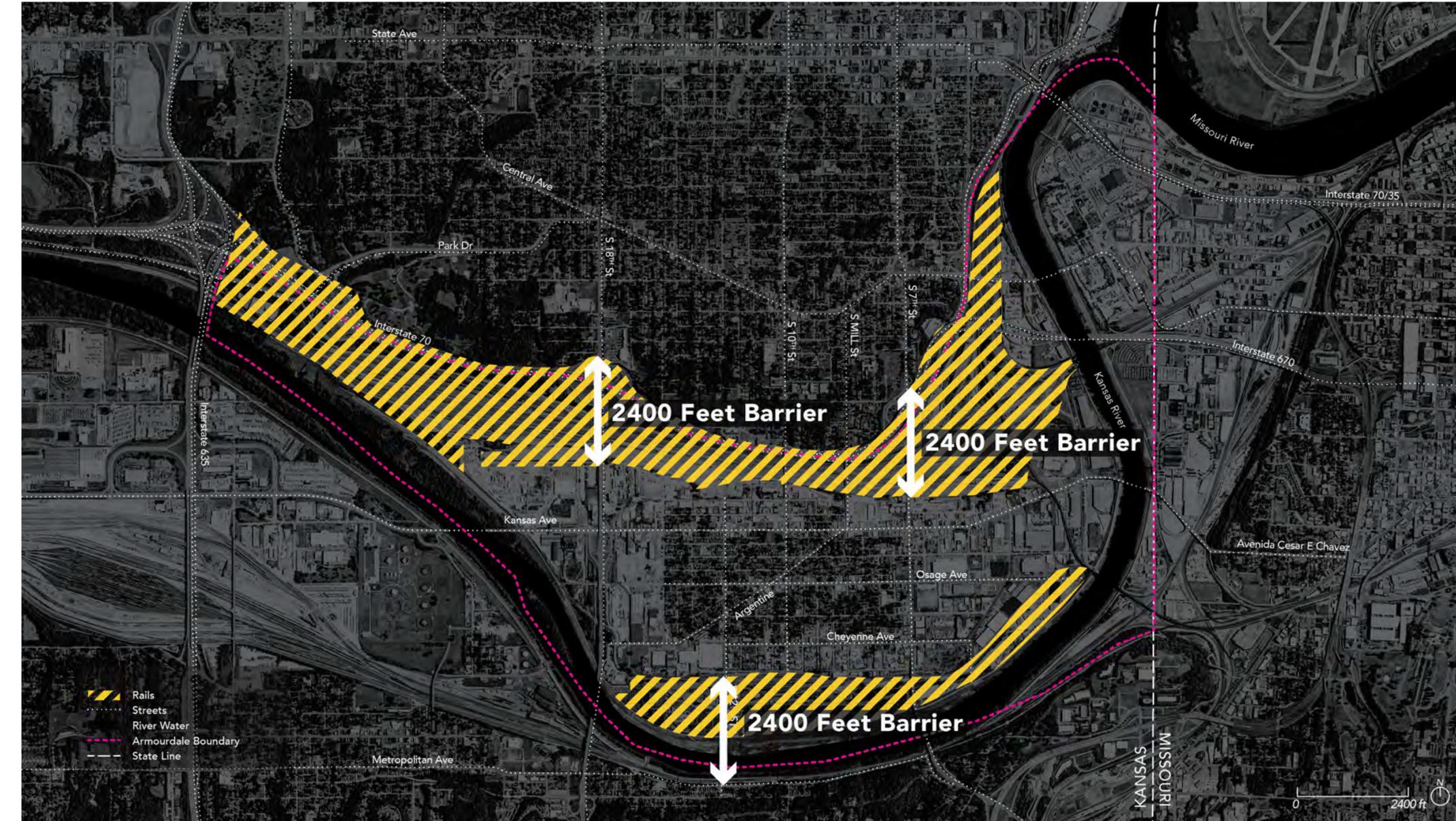
Armourdale is uniquely isolated from the rest of the Kansas City metro area by its position surrounded by rail yards, the Kansas River, and other intensive infrastructure. On the north, the Union Pacific Railroads and Interstate 70 cut the district off from the rest of Kansas City, Kansas. On the west, south, and east the core of Armourdale is bordered by the Kansas River, and a wide swath of under-utilized land behind the Kansas River Levee system. The district is also extensively criss-crossed by railroad tracks and mobility infrastructure, especially the north-south connections along 7th Street and 18th Street. East of the Kansas River in the Historic West Bottoms the district is contiguous with the area of Kansas City, Missouri that also sits in the historic floodplain.



Above: I-70 and Union Pacific Rail Road Tracks (PORT)

Below: Kansas River (PORT)

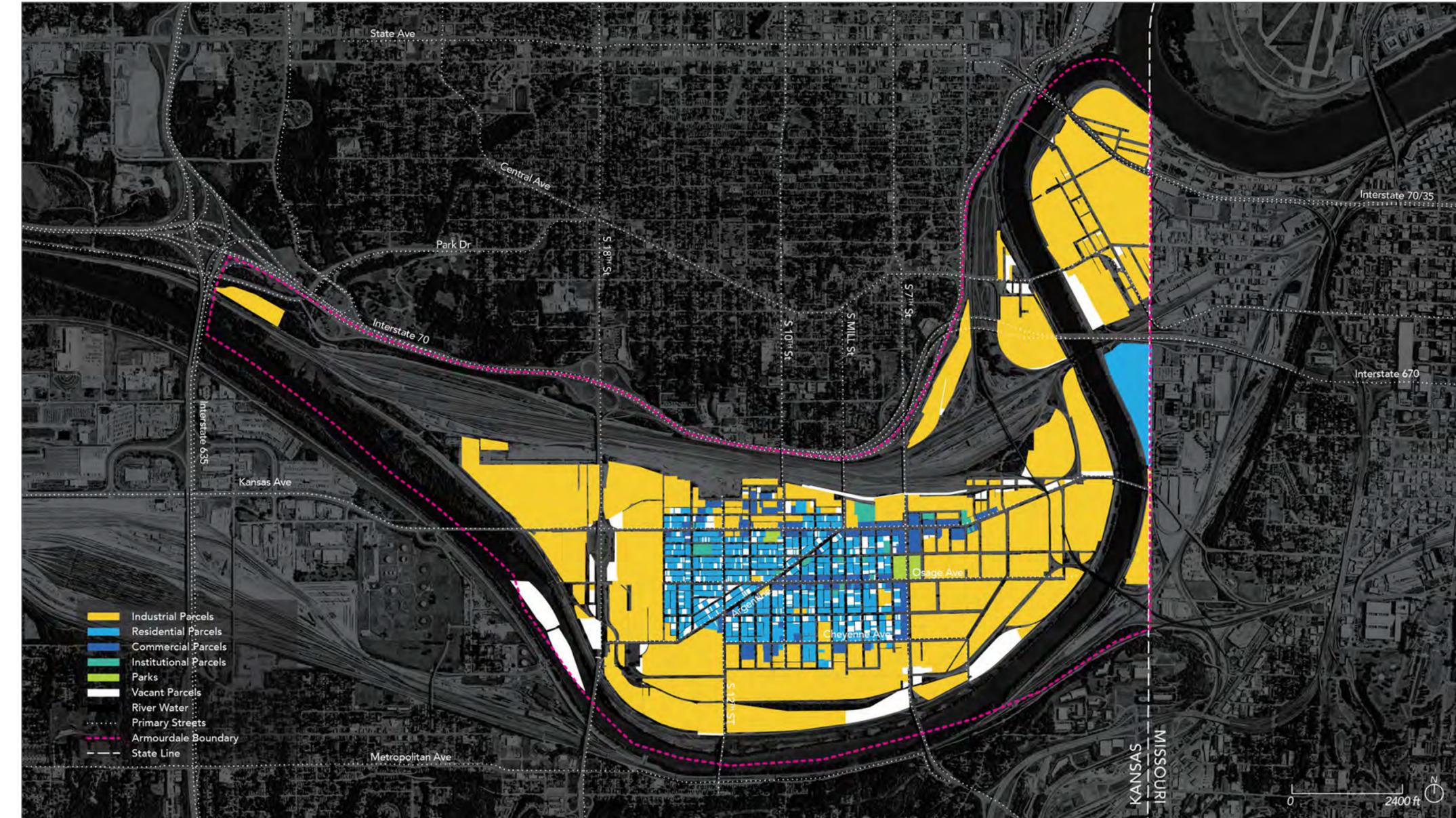
Opposite: Distances Between Armourdale and Adjacent Communities (PORT)



## LAND USE

Armourdale's Zoning was established during the creation of the 1979 master plan, which codified the urban renewal initiatives that displaced much of the Armourdale community east of 7th Street after the 1951 flood in favor of an expanded industrial district. The Armourdale community core is largely zoned as single-family residential parcels that follow the original platting of the district. Along Kansas and Osage many of the parcels have been zoned for commercial use. Outside of the residential core almost the entire district is zoned for light industrial use.

Although the 1979 plan was meant to codify the existing boundaries of Kansas Avenue, Cheyenne Avenue, 7th Street and 18th Street as the dividing line between residential and industrial uses, over time property owners would assemble and ad-hoc lobby for the rezoning of parcels for industrial uses within the residential zone. This is how the number of industrial parcels surrounded by residential homes proliferated.<sup>45</sup>

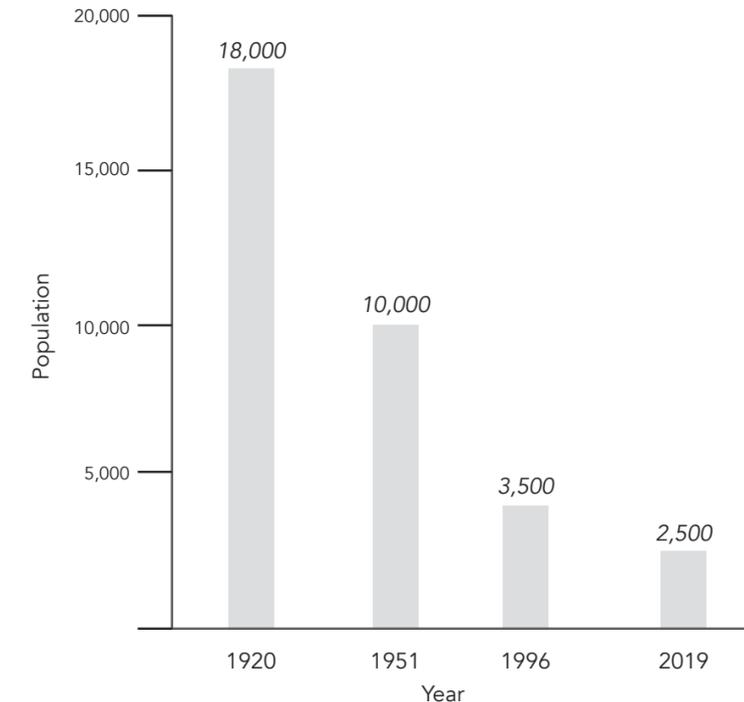


## THE RESIDENTIAL CORE

The residential core of Armourdale is an area of primarily one-story single family homes that extends over approximately 350 acres between Kansas Avenue and Cheyenne Avenue on the north and south and 18th Street and 7th Street on the west and east. The area is served by a single school, John Fiske Elementary, Morse Early Childhood Education Center and two public parks: Bill Clem Park at 10th Street and Shawnee Park on 7th Street.

Homes in this area are generally on similar narrow and deep lots that reflect the original platting of the neighborhood in the 1870's, when the residential areas encompassed almost the entire Armourdale district. Since successive floods in the first half of the 20th Century decimated the local housing stock there has been little widespread or systematic reinvestment or rehabilitation of the housing stock, and as a result the district as a whole has a wide range of levels of repair to its homes. There are clearly numerous homes that have been recently and extensively invested in, but vacancy and blight remain an issue throughout the district.

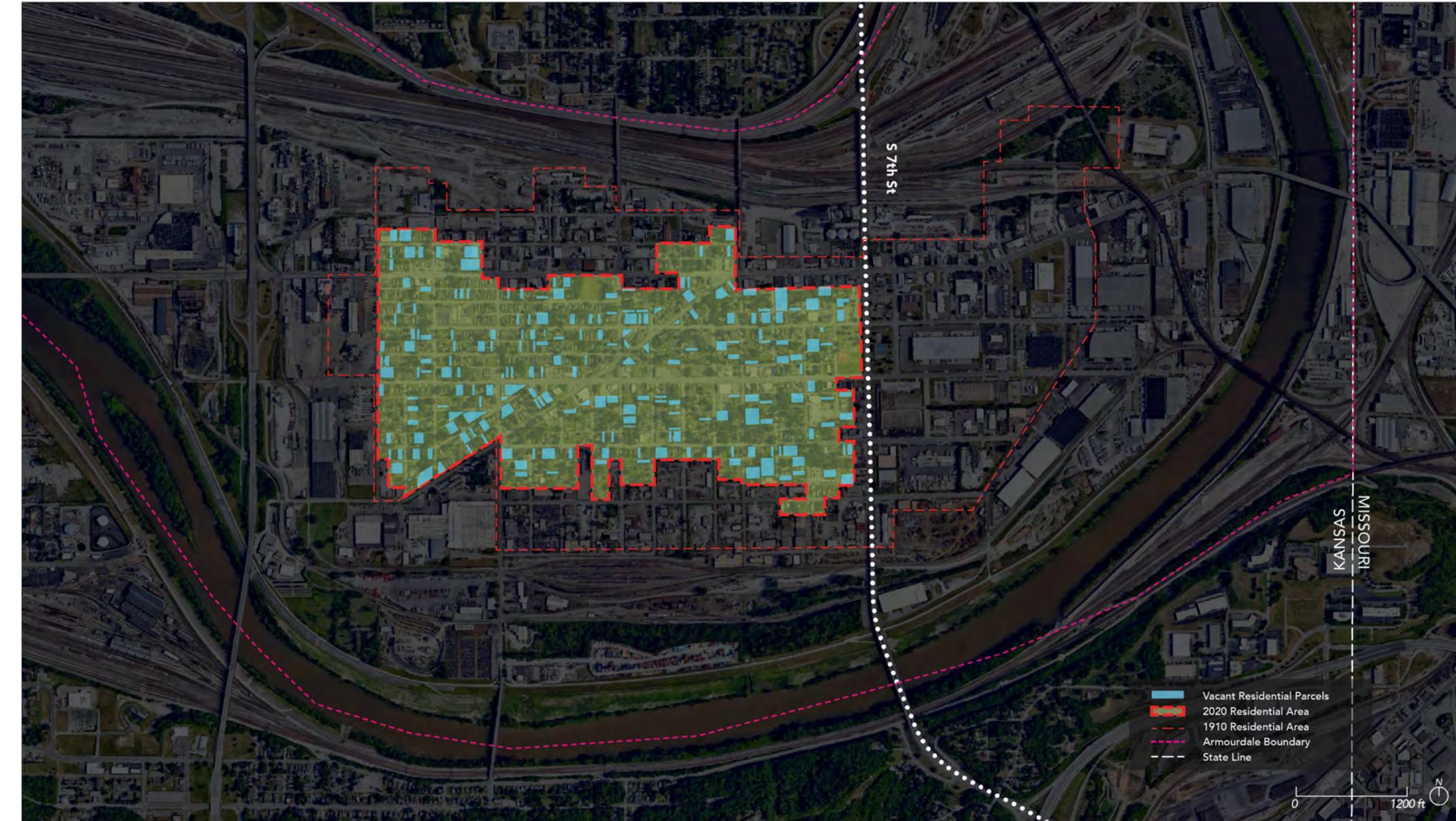
This level of vacancy is at least partly the result of the district's decline in population during the latter half of the 20th Century. From its peak of 18,000 in the 1920's Armourdale's population fell to approximately 10,000 in 1951 then 3,500 in 1996<sup>46</sup> and 2,500 today. While it is important to recognize that the district's undocumented population means this most recent number is likely an undercount, the district's loss of both residents and residential areas to urban renewal and population loss have had profound impacts on the residential, commercial, and community fabric.



**Decline in Armourdale Population, 1920-2020**  
Sources: Daniel Serda, "Planning, Community and Renewal: Harland Bartholomew Associates and the 1951 Armourdale Redevelopment Plan," p. 133; ACS 5-Year Community Survey 2019

Above: View at 14th and Pennsylvania, Looking North (PORT)

Opposite: Industrial, Commercial, Rail, and Residential Land Use (PORT)



## THE RESIDENTIAL CORE

Since the 1951 flood, Armourdale has not only lost nearly two-thirds of its population, it has also lost its major grocery store, many of its churches, 1 of its elementary schools, its fast-pitch softball team, and numerous other formal and informal markers of social and civic life. Unusually for a mostly Latino neighborhood, Armourdale no longer has a Catholic church, and the clergy at Central United Methodist has for years offered Catholic services and ceremonies to serve the local residents.<sup>47</sup>

The physical infrastructure and condition of the neighborhoods has similarly degraded. In some places, sidewalks remain covered by silt or topsoil. Because of the shallow grade across the district and the susceptibility of the storm sewer to back up, flooding across the district has become an ongoing problem even during moderate storm events. Even simple municipal services like street lighting are not always provided adequately, increasing a sense of physical insecurity and contributing to a community-wide perception of being a low priority for basic services.<sup>48</sup> This low level of service, as well as the district's position surrounded by industry, has likely contributed to the low value of owner-occupied housing here, and the relative lack of investment in rental properties by property owners.

These relatively low property values have reduced the barrier to entry for new populations, especially recent immigrants from Latin America. These immigrants are often looking to purchase property for their home or business, but with little personal equity and few financial services available to them, are often attracted to areas like Armourdale where they can buy homes or businesses with a modest upfront investment.<sup>49</sup> Anecdotally, many of the small businesses along Kansas Avenue and Osage Avenue are owned by these recent immigrants, who were attracted to Armourdale because of its existing Latino population, but more interested in buying in Armourdale than they were in Argentine or the west side of Kansas City, MO because of the low cost of land and low cost of living.



Above Top: Neglected Public Sidewalks (PORT)  
 Above Bottom: New Public Sidewalks (PORT)  
 Opposite: Assorted Houses (PORT)

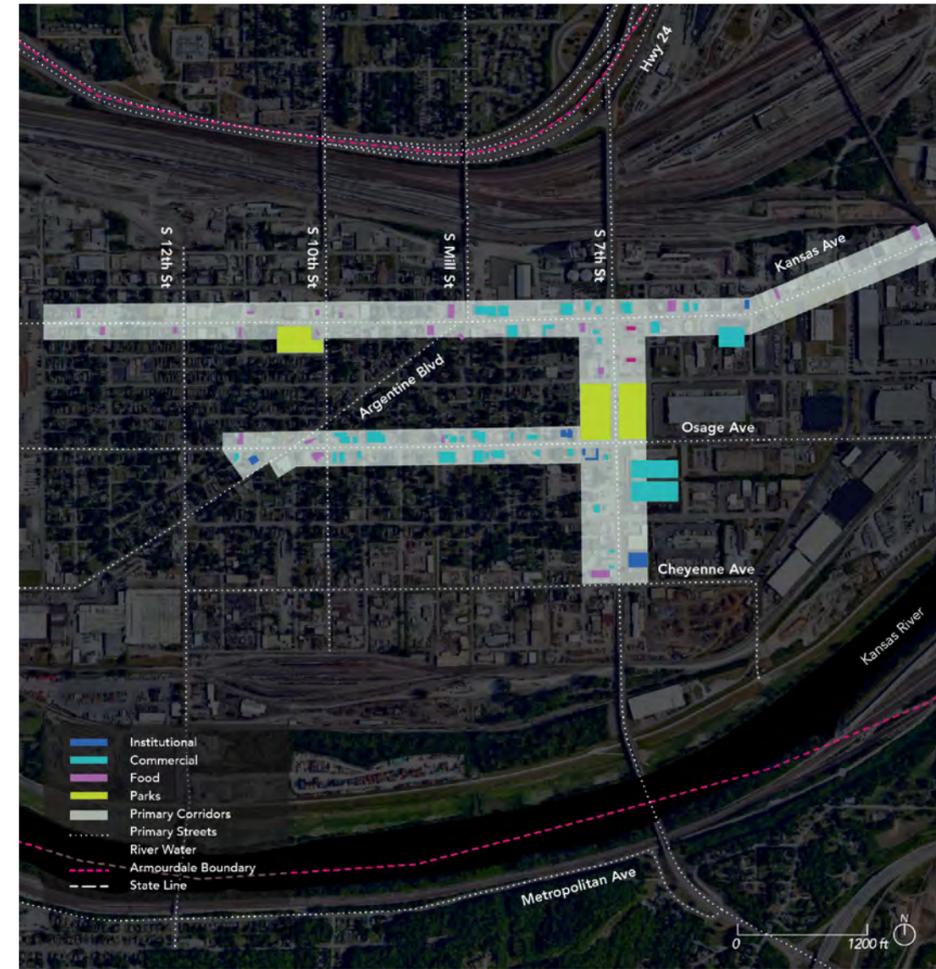


## COMMERCIAL CORES

Armourdale's commercial areas are centered around Kansas Avenue and Osage Avenue, where there is a wide variety of small grocery and convenience stores, dining establishments, small-scale auto repair, sales, installation, and other neighborhood businesses. Most of these cater to the district's Latino population, advertising their services in Spanish and English. Although almost all have street frontages, most clearly service a car-based customer base.

Because the primary commercial streets are located on Armourdale's most prominent roadways, the current and future potential to reorient the corridors toward a more pedestrian-friendly experience is constrained by high volume truck traffic, neglected sidewalks, poor drainage and overhead high voltage transmission wires.

Osage Avenue represents the best opportunity to strengthen a local commercial corridor due to its central and notable location in the heart of Armourdale Neighborhood.



Above: Armourdale Commercial Cores (PORT)

Opposite: Assorted Restaurants on Kansas Ave. and Osage Ave. (PORT)



## COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS AND ASSETS

As challenging as the context and conditions in Armourdale are, this planning effort must be built on a foundational understanding that the neighborhood has real assets, and that policy and planning recommendations must build upon those assets. Those assets are diverse and real, from a highly engaged group of community organizations to its proximity to downtown and the river to informal networks of support among Armourdale residents. These assets are the foundation on which this process will build its planning recommendations.

Community-based organizations like the Armourdale Renewal Association (ARA) and Cross-Lines play a major role in the civic life of the community. The ARA and its Executive Director Monica Mendez have made great strides organizing the local community and connecting them with resources in the Unified Government. Not only have they been instrumental in organizing and facilitating this planning effort, they also coordinate numerous programs to connect people with the resources they need throughout Armourdale and foster stronger connections between residents and the Armourdale business community.

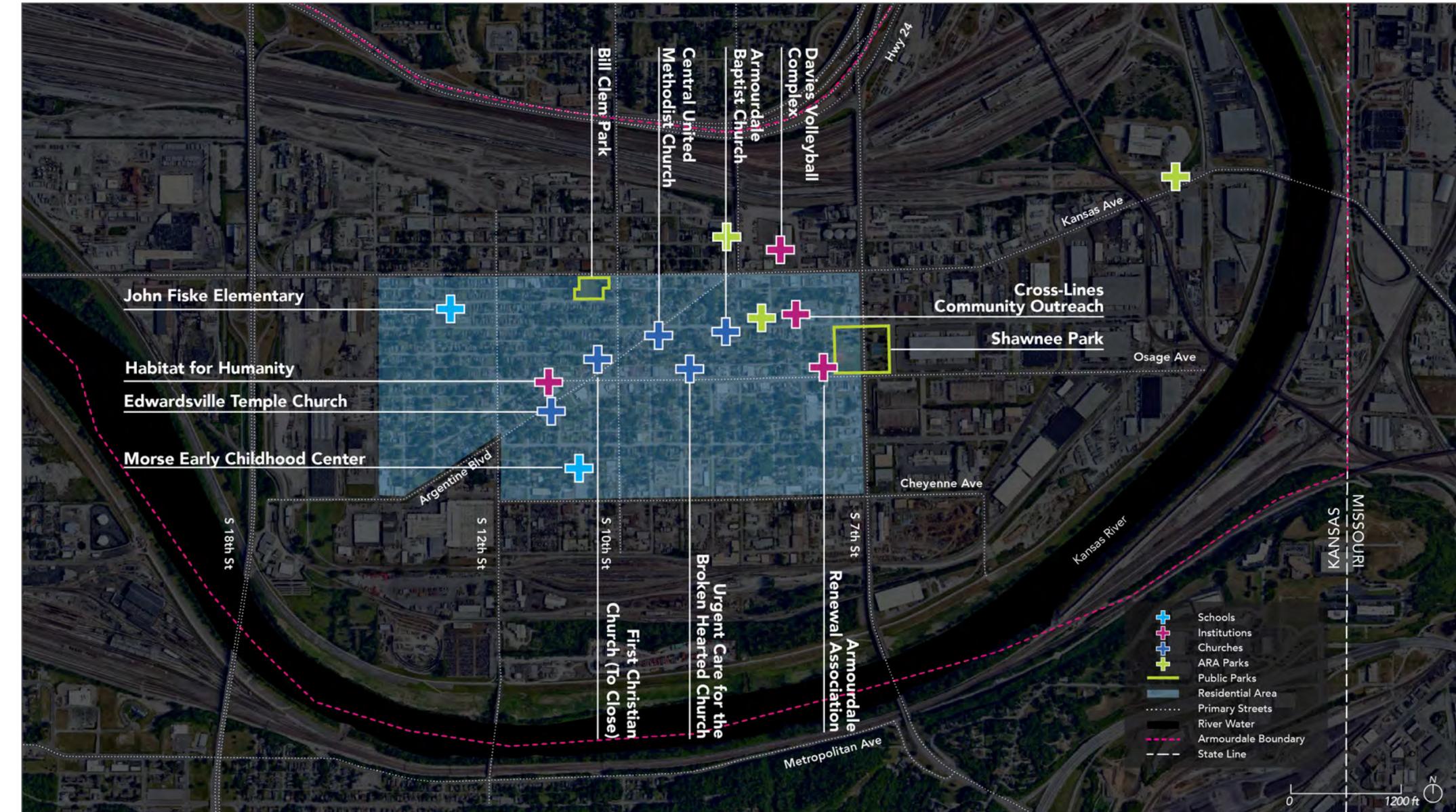
For more than 60 years, Cross-Lines has played a major role in supporting the Armourdale community. Cross-Lines' work is focused on 2 primary programs. The first is its hunger relief program. Cross-Lines serves about 60,000 meals every year out of their kitchen, including staff lunches for people on their way to work, and operate a food pantry. Second, they work closely with the local unhoused population to get as many people experiencing homelessness into stable housing as possible. Although about 25% of the people that take advantage of their meals program are experiencing homelessness, the remainder are people who are simply experiencing food insecurity who live in Armourdale or elsewhere in the area.<sup>50</sup>

Beyond these formal organizations, there is a strong informal group of highly committed local organizers and informal networks that do everything from staffing the Cross-Lines community kitchen to find contractors to improve the homes of local residents.<sup>51</sup> These networks often include Armourdale residents, employees at Armourdale businesses, or highly engaged local church leaders like Pastor Gary Roellchen of Central United Methodist Church. There are also numerous programs like Armourdale Rock, where local artist Jose Faus works with neighborhood kids to paint murals in (Armourdale Rock was responsible for the mural at 10th and Osage.<sup>52</sup> Armourdale Renewal Association owns and was responsible for improving two small parks in the district. The community center was, until the COVID-19 pandemic, a well-used resource, and the tutoring program is an opportunity for students and parents to come together.<sup>53</sup> Finally, community events like the fast pitch softball league, which periodically takes over Shawnee Park in the summer months, the Cross-Lines community barbeque and Cinco de Mayo routinely draw large crowds.<sup>54</sup> In fact, the community outreach survey consistently showed that Armourdale residents saw their neighbors, families, and the Armourdale community as the most important part of life in the Armourdale neighborhood.



Above: Mural (This mural at 10th and Osage was painted by neighborhood youth working with artist Jose Faus)

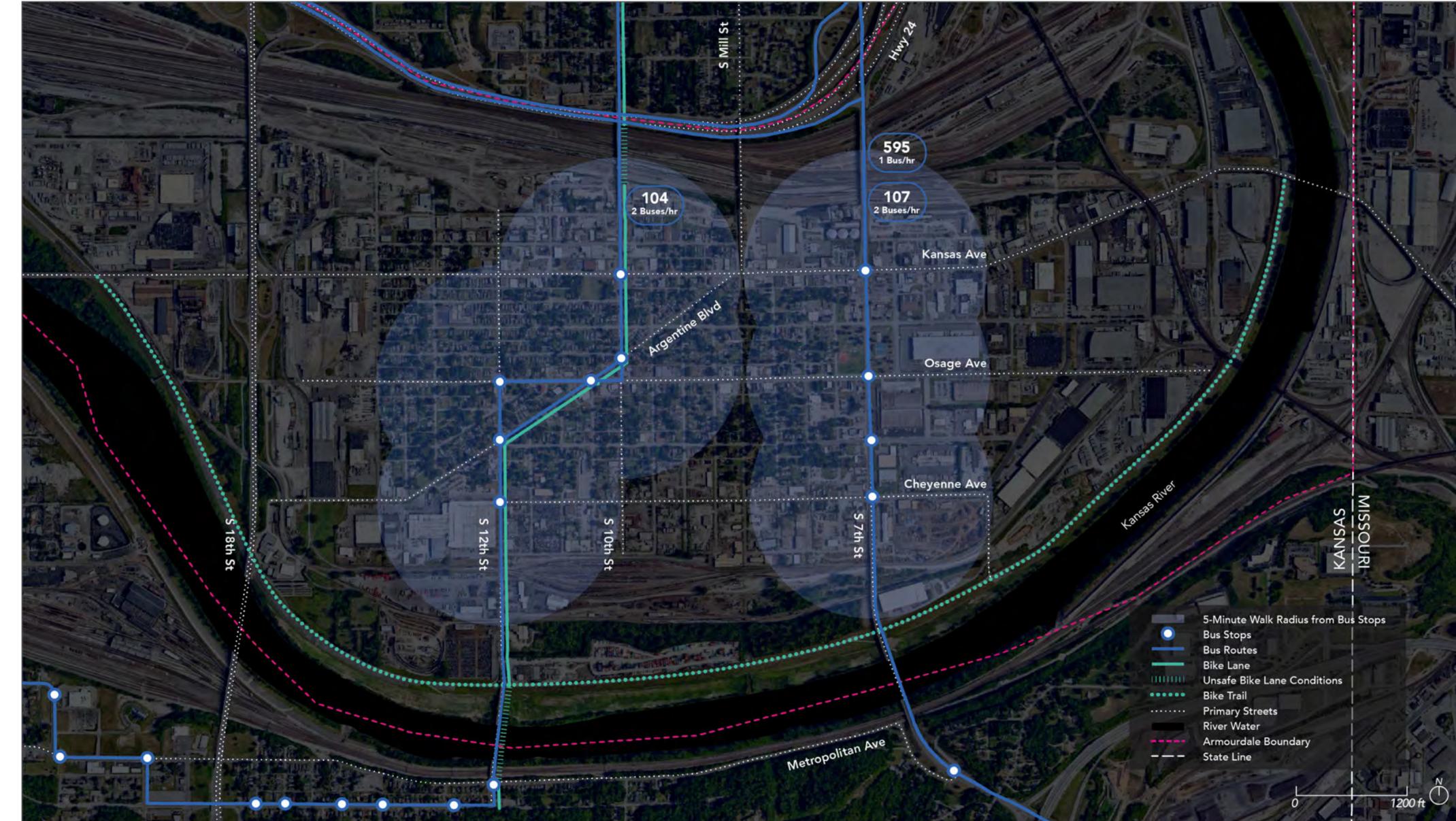
Opposite: Civic Asset Map (PORT)



## TRANSPORTATION

Armourdale's bus service is limited to three routes that run north-south along 7th Street and 10th and 12th Streets. There is currently no east-west public transit access, although the RideKC plan does call for Kansas Avenue to be a future bus route to connect downtown Kansas City, Missouri with Armourdale.

There are a number of bike lanes throughout Armourdale, and the ongoing development of the Levee Trail offers an opportunity to connect along the entire riverfront. As part of the KDOT-led reconstruction of the 18th Street Bridge there is also a planned bicycle connection between Armourdale and Argentine along 12th Street and Kansas Avenue.

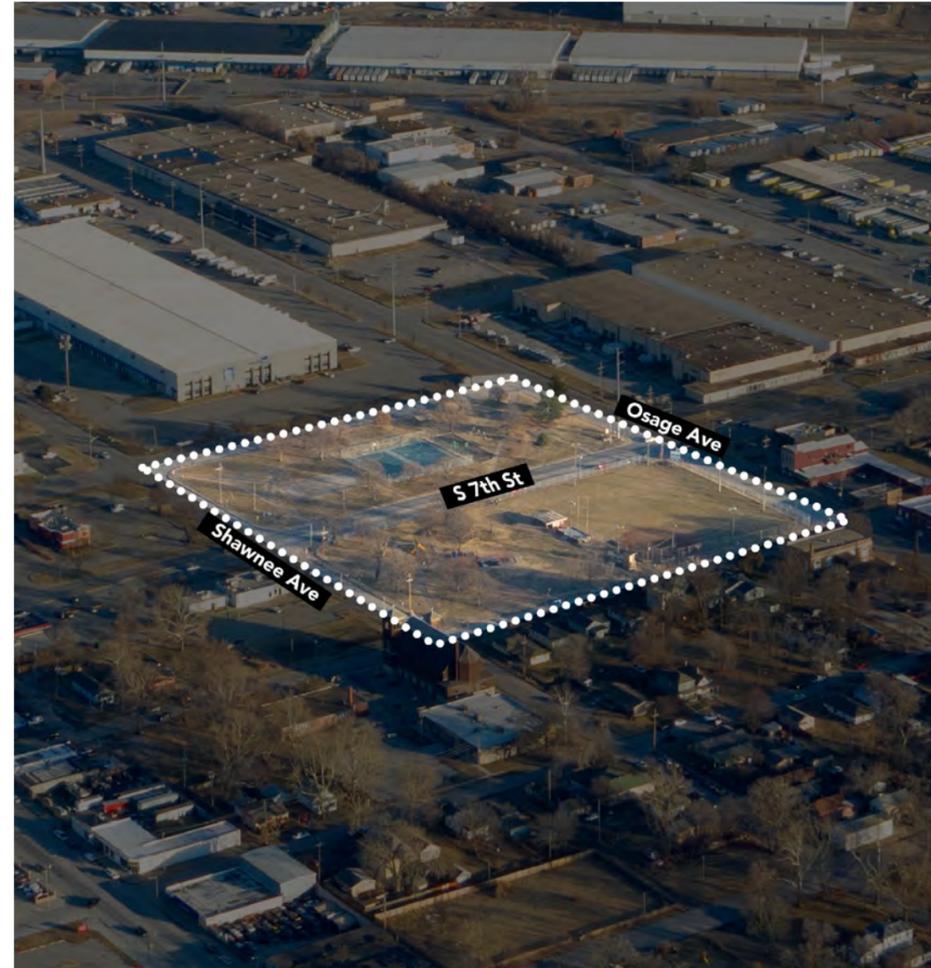


## SHAWNEE PARK

Shawnee Park is an approximately 7.5 acre park at the intersection of 7th Street and Osage Avenue. It appears in the original platting of Armourdale from 1879 completed by Charles Francis Adams and Charles Morse and was principally conceived as central town square or common, one of the hallmarks of town plans developed by Eastern-based planning consultants that were also implemented in places like Lawrence and Quindaro. Features were continuously added beginning in the 1890's with the bandstand and later supplemented by landscape features like paved promenades.<sup>55</sup> These features can still be seen in the design of the park on the eastern side of 7th Street.

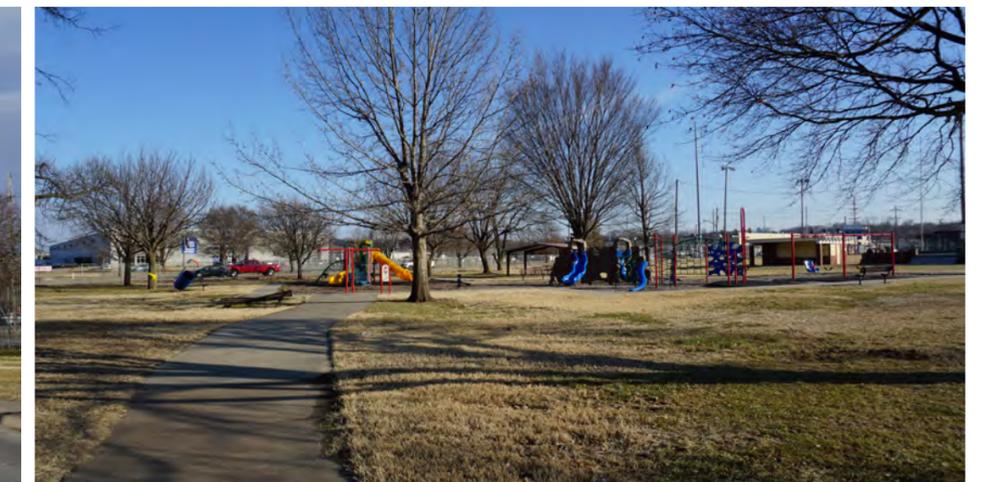
Historically, Shawnee Park has been the one of the homes of the fast-pitch softball league that has such a rich history in the Armourdale, Argentine, and wider Mexican-American community in eastern Kansas. The softball field that still exists there is often occupied during the summer months with these games, and the park plays a central role in community life during these events.<sup>56</sup> The park also includes a basketball court on the west side, a small veterans monument, a newly renovated playground and a large softball field, which encompasses almost the entire southwest quadrant of the park.

The park is split in two by 7th Street, which in this location is a major arterial street with almost constant truck traffic from the numerous industrial parcels to the east, north, and west. Until the expansion of 7th Street and the construction of the 7th Street viaduct Shawnee Park had been contiguous. The bisecting of the park by 7th street has effectively transformed the large contiguous central green into two smaller parks. The amount of traffic on 7th Street further reinforces this physical and psychological divide, making pedestrian crossing between the two parks undesirable and unsafe.



Above: Shawnee Park Aerial (PORT)

Opposite: Shawnee Park Photos (PORT)



## BILL CLEM PARK

Bill Clem Park is a 1.75 acre neighborhood park between Kansas and Custer Avenues near 10th Street. It has been recently invested in, with new playground equipment and picnic pavilions being installed in 2019. The park is dominated by a one-acre field at its center, and spans midblock between Kansas and Custer Avenue. The park has been the site of some very successful programming by the Unified Government Parks Department, including a successful Movie in the Park night, which has activated the park that is otherwise only intermittently used. It has, however, had an established perception in the community of a lack of safety, especially at night. Although it is not clear how widespread this perception is and what could be done to address it, it has been articulated enough times and through enough different channels during this planning process that it deserves future study.



Above: Bill Clem Park Aerial (PORT)  
Opposite: Bill Clem Park Photos (PORT)





## UNDERUTILIZED PARCELS

A large number of underutilized parcels are scattered throughout both the residential and the industrial areas of Armourdale. In the industrial areas, these parcels are generally smaller in size, with simple shed buildings. They are distinguished mostly because they store all manner of industrial products, often used, outside with limited apparent activity. These materials can be everything from car axels to palettes to fire extinguishers to truck tires.

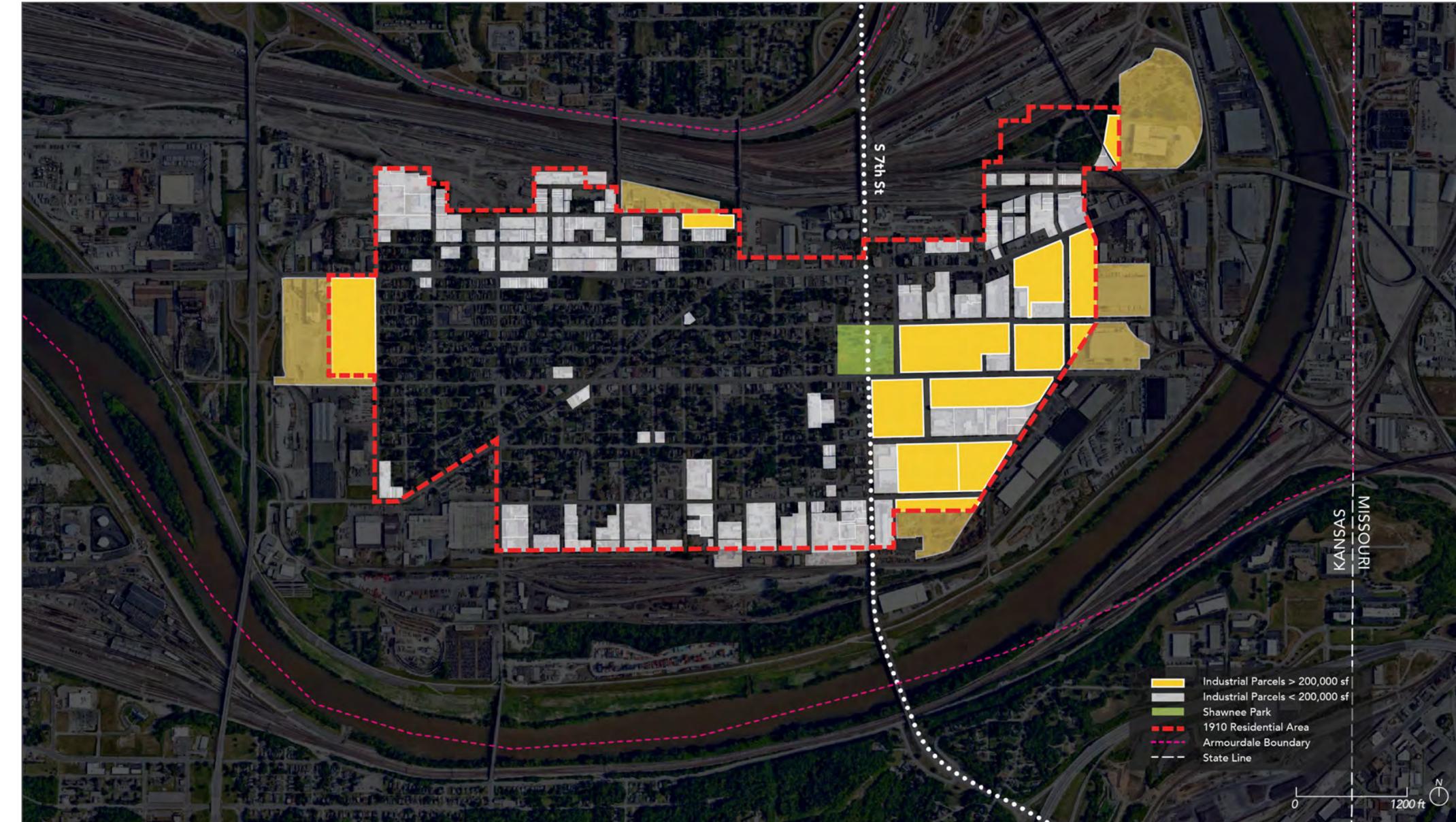
Vacant and underutilized residential parcels also extend throughout the core of the Armourdale community. These vacant parcels present long-term challenges for the stability and economic strength of the neighborhood as a whole. Vacant properties can collect trash, become overgrown, and contribute nothing to either the tax base or the safety of the community. Gaps in the residential fabric can lead to areas that feel less safe. A district-wide strategy for addressing these properties and promoting residential infill will go a long way towards strengthening the future of the community.

In general, these underutilized parcels contribute little to the overall health and viability of Armourdale, and a district-wide approach for directing them toward more productive residential or commercial uses will be important for ensuring that Armourdale is a productive, vibrant community and jobs center.



Above: Material Storage Lots in Armourdale (PORT)

Opposite: Shrinking Residential Footprint (PORT)



- Industrial Parcels > 200,000 sf
- Industrial Parcels < 200,000 sf
- Shawnee Park
- 1910 Residential Area
- Armourdale Boundary
- State Line

0 1200 ft

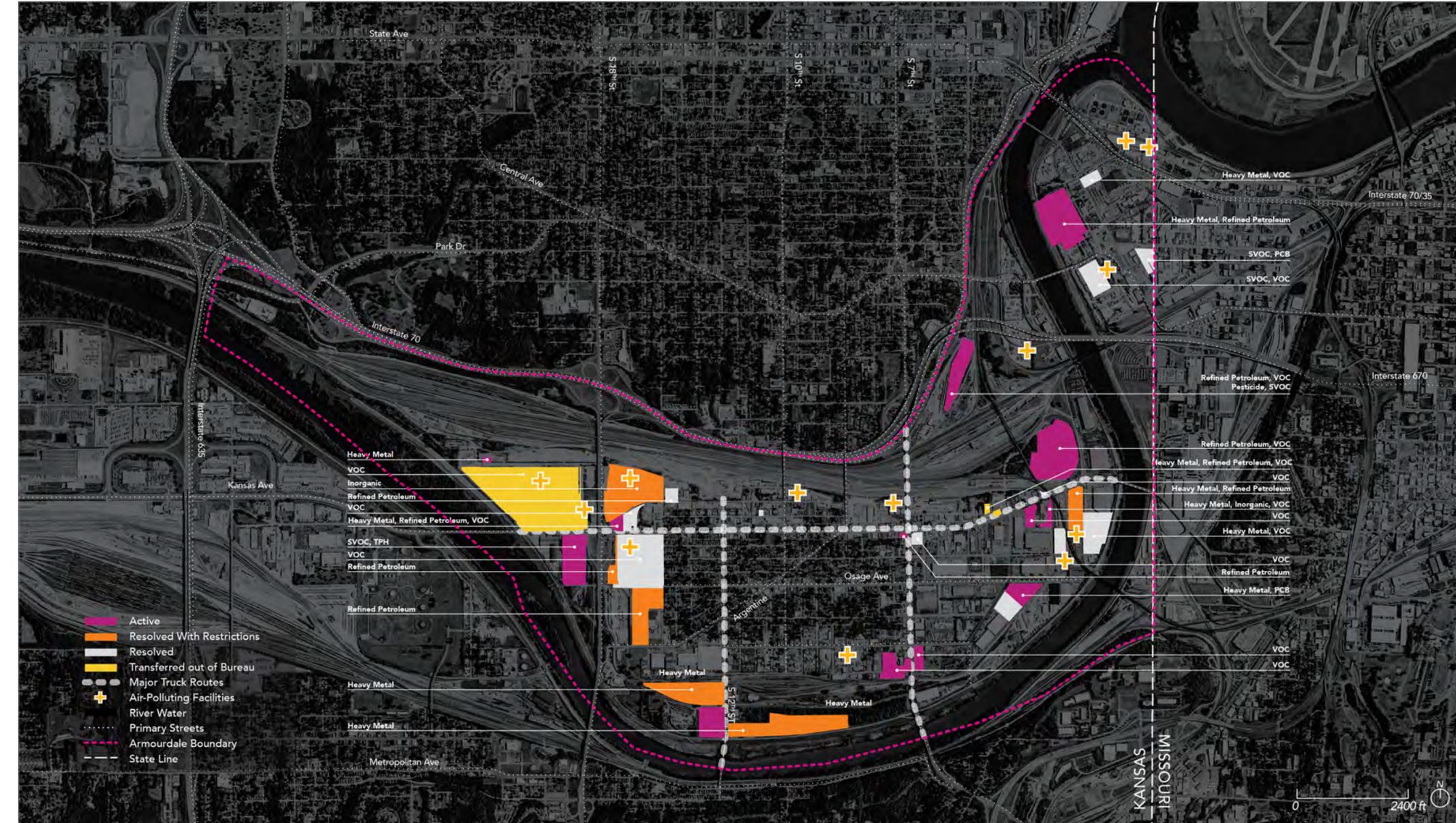
## CONTAMINANTS, BROWNFIELDS AND POLLUTION

As a neighborhood completely surrounded by industry, Armourdale is rendered a site of environmental inequality, where people who live and/or work there are disproportionately subject to industrial pollution and environmental hazards. The fact that a significant number of Armourdale's population are recent immigrants and lack access to environmental policy making, leaves this community especially vulnerable to environmental racism. Driven by "market dynamics", industry has continued to expand towards the residential core of Armourdale during the past century—risking its community's health and contaminating its live, work, and play spaces. While there isn't sufficient evidence that directly correlates Armourdale's poor health data to contamination and pollution data, it is safe to conclude that these contaminants and poor air quality pose a threat to the community's health and wellbeing. This planning effort's recognition of this inequality will help build momentum for supporting existing organizations and efforts to clean up and mitigate pollution, as well as empower the community to push against future industrial exploitation.

Both government and non-profit organizations are making efforts to identify sources of pollution and contamination. In addition to monitoring air pollution at different locations in Armourdale (among other neighborhoods in Kansas City), CleanAirNow enables and empowers youth and adults to organize, lead, and advocate for their communities.<sup>60</sup> The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) identifies sites of environmental interest and categorizes them as: contaminated, formerly contaminated, or that have been evaluated for contamination. This map includes sites identified by the Bureau of Environmental Remediation, which responds to environmental emergencies and manages environmental contamination through pollution source control, containment, or remedial action.<sup>61</sup> The map does not include data linked to spills, storm water runoff, tanks, or wastewater treatment.

The map also shows major truck routes, which cut through Armourdale's residential core and are considered major air pollutants, specifically of particular matter that is known and has negative health impacts as it diminishes the body's immune system. Additionally, it shows that heavy metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and refined petroleum are the most prominent contaminants in Armourdale. While some of these cases have been resolved, the majority of them either remain active or are resolved with restrictions.

Opposite: Pollution + Contaminants Map (PORT)



## TRAVELLING TO AND FROM ARMOURDALE FOR WORK

An ongoing question of this planning process is how the expansion of the industrial area has affected the employment of the Armourdale community. An analysis of census data by the Unified Government has shown that, by and large, people who work in Armourdale live elsewhere, and people who live in Armourdale work elsewhere.

According to the American Community Survey, the Armourdale district supports 8,213 jobs, 60% of which pay \$40,000 or more. More than half of these jobs are in Manufacturing (25.4%) and Transportation and Warehousing (29.5%) and they are by and large accessible to those with workers with less than a Bachelor's degree (68% of workers have some college or an associate's degree.) However, only 13.6% of workers in Armourdale are Hispanic or Latino, and a miniscule 1.2%, 98 total workers, actually live in Armourdale.

The reverse picture is just as stark. According to the ACS, there are 992 employed people who live in Armourdale, but all but 98 of them, more than 90%, work outside of the district. Those jobs pay less than jobs in Armourdale (75% earn less than \$40,000/year) and are split essentially evenly between Hispanic and non-Hispanic workers.

In short, of the more than 8,000 jobs in Armourdale, less than 100 are held by Armourdale residents. Although further analysis of community and workforce development issues are needed, creating more opportunities for Armourdale residents in Armourdale and Wyandotte County should be a goal of this planning effort.

**992** EMPLOYED PEOPLE WHO **LIVE** IN ARMOURDALE

**25%** EARN MORE THAN \$40,000/YR

**48%** HISPANIC OR LATINO

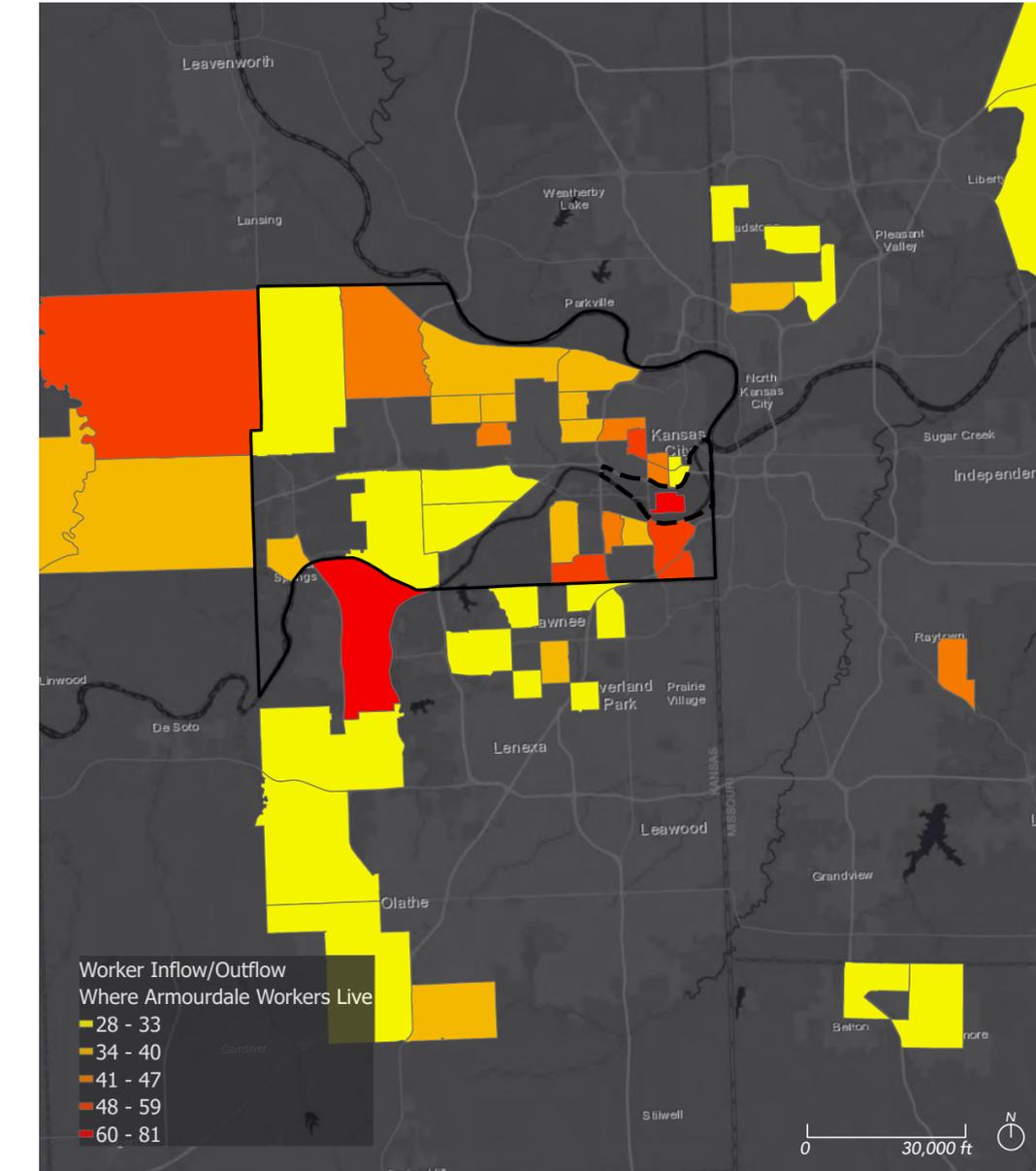
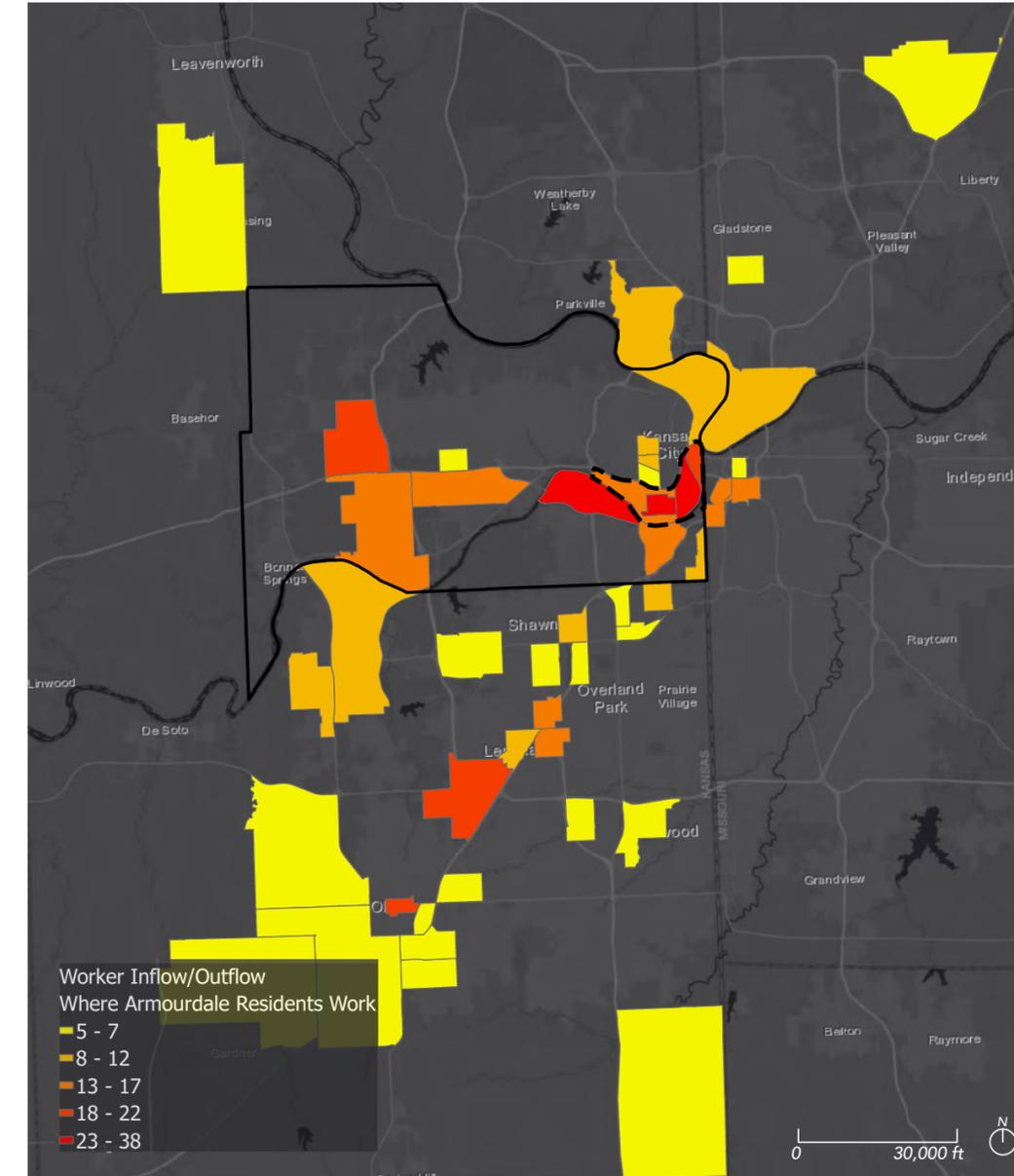
**8,213** EMPLOYED PEOPLE WHO **WORK** IN ARMOURDALE

**91%** EARN MORE THAN \$40,000/YR

**13%** HISPANIC OR LATINO

**98** PEOPLE WHO BOTH **LIVE** AND **WORK** IN ARMOURDALE

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018



## STORMWATER AND FLOODING

Stormwater and periodic flooding are longstanding problems in Armourdale. Despite the upcoming investments in pump stations as part of the levee improvements scheduled to be implemented in 2021 and beyond, the issues plaguing Armourdale infrastructure stem more from the site's topography and challenging geology than from the ability to remove water and redirect it back over the levee system.

Situated in the floodplain of the Kansas River, Armourdale has very little natural topography to convey stormwater to the Kansas River. This also means that when water does flow, it flows slowly enough for the settlement of any particulate matter that runs off the surface. In an area like Armourdale, where dust and debris regularly settle on the roads, this means that inlet points, catch basins, and other stormwater conveyance features quickly become saturated and must be mechanically cleared before stormwater can flow through them again.<sup>62</sup> This has resulted in a proportionally higher number of work orders for storm cleanout in the study area, represented in the map to the right, than for similar facilities elsewhere in Wyandotte County.

This relative insufficiency of the stormwater infrastructure in dealing with routine storm events has resulted in the Unified Government applying for, and winning, a federal WIFIA grant to invest in the local stormwater infrastructure. A number of important stormwater improvements are planned for Armourdale, all of which are detailed in the 'Future Improvement's section later in this document.



Above: Flooding on Kansas Ave. During Rain Event (YouTube)

Opposite: Frequently Inspected Inlets Map (PORT)



## PUBLIC HEALTH ANALYSIS

A close examination of public health indicators by the Unified Government showed that Armourdale residents suffer worse health outcomes by almost every measure than both Kansas and the United States as a whole. These indicators point to both a lack of access to care and a broader picture that reinforces the effect of poverty and economic instability as a social determinant of health outcomes. Although this effort is still in its early stages, the Public Health Department's preliminary analysis points to access to quality care, access to health insurance, and the overall built environment and its safety concerns as some of the most important health issues facing Armourdale residents today.<sup>63</sup>

66 Access to care is a challenge for almost all low-income communities across the country, but Armourdale's high proportion of Spanish-speakers, its undocumented and uninsured residents, and the relative inaccessibility of key health care providers all make access to care a particular challenge for residents. Residents often have more difficulty navigating the health care system, and access to advanced treatments for cancer and other complex conditions is often impossible to provide.<sup>64</sup> This lack of access to care is manifested in high rates of morbidity for diabetes (49.32 per 100,000) and kidney disease (41.1 per 100,000), which are one and a half (1.5) and two (2) times the respective death rates for those diseases for Wyandotte County. In the words of the UG Public Health Department, "these high rates point to mismanaged care where the patients were not receiving the care they needed or received it too late." The picture for dental care is similarly challenging. Adults over 65 with total teeth loss approached 29%, more than twice the rate of the United States and 1.5 times the rate of Wyandotte County, pointing to a high percentage of adults not receiving adequate dental care.<sup>65</sup>

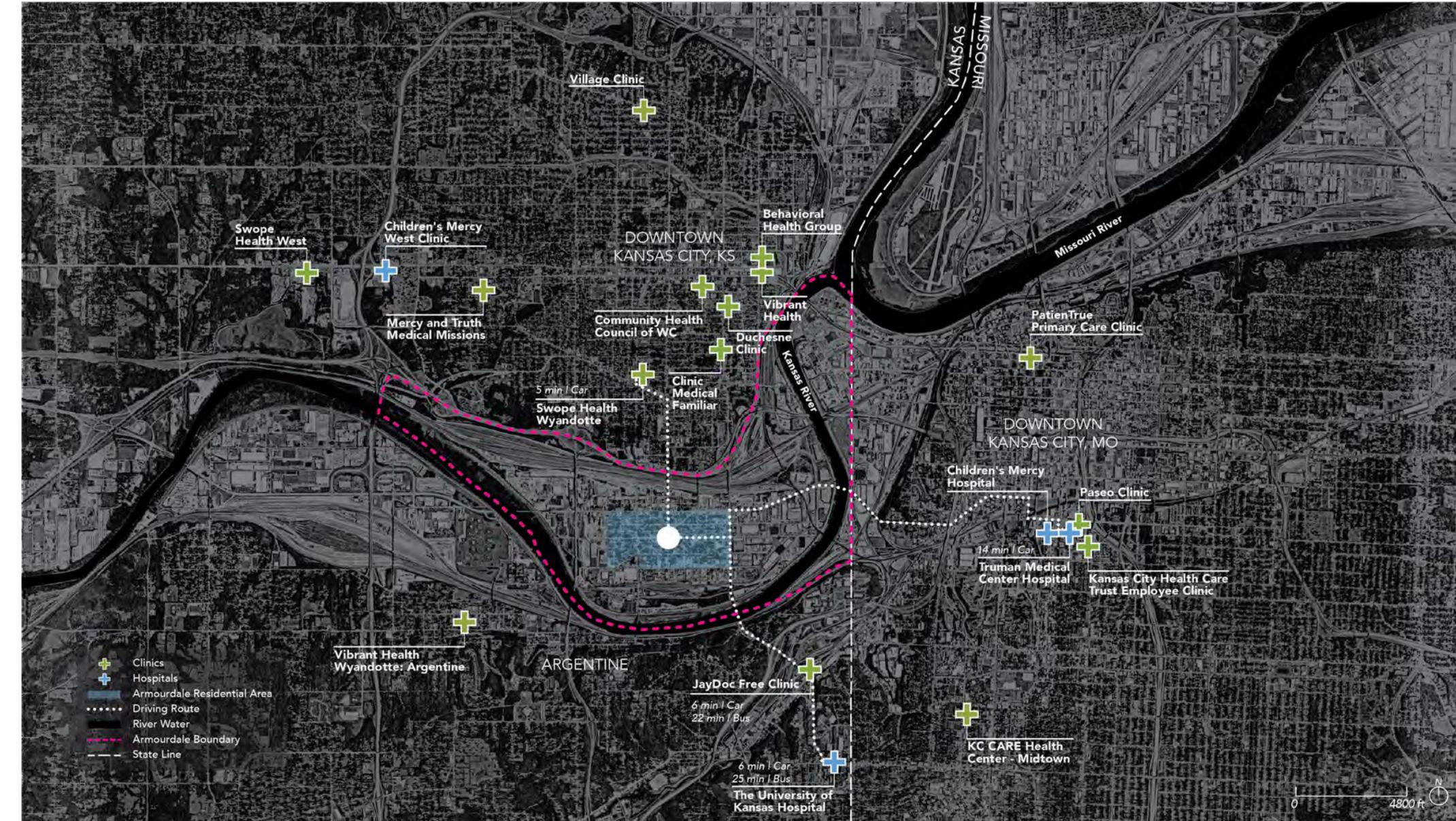
# 3.4x

Higher Uninsured Rate for those 18+  
Than United States

# 1.7x

Higher Uninsured Rate for those 18+  
Than Wyandotte County

Opposite: Health Clinics + Hospitals Map (PORT)



## PUBLIC HEALTH ANALYSIS

Although Armourdale currently has no health care clinics or doctor's offices, access to care is not solely limited to geographic proximity. The cultural appropriateness of care and ability to navigate the health care system are equally, if not more, important challenges for community organizers and health care professionals to tackle.<sup>66</sup>

Access to adequate health insurance is also a major barrier for Armourdale residents. 41% of adult respondents reported having no current health insurance, almost double the rate of Wyandotte County (25%) and almost 4 times the rate in the United States (12%). Lack of health insurance can impact other health measures such as having an annual check-up or screenings. Almost all of the prevention measures including cholesterol screening, mammography, cervical cancer screening, and blood pressure medication had low prevalence rates when compared to Kansas and the United States.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, less acute but still serious conditions like lack of sleep, obesity, physical inactivity and poor mental health are all higher in Armourdale than they are in Kansas or the United States. More than one-third of adults in Armourdale sleep less than 7 hours a night (37.1%), 44% of adults reported that they did no physical activity outside of work in the past month, and 16% of adults reported 14 more days per month that their mental health was not good.<sup>68</sup> Obesity rates were also high (44%) albeit closer to the Wyandotte County average of 41%. These many overlapping health concerns including lack of sleep, lack of physical activity, and obesity and diabetes risk point to the detrimental effects of poverty, pollution, and unsafe built environment have on mental and physical health in Armourdale.

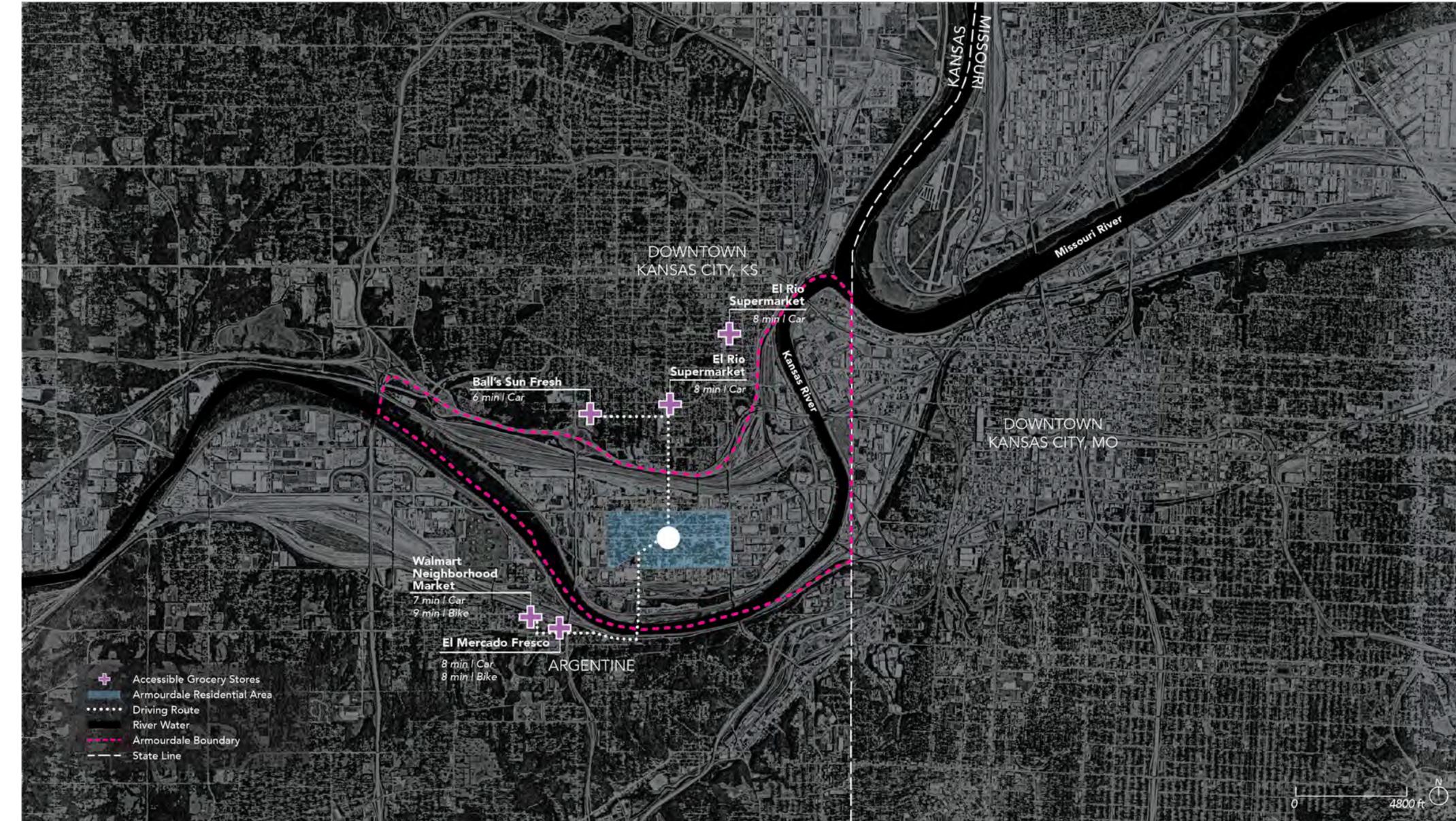
# 1.8x

Higher Diabetes Prevalence than  
Wyandotte County

# 3.6x

Higher Motor Vehicle Accident Death  
Rate Than Wyandotte County

Opposite: Grocery Store Map (PORT)



## EVOLVING CONTEXT

The Historic West Bottoms generally refers to several overlapping areas that span the Missouri-Kansas border between the Kansas River, the Missouri River, and the bluffs overlooking the district to the east on which the core of Kansas City Missouri lies. This area was historically the heart of the Kansas City stockyards, and contains the historic livestock exchange building as well as numerous remnant multi-story former industrial buildings. Although referred to by multiple names, including the Stockyard District (referring to the area south of I-670) and the Central Industrial District (the area east of the Kansas River that is not in Missouri), for clarity's sake this document will refer to the entire district as the Historic West Bottoms. This district also spans both Kansas and Missouri, and much of what is discussed below is outside of this project's formal study area. Nonetheless, the district feels contiguous and should be analyzed as a whole, rather than as separate parts.

The Historic West Bottoms is a district undergoing rapid change. With the growth of downtown Kansas City, Missouri and an existing building stock well suited for adaptive reuse, the area closest to downtown has seen recent development into a hybrid entertainment and residential district. This growth has been centered around two main clusters. The first – also known as the Historic West Bottoms – includes the area between 12th Street and Forrester Road extending as far as the State Line Road in Missouri. This area has seen extensive redevelopment and new construction of lofts and artist studios, and has some entertainment destinations and hospitality businesses scattered throughout it. The second cluster of development – known as the Stockyard District – is south of I-670 centered around Genesee and Wyoming Streets and includes the historic Livestock Exchange building and HyVee Arena (formerly Kemper Arena). This area has numerous restaurants and galleries, a winery, and other destinations, and will soon be adding additional residential units on the Kansas side of the State Line Road along the Kansas River.



Above: Historic West Bottoms and Stockyards District Adjacent to Armourdale (PORT)

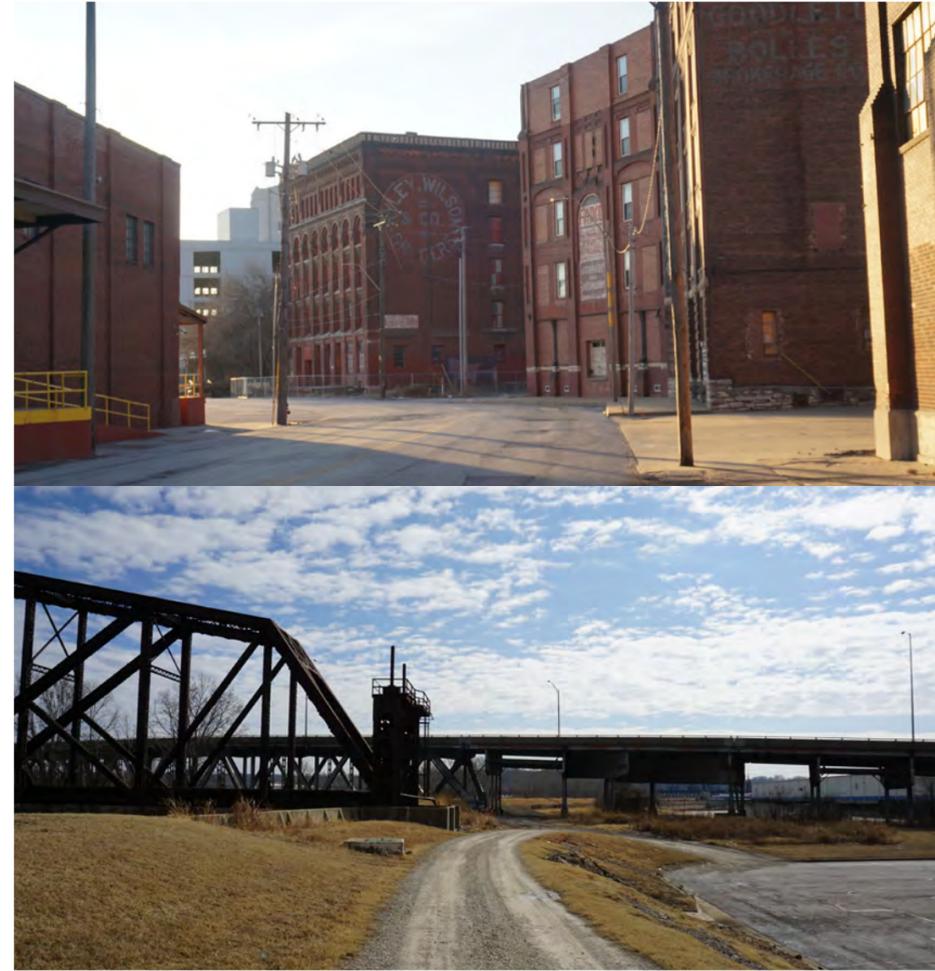
Opposite: The Stockyards District and Hy-Vee Arena (PORT)



## EVOLVING CONTEXT

As a rapidly developing mixed-use district, the Stockyards District is highly dependent on the amenities it can offer potential residents and the audience that its entertainment and hospitality destinations will attract. Central to this effort are improvements to the Kansas River Levee Trail, which offers residents an outdoor experience along the river that isn't available in other parts of the Kansas City region.<sup>69</sup> The potential to use the riverfront experience as an anchor for Kansas City residents and visitors has the most potential for near-term success in this area, where the Rock Island Bridge is under development and where the Kansas City Boat Club has operated from for years. There are also numerous ongoing public improvement projects in the area, from the improvements to the levee trail to the development of the Rock Island Bridge itself.

As a district, however, the Historic West Bottoms is far from built out, and even in the areas where residential and commercial development has taken hold there are large areas of empty or industrial properties that do little to add to (or actively detract from) the district's future as a mixed-use area of residential and commercial spaces. In the Kansas area of the district north of 670 there is almost no residential or commercial development at all, and the economics of development mean that this area, if it does see the kind of transformation happening in the Stockyards district to the south, will experience that cycle after the rest of the district does so. Nevertheless, the Historic West Bottoms is a neighborhood in transition where its industrial past is making way to an exciting, dense, walkable future for residents and businesses alike.



Above: Historic West Bottoms Building Stock (PORT)

Bottom: The Rock Island Bridge (PORT)



# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG *FUERTE*

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PLANNING PROCESS

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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH ECOSYSTEM

The community outreach ecosystem is rooted in active engagement with community groups, public audiences, and stakeholders through ongoing conversations and interventions, rather than an occasional meeting followed by weeks or months of no information. This requires a multi-pronged approach that accommodates people with different comfort levels for interacting and engaging in a planning process.

Our community engagement approach relies on 3 core strategies: an Outreach Team, constant dialogue with community experts, and continuous engagement:

**Outreach Team:** The planning team worked with the Armourdale Renewal Association to recruit and train 4 residents from the neighborhood to work closely with the planning and client teams on outreach efforts.

**Community Leaders:** We initiated a dialogue with leaders of community-based organizations and community experts interested in playing a more active role in the planning process.

**Continuous Engagement:** The planning team developed an overall strategy of continuous engagement, rather than occasional meetings staggered over the course of the project.

Each community is unique and will have different responses to engagement strategies; this is why it is vital to provide a variety of ways to interact and provide insights on the project. This approach—the combination of close partnerships with community members and organizations and a robust set of tools—grounds this planning effort in real community needs.

Together, the ambition of these strategies is to gain enthusiasm and feedback during the planning process and build capacity that empowers the community to push for change and investment in Armourdale.



### Input #1: Survey

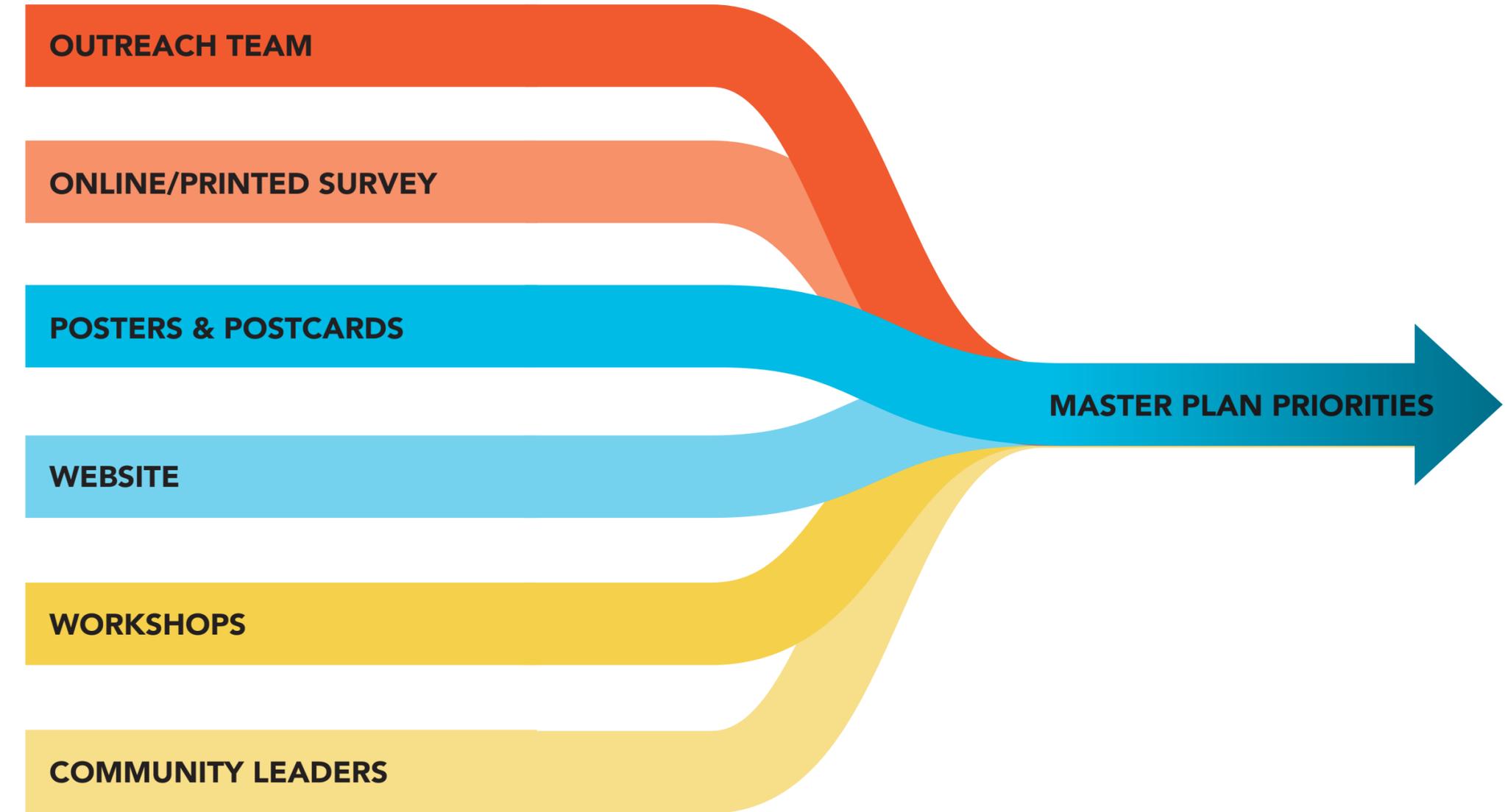
Specific questions to create data sets to better understand the community's needs & concerns.

- MindMixer Online Survey
- Printed Survey
- Outreach Team

### Input #2: Personal Story

Open-ended platform for community members to share stories of inspirations and challenges.

- Armourdale Strong Website
- Postcards
- Voicemail Recordings



## OUTREACH TEAM

PORT and Borderless Studio worked with Monica Mendez from the Armourdale Renewal Association to recruit 4 residents of Armourdale to serve as points of contact between the planning team and the community. It was important to assemble a team comprising different ages, backgrounds, and social circles to ensure we reached people across the neighborhood.

The planning team has been working with the outreach team to train its members to be local eyes and ears on the ground, help gather community feedback, and build excitement and momentum. For their work, each team member will receive a \$500 stipend and commit to approximately 20 hours of work with the project team.

Through online conference meetings, Gohan, Jessica, Luis, and Rosa were introduced to the tools the planning team created for the outreach effort. A goal was set for each team member to collect 20 surveys from residents and small business owners, as well as promote the project and share updates on the process.

After the first segment of the outreach teams work, we held a debrief meeting to understand what was successful and what did not work. The primary insights were that many residents didn't have or take the time to fill out the survey when provided just a web link. However, when approached and engaged by a member of the outreach team, residents often shared more information and asked more questions than what was asked.

This demonstrates how important developing a group of active community leaders will be in developing a comprehensive and responsive framework plan. A large aspect of the outreach team is to empower these individuals to take on the leadership for the community.



### Gohan Mendez

I attend Sumner Academy High School as Junior, where I am also a Football player. I'm currently part of the VERA Institute of Justice to become a Certified Community Researcher.

I've been an active volunteer of the Armourdale Renewal Association since 2019, and I've volunteered in the Armourdale community in several activities such as their Summer Camp, a couple of Fall Festivals and the Food Drives.

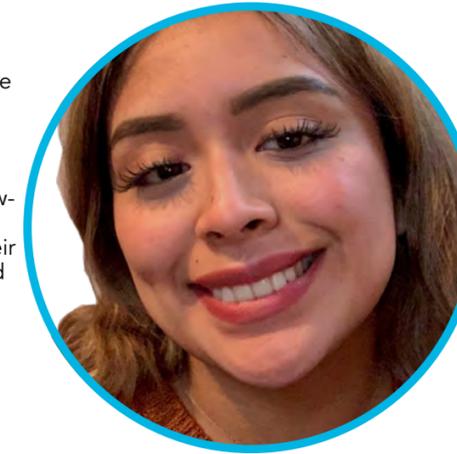
I chose to work with the Armourdale Master Plan team because I like to help others and I enjoy working with kids and other teens.



### Luis Alvarado

I am a student at Donnelly College, fresh-man year, and I have been living here in Armourdale for 11 years. My family and I moved here from Missouri to live in a safe area where there are parks, where we could walk to school, and have fun taking walks or riding bikes. I volunteer for the Food Pantry at the Armourdale Community Center. Some activities I enjoy are going to camp at the Armourdale Community Center where we play sports, going to the park, and participating in the Easter Egg Hunt at the baseball field.

My motivation to join this role for the Armourdale Master Plan is because there's been problems that have been happening here in the community, and I would like to help out to get everything back where it was in this community.



### Jessica Jimenez

I am a part-time student at Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC) and part-time worker taking care of the elderly. I am a resident of Armourdale, and grew up in this area playing with other kids past 8pm, riding our bikes, and participating in the Armourdale Summer Camp program.

My motivation for taking this role is about giving back to help my community, and seeing what we can do to improve it.

The uniqueness of this area for me is that my whole childhood was spent here. I'm currently 19 years old, and realized how much I have put aside my community.



### Rosa Chavez

I have worked the past 24 years for the School District, in the Armourdale community. I like to listen to people in the community, so I can get to know them and help them to find resources so they can fulfill their needs and goals. I have always loved volunteering and serving the community by participating in food drives and helping the Hispanic community in the Armourdale area.

The reason I decided to help with the Armourdale Master Plan is because I believe that this project will help the families and businesses grow in Armourdale with a sense of trust and safety. I am happy to be part of the team and be able to participate in this program to make a difference in Armourdale.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Prior to the start of the project, the UG assembled a robust steering committee composed of community leaders, advocates, public workers, business owners, and residents. The planning team meets with the committee monthly to provide project updates and initiate discussion around issues and assets of Armourdale.

The planning team spent the first several weeks of the project talking individually with a majority of the stakeholders. These discussions proved to be an incredible benefit to helping the planning team gain a better understanding of the existing conditions in Armourdale, from how it is experienced by a resident or business owner to a developer to a city official.

A number of the steering committee members are leaders in organizations that are actively working on the ground with residents, like Cross-Lines and the Armourdale Renewal Association. Through their daily involvement in Armourdale, the planning team was able to gain a better understanding of many of the challenges that come from the lack of services and programming for residents.

We spoke with developers and business owners to better understand their needs and how Armourdale's location approximate to Downtown KCK and Downtown KCMo provides an ideal location for access and distribution.

Additionally, Armourdale has a number of organizations and individuals that are currently working on future improvements for the area, many represented on the Steering Committee. The conversations with these key individuals enabled the planning team to gain a deeper understanding of the projects and their goals and timelines.

As the planning process continues to move forward, it will be critical for participants of the Steering Committee to continually bring in new and more diverse voices and be active in the project.



## Unified Government

### UG Planning Department

- Gunnar Hand
- Kimberly Portillo

### UG Public Works

- Troy Shaw
- Jeff Fisher

### UG Transit

- Justice Welker

### UG Public Health

- Wesley McKain

### UG Parks and Recreation

- Angel Obert

### UG Economic Development

- Katherine Carttar

### Kansas City PD Community Policing

- Jesus Casas

### UG Community Development

- Wilba Miller

### Livable Neighborhoods

- Andrea Generaux

### Commissioners

- Tom Burroughs
- Brian McKiernan

## Advocates and Technical Experts

### Rock Island Bridge/Flying Truss

- Mike Zeller

### Premier Investments

- Blake Willhite

### Livestock Exchange

- Bill Haw

### Kansas City Design Center

- Mariah Randall
- Vladimir Krstic

### Levee Trail

- Rick Behrens

### Historic West Bottoms

- Scott Brown

### US Army Corps of Engineers

- Scott Mensing

### Mid-America Regional Council

- Tom Jacobs

### Kansas City Boat Club

- Phil Donnellan

### All American Catfish

- Tim Berger

### Friends of the River Non-Profit

- Stefan White

## Community-Based Organizations

### John Fiske Elementary

- Joe Graham

### Cross-Lines

- Susila Jones

### Armourdale Renewal Association

- Claudine Sanders

- Marc Lonesk

- Rebecca Sprang

### Clean Air Now

- Beto Lugo

## COMMUNITY LEADERS

PORT, MVRDV and Borderless Studio conducted numerous interviews with community leaders who were not on the formal Steering Committee, as well as Steering Committee members with a particular commitment to serving Armourdale residents. These conversations, most of which took place in the Spring of 2021, offered the planning team essential perspective into the history of Armourdale and how it shapes the community today.

We spoke first with Gene Chavez, a historian with particular expertise in Mexican-American social institutions in the early part of the 20th century. His work on the emergence of Mexican-American baseball and softball leagues in the decades surrounding World War Two in response to segregation and racism gave our team important historical perspective.

We also spoke with Daniel Serda, an Armourdale native and staff member at Local Initiatives Support Coalition (hereafter, simply 'LISC'), who wrote his masters thesis on the effects of urban renewal and the devastating 1951 flood on the Armourdale community.

Pastor Gary Roellchen of Central United Methodist Church has been serving the Armourdale community for years, and gave us valuable insight into dynamics of Armourdale today, including the unique assets that this planning process can build on.

Susila Jones of Cross-Lines offered perspective from running that organization's food service and housing access programs, Joe Graham of Fiske Elementary was a supportive and valuable educational voice, and finally, Monica Mendez over numerous conversations proved to have a multi-faceted understandings of the unique opportunities and challenges facing the Armourdale community.

**“The UG has to make a decision. Do you want Armourdale to have a residential community or not? If its the latter, make that decision and get rid of it. Otherwise, pay attention to it.”**

-Daniel Serda, Planner and Armourdale native

**“The real center of community life and culture in the area for years has been Shawnee Park. There is definitely an opportunity to highlight the importance of the park to the Mexican community.”**

-Gene Chavez, Historian

**“There is also wealth in Armourdale. You can see satellite dishes, nice cars, houses that have been fixed up. There is income in Armourdale. There are some very talented people who have the skills and the ethics. We need more of that investment. It is not as poor as people might think.”**

Gary Roellchen, Central United Methodist Church

**“It will be really important that the residents and business owners really understand the concept of a master plan and have set expectations for the time in which it takes to implement the numerous possible strategies.”**

Monica Mendez, Armourdale Renewal Association

**“A lot of the newcomers to the community are from places outside the country, especially Guatemala, Central and South America...Those new families just want to establish roots and they get help from other families.”**

Joe Graham, Fiske Elementary

**“Residents have expressed concern that if development happens it could raise home prices leading to gentrification. How can we start growth in Armourdale that provides opportunity for both new residents and existing?”**

Susila Jones, Cross-Lines

## OUTREACH CAMPAIGN IDENTITY

The branding was developed to establish a consistent identity to help build recognition, excitement, and momentum. This graphic style will underly all documentation and media developed for the Master Plan.

### Identity

The Community of Armourdale has been resilient to many obstacles and is home to a diverse population. Armourdale Strong, Armourdale Fuerte is a statement to that history. We wanted to treat both English and Spanish equally so we developed a system of color blocks for each language to help guide the reader.

### Color Scheme

We looked to the neighborhood for inspiration on the colors for the outreach campaign. Retail stores, restaurants, and even houses are often painted in a vibrant color that we wanted to reflect in the printed and digital media. Swatches were established from images taken in Armourdale to develop a 3 color pallet used across all of the Armourdale Area Master Plan documentation.



# ARMOURDALE

# STRONG FUERTE

STORIES OF PRIDE IN THE COMMUNITY  
HISTORIAS DE ORGULLO EN LA COMUNIDAD

## WEBSITE & VOICEMAIL BOX

### Website [www.armourdalestrong.com]

We established a platform-responsive website to be a landing base for digitally sharing information and receiving community feedback. It provides the content in both English and Spanish allowing the user to select their preferred language using a menu at the top of the page.

The website is designed to be a digital platform to solicit personal stories from Armourdale residents. To leave a story, users fill out the embedded form to share their story or feedback and, optionally, their name, place of residence, and length of stay.

For the initial roll out of the public engagement campaign, the website only contributed a relatively small portion of community feedback. We have found digital tools to generally be less successful with this community, though we did have close to 100 Kansas City residents visit the site. In later stages of the community outreach campaign, strategies need to be identified to increase the usability.

### Voicemail Box [913.308.6008]

A local phone number was setup with a digital voicemail inbox to collect verbal stories from the community. When calling in, a prompt asks the caller to select English or Spanish. Based on the callers selection, a prompt is read in the language of choice asking the caller to take a moment to “share a personal story of a place in Armourdale that brings them pride.”

**“The Armourdale Levee Fest were great events. There should be better connections to the Levees so that people can walk or ride their bike nearby. Better lighting, safer connections and signage would help make it inviting.”**

~Matt Kleinmann, DOT Agency

**“Cross-Lines community outreach has been amazing with help within the community and I am truly thankful for them. However they also are attracting most of the homeless around the park and the homeless just leave trash and liquor bottles everywhere.”**

~Christina Grissom/Endsley

English

Spanish

## POSTERS AND POSTCARDS

As part of the outreach ecosystem, a set of printed media was created to distribute throughout the community. This included posters, postcards, and the survey. This provides a physical presence in the community to inform the public on how to be involved and find out updates on the planning process.

### Posters

The posters were designed and printed to display in store windows of local businesses. The posters contain the same text in English and Spanish for more broad accessibility. A QR code is linked to the online survey as well as links to the website and the voicemail box.

The outreach team each identified five retail and restaurant establishments that receive a lot of local patronage to display the posters. In total 20 establishments displayed the poster in their front window or reception area.

### Postcards

Postcards were also created that allow for community members to share any personal stories of Armourdale. The cards were distributed to partner organizations to be handed out to anyone interested. The postcards will continue to be made available at events taking place in Armourdale. As the master plan process continues to develop, the prompt on the back will change to better align with the current need.

**ARMOURDALE STRONG FUERTE**  
STORIES OF PRIDE IN THE COMMUNITY | HISTORIAS DE ORGULLO EN LA COMUNIDAD

**SHARE YOUR STORY**  
To help guide future investment in Armourdale, we would like to hear from you.

**COMPARTA SU HISTORIA**  
Para ayudar a guiar futuras inversiones en Armourdale, nos gustaría escuchar de todos.

**TAKE THE SURVEY**  
1) Scan the QR Code or visit [armourdalestrong.com](http://armourdalestrong.com).  
2) Fill out the survey questions (it will take about 10 minutes).  
3) Check back to see what others are saying!

**COMPLETE LA ENCUESTA**  
1) Escanee el código QR o visite [armourdalestrong.com](http://armourdalestrong.com).  
2) Complete las preguntas de la encuesta (toma aprox. 10 minutos).  
3) Visítenos para ver lo que otros opinan.

**LEAVE A VOICEMAIL**  
1) Give us a call at xxx.xxx.xxx.  
2) Leave your name, where you live or work, and your story after the beep.  
3) That's it! Hang up when you are finished.

**DEJE UNA GRABACIÓN**  
1) Llámennos al xxx.xxx.xxx.  
2) Deje su nombre, el lugar donde vive o trabaja y su historia después del tono.  
3) ¡Eso es todo! Cuelgue cuando haya terminado.

OR VISIT ONE OF OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS!  
¡O VISITE UNA DE NUESTRAS ORGANIZACIONES ASOCIADAS!

Armourdale Renewal Association | Cross Lines Community Kitchen  
801 Armourdale Parkway | 736 Shawnee Avenue

[armourdalestrong.com](http://armourdalestrong.com) | [#armourdalestrong](https://www.instagram.com/armourdalestrong) | [#armourdalefuerte](https://www.instagram.com/armourdalefuerte)

BORDERLESS MVRDV port

English + Spanish Poster

**ARMOURDALE STRONG FUERTE**  
STORIES OF PRIDE IN OUR COMMUNITY | HISTORIAS DE ORGULLO EN LA COMUNIDAD

**SHARE YOUR STORY**  
We would like to hear from you. Please take a moment to fill out this postcard.

**COMPARTA SU HISTORIA**  
Nos gustaría saber de usted. Tómese un momento para completar esta postal.

JUST FILL OUT THE BACK & LEAVE WITH A STAFF MEMBER  
LLENE LA PARTE POSTERIOR Y DEJE CON UN MIEMBRO DEL EQUIPO

Your name | Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

How long you have been in the neighborhood? | Cuanto tiempo lleva usted en la comunidad?: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about an activity or place in your community that made you proud | Cuéntenos sobre una actividad o lugar de su comunidad que lo enorgullezca: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

To take the survey, visit [armourdalestrong.com](http://armourdalestrong.com)  
To leave a voicemail Para dejar un mensaje de voz, llame: xxx.xxx.xxx

Postcard



## SURVEY

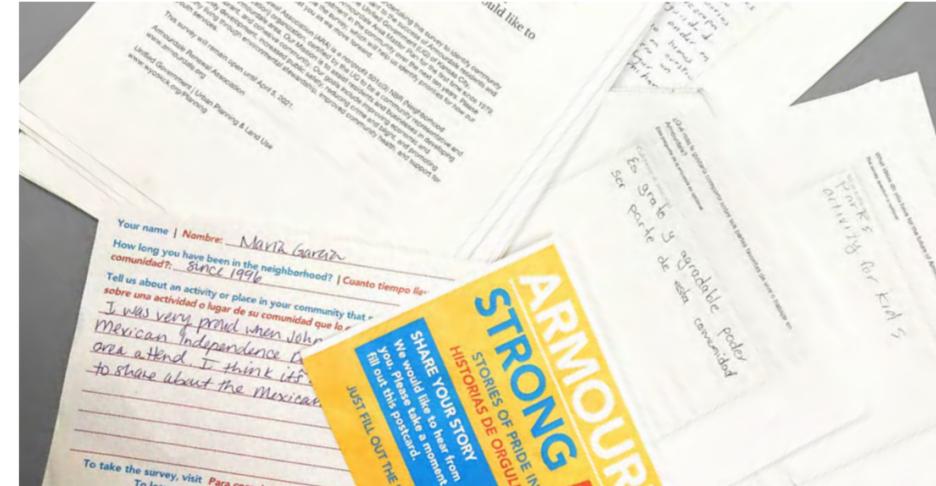
As part of the outreach campaign, PORT and Borderless Studio worked with the Armourdale Renewal Association to create a survey that covered a range of topics—from basic demographics to specific community challenges and issues. The questions were a mix of single-choice, multiple choice, and write-in questions. The questions were tailored to target specific topics as well as provide room for open responses that the planning team may have not thought to ask.

The survey was provided both digitally and on paper. The former used an online platform that allowed users to answer the questions in English or Spanish. Results of both were combined and translated. The printed survey was primarily utilized by the outreach team as they met socially distanced one-on-one with residents and small business owners of Armourdale and walked through each question of the survey.

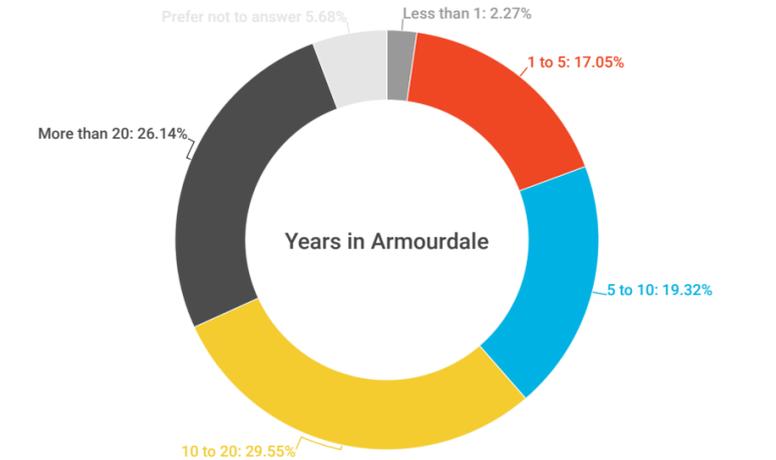
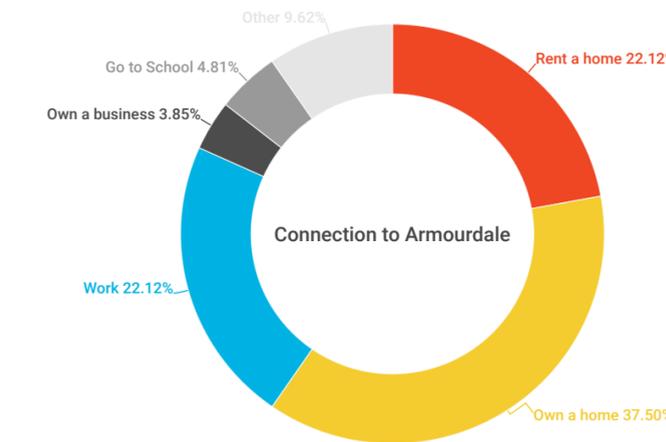
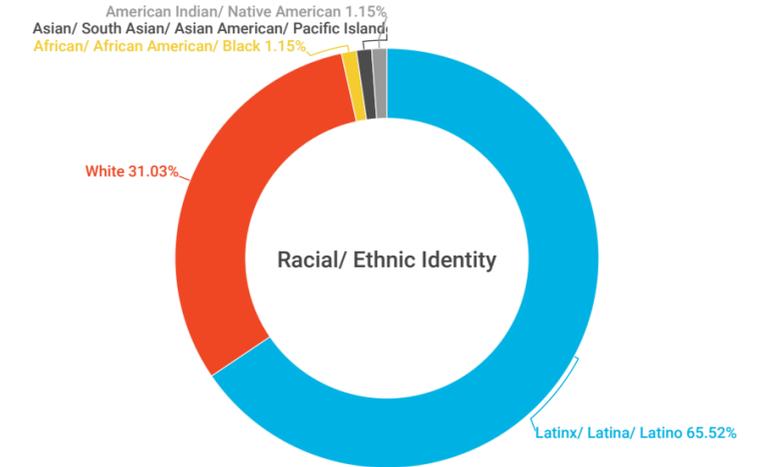
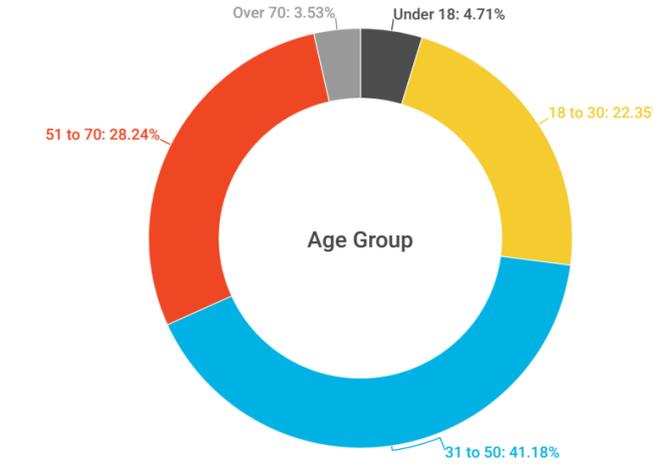
Because of the outreach teams efforts of going door to door with the survey, the comments and insights from residents is personal and verifiable.

In the debrief session with the outreach team, it was clear that residents were more open and responsive to a one-on-one conversation about the survey than they were completing it online. This also led to more in depth conversations about Armourdale and the planning process.

The following pages provide a synthesis and the planning teams initial takeaways from the answers we received. The synthesis combines similar questions to arrive at commonalities we found in the responses. To review answers to specific questions, please refer to the appendix.



### 92 TOTAL SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



## FINDINGS: ASSETS

As challenging as the context and conditions in Armourdale are, this planning effort must be built on a foundational understanding that the neighborhood has real assets, and that policy and planning recommendations must build upon those assets. Those assets are diverse and real, from a highly engaged group of community organizations to a close proximity to downtown and the river to opportunities to transform land use, zoning and development patterns to truly benefit both industry and the adjacent community. Starting from an understanding of local assets and how to build upon them is essential to not only craft strong planning recommendations, it also shifts the frame of the planning effort as a whole from a problem that needs to be solved to a foundation that can be built upon.

The survey asked residents for their opinions of these assets, especially the question "What is special, unique, or the most valuable aspect about living, working, or going to school within the Armourdale community?" More than anything else, Armourdale residents mentioned their community and family ties and the strength of their personal relationships, where 49% of participants selected "family and friends" and 36% selected "neighbors". Other important assets included schools (45%), as well as social institutions and spaces like churches (24%) and parks (32%) that form such an important part of daily life.

### Key Takeaways

How can we preserve and support Armourdale's strong sense of **community** as well as reinforce its **identity** while leveraging its **location** in its proximity to Downtown Kansas City for future investment?

How can we support Armourdale's **schools, parks, and businesses**?



”

Well, I grew up near the area and I currently work here. I love the culture, food and how it's so close to everything.

”

En el dia es un poco tranquilo los vecinos son buenas personas. Los restaurantes, las tiendas Mexicanas.

*English: It's a bit quiet during the day. The neighbors are good people. The restaurants, the Mexican shops.*

”

Me gusta que la iglesia esta cerca y la escuela tambien. Y el parque de la calle 7.

*English: I like that the church is close and the school too. And the park on 7th street.*

## FINDINGS: CHALLENGES

Challenges in Armourdale are a product of decades of neglect, disinvestment, and isolation. They vary greatly in terms of complexity and immediacy. This planning effort should take on both long and short-term challenges equally, as many of the issues—such as traffic safety and street, sidewalk, and lighting conditions— could be resolved through the provision of basic services. Meanwhile, there are more complex issues—such as safety, security, vandalism, and blighted properties— that will require a comprehensive strategy that operates on multiple fronts. Understanding the root of these issues from Armourdale residents is key to addressing them.

The survey asked residents about these challenges through two questions:

1. “What are Armourdale’s biggest challenges?”
2. The open-ended question “What else would you like to share about challenges in Armourdale?”

Safety and security came up as the biggest concern in both questions, where 58% of survey participants voted for it in the multiple choice question. Many of the open-ended answers associated the lack of safety in Armourdale to the lack of activities for children and youth to keep them occupied. Another connection to the lack of safety was the presence of vacant properties in the neighborhood, which not surprisingly was selected by 32% of participants. Other concerns included, trash at 57%, vandalism at 50%, and floods at 37%.

### Key Takeaways

How are lack of programming and activities, **vacant properties**, and poor **infrastructure** and **services** contributing to **vandalism, litter**, and the lack of **safety** in Armourdale?

What is the best strategy to implement **immediate, actionable** items, while building momentum towards **long-term** goals?

Public Safety/ Security 66 “Safety” “Shooting, gunshots” “Crime”	Property Vacancy 37 “Vacant stores” “Vacant lots” “Vacant homes”	Flooding 35
Trash/ Litter 59	Streets/ Sidewalks/ Crossings 33 “Potholes, lighting, speeding cars”	
Vandalism 53	Lack of Amenities/ Activities 28	

”

Llevo viviendo mas de 10 anos en Armourdale con mi familia no hemos tenido problemas con nadie, escuelas trabajos estan a nuestro alcance lo unico que nos de miedo en estos ultimos anos se ha escuchado mucho tiroteo y ha oido varios muertos es lo que nos preocupa a mi esposo y a mi por la seguridad de nuestros hijos, nos gusta andar en bicicleta a la orilla del rio hemos encontrado mucho vagabundo en nuestro recorrido me gustaria que hubiera un poco de vigilancia en ese lugar es mi parta favoria para caminar al aire libre.

English: I have been living in Armourdale for more than 10 years with my family, we have not had problems with anyone. Schools and jobs are within our reach. The only thing that scares us in recent years, we have heard a lot of gunfire and there have been several deaths, which is what worries us. My husband and I worry for the safety of our children, we like to ride a bicycle along the river bank, and we have encountered a lot of homeless people there. I would like there to be a little vigilance in that place. It is my favorite part of walking outdoors.

95

”

Faltan actividades para los ninos y adolescentes y las actividades que hay son caras y las familias de bajo recursos no pueden castearse las actividades.

English: There is a lack of activities for children and adolescents. And the activities that exist are expensive and low-income families cannot afford them.

”

Inundaciones en la calle Miami y Mill se va la luz sequido. En los postes de luz no hay suficiente iluminacion.

English: Floods on Miami and Mill streets, they go out of power. There is not enough lighting on utility poles.

## FINDINGS: IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

Determining what issues are most important to the community and recognizing its ideas for the future of Armourdale will help the planning process base its priorities and goals upon the community's vision. Ranging from having a safer neighborhood to creating more accessible activities and programs, the findings are closely tied with ideas about preserving community assets and addressing challenges.

The survey asked residents about the issues most important to them and the ideas they have for the future of Armourdale through two questions;

1. "What three community issues are most important to you?"
2. The open-ended question "What Ideas do you have for the future of Armourdale?"

Similar to questions about challenges, safety and security took top priority as they were selected by 72% of the survey participants in the multiple choice question. Reducing blight, graffiti, and trash was voted for by 56% of participants. And creating parks, trails, and recreation reached 28%. Many answers contained specific suggestions, including gymnasiums, pools, and a community center. Also similar to questions about challenges, many open-ended answers included specific programming suggestions, emphasizing the importance of creating activities for children and adolescents so as to keep them involved in positive things.

### Key Takeaways

How can we address public **safety** issues through urban planning?

What kind of **activities, parks, and recreation** are Armourdale residents interested to see in their neighborhood?

How can we new **businesses** and **job opportunities** in Armourdale **serve** and **prioritize** its community?



”

Me gustaria ver que haya mas actividades deportivas y artisticas para las jovenes y ninos para que se ocupen en cosas positivas.

*English: I would like to see that there are more sports and artistic activities for young people and children so that they can occupy themselves in positive things.*

”

Que disminuya la delincuencia mas centros recreativos para los ninos como en otros lugares. Centro comunitario con alberca que haya mas motivacion para las familias. Como gimnacios. Equipos de soccer y otros deportes.

*English: Let crime decrease, more recreational centers for children as in other places. Community center with pool that has more motivation for families. Like gymnasiums. Soccer and other sports teams.*

”

Neighborhood restoration: 1) Vacant houses/businesses 2) Improved rain drainage 3) Environmental green space or structural separation 4) More usable green/park space 5) Improvement of sidewalks

”

I think there is a need of more activities for children and teenagers like sports, theater, art, music, dance at low cost and accessible for all families. Parent advocacy groups that help families to educate them about their rights related to immigration, special education, discrimination... etc. Low cost mental health assistance.

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# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG *FUERTE*

99

## PUBLIC HEALTH + SAFETY WORKSHOP

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## WORKSHOP BACKGROUND

This project seeks to generate a collective vision for the future of Armourdale. To understand and leverage the potential of Armourdale's community and stakeholders, three interdisciplinary workshops represent a crucial part of phases 1 and 2 of the project:

- Workshop #1: Public Health & Safety
- Workshop #2: Economic Development

The following summary aims to document and draw conclusions and recommendations from Workshop #1: Public health and safety. This workshop took place on the 29th of March, 2021 following all precautions and recommendations of social distancing, due to the COVID 19 pandemics. The meeting was held in a video-conference format, and supported by an online white-board web-app for sketching and note taking.

### Workshop # 1: Public Health & Safety

The Goals of this workshop were to gain a more complete understanding of the public health landscape in Armourdale, and to collectively develop potential strategies and initiatives to improve public health and community quality of life. In summary, it focused on:

- Stimulating dialogue
- Refining our initial findings & understanding of the existing public health issues and causalities
- Identifying existing assets and future ambitions for public health
- Outline possible actions and next steps to improve public health

	ATTENDEE	TITLE	AFFILIATION
PARTICIPANT	Juliann Van Liew	Director	UG Public Health Dept
	Cathy Harding	President & CEO	Wyandotte Health Found.
	Susila Jones	Executive Director	Cross-Lines
	Gunnar Hand	Director	UG Planning&Urban Design
	Dr. Erin Corriveau	Deputy Medical Officer	Health Forward Foundation
	Karen Dehais	Evaluation and Learning Officer	UG Police Department
	Jesus Casas	Community Policing Officer	El Centro
	Irene Caudillo	President / CEO	Armourdale Renewal Association / Former Board Member
	Archie Smith	Former ARA Board Member	UG Department of Planning and Urban Design
	Kim Portillo	Long Range Planner	UG
Brian McKiernan	Commissioner, District 2	UG Public Health Dept	
Wesley McKain	Community Health Supervisor	Reach Healthcare Foundation	
Dawn Downes	Senior Program Officer	UG Parks and Rec	
David Morales	Armourdale Resident	UG Public Works	
Carmen Oropeza	Assistant Director		
Sarah White			
FACILITATOR	Halina Zarate	Urban Design Project Leader	MVRDV
	Brandon Biederman	Senior Associate	PORT
	Nick McClintock	Associate	PORT
	Rula Zuhour	Designer	PORT
	Kristina Knauf	Associate	MVRDV
	Tom Meyer	Americorps VISTA	PORT
Andrew Moddrel	Partner	PORT	

### Workshop methodology: From... To!

In the general analysis of Armourdale, PORT urbanism identified six challenges for the area: isolation, vulnerability, segregation, neglect, deterioration and disinvestment. These challenges are interrelated, forming a vicious cycle that gradually exacerbates conditions in Armourdale.

The workshop therefore focused on how to turn this "downward spiral" to an "upward spiral". It aims at collectively identifying opportunities that can be derived from existing challenges in order to strategize action towards a positive, healthy future for Armourdale.

Based on initial findings of the public health analysis, we identified 3 of the 6 opportunities as focus topics for public health:

- From Isolated to Accessible
- From Vulnerable to Safe
- From Disinvested to Stimulated



### Workshop structure

The workshop was structured into 3 parts. In each part, a collective introduction was followed by breakout sessions in small groups to facilitate an open dialogue. Each breakout group focused on 1 of the 3 challenges and opportunities relevant for public health. After each breakout session, there was opportunity to regather and share thoughts and observations on each topic in the larger group.

#### Three Parts

- Part 1: Feedback on initial findings: Presentation of our initial public health analysis & understanding, feedback session around the questions "What stood out?" and "What did we miss?"
- Part 2: Assets and ambitions: Session based on mapping and listing existing assets based on each participant's knowledge of Armourdale and identifying future ambitions for improved public health outcomes.
- Part 3: Vision and action plan: Strategizing a short-term and long-term action plan, listing possible actions, places for interventions, stakeholders, suitable mechanisms and potential for funding

#### Three Focus Groups

The groups focused on 3 opportunities that address the existing conditions of Public Health & Safety in Armourdale:

- From Segregated to Accessible (focus topics: infrastructure barriers, missing links to the neighbors, access to health care, access to food)
- From Vulnerable to Safe (focus topics: pollution, crime, accidents, flood risk)
- From Disinvested to Stimulated (focus topics: street-scape, urban green, Kansas River, ownership & land-use)

## PUBLIC HEALTH CONCLUSIONS

First impressions about Public Health and Safety in Armourdale were based upon 3 main sources: The UG's Public Health Department Data Analysis; The testimony of the resident Monica Mendez, who is also the executive director of the Armourdale Renewal Association; and the Urban Site Analysis drafted, which can be viewed later in this document. Combining these findings and insights, the following key issues that seem to have been identified as effecting Public Health in Armourdale:

### ISOLATED ARMOURDALE

#### 1. Access to care, health insurance and prevention:

There are no health care facilities in Armourdale. Without a doctor, dentists, or other health service providers close-by, residents are less likely to obtain treatment for illnesses or chronic diseases. High rates of diabetes, kidney disease and tooth loss indicate mismanaged care, patients either not receiving care at all or too late. The data analysis shows low prevalence rates of prevention measures and low health insurance coverage.

**2. Access to healthy food:** Access to healthy food is of local interest and could be enhanced by strengthening corner shops, bringing a big grocer that can sell affordable products, and a farmers market. There is also interest in creating a community garden. There is one near Cross Lines, but the produce is only used by "The Kitchen". Currently, there are no major grocery stores providing healthy nutrition in Armourdale.

**Related issues:** Infrastructure barriers, missing links to the neighbors

### VULNERABLE ARMOURDALE

#### 3. Accidents & safety of the built environment:

The high motor vehicle accident death rate indicates need for increased safety for drivers and pedestrians that circulate in Armourdale. The wide streets have a lot of traffic, which make people feel afraid of car accidents.

#### 4. Pollution & environmental impact on health:

There are high rates of cancer, asthma, mental health and sleep deprivation in Armourdale, compared to other communities in Kansas City. No clear causal relationship between these indices and the social and environmental conditions in the area could be identified. The workshop and further analysis need to examine potential ties with socio-economic stress (employment, affordability, crime, reoccurring flooding), pollution and noise.

**Related issues:** Crime, flood risk

### DISINVESTED ARMOURDALE

#### 5. Quality of built environment and activities:

The youth of Armourdale lacks opportunities to encourage active living and healthy eating. After school there are not many options or places for activities. The community lacks stimulus or interest to engage in community meetings (offering gifts and lunch can be effective, but not art or culture). Elements of the built environment that act as a source of Public Health issues are streets and parks. The fragmentation of Shawnee Park causes underutilization of public green. More comfortable and attractive sidewalks, complete streets, bike paths and parks are needed to stimulate activity and reduce the currently very high levels of Obesity, Diabetes and Physical Inactivity.

**Related issues:** Kansas River isolation and underutilization for leisure, Ownership and qualitative use of (vacant) residential and industrial plots

#### 1. Access to Care

# 1.7x

Higher Diabetes Disease Death Rate, 1.8x higher Kidney Disease Death Rate than Wyandotte County

High death rates of treatable diseases point to mismanaged care where the patients no care too late or not at all. Without access to care, residents are less likely to receive treatment for their illnesses or chronic diseases.

#### 1. Health Insurance & Prevention

# 41.3%

of 18+ respondents reported having no current health insurance coverage. US: 12.2% and Wyandotte: 24.8%.

More than 40% of respondents reported having no current health insurance coverage. Almost all of the prevention measures had low prevalence rates (cholesterol screening, mammography, cervical cancer screening, blood pressure medication, dentist visits) when compared to Piper, Wyandotte, and the US.

#### 2. Access to Healthy Food

# 0x

larger grocery stores offer healthy food at a walkable distance.

Armourdale is a "food desert". There is a 1.8x higher diabetes prevalence than in Wyandotte County. Can diabetes and obesity be reduced by bringing healthy food to Armourdale?

#### 3. Safety of Built Environment

# 3x

More motor vehicle accident deaths than in Wyandotte (65.76 per 100k vs. 18.5 per 100k)

The motor vehicle accident death rate is very high in Armourdale. The data shows an increased need for traffic safety.

#### 4. Environmental Impact on Health

# 32.3%

Higher cancer death rates than Wyandotte (230.15 Armourdale vs. 173.90 Wyandotte), 57% higher mental health rates compared to the U.S. average (19.9% Armourdale vs. 12.7% U.S.) 15.7% more people in Armourdale sleep <7h than the U.S. average)

High rates of cancer, mental health and sleep deprivation. Do higher levels of socio-economic stress, pollution and noise cause those rates in Armourdale?

#### 5. Quality of Built environment, Activities and Nutrition

# 41.9%

Physical inactivity rate - twice as high as in Piper and ca. 75% higher than the U.S. average.

43.5% Obesity rate, ca. 40% higher than the U.S. average.

Obesity and Physical Inactivity are very high in Armourdale. Is the built environment - lack of accessible sidewalks, bike paths, leisure and sport areas - to blame?

Source: UGPHD and Design Team Analysis

# PART 1: FEEDBACK ON INITIAL FINDINGS

## What stood out? What did we miss?

After presenting our initial findings on public health, this was the group's feedback on the various topics:



**Infrastructure Barriers:** Transportation issues are something that was not mentioned. They can form a barrier to access healthcare. Also, a lack of transportation options prevents access to the food stores outside of Armourdale that offer healthy nutrition.

**Missing Links with Neighbors:** Armourdale doesn't look like a residential area. Driving through all you see is industry. It is setup perceptually of industry is first. This perception of Armourdale not being residential leads to the perception of disinvestment and disconnect.

**Poor Access to Healthcare:** Poor health isn't necessarily a result of access. Just adding a clinic in the area may not trigger change. Healthcare is often not accessed because of the cost—getting a bill prevents people from going to receive care. Many people here live life long in poverty, with long-term health conditions. There is a need for more trust and communication, e.g. service staff that is culturally similar and helps to overcome language barriers. Inform how to access health care as a low-income resident, overcome.

**Food Desert:** No food groceries in the area is a true issue. There are fast food facilities but no places offering healthy foods and produce. Cross Lines is trying to deal with this on their end but sometimes there is a stigma with free food. In June Cross Lines is setting up a model that is more like a grocery store (versus a pre-made box), and offering breakfast and lunch as take away. Cross Lines is the only community garden in the area.

**Other Feedback:** Include input from the community for what the solutions might be and what their needs are.

**Flood risk:** Not discussed.

**Pollution:** There is no documented cause-effect relationship between pollution and diseases. Public Health issues are closely related to getting access to care, either because of practicalities such as having health insurance coverage, or influenced by subjective reasons such as feel like they are being taken seriously. There was surprise in the group about the environmental public health risks, but the impressions seem accurate according to participant's experience.

**Crime:** From a business standpoint, little crime is noted (Argentine). There is a large homeless population to the west, but no crime issues with them. However, there is concern for that population. Can we create opportunities that the homeless population is comfortable using?

**Traffic Accidents:** Not discussed in detail. General take away: there needs to be more organizing in the community around this issues.

**Other Feedback:** There is lots of deferred maintenance of public infrastructure within Armourdale. Family care, across the river to the south, lacks a CMO and direction.

There could be a variety of factors that prevent access to care - transportation, nearby family etc. There is a larger story to the data. The hardest task is identifying and getting care to undocumented people diagnosed with cancer. Existing medical facilities will not serve undocumented populations. We have a hard time with our community and partners with that issue, cancer mostly. But also other conditions that require ongoing care are all an issue. Can we use Mill Levy funds for care? Need to get buy-in from the community and elected. But the issue is having more needs than resources. What are the demographics and has information been gathered from neighbors? Amongst other, we found that roughly 50% live below poverty line, have low access to care. PORT has just begun the survey process.

**Kansas River / Flood Risk:** The levee creates a disconnect, look for opportunities to inter-link this master-plan with the Levee and River Development Master plan. Link to the levee for more recreational amenities. Additionally, there are many floods in the area that need to be addressed.

**Streets:** Industrial uses are a barrier to walkability in Armourdale.

**Squares:** Shawnee Park is very important to the community, but it is now cut in half by 7th St. As the Eastern part is not very accessible, the Western edge of Shawnee Park is more heavily used. The community has asked repeatedly for push-lights to access the East side safely.

**Ownership and Responsibility / Land-Use:** Reopen opportunities for development and combine development with infrastructural investments to improve walkability (public space upgrades).

**What Stood Out?** Health insurance issues, diabetes rates, cancer rates, lack of health centers and access to healthy food.

**Other Feedback:** Health statistics and the huge disparity makes one think about what is life like for people who live in Armourdale. Lower-income people stayed here mostly, we need to focus on them. How to balance their needs with ideas for recreation and Armourdale becoming a destination? Residents need support in this master plan. Help people now, not just in the future.

Armourdale has the lowest ratings in the county, we need to change the perception of the neighborhood.

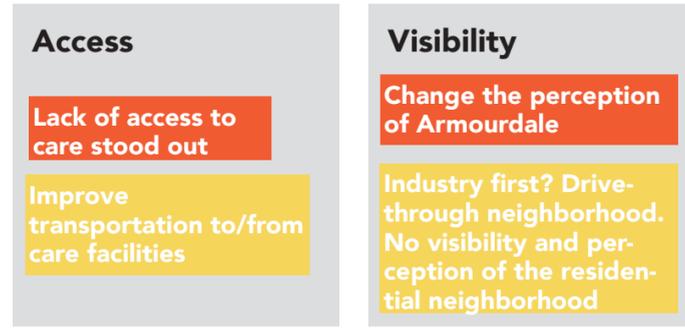
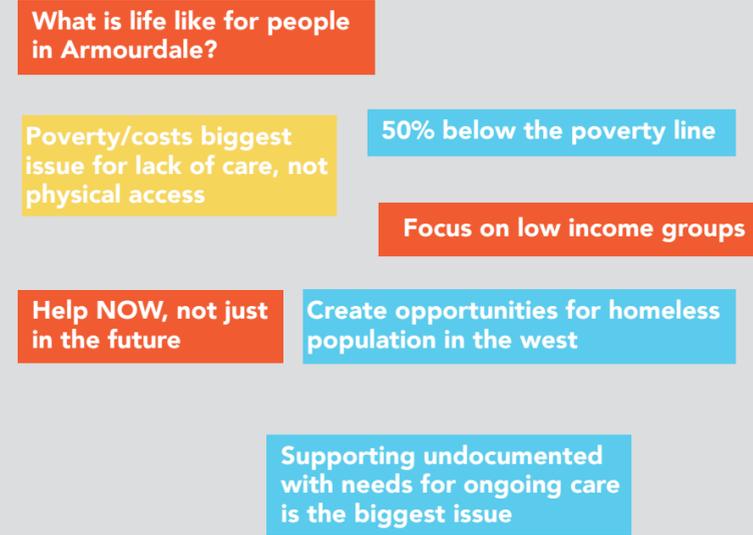
The EPA has collected data on Armourdale and Argentine.

On Osage, there has been speculation on large poles and wires affecting health.

This scheme illustrates aspects highlighted most in the feedback session. The bigger the square, the more the respective issue was emphasized. Main conclusions of this first part are:

- The relationship of poverty and public health needs to be investigated in more depth, also linking it to cultural aspects and services for better long-term care and prevention
- The group sees opportunities in linking infrastructure upgrades to development strategies
- Access to healthy food is indeed a major issue
- The topic of public transportation needs to be included in care and food strategies
- The perception and identity of Armourdale as a community needs to be strengthened in the context of the neighborhood but also city- and county-wide

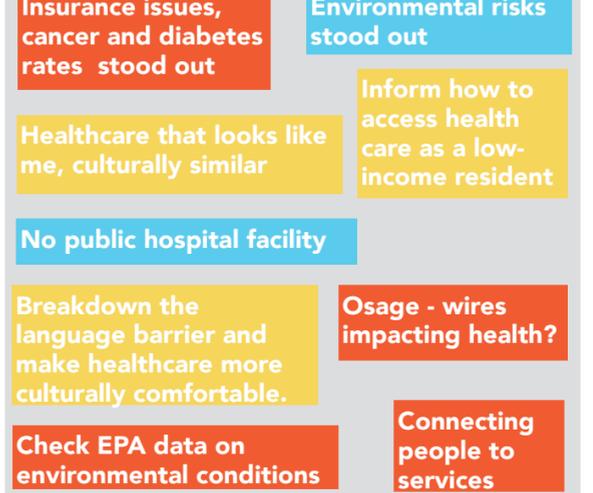
## Poverty



## Link Infrastructure and Development



## Health Conditions & Care



## PART 2: ASSETS & AMBITIONS

What are the existing assets and ambitions for future improvements of Public Health in Armourdale?

FROM ISOLATED TO ACCESSIBLE

FROM VULNERABLE TO SAFE

FROM DISINVESTED TO STIMULATED

**Existing Infrastructure:** Amenities such as restaurants and retail is organized along Kansas Avenue, but there is conflict with truck traffic. The Levee trail is an asset, but not yet much used by Armourdale Residents. Osage Avenue is an asset for a potential commercial corridor revitalization.

**Links to Neighbors:** Kansas Avenue, 7th Street, 12th street - key connection to neighboring destinations, but not friendly to biking or public transportation

Access on foot to the river feels like trespassing, and is not inviting the use of this asset as a place for the community or for physical activity

**Poor Access to Healthcare:** Its not about bringing in a clinic, there are pre-conceptions about accessing health care and having to pay a unfordable bill for the service. Local residents can be an asset as staff of leaders in which the community trusts and feels represented by.

Existing bus and mini van routs can be an asset- check if they stop by these public health centers or if the route should change; check how easy and quick it is to get to key destinations

**Food Desert:** There is only one community garden, Cross-lines, but there is stigma towards free food.

Urban farming could be an asset if empty plots could host such programs, but it also requires community training and care to cultivate it Liberty Fruit in the south is an asset to be leveraged for healthy food supply, or a fresh food market destination.

**Pollution:** There is no documented cause-effect relationship between industrial land-use pollution and diseases, but the large warehouses and industries are visually unappealing and a barrier to active living. There is a concern about visual pollution in Osage Ave, related to the aerial power lines.

**Crime:** The perception of crime has been rising and the residents do not see the presence of police in their communities. The community policing staff (UG Police department) in an asset, that exists to be a filter between community leaders and the local district commanders. Community policing works but only if you put the resources behind it, and Officer Casas does not have much support. As the perception of crime has risen, the ability for the district to communicate through those officers became more difficult. Community leaders are a great asset but need support and more resources.

**Traffic Accidents:** Kansas Avenue and 7th Street have a great conflict between pedestrians and truck traffic, being perceived as dangerous for walking. The 12th street feels extremely dangerous to walk or bike, exposed to motor vehicles. Shawnee park is a great public asset for the community but it is divided by a road. A pedestrian walk-over (preferably over a push-light) could help enhance crossing safety.

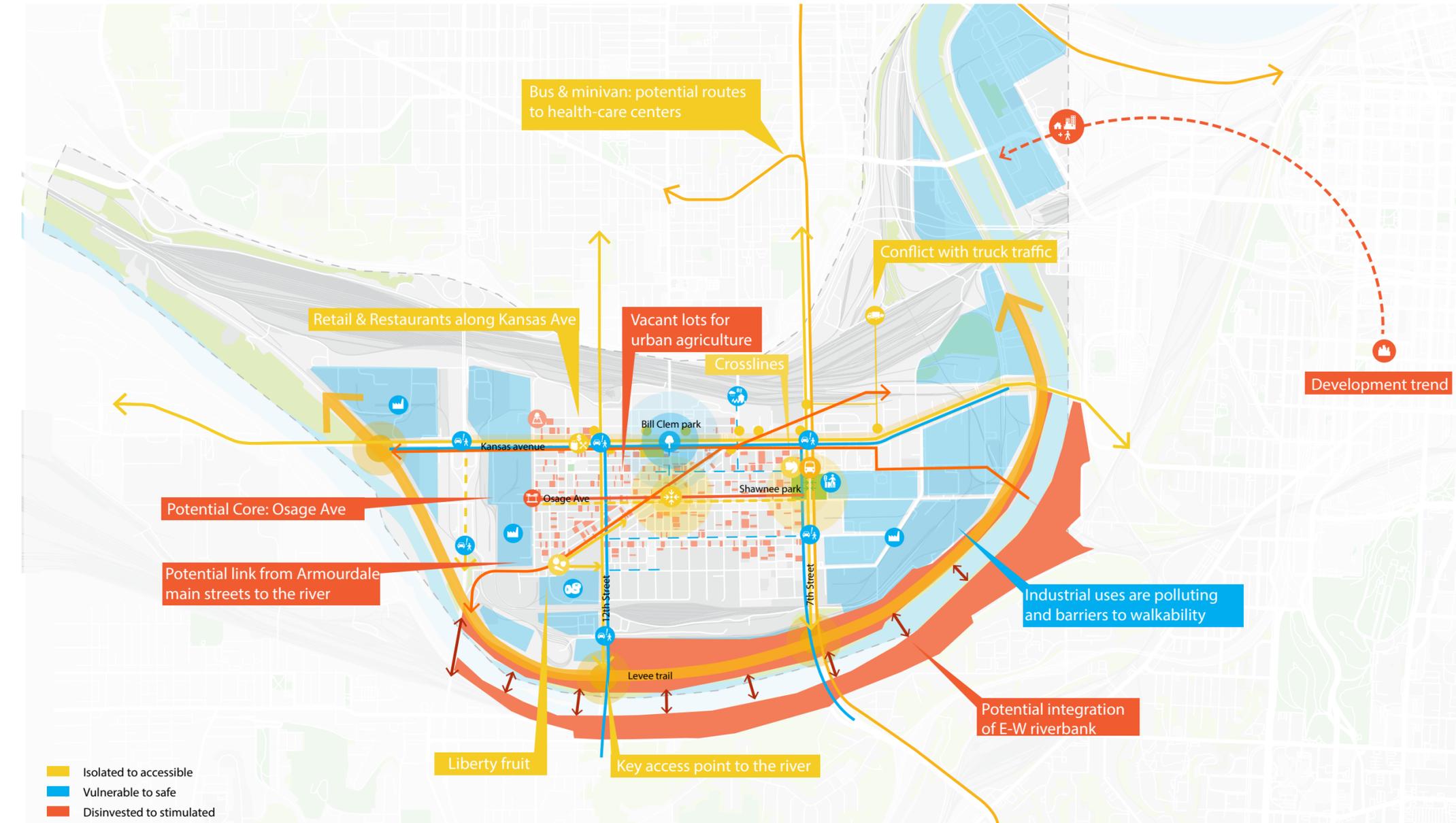
**Flood Risk:** Existing budgets for infrastructure maintenance are an asset, but they do not include storm-water management costs. Delay and deferral of public infrastructure maintenance in Armourdale are a challenge.

**Streetscape and Built Environment:** The Levy investments can be an asset and provide funding and stamina for open space & way-finding enhancements and better E-W connection. Industrial program is an asset to the city, but a barrier for the community, concerning walkability and attractiveness of the built space. Osage avenue is an asset for a potential centrality, and its built space quality can be enhanced by, for example, eliminating aerial power lines.

**Urban Green:** Shawnee Park is an asset to the community, and could be enhanced by being an integral piece, so kids could access safely all of its parts without the dangerous street crossing. Currently the western part is more frequently used. The organization Cross-lines is an asset to support the community's green and healthy food access. There is potential of using public open space and green for orchards and edible gardens, and the community would be a fundamental asset in maintaining them. Bill Clem Park is an underused asset due to the community's safety perception.

**River Role:** The river is an asset for activity attraction, and presents potentials in activating both West and East banks, capitalizing on the ongoing opportunity generated by the Levee trail enhancements. There is a real estate development pressure coming from KC-MO, that could help bring program and people from East to West of the river. The Kansas River Group is an asset to help define pick-up points and connections to trail heads and amenities, promoting a better linkage to the neighborhood.

**Ownership and Responsibility:** Community-run organizations fighting food deserts can be an asset to reprogram or activate vacant plots.



## PART 3: VISION & ACTION PLAN

Which short-term and long-term actions can be taken to reach the vision for Armourdale?

FROM ISOLATED TO ACCESSIBLE

FROM VULNERABLE TO SAFE

FROM DISINVESTED TO STIMULATED

### Vision

A New Downtown: a new destination along Osage Avenue, hosting new business and fresh-food providers, safe to walk without conflict with heavy truck traffic.

Linked and Better River and Parks: enhanced access to Shawnee Park in its integrity. Safe and active Bill Clem park. Inviting and vibrant riverbank. Enhanced configuration of streets to favor pedestrian and bike use.

Health Routes: direct public transportation connections to public health-care facilities through re-routed bus and minivan lines and stops. Stronger trust on the health-care system, insurance coverage, information about costs, ethnic representativity in the care staff.

Fresh Food Abundance: offer of affordable healthy food through large grocery stores, the establishment of a fresh food market, and enhancement of the potential of Cross-lines and Liberty Fruit for local provision.

### Short term actions:

Policy incentives to attract business to locate and stay in Armourdale, Redesign of streets and public space to enhance walkability & biking, Re-route of buses and minivans serving 7th St to connect to healthcare, Establish farmers market, Invite Liberty Fruit to help

### Long term actions:

Incentive larger local businesses to invest in the local community  
Connect multiple actors and assets ("break down silos")  
Combat poverty as a barrier to the access to health and jobs  
Re-purpose vacant plots for food production, cultivated by community

### Vision

Monitored & Informed: a community that is aware about the interrelation between pollution and public health, and has transparent and effective access to information

Reduced Crime: a community that is seen and heard, with balanced coverage of district commanders  
Enhanced Ped/bike safety: a mobile and active community, that does not feel threatened by car and truck circulation

Infra Adapted for Climate Change: a neighborhood protected from storm-water and river floods

### Short term actions:

Investigate and integrate existing pollution data in Armourdale from different sources, identify how it affects life quality and potential enhancements in sharing and receiving of information  
Reduce police officer's coverage area, hire more officers  
Traffic management & activity distribution adjustments in Kansas Avenue, 7th street, and 12th street; add a push-light or walk-over to access both sides of Shawnee Park  
Catch-up on infrastructure maintenance including storm-water

### Long term actions:

Enhance community awareness about pollution and public health, do the necessary interventions in the built space and land use to enhance life quality  
Built space interventions in Bill Clem Park for better safety perception  
Redesign streets for reduced car accidents  
Allocate budget for storm-water infrastructure enhancement projects

### Vision

Re-linked Shawnee Park: one full park, not divided in two

Re-programmed vacant plots: a neighborhood with no underutilized land, in which vacant plots can serve the community with edible gardens, orchards and trees, that are collectively run by residents

Linked River and community: a river and riverbank that can be used for resident transportation and leisure, for visitors, business

Re-envisioned Ownership & Responsibility: a community of reprogrammed plots taken care and maintain by the local residents. A place to live where residents are able to re-parcel plots to extend their property for social/green functions.

### Short term actions:

Walkover connecting both sides of Shawnee Park  
Policy change allowing use of vacant plots for urban agriculture  
Define clear access points to the Levee trail and the amenities that could better serve the community there (engagement process)

### Long term actions:

Strengthen integrity of Shawnee Park  
Re-plot vacant land in close proximity, reprogram for urban green or housing, promote narrow plot housing design  
Locate amenities on both sides of the river, capitalize on the development trend coming from KC-MO to activate river activities.

OPPORTUNITY	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	WHO TO INVOLVE?	MECHANISMS	ONGOING EFFORTS	RISKS
1. Osage Ave as Downtown	Adapt Osage Avenue as a destination for retail, restaurants, groceries, people	Residents and local businesses owners, KCK chamber, ARA	Reprogramming of activities along Osage avenue, removing of aerial power lines, street design&furniture	Armourdale Area Master Plan	Not having community buy-in, not having the voice of the community represented
2. Linked & Better River and Parks	Change the how attractive and safe streets are perceived, parks and riverbank	UG (Bill Clem park, Shawnee park, 12th street, Kansas Avenue and 7th), Kansas River Group	Redesign of streets for safer traffic and stimulated walkability, public space design & maintenance	Infrastructure maintenance budget	Sustain long term funding
3. Health Routes	Re-route bus lines and minivans to create direct& fast access to important healthcare facilities	Transportation Authority in charge of the local bus line along Kansas Avenue	Adapt existing bus and mini van lines and stops	Diverse funding sources	Perception of high healthcare costs preventing residents to seek assistance, low insurance coverage
4. Fresh food Markets	Establish a local farmers markets, local production of fresh food, attract a major grocery stores	Cross-lines Community outreach and Food distribution center, Liberty Fruit	Tax incentives, policy change to allow the use of empty plots for urban agriculture, local ownership	Cross lines food pantry	Perception of free or low cost food, maintain large grocers on the long term
1. Monitor & Limit Pollution	Investigate the interrelation between Pollution and Public health, existing info, sharing effectiveness.	EPA, Public Health department and Irene Caudillo	Use local organizations as a conduit to facilitate communication between the UG and the Community	EPA data collection along Armourdale and Argentine ave	Making data available on a website is not enough, residents have to receive and understand info
2. Reduce crime	Increase policing, promote public space enhancements in Bill Clem Park	Community leaders and local district commanders	Hire more community officers, reduce community officer's coverage area, more resources	?	Secure resources to increase policing and make residents feel watched-out for and heard
3. Enhance Ped/Bike Safety	Prioritize walking and cycling in Kansas Avenue, 7th street, 12th street; connect Shawnee Park sides	UG (Bill Clem park, Shawnee park, 12th street, Kansas Avenue and 7th), local residents, schools, initiatives	Redesign main streets for pedestrian and bike friendliness, create safe crossings, signal residential area	Local residents requests for push-lights or cross walks for safety Shawnee park	Conflict with Industrial use demanding for heavy lead vehicles and intense traffic
4. Infra Adaptation for Climate Change	(To be further discussed) Realize maintenance of local infrastructure, allocate budget for storm-water	(To be further discussed)	(To be further discussed)Storm-water Infrastructure Maintenance & Enhancement Projects	(To be further discussed)mention about \$54mi for public infra maintenance	(To be further discussed) Deferring maintenance and not allocating a share for public space enhancement
1. Re-link Shawnee Park	Connect Shawnee park sides	Local business and community groups			Sustain affordability of Armourdale neighborhood, avoid gentrification
2. Re-program Vacant Lots	Re-purpose vacant lots be used for food production or be offered to some residents to extend their plots	UG planning department, residents, community leaders	Community leadership to relief the municipality from maintenance, re-plot and leverage for housing		
3. Link River with Community	Enable for multiple use: active mobility, leisure, grow businesses & community on levee trail heads	Real estate developers pushing from KC-MO side, runners, bikers, levee trail master plan		Procter & Gamble gift to build legacy monument on west side trail-head close to their plant	

The fields highlighted in strong colors represent elements that resonated in multiple discussion groups

## SYNTHESIS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

### What resonates across all topics?

Across the different workshop session and groups, some challenges, assets, visions and actions coincided. It is possible to perceive the interrelation between the three topics used to frame the discussion (From Isolated to Accessible, From Vulnerable to Safe, from Disinvested to Stimulated). These “universal” ambitions can be summarized by 3 main action groups:

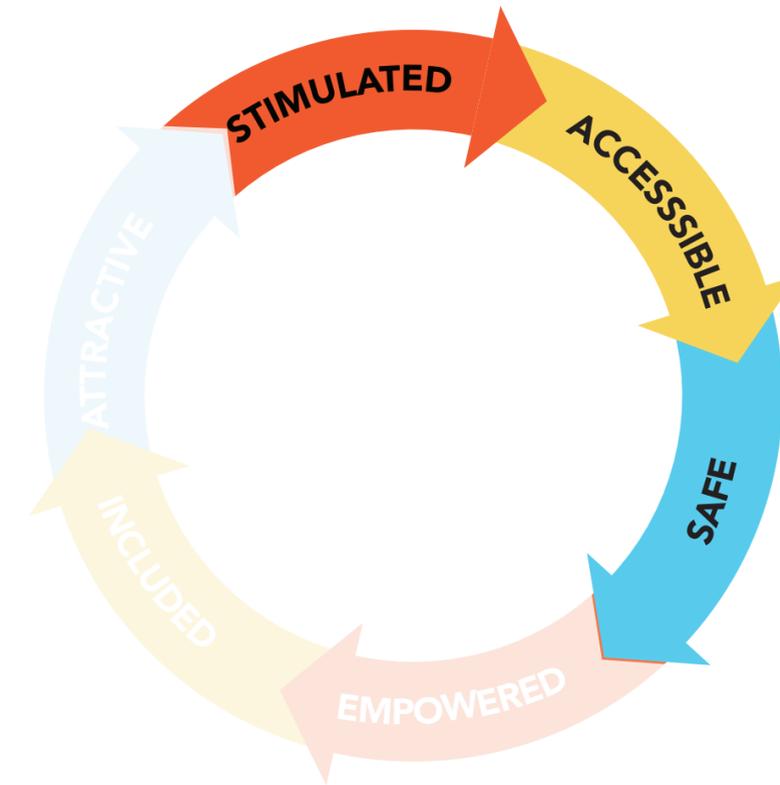
- Reconnect
- Reprogram
- Empower

### Part of an integral approach

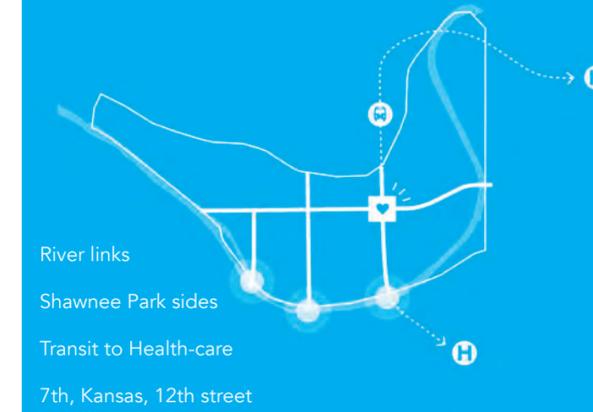
To effectively turn the vicious cycle of challenges in Armourdale into an virtuous cycle of opportunities, it is crucial to understand the interdependence between them. Only with an integral approach is it possible to thoroughly strategize the steps for the transformation towards a positive, healthy future of Armourdale.

Whereas Workshop #1 covered several of the topics that influence on three main challenges, much is still to be explored during subsequent steps of the Armourdale Master Plan effort, in conjunction with the local community.

Following the same “From...To” methodology, the challenges that contribute for Armourdale’s current condition of a segregated, neglected and deteriorated neighborhood are the subject of discussion in Workshop #2: Economic Development and Market Analysis of Armourdale.



### RECONNECT!



**Adapt public transportation lines and stops for direct and fast access to healthcare**

**Redesign mobility & land use integration on Kansas avenue, 7th street and 12th street**

**Make links to the river readable and inviting, connecting the community to the river**

**Re-integrate Shawnee Park is divided sides**

**Connect people to information, by monitoring and effectively informing residents about public health and pollution**

### REPROGRAM!



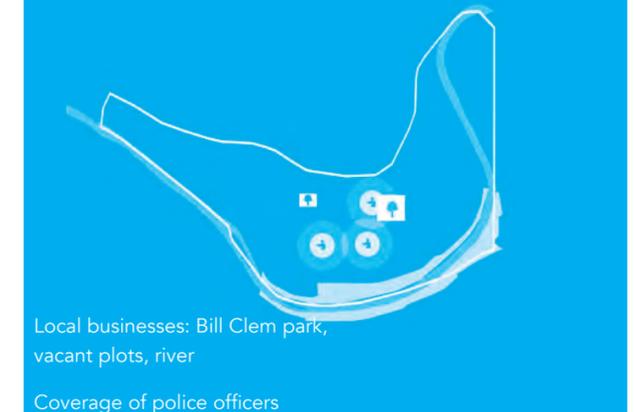
**Create policy support for reprogramming vacant plots for urban green, food production and social functions**

**Identify polluting industrial uses and promote the transition to clean and double-purposed uses that serve the local community**

**Diversify the program and functions of the river to strengthen its role for resilience, active living and leisure, and activate levee heads as a destination for amenities and local businesses**

**Reprogram activities along Osage Avenue to configure a new downtown, attractive to large grocery shops and local businesses**

### EMPOWER!



**Promote engagement and co-design of the area’s transformations (such as levee connection plans, downtown relocation, reprogramming of plots into urban agriculture)**

**Build trust within the community by increasing the representation of Hispanic, Latino and Spanish speaking staff in healthcare**

**Enhance safety perception by increasing the number of community officers interacting with the residents**

**Collaborate with local business and initiatives to activate public spaces such as Bill Clem Park, river trail heads and to create vibrancy in the new destination within Armourdale**

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# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG *FUERTE*

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

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## WORKSHOP BACKGROUND

**Workshop Summary Provided by MVRDV:** This project seeks to generate a collective vision for the future of Armourdale. To understand and leverage the potential of Armourdale's community and stakeholders, three interdisciplinary workshops are a crucial part of phases 1 and 2 of the project:

- Workshop #1: Public Health & Safety
- Workshop #2: Economic and Community Development
- Workshop #3: Master Plan Strategy: Focus Group Input

The following summary aims to document and draw conclusions and recommendations from Workshop #2: Community and Economic development. This workshop took place on the 8th of June, 2021 following all precautions and recommendations of social distancing, due to the COVID 19 pandemics. The meeting was held in a video-conference format, and supported by an online white-board web-app for sketching and note taking.

### Workshop #2: Community and Economic Development

The Goals of this workshop were to gain a more complete understanding of the public health landscape in Armourdale, and to collectively develop potential strategies and initiatives to improve public health and community quality of life. In summary, it focused on:

- Stimulating dialogue
- Bring business and community leaders together
- Define potential futures for the district
- Identify opportunities for collaboration between business and community leaders

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	Blake Willhite	Director	Premier Investments
	Monica Mendez	Executive Director	Armourdale Renewal Association
	Daniel Serda	KC CUR Project Manager	LISC
	Alicia Gaytan	Manager and resident	McDonalds
	Archie Smith	Small Business Coordinator	Universal Construction
OBSERVER	Shaya Lockett	Resident	UG Economic Development Department
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### Workshop methodology: From... To!

In the general analysis of Armourdale, PORT urbanism identified six challenges for the area: isolation, vulnerability, segregation, neglect ion, deterioration and disinvestment. These challenges are interrelated, forming a vicious cycle that gradually exacerbates conditions in Armourdale.

The workshop therefore focuses on how to turn this "downward spiral" to an "upward spiral". It aims at collectively identifying opportunities that can be derived from existing challenges in order to strategize action towards a positive, healthy future of Armourdale.

Based on initial findings of the urban and economic analysis, we identified three of the six opportunities as focus topics for community and economic development:

- From Segregated to Empowered
- From Neglected to Included
- From Deteriorated to Attractive



### Workshop structure

The workshop was structured into two parts. In each part, a collective introduction was followed by breakout sessions in small groups to facilitate an open dialogue. After each breakout session, there was opportunity to regather and share thoughts and observations on each topic in the larger group.

#### Two Parts

- Part 1: Feedback on current conditions: Presentation of our initial analysis & understanding, feedback session around the question "What did we miss?", "What is your current situation in Armourdale?", "How can residents and businesses collaborate on shared goals?"
- Part 2: Shared goals and potential for collaboration: Session based on sharing, listing and mapping existing issues and assets, individual goals and potential places and formats for collaboration based on participants' backgrounds and development interests.

#### Two Groups

For the two parts, the workshop participants were split into two groups to allow direct dialogue in breakout rooms. Each room was composed of participants of diverse backgrounds in order to discuss the topics and questions outlined above in detail and from various (economical and community-oriented) perspectives.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS AND CASE STUDIES

Our first impressions about community and economic development in Armourdale are based on the Urban Site Analysis by PORT Urbanism. It reveals that there is a segregation between residential and industrial areas that seems to hinder qualitative development of the district. Despite the diversity of small businesses and a broad range of productive larger ones, the spatial potential of the land they occupy as well as the strategic potential for collaboration to improve issues of mutual interest is not exhausted. During this workshop, we therefore presented below case studies to inspire the dialogue between the diverse Armourdale stakeholders, and to examine collectively: How can residents, businesses and the public sector collaborate on shared goals to create a positive outlook for Community and Economic development of Armourdale?

FROM SEGREGATED TO EMPOWERED

How can we bring more opportunities to Armourdale residents? Could we apply participatory budgetting processes in Armourdale?

The case of Floriade Almere, Growing Green Cities, illustrates how municipal maintenance budgets can be redistributed to fund local initiatives that deliver public benefit on private and public plots. The case of Rotterdam Luchtsingel City Lab shows that the public sector can initiate ideas competitions for urban upgrades - in this case the selected proposal was a bridge connecting scattered and underused public spaces - and how these initiatives can be realized through crowd funding/ participatory budgetting processes.

How can we grow the community while keeping it affordable and accessible?

Can we support infill and collective development in Armourdale? There are several ways to enable inclusive growth of neighborhoods. The Student Hotel, Maastricht for example offers affordable spaces and onboarding services for new arrivals, short stay, youth/students. The project Schoonschip in Amsterdam illustrates sustainable models for collective private development. The Incremental Housing in Santiago de Chile as well as the subsidized DIY lots in Rotterdam are examples for offering affordable basic accommodation that offer opportunities for self-initiated, flexible growth.

FROM NEGLECTED TO INCLUDED

How can Armourdale leverage underused spaces to create new opportunities for the local community? Could Armourdale attract and mix non-polluting business into its existing fabric to create a thriving environment the community is proud of?

The creative manufacturing industry is hip today, clean production and creative culture is integrated visibly into urban neighborhoods again without separation of functions, as the example of the Freitag factory in Zurich shows. This increases the diversity of job opportunities in the vicinity of residential areas, adding to more attractive and inclusive neighborhoods. Another example, the Rotterdam Maker Space illustrates how small businesses can be offered shared spaces and facilities within larger plots or buildings, integrating small scale crafts with smart, clean and innovative production processes in the city.

How can businesses support education and job creation? Could local businesses create mutual benefits by supporting local social and educational programs?

Community programs such as "Hotspot Hutspot", "Overloed in Overschie" and "Oma's Recept" in Rotterdam can link local food production to multi-generation education and health, creating jobs and new career opportunities in and with vulnerable communities. Other Dutch governmental programs stimulate collaboration of private companies with local social projects, offering e.g. lunch catering and support staff.

FROM DETERIORATED TO ATTRACTIVE

How can industry be a net contributor to local environmental health? Could local businesses contribute to the community, boosting Armourdale's spatial, environmental and economic attractiveness?

In the Schiphol Trade Park development, a business and logistics park close to Amsterdam, all companies contribute to an "area fund" to finance a pleasant, sustainable and healthy working environment, collectively creating and maintaining a flagship site for innovative companies. Here, flexible industrial plots are created where sustainability and operational efficiency are key. Double use outdoor spaces and roofscapes as well as water collection, cleaning and -reuse and the production of sustainable energy in this green business park is stimulated by public guidelines and the area fund.

How can we create a proud & attractive riverfront community together? Can Armourdale give space to its community and its river?

MVRDV's project (Y)our Glasgow develops urban acupuncture projects inspired by community ideas as part of the larger masterplan strategy. The National Dutch project Space for the River integrates local community needs in water management projects. It creates more space for rivers along (former) levees to allow for larger water buffers, while adding leisure facilities and connections to adjacent riverfront communities.



Santiago de Chile, incremental housing: affordable basics & flexible DIY growth



Floriade Almere: repurposing municipal maintenance budgets for local initiatives



Rotterdam Luchtsingel: building bridges through crowd funding



Freitag Factory in Zurich: clean urban manufacturing



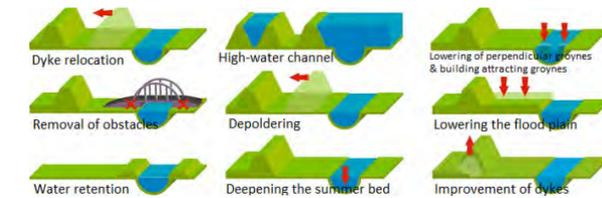
Rotterdam Maker Space: shared spaces for small businesses offered in larger industrial buildings



"Hotspot Hutspot", "Overloed in Overschie" & "Oma's Recept" in Rotterdam: Programs linking local food production with education, health & job creation.



Schiphol Trade Park Amsterdam: Contributions to an "area fund" finance a pleasant, sustainable and healthy working environment - a flagship site for companies.



Room for the River, The Netherlands: more space for rivers, while adding leisure facilities and connections to riverfront communities.

## PART 1: FEEDBACK ON CURRENT CONDITIONS

**“What is your current situation in Armourdale?”, “How can residents and businesses collaborate on shared goals?”** After presenting our initial findings on public health, this was the participant’s feedback on the various topics:



**Quality, Maintenance And Future Of Housing:** The quality of the housing stock in the area is poor. Many homes are salvaged homes built in the late 1970ies. As the area has been indicated as an “industrial district” by leaders of urban renewal efforts since the 1903 flood (aside from 1979’s plan of the ACA, Armourdale Citizens for Action, that respected the residential core), there is no feasible economic expectation for home owners. Opportunities for loans for home improvements have been limited after programs in the 1980ies. A large number of residents rent. Many newcomers arrive here, renting for 8-10 years. Property owners take advantage of those families, offering them houses in poor conditions for relatively high rental prices, and making them believe they will be able to buy those houses on a word to word contract. Renters often don’t know their rights. How can they be assisted and home owners motivated to maintain their buildings? Additionally, there are few to no options for senior retirement in the area. Many seniors are forced to relocate.

**Vacant Plots:** Vacant plots are driven by speculation. Industrial property owners buy them, hoping to rezone residential plots to (heavy) industry. As plots are small and scattered, it is difficult to gather parcels to redevelop. Without redevelopment, upgrades of open spaces are not happening. As the future landuse situation is unclear, many lots remain vacant. This decade-long pattern led to neglect and intrusion of industrial use into the residential area. East of 7th Street and around Argentine, many residents have been removed or relocated already.

**Industry vs. residents - need for clarity:** The lack of investment perspective fuels the vicious cycle of deterioration of the residential community and restricts industrial upgrades. The participants feel a lack of public support and security for investments. A clear political decision is needed that delivers a strong message about the future of this area: will it be purely industrial or mixed residential+industrial? Based on this, it is crucial to establish & follow clear policies. The co-existence of the community with industries feels very normal to long-time residents. How can we leverage this to create a strong future for & with Armourdale?

**Job Balance & Education:** Only ca. 1% of residents of Armourdale work in the area - should more locals work here? Industrial companies are in close proximity to (potential) workforce in this area. Many high wage jobs are created by companies located in Armourdale. But a high percentage of employees indeed comes from outside (even outside the county). Local companies wish to address this inflow-outflow gap at neighborhood level, to change the dynamic and help locals move into better jobs. Armourdale could become a place for a strong community to work and live together again. However, there are two issues for employers. Firstly, many locals lack efficiency of English and legal status. Secondly, there is a lack of education of local workforce. Access to training is needed. Which programs are there and how can we bring them to Armourdale residents? The example of a growing Business ESL program through KCK Community College is mentioned. They work closely with Crosslines and Catholic Charities on case management/wrap around services. There is a need to keep expanding these programs.

**Champions/Communication Platform:** Work related language barriers and legal status issue are concerning. There are programs to educate people who rent homes in Armourdale. Participants suggest to an immigration lawyer is needed to enable them to protect their rights.

Additionally, there is a need to have communication in Spanish. As a third of the local population doesn’t speak English, they don’t know how to access programs. A neighborhood communication platform and/or champions within community to spread the word could be useful.

**Opportunities for Transformation:** Turning circles and routing of some logistic routes are not efficient for larger trucks (North & West of the area). Participants see opportunities here to redevelop these areas as a “buffer zone”, with a more mixed scale of businesses and industries that don’t require very large truck logistics. A more active conversation about the redeveloping power plant is needed.

**Safety:** Security of the neighborhood is a concern. Residents often hear gunshots. Thefts in the parking lots of industrial areas, reduce the safety of employees and attractiveness of local companies. Accessibility and wayfinding: The ease of access from highways is a positive asset for most industrial businesses. Turning circles and routing of some logistic routes are not efficient for larger trucks (North & West of the area). Semi truck traffic makes navigation and access difficult for staff. A rerouting of semi-trucks on a dedicated route would improve logistic flows. The access point by Proctor and Gamble is not easy to navigate. The wayfinding signage is inadequate.

**Public Space Quality & Walkability for Employees and Residents:** Making the area more walkable would help small businesses. It is a challenge of these businesses to create a friendly retail (Restaurant) area, as sidewalks and public spaces are missing. More public spaces for young people would be nice.

Many employees of the local McDonalds live in Armourdale but most stay in the restaurant on breaks, eating at company provided picnic tables or inside. Most are finished with the day by 5pm. Generally, people don’t stay in the area after-hours. The community core of Armourdale with its restaurants and stores is geographically central to many (industrial) employees. Improving their experiences outside of the office in the surrounding areas and connections to the diversity of restaurants in downtown for break-time and after work would be interesting. Outdoor activities are popular with staff. Some companies have running clubs. Being able to safely and enjoyably run in Armourdale would be a positive. Industrial companies want more feeling of a qualitative business park area. There are efforts to redevelop the area East of 7th Street for efficient industrial uses. It is difficult to gather parcels to redevelop and upgrade the open space.

**River:** According to residents, the River doesn’t feel far away, but the spaces around the levee trail access points are unfriendly. An access point at the mid-point of the arc of the levee trail would be necessary.

This scheme illustrates aspects highlighted most in the feedback session. The bigger the square, the more the respective issue was emphasized. Main conclusions of this first part are:

- The lack of a clear public position about the future of Armourdale - fully industrial or mixed residential-industrial - is causing investment insecurity and fuels deterioration
- Both, business owners and residents see potential in collaboration
- Vacant plots and maintenance of housing need to be addressed
- Communication and education need to be addressed to change the dynamics of the job market on the neighborhood scale
- Safety, public space quality and walkability are highlighted by all participants as crucial challenges for Armourdale

### Industry & Residential: Need for a clear future vision

Simply decide what this area will be, deliver a strong message!

Need to establish & follow clear policies.

Massive structural issues regarding the housing stock:  
1. no investment anticipation  
2. lack of residential improvement  
3. poor quality of housing

Home owners are not investing in maintenance but ask high rental prices. Renters often don’t know that they have rights.

Many plots remain vacant due to speculation and insecurity.

No options for senior retirement in the area

Businesses have difficulties in gathering & redeveloping parcels.

### Transformation opportunities

Turning circles and routing of some logistic routes are not efficient (North-West)

Redevelop inefficient areas as “buffer zone” of more mixed scale industries that don’t require very large truck logistics.

### Public space quality & walkability

Making the area more walkable would help small businesses in the community.

Proximity of larger companies to local restaurants. Improved sidewalks between them and friendly public realm around retail /restaurants can stimulate interaction.

Companies would like to create a feeling of an attractive business park in industrial areas, improving worker’s experiences outside of the office.

Outdoor activities are popular with staff.

More public spaces for young people

### Safety

Theft from parking lots of business areas in the East are reduce feeling of safety for employees.

Residents often hear gunshots.

How to make it safer to move around in the neighborhood during breaks / after work hours?

### River

The river doesn’t feel far away, but spaces around levee trail access points are unfriendly.

An access point at the mid-point of the arc would be necessary.

### Jobs, education, communication

Only 1% of residents of Armourdale work here as well. How can more locals work here?

Lack of English and legal status of potential local workers is a big issue.

Lack of education. Where are those programs & how can we bring them to Armourdale residents?

Enable locals to access training.

Companies are frustrated about the job force situation, looking to change the dynamic.

## PART 2: SHARED GOALS AND POTENTIAL FOR COLLABORATION

What are ambitions and goals for future development of Armourdale and how could they create mutual benefits?



### A Clear Future Identity

- Need to define a transition strategy from now to the envisioned future, into a positive cycle of reinvestment
- Understand the network of needs/desires/triggers to guide a mutually beneficial direction, match private investment with public funding
- Public announcement of projects is needed, creating certainty needed for investments in property
- With a broader vision and governance the investment can be spread and new investments be steered
- Identify unique identity of Armourdale: there is some benefit of its isolation, its island-ness makes it unique - draw people with this. Armourdale's footprint is bigger than any other identified neighborhood in the city. what can that mean for its future identity?
- Armourdale is one of few areas that has a true grid, also for pedestrians. Strengthen the walkable grid and revisit the 1979 plan.

### Strong Community Core

- Many older residents have left the neighborhood (aged out), while Armourdale has potential to support older communities. Understand what are the barriers to aging-in-place.
- Cost of housing, elementary school and ability to make DIY improvements attract people. Leverage that.
- WyCo has Neighborhood Revitalization Act with tax rebate for new construction or rehab, credit goes to increase of valuation. How can this incentive be marketed within Armourdale?
- Make a real main street, consolidate old high street structures that have more potential than Kansas Avenue.

### Easier Communication

- Difficult to identify players and collaboration opportunities, no notification system in place. Create a more robust communication network for business-to-business and UG-to-business communication, a forum to connect people and ideas.
- Conversations about co-locating, how business owners view their district and the future have only regarded KCK as a whole. Organize such conversations with Armourdale-located businesses.

### Jobs Close to Home

- Business owners seek collaboration with residents for mutual benefits There are low-skilled to high skilled jobs available. Create education perspective and labour pools.

### Less Division, More Mix

- Rethink the zoning system, landuse division creates barriers.
- Identify benefits of investments for users/citizens.
- Small businesses are looking for spaces in Armourdale. Integrate cool ideas that attract people without killing existing companies that already invested. Livability is key for co-habitation of businesses and residences.
- Bring (back) uses that are done outside of Armourdale. The Community Center e.g. is available for this. As event sizes are eclipsing available event spaces, can other spaces be (temporarily) used?
- Define locations for S/M sized businesses: interesting mix of plots in the West/North, waiting to be bought up. Create mixed buffers here of S/M businesses, redefine the boundaries of retail, industrial and residential.
- Tackle outdoor storage as a barrier to cohabitation of businesses
- Opportunities to mix more: bridge upgrades, levee enhancements.
- Building on 18th is purposed for heavy industry but 18th is difficult to access by big trucks - repurpose the building, potential for retail here.
- For mixed-use to be viable, residential demand needs to be higher. Create sufficient critical mass for investments, focus on getting more tenants, businesses and employees here, redevelop some parts.
- Can incentives be offered to small businesses, similar to those offered to large corporations from outside?
- Create a moratorium on certain uses like containers, salvage yards, used car lots etc. Some are good businesses but don't contribute to the long term look and feel envisioned for Armourdale.
- Set strict requirements for minimum footprints, e.g. for used car dealerships and auto repair.

### Green Business Park

- Parts of the area are too hazardous for residents. When redeveloping industrial/business areas, upgrade waste deposits, clean up, develop new buildings according to UG codes.

### Attractive Public Realm

- Projects shown in the case studies regarding public space up grades are often based on PPP's or participatory funding.
- Consider public space/ pedestrian friendly aspect in concrete public investments.
- Maximize public access to levees.
- Create an area that is more of an experience, enhance business attraction.
- The true grid is precious for Armourdale, focus on its maintenance. Don't just consider the benefits of the street framework for the businesses but also for locals.
- Inconsistency in facades along Kansas Avenue. Create more visual cohesion in corridors.
- Can we bring back the idea of creating a walking trail through and around the east-of-7th part of Armourdale to offer a better connection to commercial areas?

### Safety

- Nobody around the business areas, ghost town after 6pm now, reduced feeling of safety. Need for a public safety strategy.
- Safety of employees is important. Reduce the risk of theft. Mixing business areas more with new recreational functions/ residents can solve the problem.
- Scale of the streets and speeding are an issue, people are afraid of crossing Kansas Avenue. Don't mix bike and truck traffic. There are currently no plans to make bridges more pedestrian friendly. Can this be addressed?
- Alternating one-ways don't work, as the blocks are too long. Target and rethink Chayenne, to make it more accessible to re-route trucks.

## SHARED GOALS

### A clear future identity

- Create and communicate a clear and strong plan and unique identity for the future of Armourdale
- Define where to keep & develop industrial building stock, residential areas, mixed use
- Define a transition strategy from now to the envisioned future, into a positive cycle of reinvestment
- Develop clear policies and governance models to inspire and spread investment

### Strong Community core

- Increase critical mass and diversity of residents and smaller businesses and thus of investments
- Support home owners in maintenance
- Inform renters of their rights & support new collaboration models between them and owners for upgrades
- Offer places and purpose to seniors

### Easier communication

- Create a central physical (Communit Center?) and online (also anonymous) platform for exchange of initiatives, information on legal issues, training programs and local job offers in different languages
- Create a neighborhood buddy program for newcomers, linking them to English speakers
- Organize conversations with Armourdale-located businesses about the future of the district and co-locating

### Jobs close to home

- Create labour pools
- Create education perspective for locals, make trainings accessible
- Create a program linking local companies to young residents and seniors

### Less division, more mix

- Rethink zoning and boundaries between industries and residents
- Create mixed-use buffer zones for S/M sized businesses
- Reuse vacant spaces, stimulate mix of uses and double-use of spaces/roofs/buildings where possible
- Develop an in-depth transition strategy for how to create opportunities for residential uses, DIY, S/M scale businesses and mixes thereof on vacant plots and in unused buildings
- Attract new small businesses and programs that are currently used outside of Armourdale
- Offer incentives to small businesses, similar to those offered to large corporations
- Define clear areas where to keep and upgrade an efficient industrial building stock
- Regulate: create a moratorium of undesired functions/spaces & set requirements for sizes of companies/plots

### Green business park

- Stimulate redevelopment of industrial/business areas to contribute to a productive and attractive green river park, upgrade waste deposits, clean soil/air/water, and develop new buildings according to UG codes and latest sustainability standards

### Attractive public realm

- Create additional public access points to the levee trail (central bend of river), link them to walkable street corridors
- Enhance business attraction: embed larger businesses in a green river park with new recreational functions for the whole district. Stimulate upgrades of public spaces around and buildings of small local community businesses.
- Maintain, improve walkability and highlight the street grid as a characteristic feature of Armourdale

### Safety

- Upgrade bridges and main streets to be more pedestrian friendly, with dedicated lanes for trucks, bikes, pedestrians
- Reduce crime in parking lots by adding light and mixed use where possible to stimulate 24/7 activity
- Re-think logistic routes, create a separate and efficient (turning circles/less conflict with other traffic) access for trucks

## POSSIBLE LOCATIONS

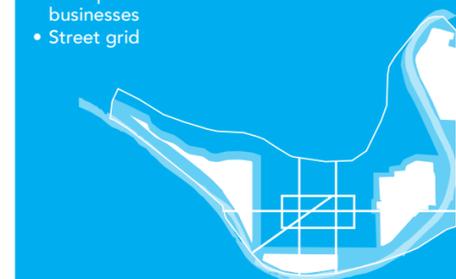
- Identity of Armourdale as a whole
- Community core + mixed "buffer" around it



- Mixed "buffer" and surrounding business park



- River park and embedded businesses
- Street grid



## WORKSHOP CONCLUSIONS

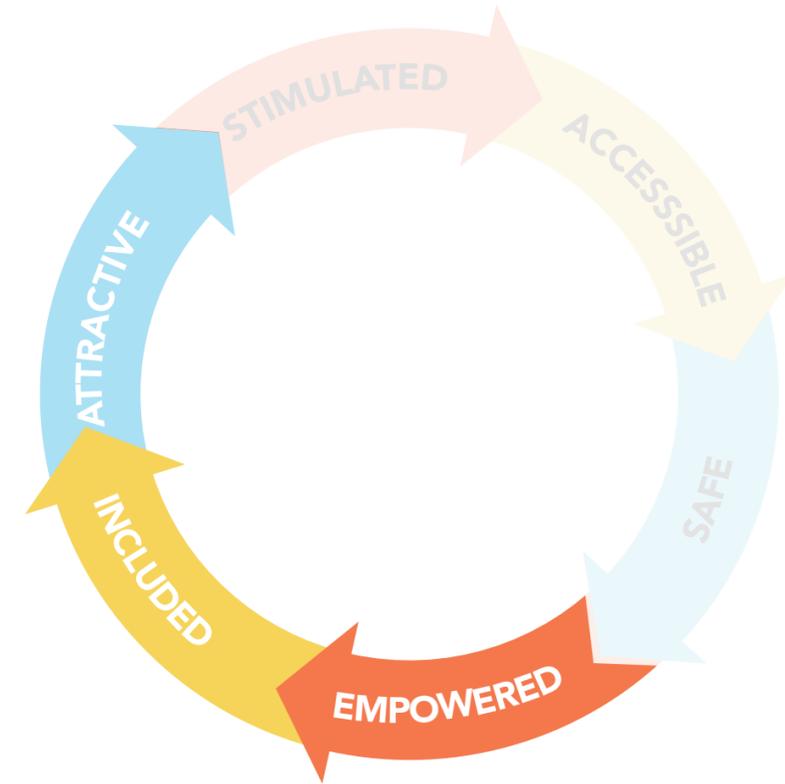
### What resonates across all topics?

Across the different workshop parts and groups, some shared ambitions were integral to the three topics used to frame the discussion. The overarching needs for the future of Armourdale are:

**More Clarity:** in order to create positive economic and community development, it is most crucial to have clarity about the future character and landuse of the area. The workshop showed that there is strong potential for a fruitful mix of residents and businesses. A clear vision for this model needs to be communicated and guided by clear policies by the UG in order to create security for investments. Basing this vision on the unique qualities of Armourdale can inspire local stakeholders to collaborate and contribute to its realization.

**More Mix:** the workshop participants confirmed the need and potential of the co-existence of residents and businesses in Armourdale. The discussion focused strongly on the need to re-think zoning, to attract and mix more small and medium scale businesses into the existing fabric for economic diversity and safety, to create opportunities for improvement of housing. This ambition calls for integral collaboration, a stronger communication between of stakeholders in the area: it calls for more mix of people. This requires a platform where they can come together, and are supported in creating cross-sector initiatives, new business and job opportunities.

**More Green:** both residents and businesses see a high need and mutual benefits in upgrades of the public realm. A pleasant, safe and walkable street grid can make local retail more accessible to staff of large companies. Dedicated traffic lanes and a more mixed environment contribute to safety. Better public access to the levee trail, in combination with leisure activities for both employees and residents and upgrades of open spaces around larger industrial sites and have potential to form a sustainable "River business park" that attracts diverse users of the local community as well as visitors.



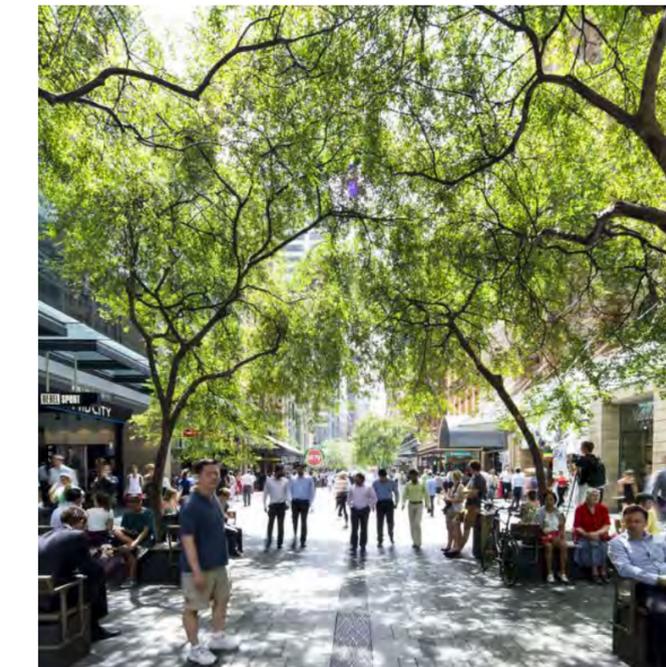
### Clear Vision For The Community



### More Mix



### More Green



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARMOURDALE STRONG!

What does it mean for Armourdale to be strong? How can this be translated into a future vision for this unique district?

Armourdale - its businesses and community - has been created as an island within a river plain and has always been centered around the processing and production industry. With this in mind, how Armourdale develop a strong future identity, that inspires everybody to work towards to, hand in hand? Can this unique position bring forth a new future model for a productive, resilient community?

For us, Armourdale strong! means Armourdale redefining itself as a new type of *Productive City*, setting new standards for:

- Environmental productivity,
- Social resilience,
- Economic innovation.

The island-setting of Armourdale is another unique feature of its grown identity. Therefore, we believe that we need to strengthen the area from its core, its community, in order to set these new standards mentioned above. Our starting point that the residential community will be a key part of Armourdale in the long-

term, next to local businesses, sets the tone for our future vision and strategy for the gradual transformation of Armourdale. Rather than focusing on the division between two seemingly incompatible groups of users, we suggest to change perspective - to highlight, leverage and stimulate the existing diversity within the community of residents and businesses to grow.

While guarding and enhancing its unique position embedded in the river, we suggest to create strategies for blurring the boundaries between different landuses and groups, for turning the binary "Avocado model" into a more flexible "Guacamole mix" that fosters environmental productivity, social resilience and economic innovation. In this model, we imagine local initiatives and users to spatially and organizationally mix and collaborate with each other and with new, carefully added partners that amplify the genius loci of Armourdale.

We suggest to base the Armourdale vision on creating **3 different mixes of scales, users and identities:**

### S scale: The Resilient Oasis

- The heart of Armourdale, the driver of social resilience
- A new central downtown where businesses can mix with residents
- Main corridors of its historic grid become walkable, safe, lively and green community streets that connect the heart to and across the river and surrounding business areas
- Housing upgrades, DIY additions and new models of housing, mixed use and collective open spaces/sports on vacant plots are stimulated by owners, UG, and realized through participation models
- Senior residences
- The community center becomes a multilingual platform to share business ideas, get legal advice, job offers, trainings
- English speaking residents volunteer to become buddies of newcomers and non-English speakers

### Develop further:

- Spatial, regulatory, zoning, economic and participatory strategy for vacant plots
- Shared investment models for street upgrades

### S+M scale: The Living Marketplace

- The flexible, lively buffer zone connecting the heart and large businesses - the core driver of economic innovation in Armourdale
- Collectively organized multilingual events invite newcomers, existing and new businesses to connect
- Existing companies in this zone are stimulated to share underused spaces for local initiatives, share facilities with smaller businesses
- Trainings and temporary events can be organized in shared buildings, on vacant or underused plots
- Plots that are inefficient for larger companies can be transformed into smaller plots or collective sites for small and medium sized businesses
- Locals and suitable regional initiatives are stimulated to set up clean urban production, crafts, start-ups, community oriented businesses here
- A mix with shortstay/student/DIY/creative makers' or business housing can activate this area beyond office hours, to increase safety

### Develop further:

- Analysis of ownership and plot boundaries to identify exact location and potential for (future) flexibility of suggested mixed-use areas

### L+XL scale: The Green Machine

- An efficient belt of clean L+XL business clusters embedded in a river park drives environmental productivity in Armourdale
- They contribute to cleaning and maintenance of the park, provide sustainable energy for own and the community's consumption
- The attractive, sustainable business park becomes the figurehead for Armourdale and provides buffer spaces for storm water, leisure functions for its employees, the community & Kansas City
- The street grid of the heart connects at several locations to the levee trail and the river park trail around the business clusters.
- A new, efficient logistic loop with dedicated truck lanes is integrated in the green park buffers in a way that does not hinder pedestrian and bike flows between community heart and river

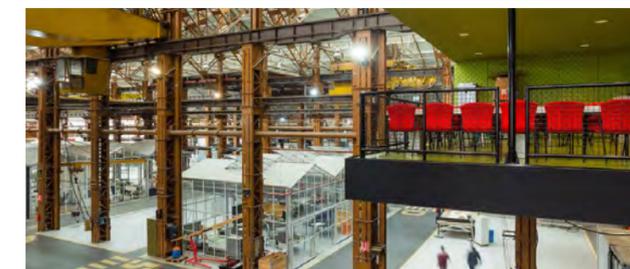
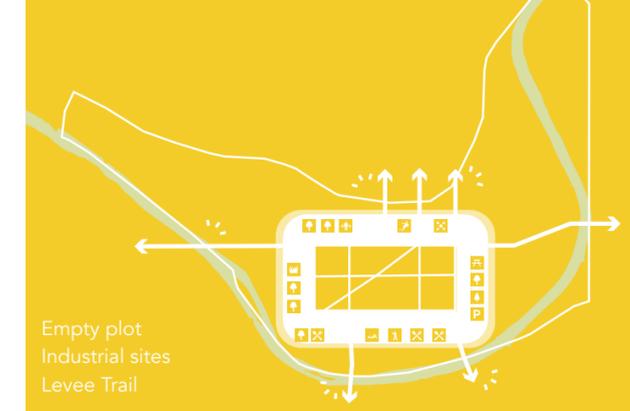
### Develop further:

- Suitable locations for efficient logistics/ L/XL businesses
- Origin-destination analysis of current (logistic) traffic movements in Armourdale and on city/metropolitan scale
- Solutions for integration of dedicated logistics loop in the park

### THE RESILIENT OASIS - S SCALE



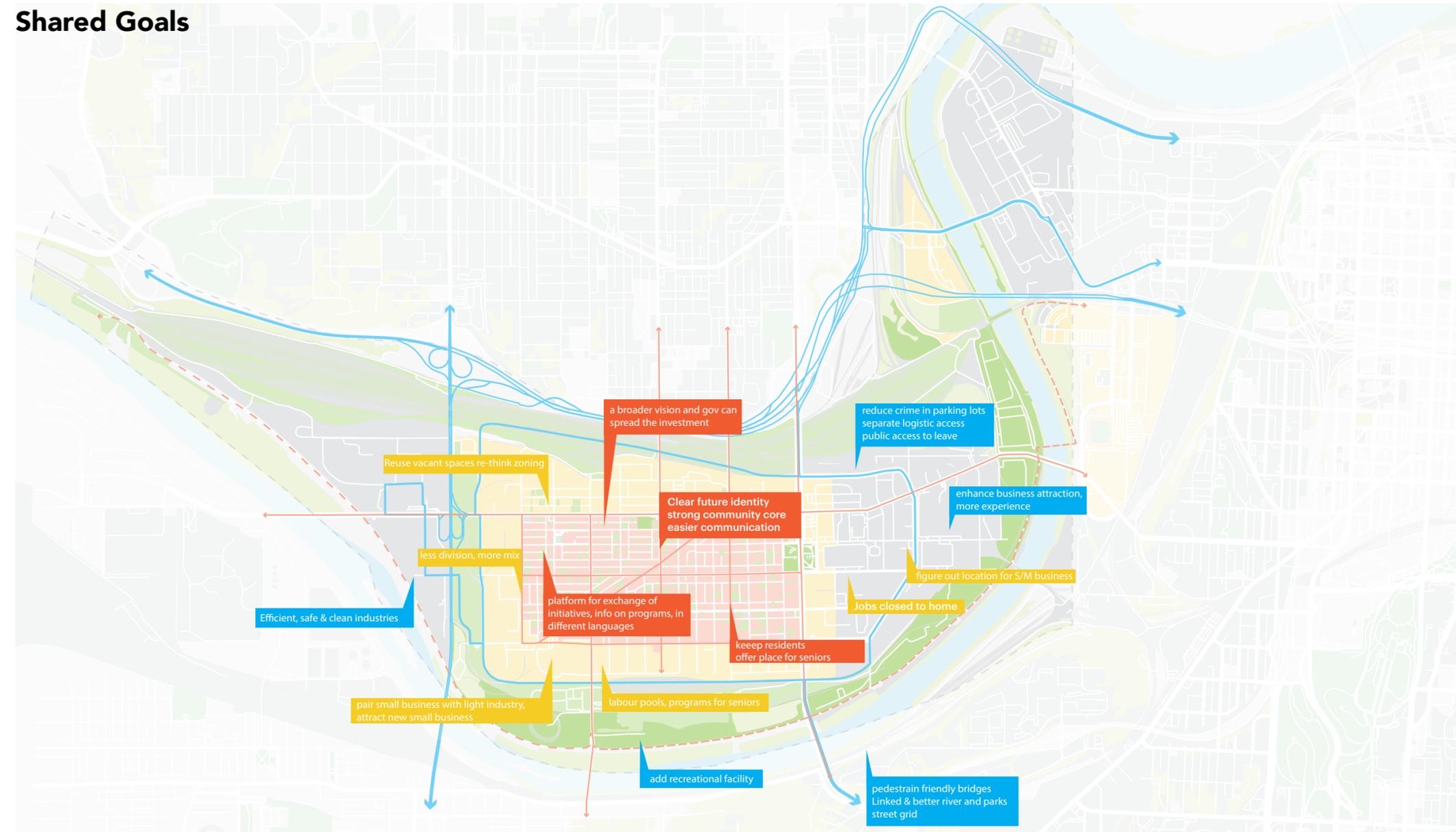
### THE LIVING MARKETPLACE - S+M SCALE



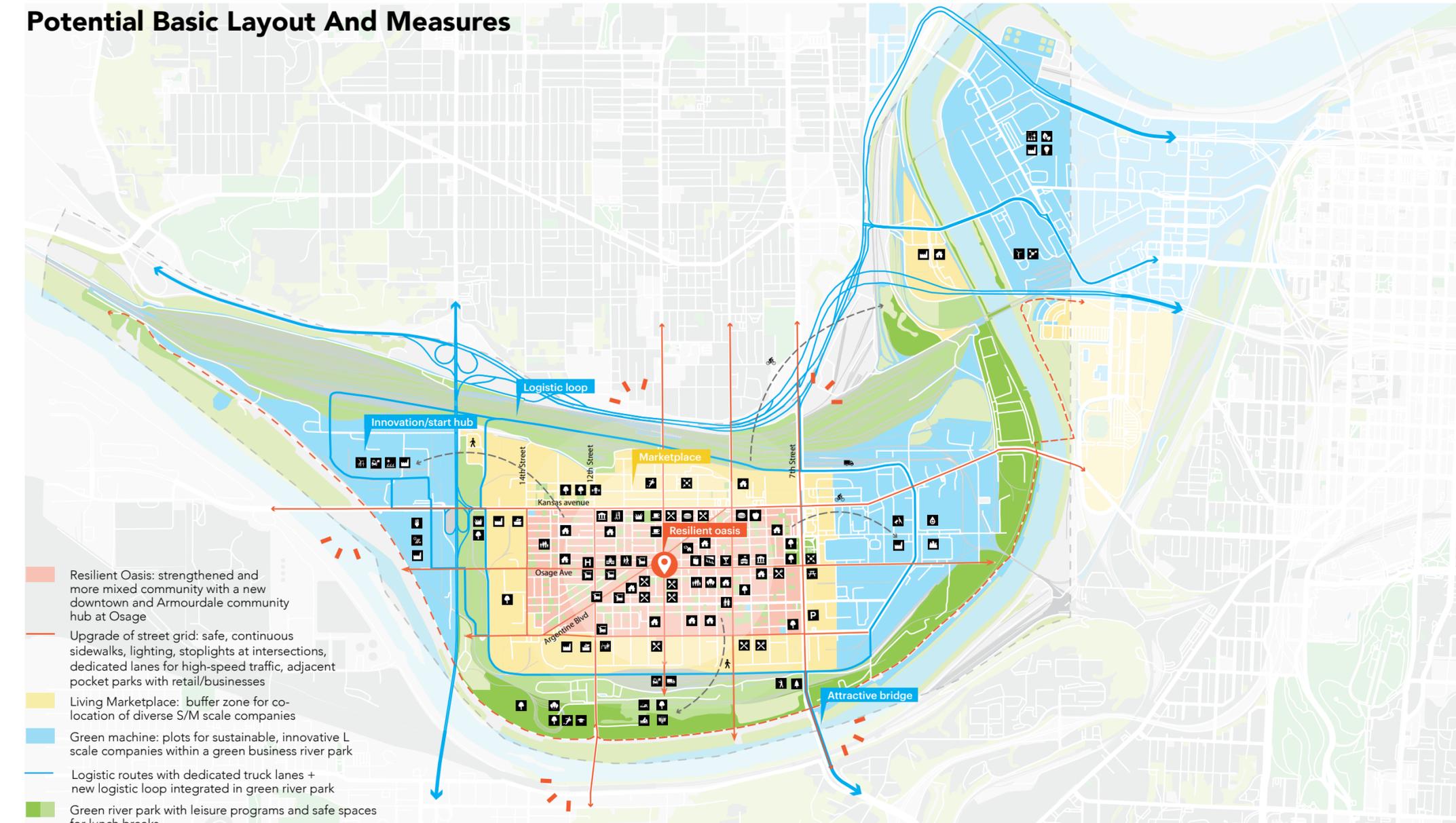
### THE GREEN MACHINE - L+XL SCALE



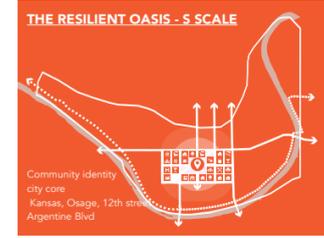
## Shared Goals



## Potential Basic Layout And Measures



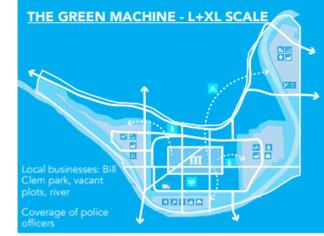
# Moodboard "The Resilient Oasis"



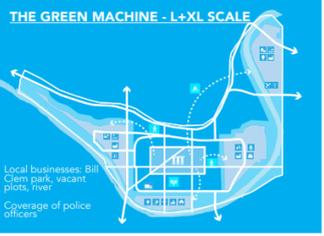
# Moodboard "The Living Marketplace"



# Moodboard "The Green Machine": L+XL Businesses



# Moodboard "The Green Machine": River Park



## NEXT STEPS TOWARDS A PRODUCTIVE CITY MASTERPLAN

As a basic approach to the masterplan, we suggest to elaborate 2 strategies that, hand in hand, answer the needs of the community as indicated in the workshops as well as stimulate the Productive City 2.0 that we envision Armourdale to become in the future:

### 1. A menu for productive co-creation:

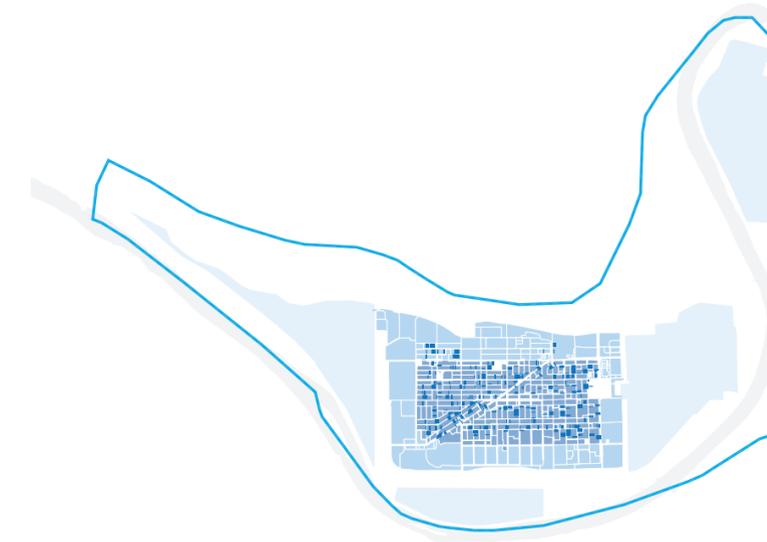
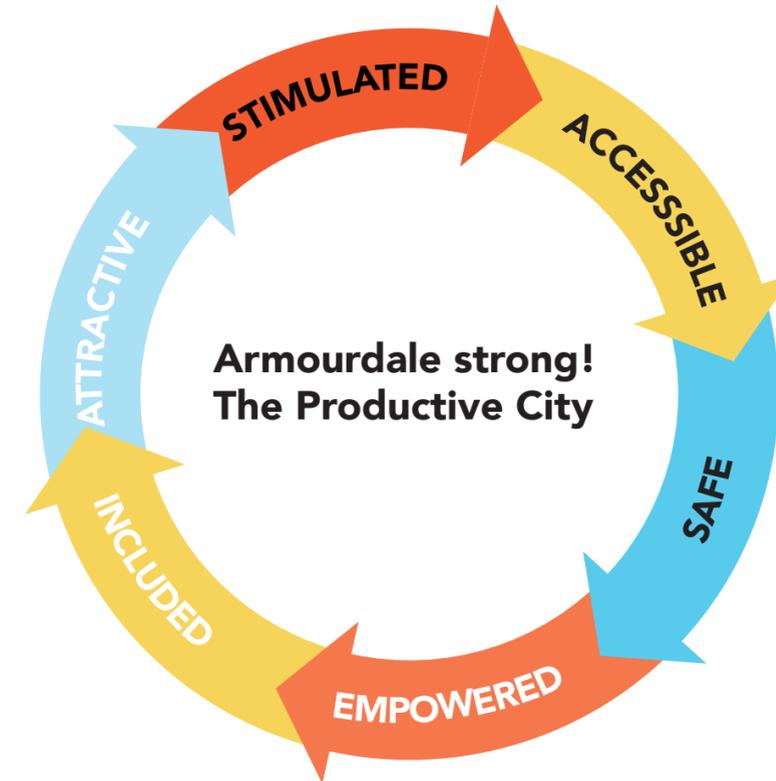
An inspirational catalogue of possible typologies, scales, collaboration models and strategies stimulating and empowering anti-gentrification growth and productive mixes, including:

- Analysis and illustrations of current and possible future ownership scenarios, historic grain and character of typologies
- Strategy for flexible re-zoning and repurposing of vacant plots as contributors to the productive city
- Quality guidelines and inspirational precedents for upgrades of existing residential and business buildings and new additions to the historic grid structure and buffer zone of the core community
- Concept for a physical and digital, multi-lingual information, collaboration and education platform
- Concept activation plan/event calendar for 365 collaboration and community/business events
- Mapping of potential governmental or stakeholder funded stimuli - subsidies, collaboration opportunities, non-monetary support, incentives for private upgrades and initiatives, participatory funding opportunities

### 2. A design and implementation plan for a livable framework

A design and implementation plan for a strong, resilient network of River Park and walkable grid design as a backbone of the Productive City 2.0:

- Resilient river park design, including a strategy for inclusion of current levee plans and possible future park extensions, measures for stormwater storage, leisure programs, levee trail connections and opportunities for local businesses to contribute to their activation
- Strategic proposal, inspirational precedents and quality guidelines for greening of efficient logistics/ L/XL business plots and their spatial integration as green business clusters in the River park and their contribution to sustainable upgrades of the environment and social activation of the park
- Analysis of traffic flows, origin-destination models, leading to proposals for a sustainable and safe integration and potential re-routing of logistic traffic
- Analysis and design for pleasant, safe, walkable and green corridors connecting the heart of the community with the River front and surrounding neighborhoods
- Implementation and phasing plan in collaboration with L/XL business partners and the UG



### Menu for productive co-creation:

An inspirational catalogue of possible typologies, scales, collaboration models and strategies stimulating and empowering community-driver, anti-gentrification growth and productive mixes.



### Livable Framework design

A design and implementation plan for a strong, resilient network of River Park and walkable grid design as a backbone of the Productive City 2.0.

# ARMOURDALE

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## STRONG FUERTE

## FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Forthcoming Projects Overview	136
18th Street Bridge Reconstruction	138
Stormwater Improvements	139
Adjacent Investments	140

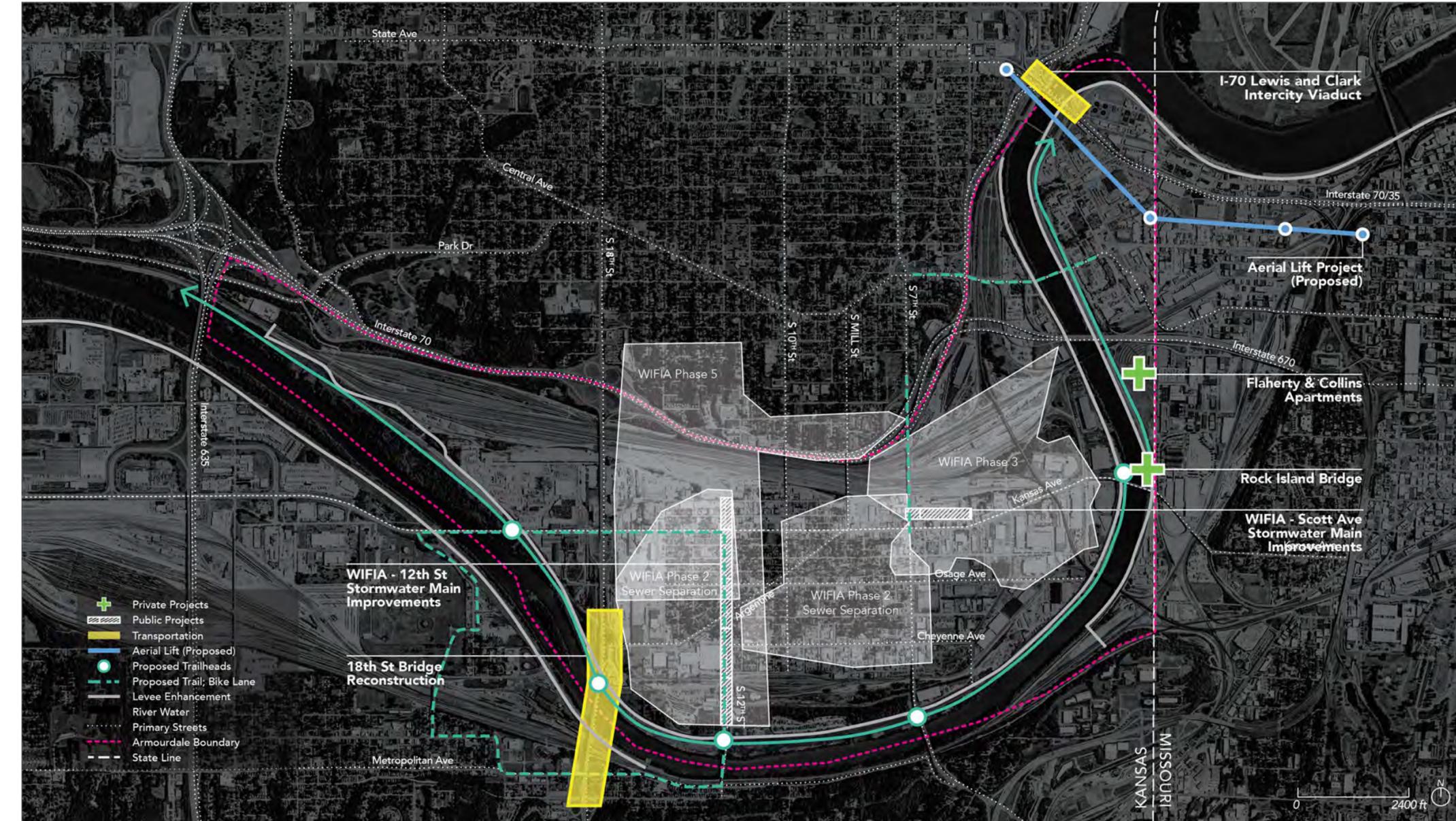
## FORTHCOMING PROJECTS OVERVIEW

Numerous future public and private investments are scheduled for Armourdale for the coming years. By far the largest of these is the raising of the levees along the Kansas River by 4 feet through a combination of new flood wall construction and additional height added to the existing levees along the river. As part of this effort, the Unified Government has an ongoing planning effort for the 'betterments' that will be constructed as part of this effort. These betterments include everything from trailheads and access points for the levee trail to public space improvements along the levee itself. In some cases these betterments represent substantial public investments in spaces of collection, activity, and recreation.

Other infrastructural investments are planned by both the Unified Government and the State of Kansas for the Armourdale area. The first of these are a series of stormwater infrastructure improvements in Armourdale that are partially funded by a federal WIFIA grant. These include green stormwater infrastructure and other multiple-use infrastructural solutions to the area's longstanding stormwater challenges. The second is the Kansas Department of Transportation reconstruction of the 18th Street Bridge, a project that should involve the improvement of pedestrian connections between Armourdale and Argentine.

Finally, there are 2 notable private developments along the Kansas River. The first of these is the Rock Island Bridge project, an ambitious effort to transform an existing abandoned railroad bridge into an outdoor event and food destination space. The project will also be the point where the Levee trail crosses the Kansas River to the east bank, ensuring that the Rock Island Bridge will be a pedestrian and bicycle connection, as well as a food and lifestyle destination. The second is a large mixed-use development just north of the Rock Island Bridge commonly known as the Yards project. Together, these projects are important to the emergence of the Stockyards district as a true residential and entertainment district on both sides of the State Line.

Opposite: Future Investments Map (PORT)



## 18TH STREET BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION

Built in 1959, the 18th Street Bridge that spans the Kansas River between Armourdale and Argentine has reached the end of its useful life. Already extended by renovations in 2018, this bridge is scheduled to be replaced and possibly realigned. Although not a Unified Government-led project, this is an opportunity to strengthen pedestrian connections between Armourdale and Argentine as well as provide access to the Levee trail where possible. The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) is consulting with the Unified Government on bicycle and pedestrian improvements within the project area that extend down Kansas and 12th Avenues and connect to themselves through Argentine.<sup>70</sup>



## STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS

The Unified Government was recently awarded a WIFIA loan from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of a \$152 million investment in its stormwater infrastructure. Many of the priority projects in that package serve Armourdale and its surrounding communities, including separation of combined sewer systems and incorporation of green stormwater infrastructure principals.

Those projects include 2 areas where the Unified Government plans to increase capacity of the existing stormwater infrastructure to alleviate street flooding. ARMO-3 is concentrated on Scott Avenue east of 7th Street as well as the intersection of 7th Street and Kansas Avenue, and its plan is to “capture and convey” the 5 year, 24 hour storm flooding event below ground to alleviate street flooding. The second, ARMO-5, concerns the flooding of 12th Street from McApline Ave. to the Kansas River. Its goal is to replace the existing brick sewer system that conveys both stormwater and sewer flows with a new stormwater pipe and inlet capacity.

The plan also calls for the separation of stormwater and sewer systems in Armourdale itself. The Phase 1 sewer separation will be concentrated around Kansas Avenue west of 18th Street, and Phase 2 will be concentrated on the residential core of Armourdale.<sup>71</sup>



## ADJACENT INVESTMENTS

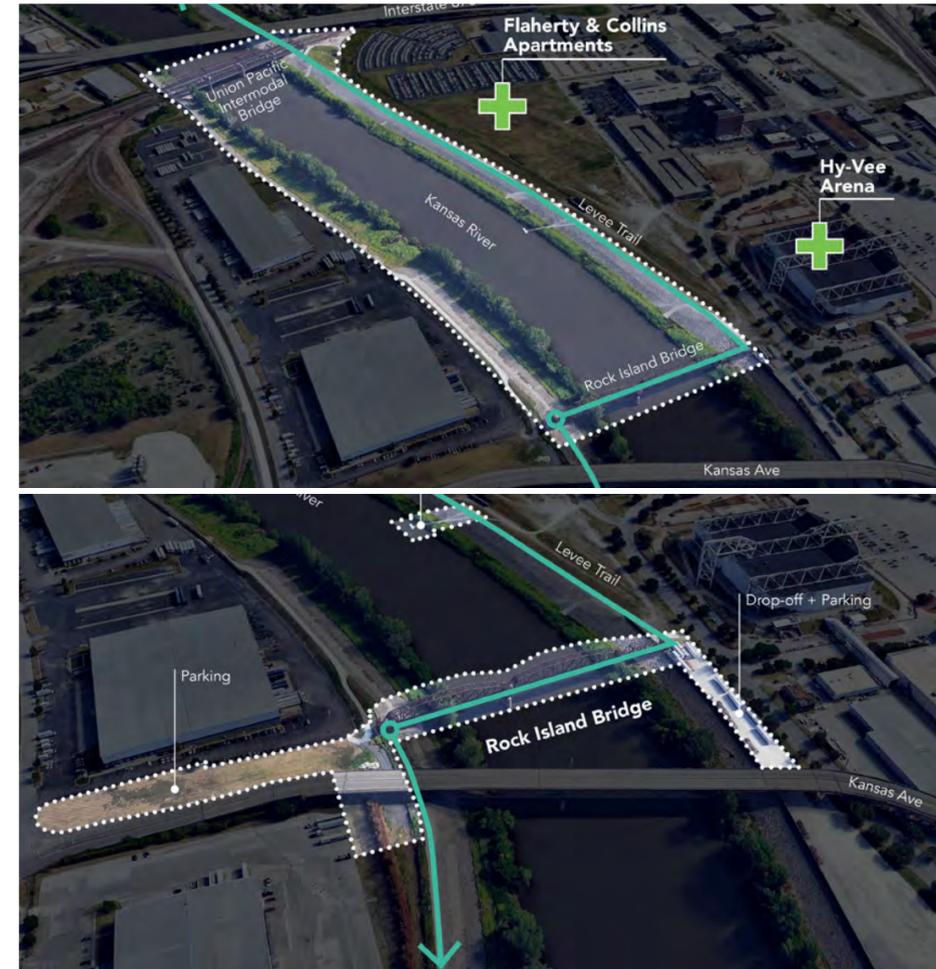
The stretch of the Kansas River between the Rock Island Bridge and the I-670 Viaduct is on the cusp of transformation, especially on the east side of the river. This transformation includes several large-scale projects being implemented simultaneously.

The first of these is the raising of the Kansas River Levees by 4 feet to meet the increasing pressure and intensity of the spring and summer floods. Led by the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) this effort includes a parallel effort led by the Unified Government to include public realm improvements in and around the levees themselves. These 'betterments' include the establishment and opening of the Levee Trail, the provision of parking and other access amenities, benches, and wayfinding.

The second of these is the Rock Island Bridge, a project to transform the former Rock Island Railroad Bridge into a food and cultural destination, event space, and hub of activity. The Rock Island Bridge will also be supported by public parking on both the east and west sides of the Kansas River and include a public trail linking the Levee Trail from the west to the east sides of the Kansas River.

The Flaherty-Collins project on the east side of the Kansas River just north of the Rock Island Bridge will include public access to the Levee Trail, The Yards II, the eventual expansion of this mixed-use district to the north, and public facilities between it and the Rock Island Bridge.

Finally, the recently proposed Aerial Lift project proposes to link the two Kansas City downtowns -- and the West Bottoms between them -- in order to build common investment and access to a wealth of cultural attractions, the Kansas River, arena events, and jobs.



Above: The Yards Front Facade

Below: The Yards courtyard



Above: Aerial Lift Project (SOM)

Below: Looking East Towards Hy-Vee Arena (Flying Truss)

## ENDNOTES

### Endnotes

- 1 Census Tract 426 Profile, Census Reporter. Source: ACS 2019 5-year. <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/14000US20209042600-census-tract-426-wyandotte-ks/>, Accessed April 12, 2021
- 2 "Armourdale-CID: Existing Conditions (Draft)," Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City Kansas Economic Development Department, January 11, 2021, p. 61
- 3 Manuel C. Elmer, "Armourdale: A City Within a City," Bulletin of the University of Kansas, Vol. XX, No 12, June 15, 1919. P. 91.
- 4 Elmer, 34.
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- 15 Serda, 60-63
- 16 Serda, 60-63
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- 18 Serda, 67.
- 19 Ordinance Book, City Clerk's Office, City of Kansas City, Kansas, 1882
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- 33 Interview with Chavez.
- 34 Interview with Gene Chavez, February 8, 2021
- 35 Kansas City, Kansas, City Planning Commission, The comprehensive city plan, Kansas City, Kansas. Harland Bartholemew and Associates, city planning consultants (Kansas City, Kan.: The Commission, 1942), quoted in Serda, 78.
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- 41 Serda, 104.
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- 43 Serda, 135.
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- 45 Serda Interview.
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- 48 Interview with Commissioner Brian McKiernan, February 4, 2021.
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port

[www.porturbanism.com](http://www.porturbanism.com)

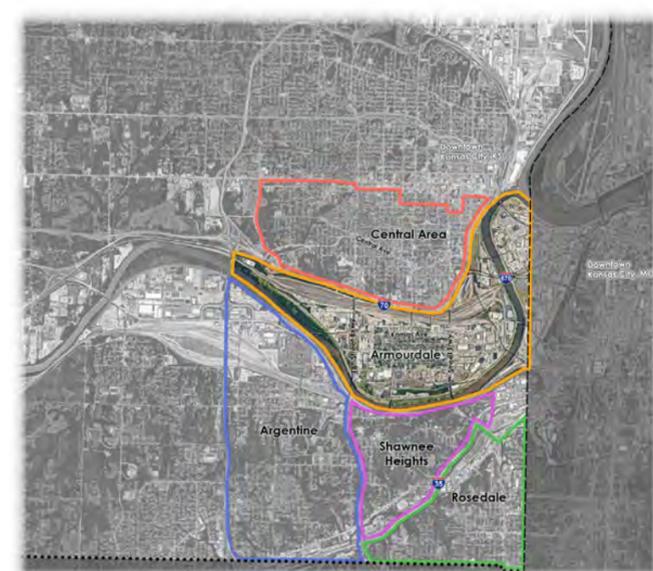
## APPENDIX 2

- Appendix 1 Master Plan Task 1 Site Analysis Report - Sepember 14th, 2021  
*Including Full Community Survey Results*
- Appendix 2 UG Existing Conditions Report - April 29th, 2021
- Appendix 3 Clear Air Now Report - May 2021

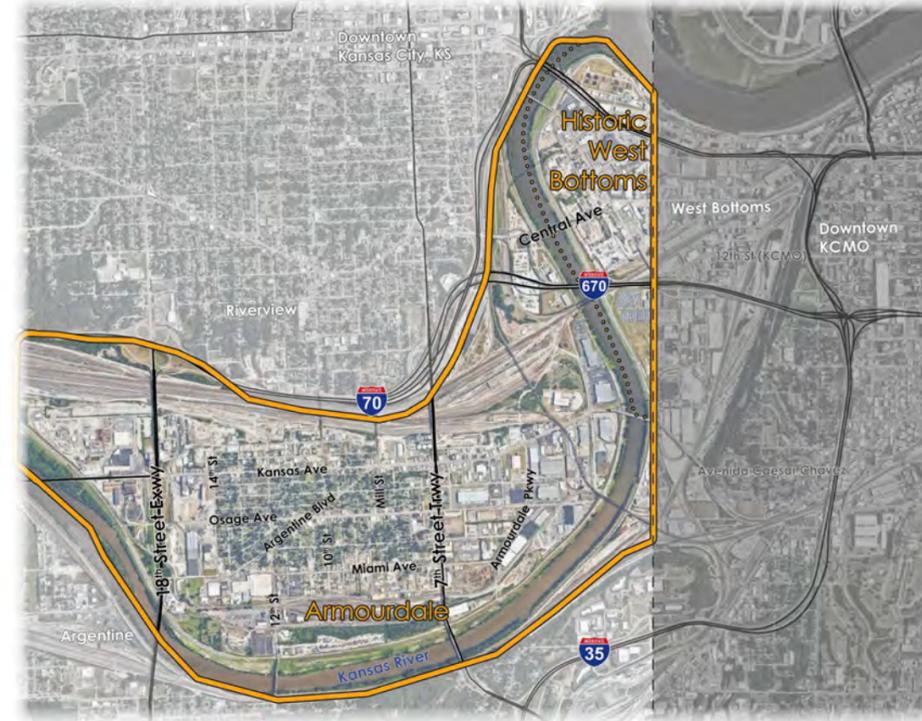
**APPENDIX:  
ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS**

## GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

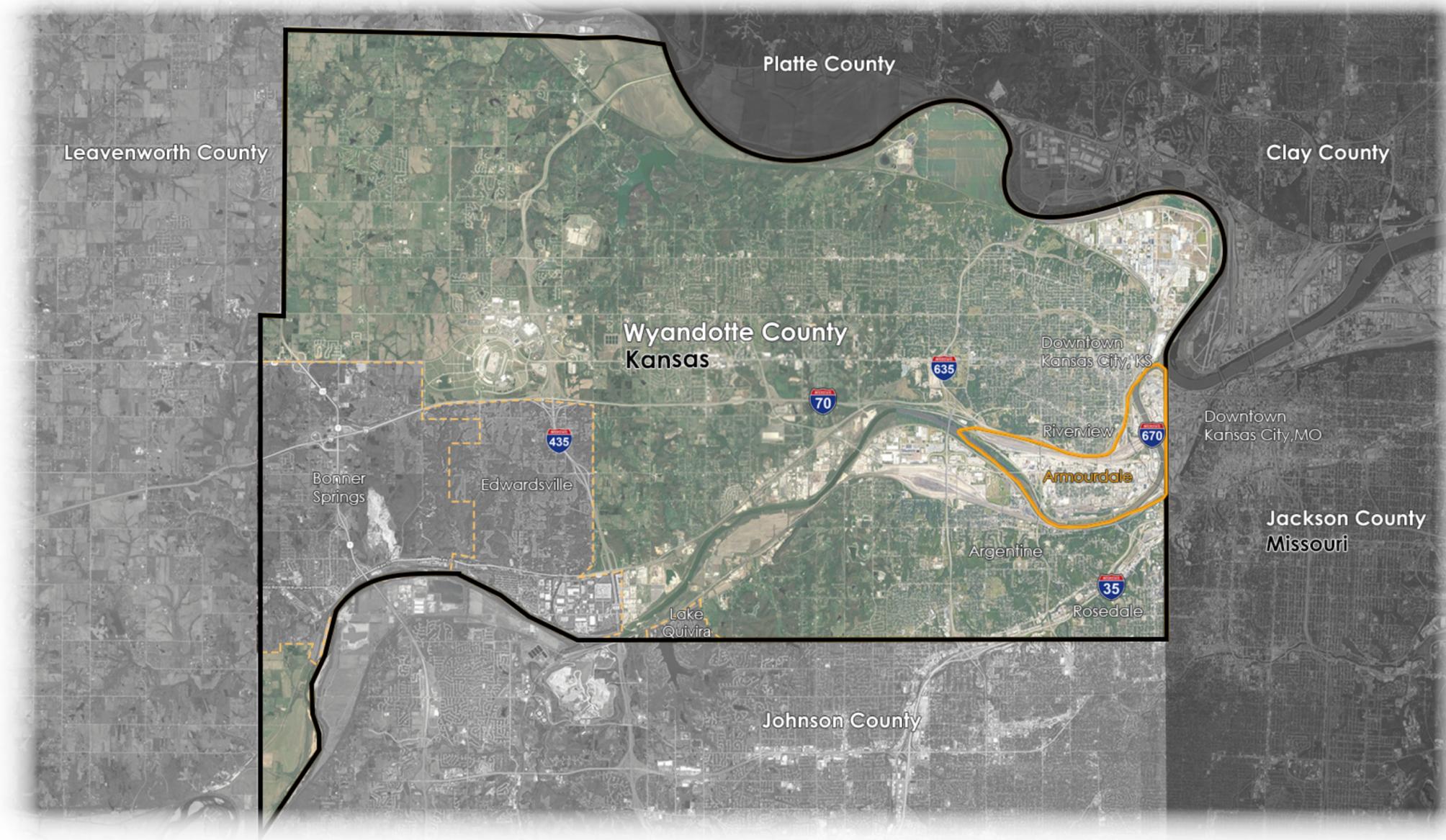
Armourdale is located in eastern Wyandotte County between the bluffs of the Kansas River valley. It borders the neighborhoods of Riverview, Armstrong, Argentine, Shawnee Heights, and the Historic West Bottoms. The Kansas River is a major natural feature in the area, surrounding Armourdale on three (3) sides. For planning purposes, the Central Industrial District, across the river to the northeast, is included within Armourdale's boundaries.



Armourdale Planning Context

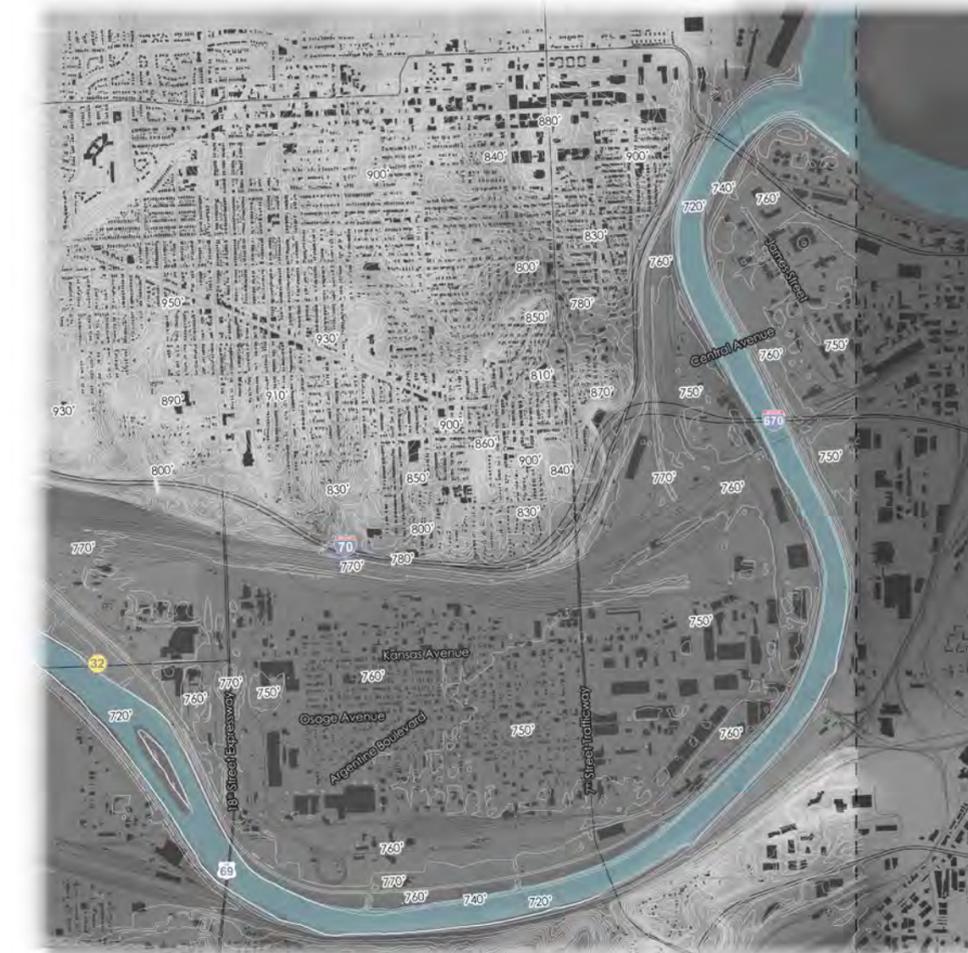
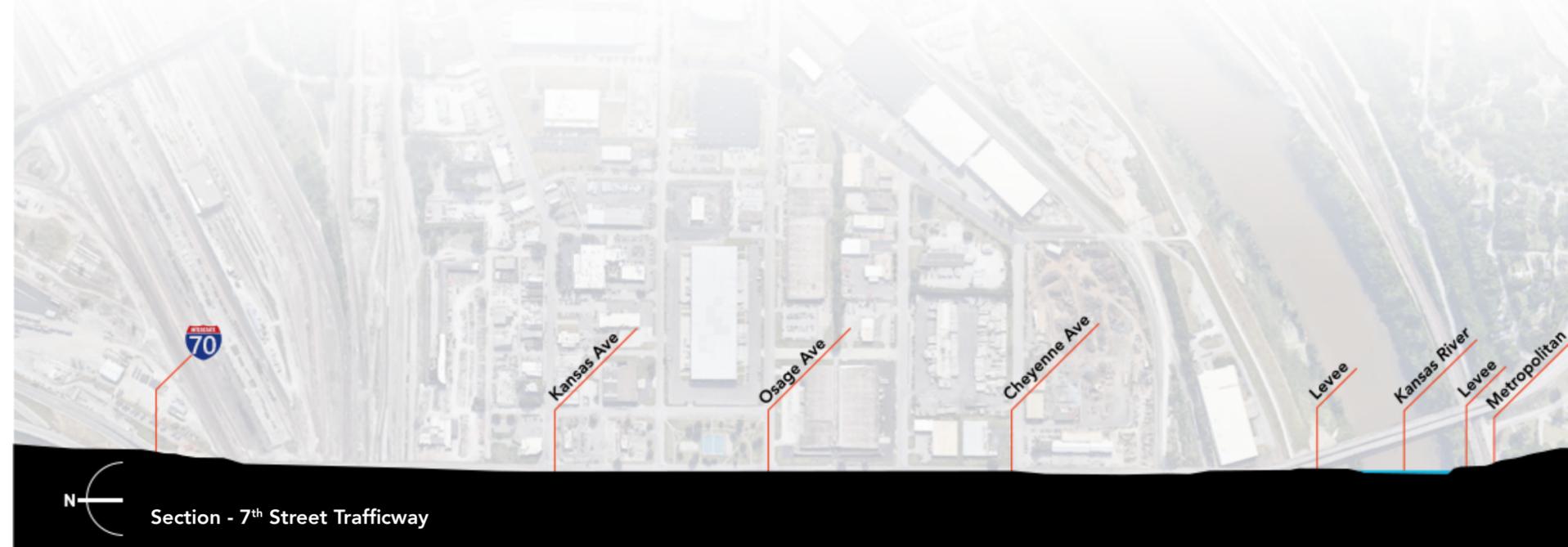


Armourdale Area Context



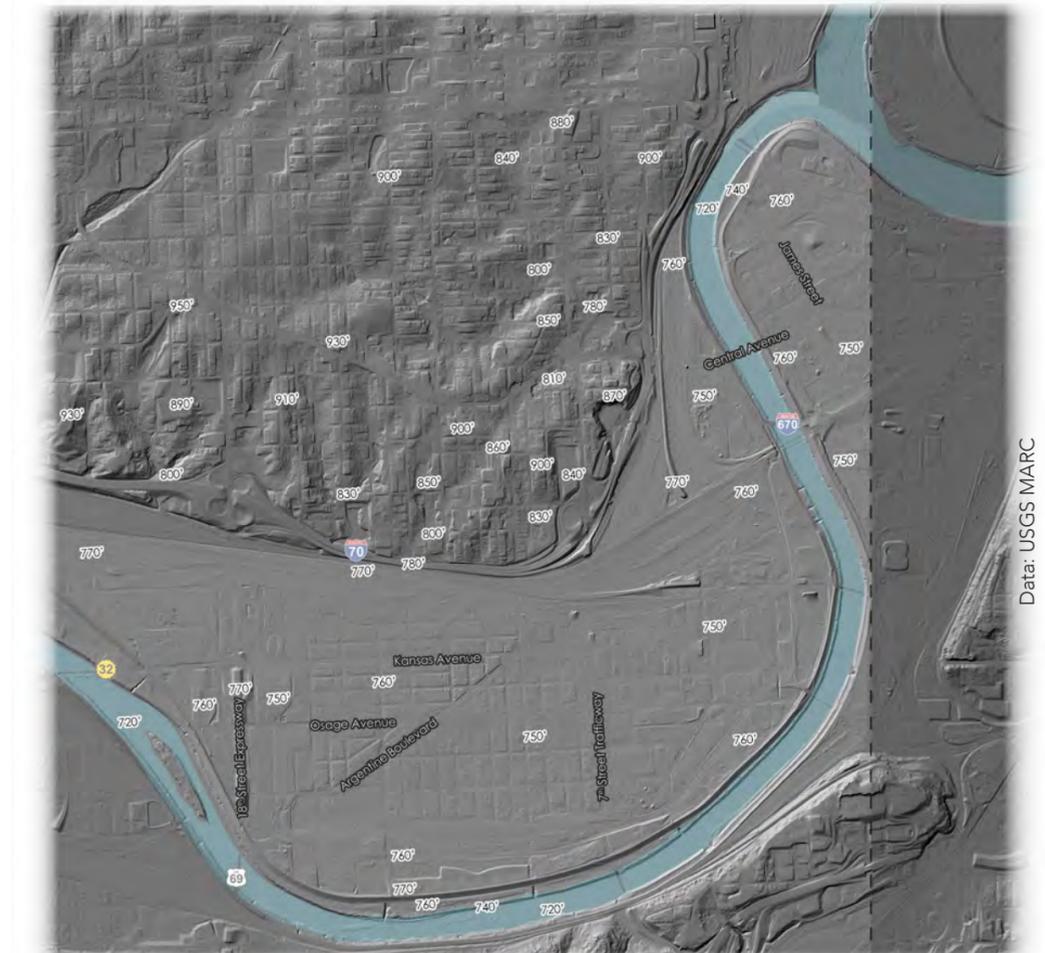
## TOPOGRAPHY

The entirety of the Armourdale planning area is within the Kansas River Valley. Natural geographic formations act as boundaries for much of the community. These boundaries include the bluffs to the north and the River itself to the south and west. The Kansas-Missouri border is the only man-made planning boundary. The relative flat topography of Armourdale made it attractive to 19th century railroad developers. This led to the dominance of industrial land uses in this and other low-lying areas in the metropolitan region.



**Environment**  
Contours - 10' Intervals

Data: Unified Government, MARC



**LIDAR**

Data: USGS MARC

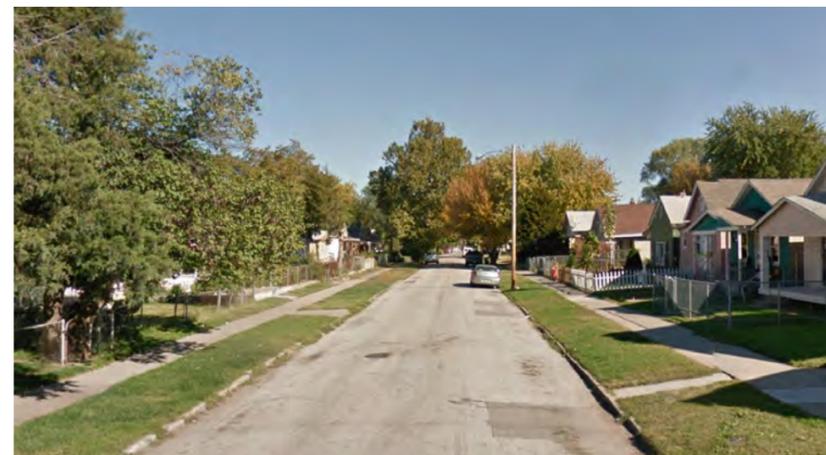
## TREE CANOPY

Kansas City, Kansas's tree canopy covers 24% of its land area, with particularly healthy canopies in central KCK and south of the Kaw River. Industrial areas, agricultural land, and commercial corridors represent most of the un-treed areas.

In Armourdale however, the tree canopy covers a paltry 1% of land area. Large, industrial footprints and railroads, as well as wide streets and large parking areas, have left little space for trees along the periphery. Most of the area's trees are within the residential neighborhood and along the Kansas River bank.



Above: Lack of trees along James Street in the West Bottoms (Google)

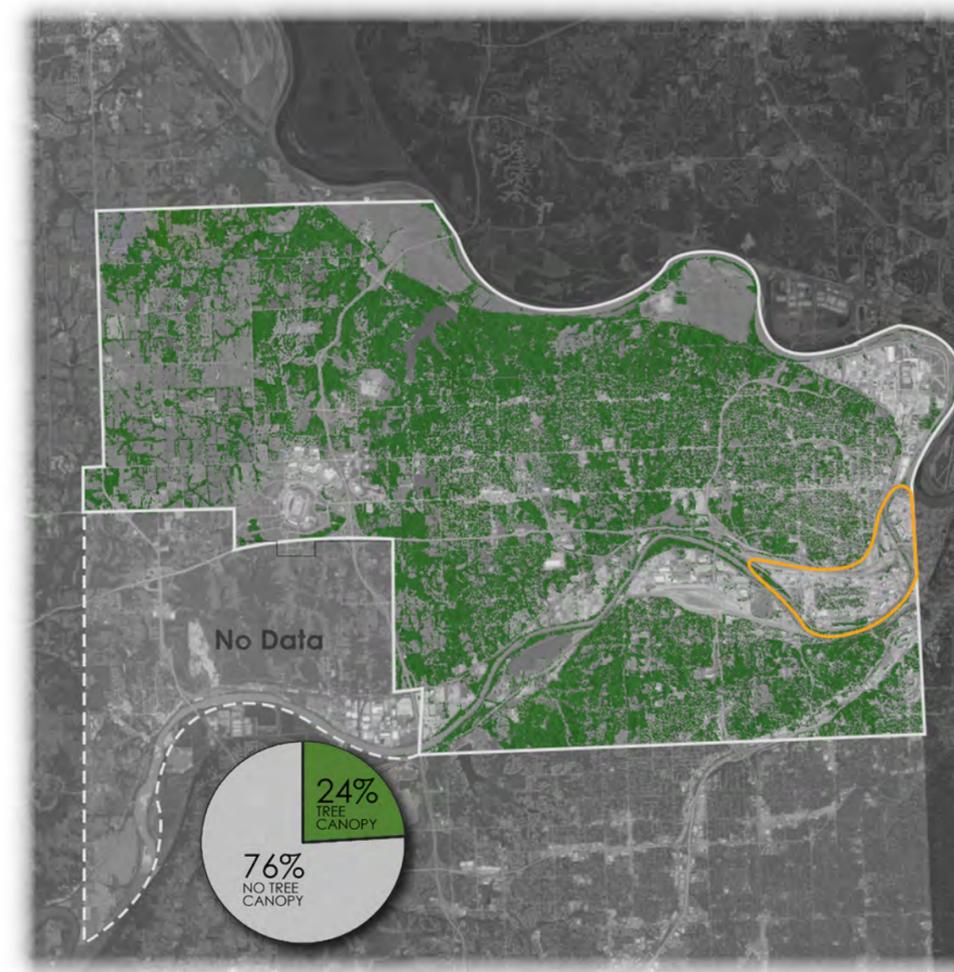


Above: Partial tree canopy along Shawnee Ave in the residential area of Armourdale (Google)



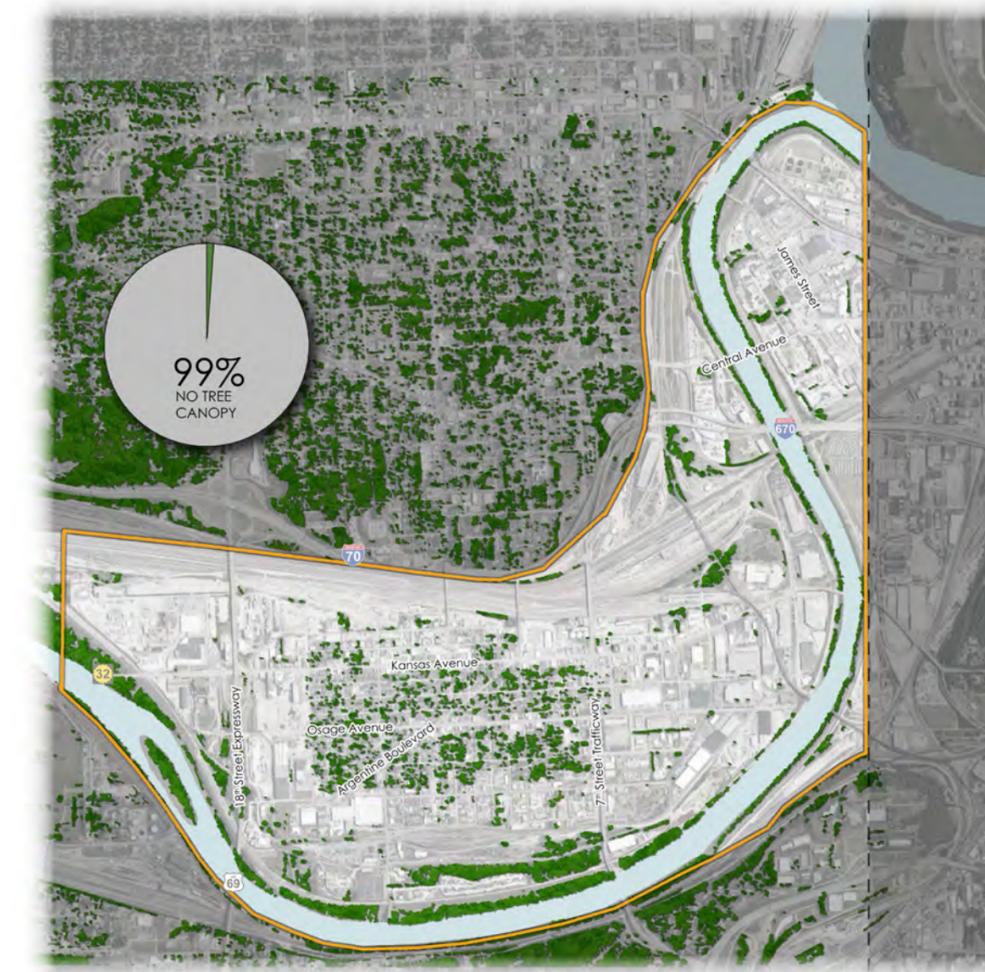
Above: Lack of trees along Osage Ave in Armourdale (Google)

Opposite: Comparing tree canopies in Kansas City, KS and Armourdale (Data: Kansas Department of Natural Resources)



Tree Canopy  
Kansas City, Kansas

■ TREE CANOPY  
■ ARMOURDALE



Tree Canopy  
Armourdale

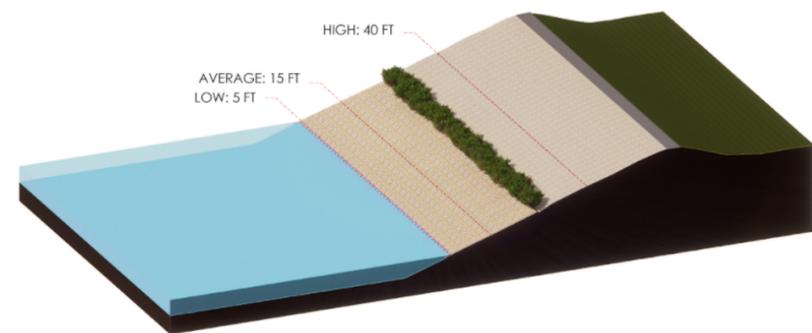
■ TREE CANOPY  
■ ARMOURDALE



## RIVER DEPTH AND FLOW RATE

The average depth of the Kansas River is 15 FT, but seasonal changes in the spring and summer can raise this level significantly.

The Missouri River flows more swiftly than its tributary, the Kaw. A slower flow rate makes the Kansas River more suitable for recreational activities such as boating and fishing.



Above: Diagram showing variability of river depth on the Kaw (KCDC)

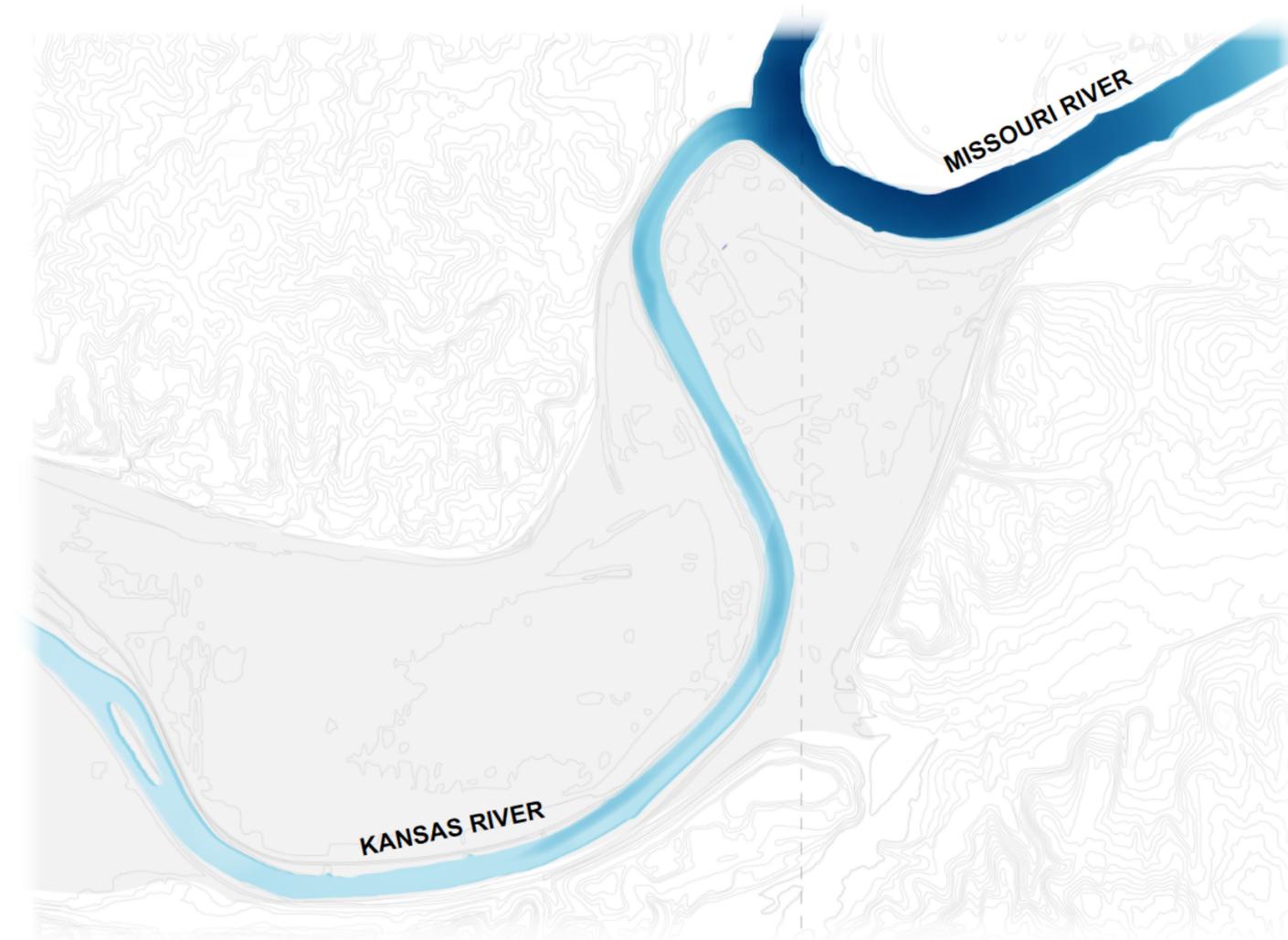


Above: Low water on the Kaw, looking upriver from the Central Ave Bridge in April 2015 (Google)



Above: High water on the Kaw, looking upriver from the Central Ave bridge in July 2011 (Google)

Opposite: Flow rates of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers (KCDC)



### ENVIRONMENTAL FLOW SPEED

Average October flow speed is 2,090 cubic feet per second at Desoto, Kansas (the nearest USGS streamflow station to this site). The Missouri River median flow rate for October is 48,00 cfs.

■ FASTER WATER FLOW  
■ SLOWER WATER FLOW



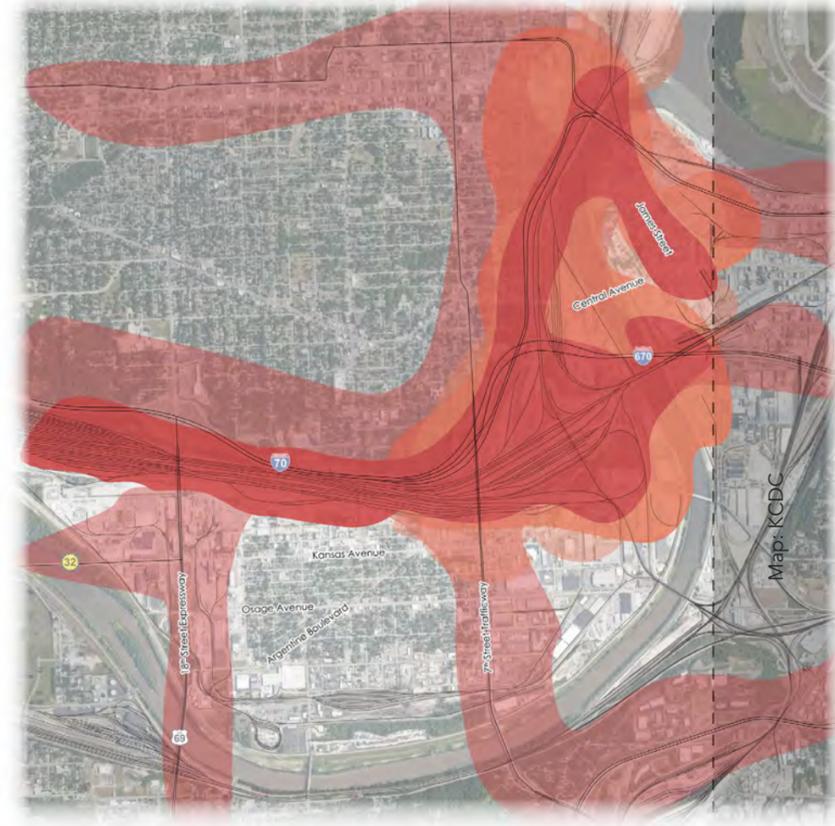
# AIR POLLUTION

Surrounding highway and railroad corridors are major contributors to air-quality degradation in Armourdale. This is particularly pronounced in the Historic West Bottoms.

Measures of aerosol particulate matter show significant levels corresponding with the areas of high air pollution. Higher levels of particulate matter in an area have been associated with more frequent incidents of chronic health conditions in nearby populations.



Above: Looking southwest, the rail-yards and highways that run through and around Armourdale are significant sources of air pollution. (Google)

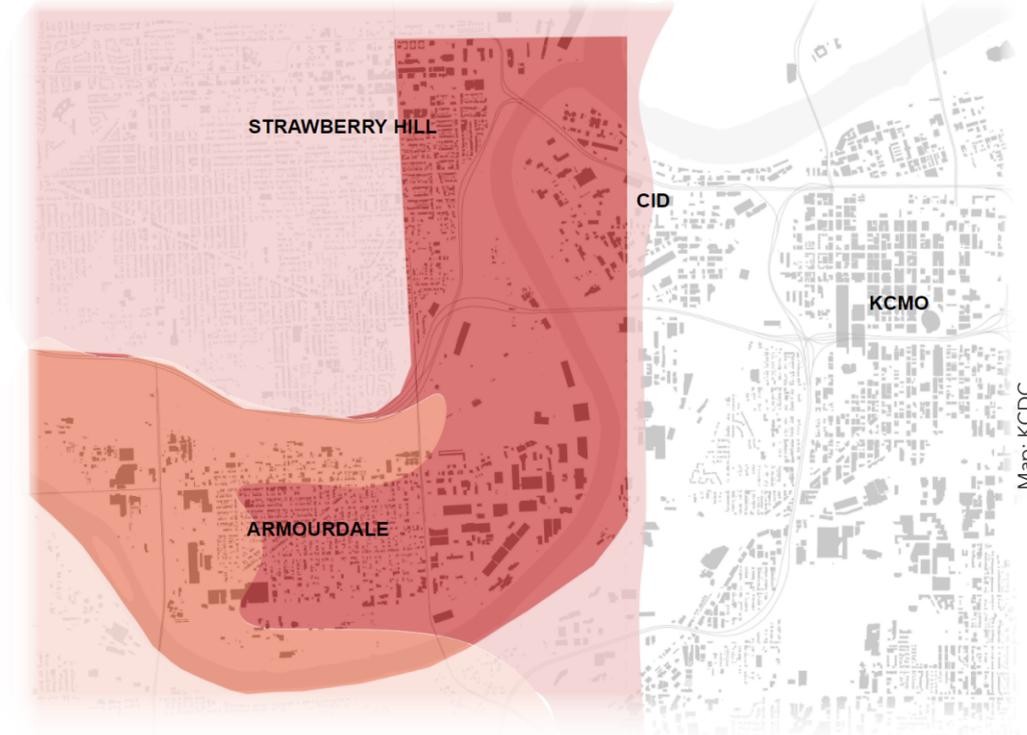


**Environment**  
Air Pollution

<b>HAZARDOUS AIR POLLUTANTS (HAP)</b> Includes: Benzene, Perchloroethylene, Methylene Chloride	<b>VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS</b> Includes: Lead, Mercury, Ethanol, Xylene, Formaldehyde	<b>HAZARDOUS AIR POLLUTANTS (HAP)</b>
<b>PARTICULATE MATTER</b> Includes: Dust, Pollen, Mold, Organic Compounds, Metals, Combustion Particles	<b>CARBON MONOXIDE</b> Includes: Vehicles, Power Plants, Off-road equipment	<b>VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS</b>
		<b>PARTICULATE MATTER</b>
		<b>CARBON MONOXIDE</b>



Map: KCDC

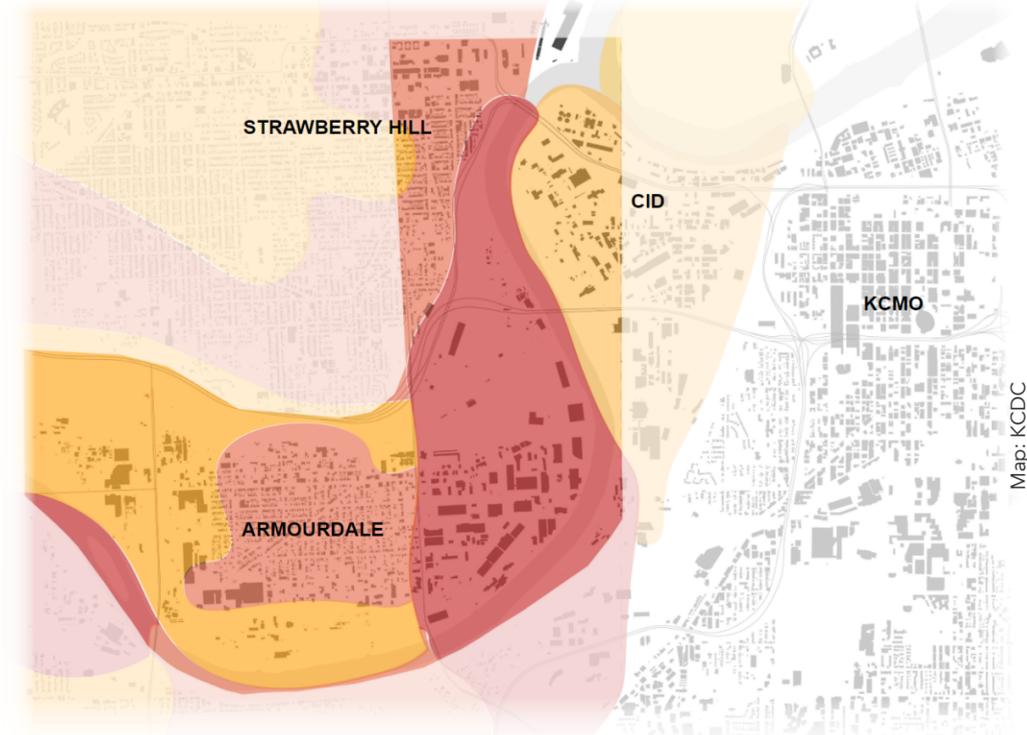


**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
POLLUTION: PARTICULATE MATTER

50 - 60 PERCENTILE	70 - 80 PERCENTILE
60 - 70 PERCENTILE	80 - 90 PERCENTILE
	90 - 95 PERCENTILE
	95 - 100 PERCENTILE



Map: KCDC



**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
POLLUTION: CANCER RISK

50 - 60 PERCENTILE	70 - 80 PERCENTILE
60 - 70 PERCENTILE	80 - 90 PERCENTILE
	90 - 95 PERCENTILE
	95 - 100 PERCENTILE



Map: KCDC

# WATER POLLUTION

The water quality of the Kansas River along the Armourdale bend has been severely compromised due to human activity. Industrial farming, outdated combined-sewer overflows and other harmful discharges occur along the length of the river. By the time its course reaches Kansas City, KS, the water contains high amounts of bacteria, suspended solids, and harmful nutrients. Aquatic life within the river has been degraded due to the poor water quality.

Upstream activity does not absolve Kansas City, KS of its own contributions to these unhealthy conditions. Much of the city relies on a combined sewer system that can expel household sewage into waterways during heavy precipitation events. Additionally, storm runoff that passes over industrial roadways in the river bottoms can carry harmful particulates and other pollutants, not to mention trash, into the river.



## URBAN FABRIC

A figure-ground analysis reveals a distinct pattern of structure size, with large, industrial building on the periphery and smaller commercial and residential structures on the interior. Also of note is the distinct boundary across 7<sup>th</sup> Street Trafficway, with industrial to the east and commercial and residential to the west. The figure-ground also shows the dominance of the railroad in the northeast of Armourdale where only a few industrial buildings are scattered amongst a tangle of rail lines.

In the Historic West Bottoms, there is a noticeable lack of structures immediately along the river. Much of that area is used for long-term storage of shipping containers, scrap metal, trailers, and rental equipment.

The street grid in Armourdale consists of two distinct patterns. First, the industrial areas of the district have large irregular blocks. This can be seen around the periphery of both Armourdale and the Central Industrial District. Secondly, the residential area of Armourdale has regular, gridded blocks. The notable exception to this compact grid system is Argentine Boulevard which, as a radial street, divides the residential area in two from northeast to southwest.

Another notable element of the street grid in Armourdale is how disconnected it is from the street grids of surrounding neighborhoods to the north, south and east. With only a few ways in or out of the area, Armourdale is isolated from its adjacent neighborhoods, the city and the region.



Urban Fabric  
Figure-ground



Circulation  
Street Grid

- ROAD NETWORK
- LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAY
- AREA WITH REGULAR STREET GRID
- AREA WITH IRREGULAR STREET GRID

## URBAN FABRIC

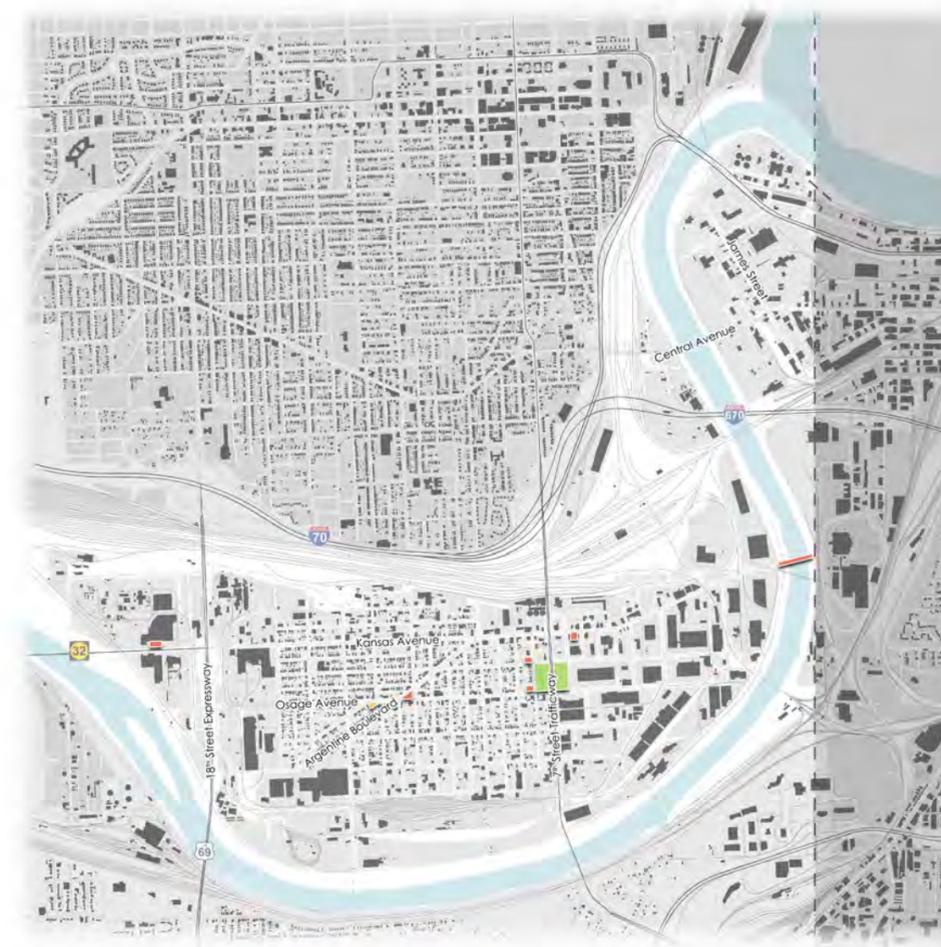
### HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Armourdale has only one building on the local historic registry, Fire Station No. 6, at 1103 Osage Ave. There are, however, other buildings and sites throughout Armourdale that may be eligible or worthy of the protections that come with historic designation. For example, cultural and commercial sites, such as the former St. Thomas Catholic Church at Shawnee Ave and Pyle Street or the Shankenbery building, the long-time location of the L.A. Hardware store, have been centers of activity for the Armourdale community for over a century. Other sites, such as the Procter & Gamble manufacturing facility and the Rock Island Railroad bridge, reflect the industrial character that has historically provided jobs to Armourdale residents. Many of the residential properties in Armourdale are also old enough to warrant historic recognition.

### PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC

Public facilities include fire stations, schools, parks and other institutions owned by the community through government entities like the Unified Government or the school districts. Examples of public facilities in Armourdale include John Fiske Elementary School and Fire Station No. 3 on Kansas Ave.

Semi-public facilities include churches and public-facing social welfare organizations. Argentine Blvd has a number of churches making it a hub of these facilities. The Crosslines complex on Shawnee is also a semi-public facility serving many people in need throughout the community.



**Land Use**  
Historic Properties

- PROPERTIES ON THE HISTORIC REGISTRY
- UNREGISTERED PROPERTIES WITH HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE
- SHAWNEE PARK



**Land Use**  
Public/Semi-Public Facilities

- SCHOOLS
- CHURCHES
- COMMUNITY CENTER
- PUBLIC PARKS
- FIRE STATION
- COMMUNITY OUTREACH/SUPPORT



## LAND USE

The map on this page as an approximation of historic land uses in Armourdale based on an analysis of pre 1950's maps. Comparing it with the map of existing land uses shows that industrial uses have encroached on formerly residential and commercial uses. This is particularly true east of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and north of Kansas Avenue. In the past, much more of Armourdale was used for residential and neighborhood-serving commercial purposes.

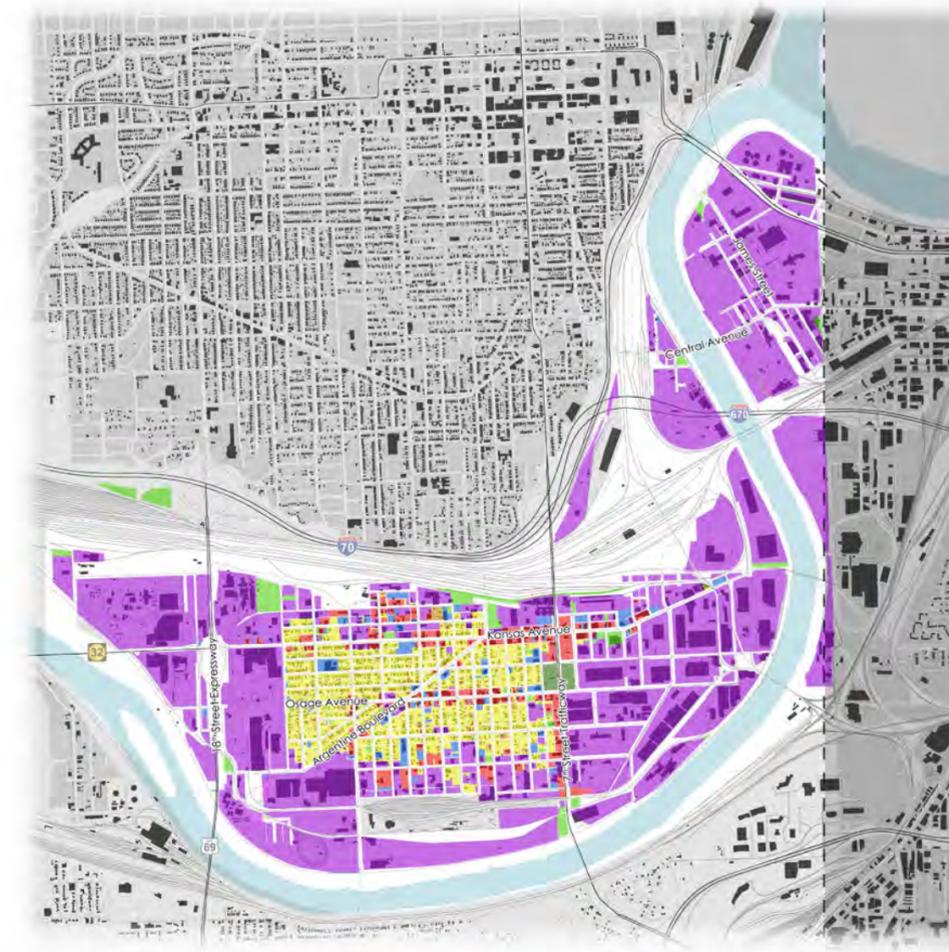
On the opposite page, land area in Armourdale can be seen to be dominated by industrial uses. The predominantly single-family home neighborhood in the center of Armourdale makes up the next largest land use category. The remainder of the land area is comprised of public or semi-public facilities and parks or green space.

Also on the opposite page is the current land use map, which shows existing land uses in the community, and the future land use map, which the Unified Government uses to guide development decisions for the area. The future land use map is the result of a previous planning process in Armourdale and will be updated when the current process is finalized.



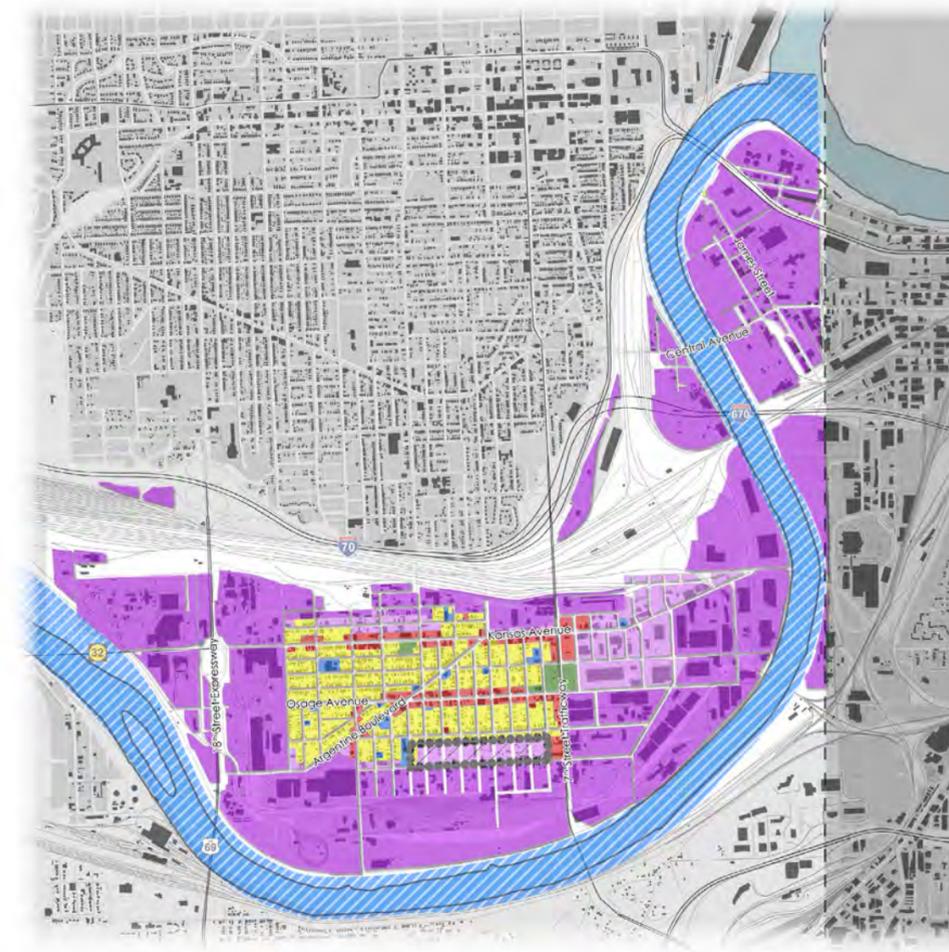
**Land Use**  
Historic Land Use

- RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARK



**Land Use**  
Existing Land Use

- COMMERCIAL/OFFICE
- INDUSTRIAL
- PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
- PARKS/OPEN SPACE
- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- AGRICULTURE/VACANT

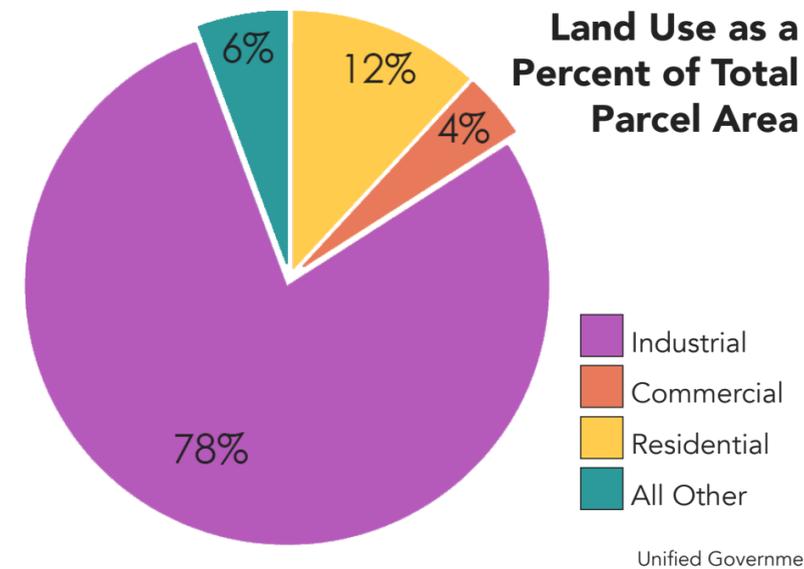


**Land Use**  
Future Land Use

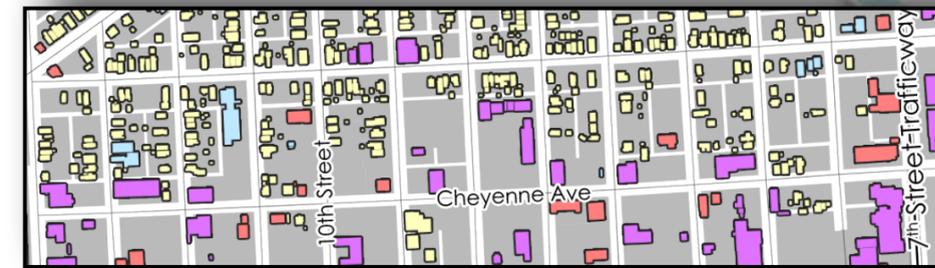
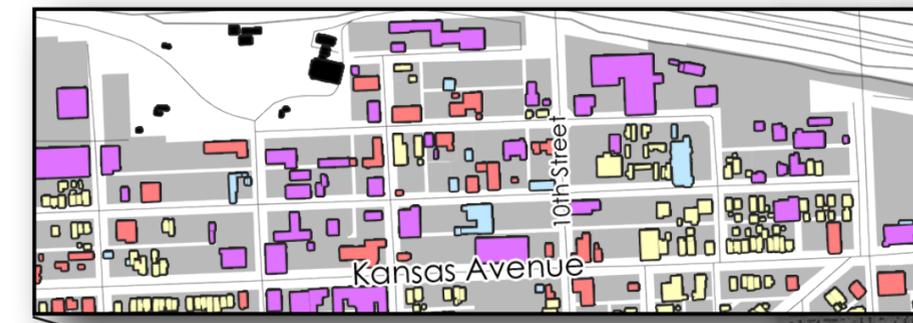
- COMMERCIAL
- HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- RESIDENTIAL
- PARK
- PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
- FLOODWAY
- SPECIAL CONDITIONS AREA

# LAND USE

Two areas within Armourdale have a conflicting mix of uses. Both show evidence of ill-defined boundaries between industrial, residential, and commercial uses. While mixed-use districts are not uncommon, the character of the industrial uses along these corridors may contribute to negative environmental factors for those living amongst them.



Unified Government



Above: Two areas of Armourdale reflect a conflicting mix of uses, the two call outs from this map show how industrial and residential uses are meshed together along Cheyenne Ave and north of Kansas Ave.

Land Use  
Land Use by Structure



Unified Government

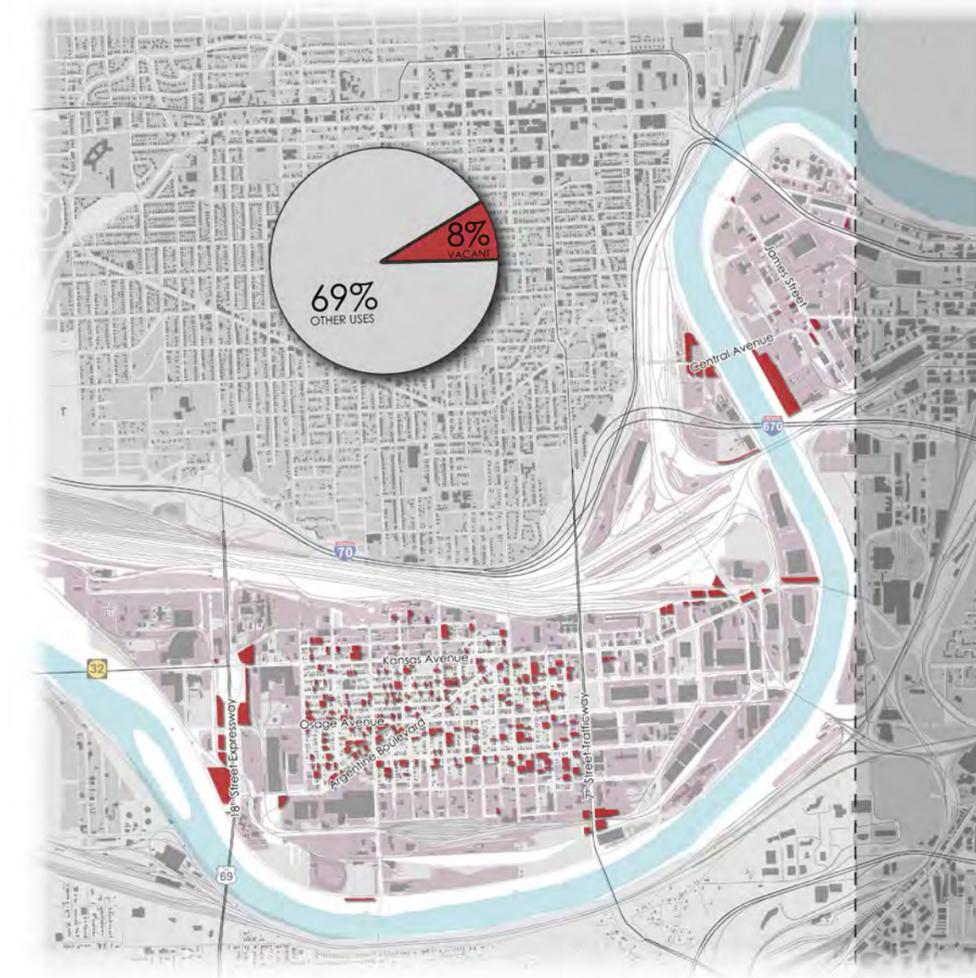
## LAND USE - UNDERUTILIZED PARCELS

8 percent of the land area in Armourdale is currently vacant or undeveloped. There is a particularly high concentration of vacant residential parcels spread evenly across the interior of Armourdale.

A significant portion of Armourdale consists of paved parking or storage areas. These areas may offer an opportunity for developing with higher-value uses by creating a more intensive use of the existing properties. An alternative to development would be to replace these paved areas with pervious surfaces that can soak up storm runoff and help reduce the burden on existing infrastructure.

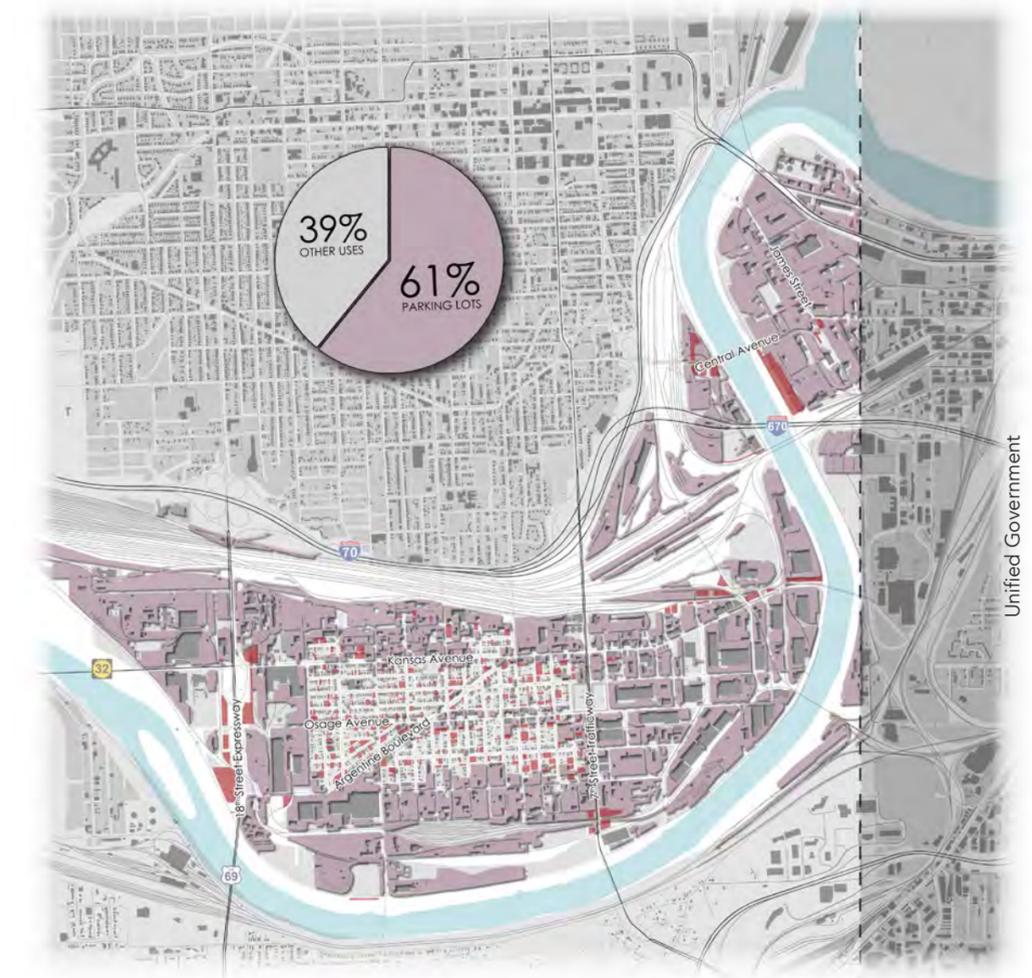


Above: This green infrastructure project, completed in 2020, replaced a large paved area in an industrial part of the Historic West Bottoms in Kansas City, MO. Converting some of the underutilized, impervious acreage in Armourdale in a similar fashion could help relieve storm water issues and provide the community with a new outdoor amenity. (KCMO)



**Land Use**  
Underutilized Parcels - Vacant

VACANT  
PARKING LOTS



**Land Use**  
Underutilized Parcels - Parking

VACANT  
PARKING LOTS

## TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS

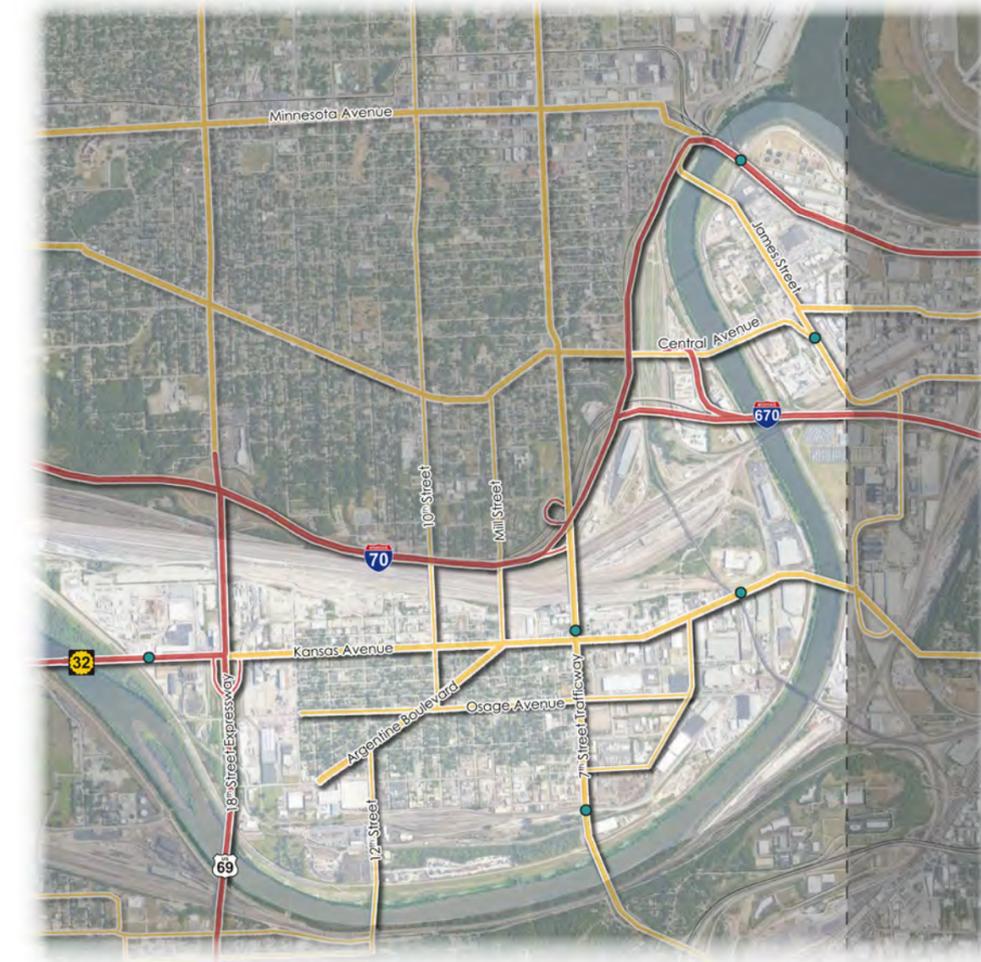
Armourdale is well served by multiple highways. These include Interstates 70 and 670, U.S. Highway 69, and State Highway 32. Each of these highways offers access to other nearby interstates within a few miles of Armourdale. These other highways include Interstates 35, 635, and 29. This convenient highway access has contributed to the popularity of Armourdale as a hub for distribution-related industrial uses.

The primary roadways providing access to Armourdale are 7<sup>th</sup> Street Trafficway, 18<sup>th</sup> Street Expressway, Kansas Avenue, and Central Avenue. Of these 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Kansas Avenue are major commercial corridors. The 18<sup>th</sup> Street Expressway is an elevated, limited-access highway with one exit (at Kansas Ave) serving Armourdale. Minor roadways providing access to the area include James Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Street, and Mill Street. Osage Avenue and Argentine Boulevard are minor arterials with moderate commercial uses.

Transit service in Armourdale is managed by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) under the RideKC brand and includes five (5) existing bus routes. Two (2) of these, Routes 118 and 595, are commuter routes with few stops and infrequent service. There are no east-west routes through Armourdale. A route along Kansas Avenue, however, is in the planning stages at the KCATA. Paratransit is available for those who qualify, Monday-Friday, by appointment, through the RideKC Freedom program.

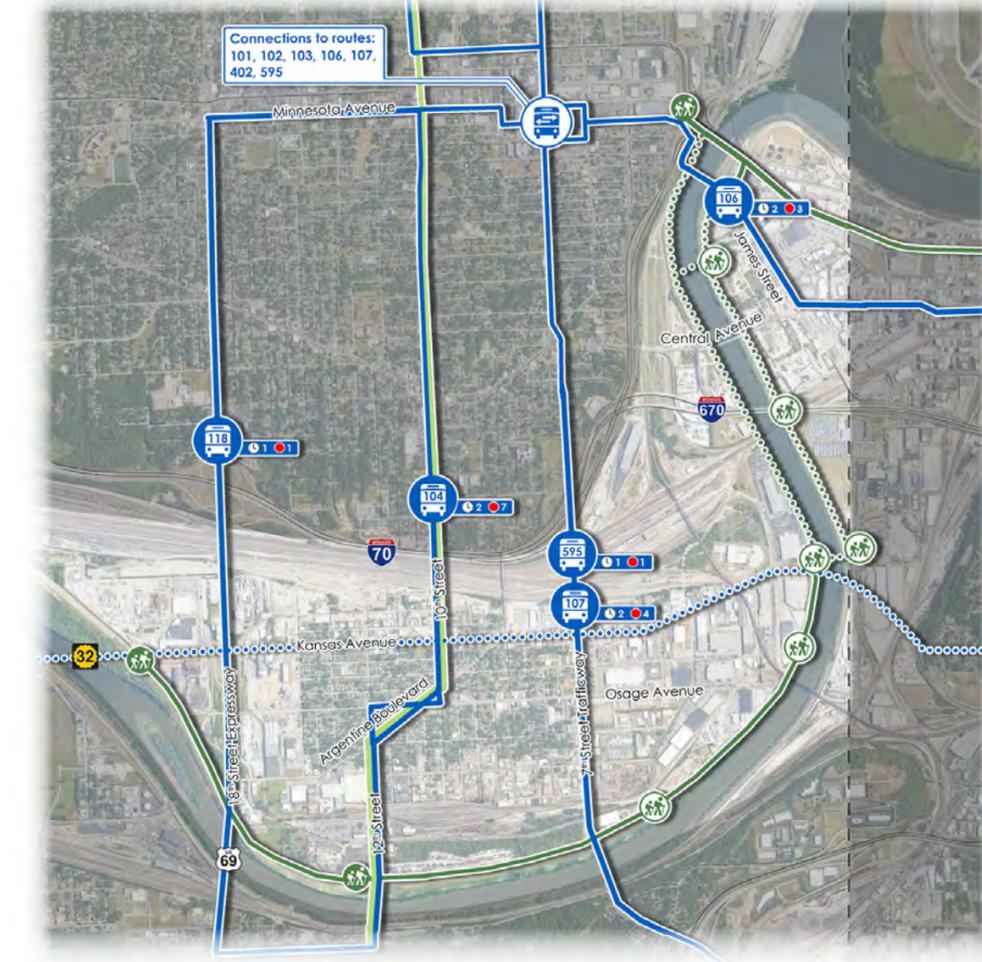
Portions of 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Argentine Boulevard, and 12<sup>th</sup> Street have marked bike lanes creating a continuous route connecting Armourdale to the north and south.

Two (2) multi-use trails serve Armourdale, the Armourdale Levy Trail, which follows the arc of the levy around southern Armourdale, and the Riverfront Heritage Trail which connects downtown Kansas City, Kansas to Kansas City, Missouri through the Historic West Bottoms. Past plans have called for continuing the levy trail northward, creating a connection with the Riverfront Heritage Trail near the James Street bridge. The Rock Island Bridge proposal will create a river crossing for the Levy Trail, just north of Kansas Ave.



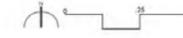
**Circulation**  
Corridors + Gateways

- HIGHWAY CORRIDORS
- LOCAL CORRIDORS
- GATEWAYS



**Circulation**  
Bus Routes + Bike Lanes + Trails

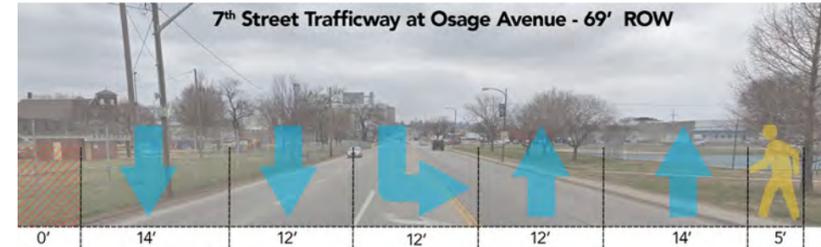
- RIDEKC BUS ROUTES
- ⋯ FUTURE BUS ROUTES (KC SMART MOVES)
- NUMBER OF STOPS IN ARMOURDALE
- 🕒 BUSES PER HOUR (PEAK TIME)
- BIKE LANES
- MULTI-USE TRAILS
- PLANNED MULTI-USE TRAILS
- 🚶 EXISTING TRAILHEADS
- 🚶 PLANNED TRAILHEADS



## TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS

Historically, Armourdale was an east-west community oriented along Kansas Ave until construction of the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Trafficway (1933) and the 18<sup>th</sup> Street Expressway (1953) re-oriented the primary paths through Armourdale along a north-south axis. The area became better connected to areas of KCK south of the Kansas River and north to downtown. Shawnee Park was split down the middle by the new 7<sup>th</sup> Street Trafficway and thru-traffic increased dramatically. The elevated roadway of the 18<sup>th</sup> Street Expressway only offers one connection to Armourdale, at Kansas Avenue.

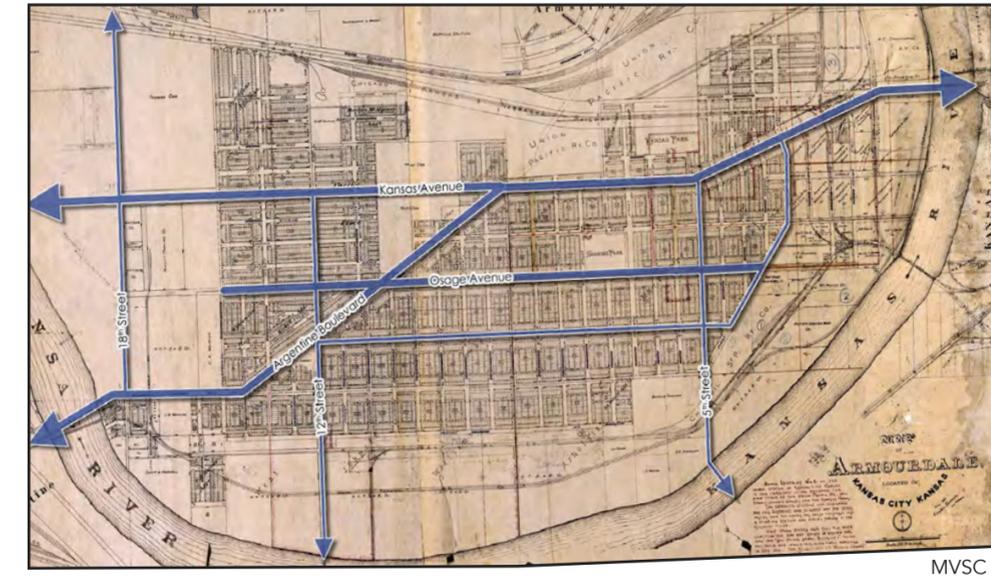
Over time, corridors that were once navigated by pedestrians and streetcars, carrying workers to their jobs and shoppers to commercial districts in downtown KCK, were widened to accommodate ever larger amounts of industrial traffic. Now, the wide, multi-lane thoroughfares of Kansas Ave and 7<sup>th</sup> Street Trfwy can be a harsh environment for anyone not inside a car.



Above: 7<sup>th</sup> Street Trfwy has two, wide, driving lanes in each direction and a center turn-lane. Sidewalks on 7<sup>th</sup> Street can be difficult to navigate. In one stretch, pedestrians must cross the street for one block, and then cross back to the other side, just to stay on the sidewalk.



Above: Kansas Ave has wide sidewalks in some locations but they are found inconsistently and some stretches have no sidewalk at all. At 12<sup>th</sup> street, only the centerline of the roadway is marked, leaving drivers to speculate on the width or number of lanes. Further east, Kansas Ave has clearer markings and turn lanes, but without a consistent approach, navigation on the corridor can be confusing.



Transportation  
Axial Orientation - 1900



Transportation  
Axial Orientation - 2020

## PEDESTRIAN CORRIDORS

Most residential streets through Armourdale are served by alleyways. These may offer alternative pedestrian paths or sites for green infrastructure. A block-by-block survey of alley conditions could help determine their future uses or potential improvements.

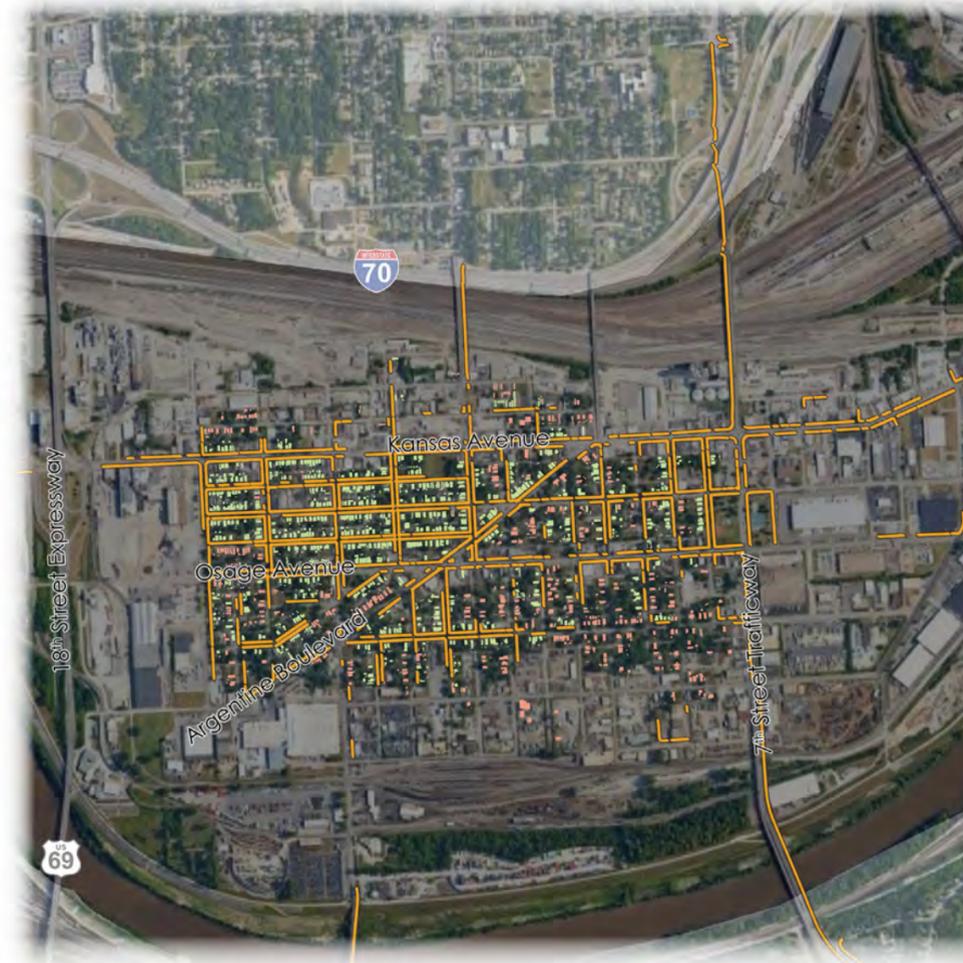
Sidewalk access into Armourdale is more limited than motor vehicle access. The general lack of connectivity with other neighborhoods is exacerbated for the pedestrian. Most viaducts in and out of the area have narrow sidewalks, some have a concrete barrier protecting them from traffic, but most do not. Some major gateways have no sidewalks or sidewalks that are so neglected that they've become impassable. These include 18<sup>th</sup> Street and the eastern bridge of Kansas Avenue.

Within Armourdale, residential areas to the northwest are well served by sidewalk connections. Sidewalk access is spotty to the southeast of the residential area and nearly non-existent east of 7<sup>th</sup> Street in the predominantly industrial area. Pedestrian infrastructure in the Historic West Bottoms has been similarly neglected.



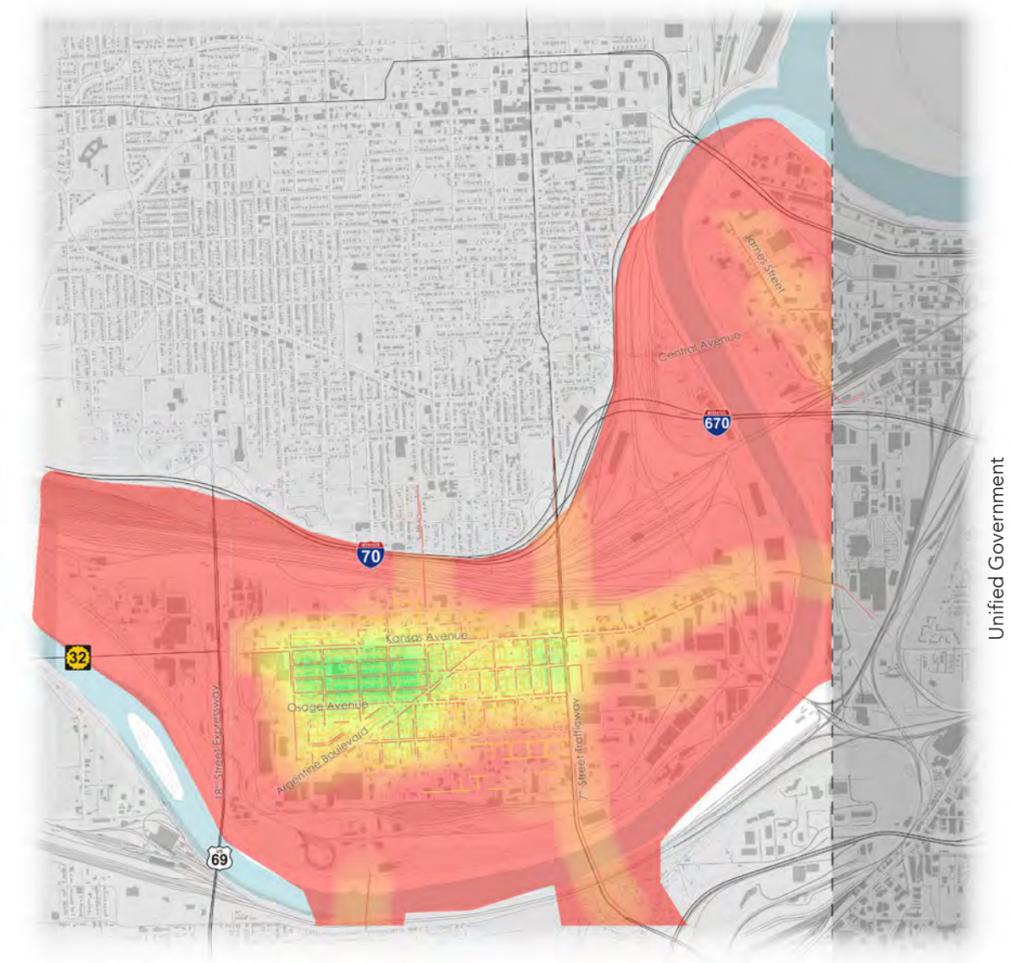
**Circulation**  
Alleyways

— ALLEYWAYS  
BUILDINGS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES  
— WITH SIDEWALKS  
— WITHOUT SIDEWALKS



**Circulation**  
Sidewalks

— SIDEWALKS  
BUILDINGS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES  
— WITH SIDEWALKS  
— WITHOUT SIDEWALKS



**Circulation**  
Sidewalk Density

FEWER SIDEWALKS  
— SIDEWALKS  
— ALLEYWAYS  
MORE SIDEWALKS



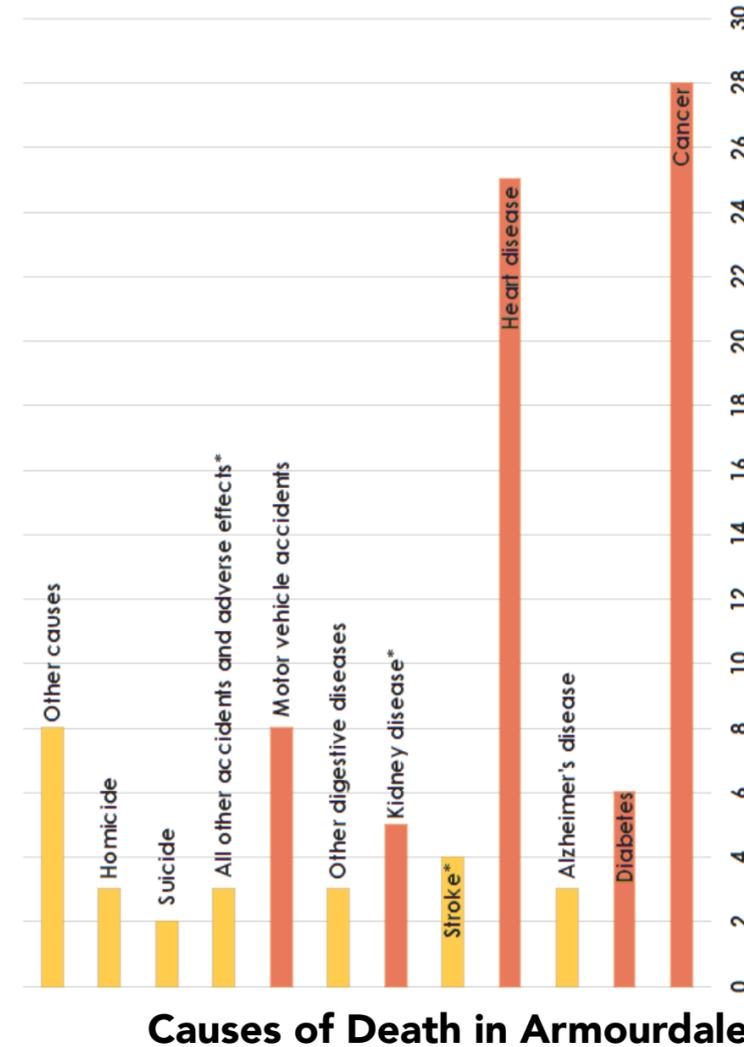
## PUBLIC HEALTH

From 2015-2019 the leading causes of death in Armourdale were cancer and heart disease. High rates of motor vehicle fatalities, kidney disease, and diabetes are also cause for concern.

Data from the Center for Disease Control shows that people living in Armourdale fare poorly on a number of health metrics when compared to other places in the country.

High rates of preventable conditions and low frequencies of treatment may indicate a lack of access to regular health services. The high percentage of adults without healthcare contributes to this inequity.

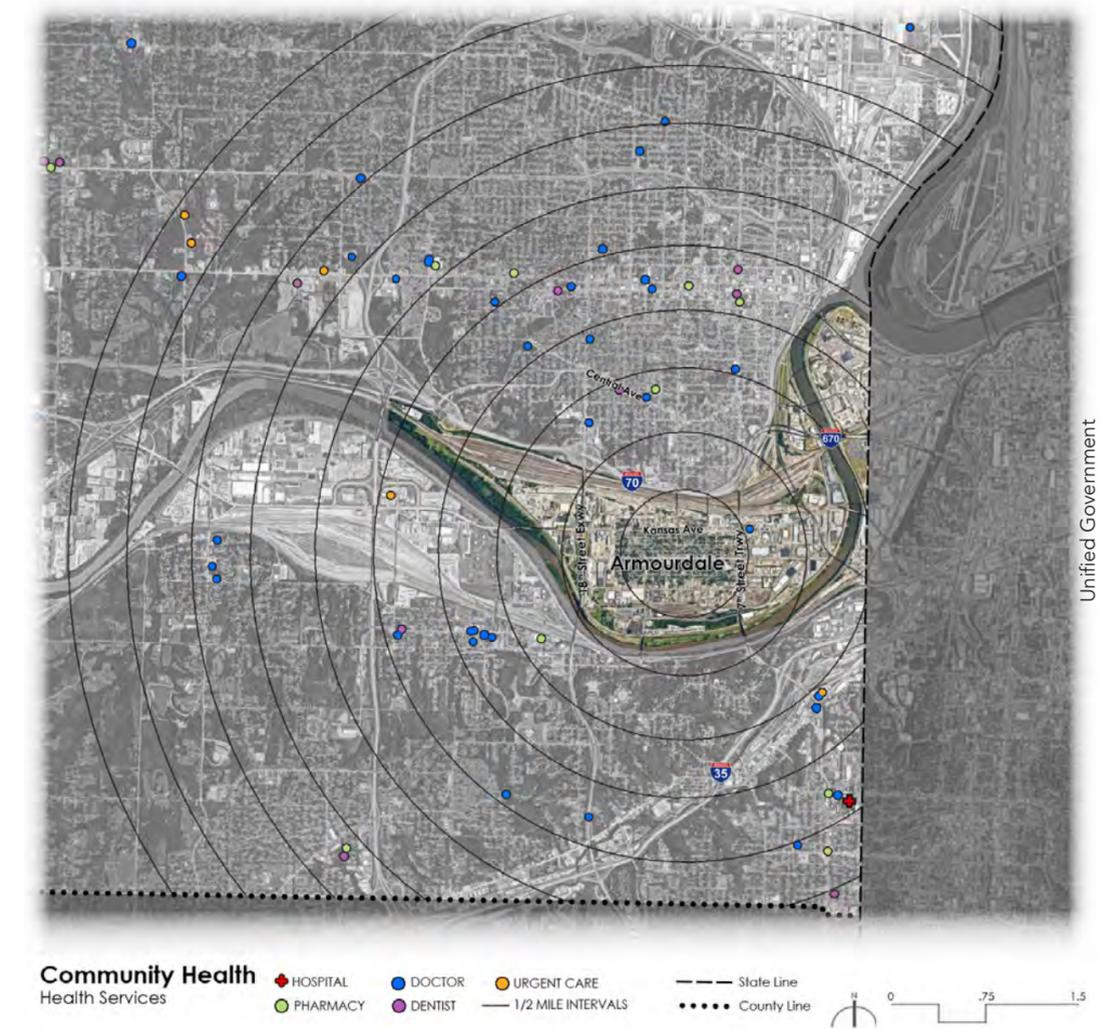
There are virtually no health services within Armourdale and the disconnected street network exacerbates the distance to nearby providers.



Category	Indicator	Value
Health/Access to Health Services	Adults who have had a Routine Checkup	60.20%
	Adults without Health Insurance	40.80%
Health/Cancer	Adults with Cancer	4.60%
	Colon Cancer Screening	44.10%
	Mammogram in Past 2 Years: 50-74	69%
	Pap Test in Past 3 Years: 21-65	75.40%
	Adults with Diabetes	13.80%
Health/Diabetes	Adults with Diabetes	13.80%
Health/Disabilities	Persons with a Disability (5-year)	14.60%
Health/Exercise, Nutrition, & Weight	Adults who are Obese	40.90%
	Adults who are Sedentary	45.60%
Health/Heart Disease & Stroke	Adults who Experienced a Stroke	3.50%
	Adults who Experienced Coronary Heart Disease	6.90%
	Adults who Have Taken Medications for High Blood Pressure	66.30%
	Cholesterol Test History	64.70%
	High Blood Pressure Prevalence	33.60%
	High Cholesterol Prevalence: Adults 18+	33.80%
	Poor Mental Health: 14+ Days	17.80%
Health/Mental Health & Mental Disorders	Adults 65+ who Received Recommended Preventive Services: Females	19.20%
	Adults 65+ who Received Recommended Preventive Services: Males	23.70%
	Adults with Arthritis	21.60%
Health/Older Adults & Aging	Adults 65+ with Total Tooth Loss	29.30%
	Adults who Visited a Dentist	40%
Health/Oral Health	Adults with Kidney Disease	3.50%
Health/Other Chronic Diseases	Adults with COPD	8.10%
	Adults with Current Asthma	10.20%
Health/Respiratory Diseases	Adults who Binge Drink	17.50%
	Adults who Smoke	28.10%
Health/Substance Abuse	Insufficient Sleep	37.10%
	Life Expectancy	72
	Poor Physical Health: 14+ Days	17.50%

Source: CDC-500 Cities Project (2016-2017)

- Armourdale ranks in the top 50% of US Census Tracts
- Armourdale ranks in the bottom 50% of US Census Tracts
- Armourdale ranks in the bottom 25% of US Census Tracts



**Community Health Health Services**

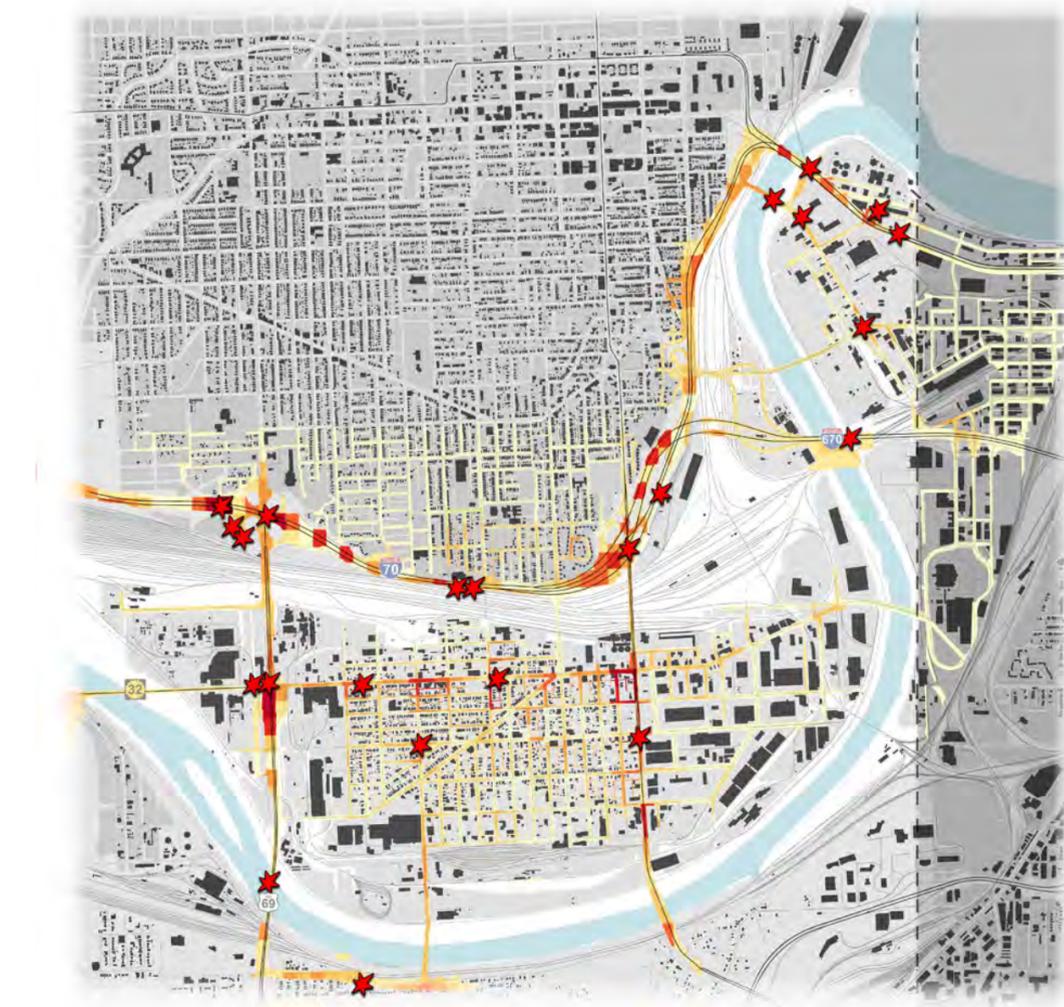
- HOSPITAL (Red dot)
- DOCTOR (Blue dot)
- URGENT CARE (Yellow dot)
- PHARMACY (Green dot)
- DENTIST (Purple dot)
- 1/2 MILE INTERVALS (Concentric circles)
- Slate Line (Dashed line)
- County Line (Dotted line)

Scale: 0, .75, 1.5 miles

## TRAFFIC CRASHES

Armourdale has a number of areas with high frequencies of traffic crashes. The 18th Street Expressway and I-70 both have a frequent crash occurrences at major interchanges. Within the interior of Armourdale, the intersections along 7th Street and those along Kansas Avenue all have more crash occurrences than other areas.

With motor vehicle crashes being the number 3 cause of death for Armourdale residents, reducing the number of crashes in and around the neighborhood should be a public health priority.



**Car Crash Density**  
2010-2020



## History: City Within a City, 1919

In 1919, Manuel C. Elmer and a group of student researchers from the University of Kansas conducted their own existing conditions investigation in Armourdale. They published the results of their study in the *Bulletin of the University of Kansas as Armourdale: A City Within a City*. This report is a unique glimpse into an early planning project and contains valuable data and anecdotes that can be used to compare conditions in the neighborhood over time. While the methodology and biases of the time would be unreliable and misguided by today's standards, there is still valuable information to be mined from that document.

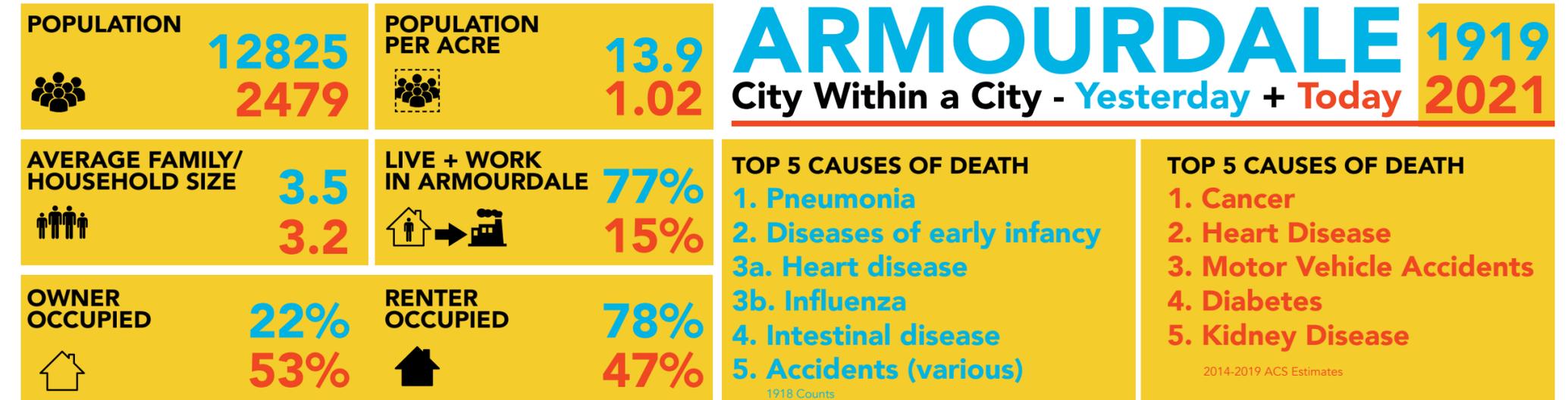
Despite being published 100 years ago, there are many parallels to today. The 1918 Influenza Pandemic is frequently mentioned and the anxieties it produced are evident in the report's focus on health and sanitation. The handling of food and water are examined in detail, as are the poor handling of refuse and waste. The report found the availability of clean water and food adequate, but encouraged the community to connect all homes to the sanitary sewer and create a system to remove waste from alleyways. Given the ongoing fight with COVID-19 global pandemic, we might draw comparisons in their observations and critiques.

Insufficient storm water management has inundated the area with regular flooding for over 100 years. Beyond the dramatic, and rare, over-topping of levies, the area has long dealt with less significant flooding during moderate storms. The 1919 report mentions that flooding occurs with each storm because the existing sewer infrastructure is overwhelmed, a condition that today's Armourdale residents are all too familiar with. The report also notes that, given the low number of property owners in the area, their needs are likely to be neglected. Today, with an even smaller, and largely minority or immigrant community, there is even less political

power to find a solution to the storm-water issue.

The document also draws frequent distinctions between "native-born" euro-Americans, Black residents, and recently arrived immigrants. At one point an anonymous realtor is quoted... "*The west of the tracks (a former streetcar line on 7th) is restricted against negroes and Mexicans. The inhabitants point to this with pride.*" This quote is just one of many that represents the common view at the time that living amongst black and brown people was an unwelcome circumstance. The biased and discriminatory commentary regarding recent arrivals and other minority groups is indicative of people's attitudes at the time but can also highlight the neglect of the community in more recent history. If Armourdale's current residents weren't largely a community of latinx immigrants, would they be burdened with the inadequate infrastructure and high levels of environmental pollutants that plague the area?

Other aspects of Armourdale have changed a great deal. Nearly half of the residential area of 1919 is gone, replaced by an expansion of industrial facilities after the great flood of 1951. The loss of housing predictably coincided with a declining population. Today's population is just 1/5 that of 1919. The KU report counted 29 factories in the district in 1919. Today, there are 353 parcels with industrial land uses and, while industrial parcels and factories are not an exact comparison, the extremity between the numbers does seem to imply a marked increase from the past.



Comparing contemporary data with information from the 1919 report must be done with the caveat that methodologies, definitions and estimations are quite different today than they were then. While these kinds of comparisons would be irresponsible in a scientific or academic analysis, they are used here to highlight extreme changes or consistencies that might be worth further examination.

Methods for calculating population statistics have changed little and can be assumed to be relatively reliable. By all accounts, the population in Armourdale is known to have shrunk dramatically. The data points above on population and population density illustrate this fact. Those same population statistics show that Armourdale household sizes have changed very little. So, despite the steep population decline, Armourdale has remained a community of small families.

The number of renter and owner occupied homes has also changed dramatically. Some of this can be attributed to the decline of single-room occupancy residency units. These units, often called boarding or rooming houses are mentioned frequently in the City Within a City document and were popular with single laborers who worked in the factories of Armourdale.

## History: Redlining and Urban Renewal

Other aspects of Armourdale have changed a great deal. Nearly half of the residential area of 1919 is gone, replaced by an expansion of industrial facilities after the great flood of 1951. The loss of housing predictably coincided with a declining population. Today's population is just 1/5 that of 1919. The KU report counted 29 factories in the district in 1919. Today, there are 353 parcels with industrial land uses and, while industrial parcels and factories are not an exact comparison, the extremity between the numbers does seem to imply a marked increase from the past.

This transition of space from residential to industrial uses did not occur by accident. It was the result of public policy choices that explicitly devalued land occupied by minority communities. Evidence of this process is seen as early as 1919 in the *Armourdale: City Within a City* document. The restrictions that concentrated minority groups east of 7<sup>th</sup> Street prevented white and minority communities from integrating, leaving the disadvantaged group as a target of powerful interests. In the 1930's, the Home Owner's Loan Corporation used concentrations of minority populations to label neighborhoods as unworthy of federally-backed home loans. This process, now known as red-lining, made it impossible for residents in red-lined neighborhoods to access lending for the purchase or upkeep of their homes. Without access to capital, home values collapsed and property conditions deteriorated. The flood in 1951 was the nail in the coffin for the community. Flood damage was noted as being particularly devastating east of 7<sup>th</sup> and residents there were still being denied the kind of lending necessary to recover.

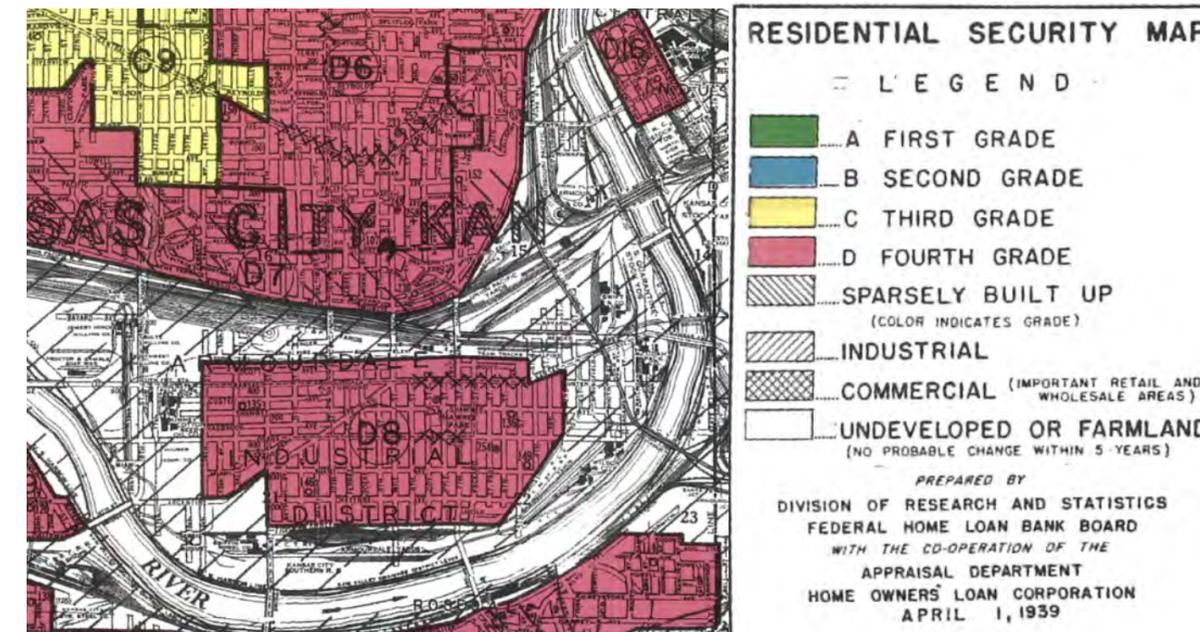
This devastation created an opportunity for the municipal government and the business interests that backed it. With property values bottoming

out, remaining residents were bought out at bargain prices and most of Armourdale, east of 7<sup>th</sup> was designated as an urban renewal zone. Urban renewal was a set of policies developed by urban planners in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These policies called for the clearing of large areas of urban land and re-developing it for "higher and better uses". According to a document published by the KCK Urban Renewal Agency in the 1960's, 139 families and individuals were forced to relocate, leaving 60 acres vacant for redevelopment.

A 1948 Supreme Court Case had invalidated the enforceability of racially restrictive covenants, so some displaced residents may have remained in Armourdale, west of 7<sup>th</sup>. However, the large community of Mexican immigrants that was forced out had to rebuild businesses, church communities, and other aspects of their civic wealth and social cohesion.

Opposite: Left: HOLC "redlining" map with key and area description of Armourdale. (Mapping Inequality)

Right: An advertisement from the Kansas City Star inviting development during the Urban Renewal period. (Midcontinent Public Library)



Armourdale, residential section of the large industrial district surrounding it. Prior to 1903 it was an attractive community of well kept homes, when the flood of that year inundated most of them. Since that time there have been no new homes erected and the community has drifted to an unsightly and ill-kept neighborhood housing industrial workers entirely, including a sprinkling of foreigners of the lower income brackets and many Mexicans. The outer fringe, south of Miami and east of Packard, is virtually a slum section of old-run shacks. Negroes are found in the north portion. Considered as a whole, a cheap industrial workers' area. Armourdale has good schools, all utilities, a large business district and good transportation facilities to Kansas City, Kansas, proper and to Kansas City, Missouri. Seventh Street Trafficway is the principal artery north and south. Demand for property is governed by industrial employment. Although houses are in poor repair, it would be poor business to rehabilitate institutionally-owned homes.

Locate for Profit

In the Strategic Geographical Center of Metropolitan Kansas City!

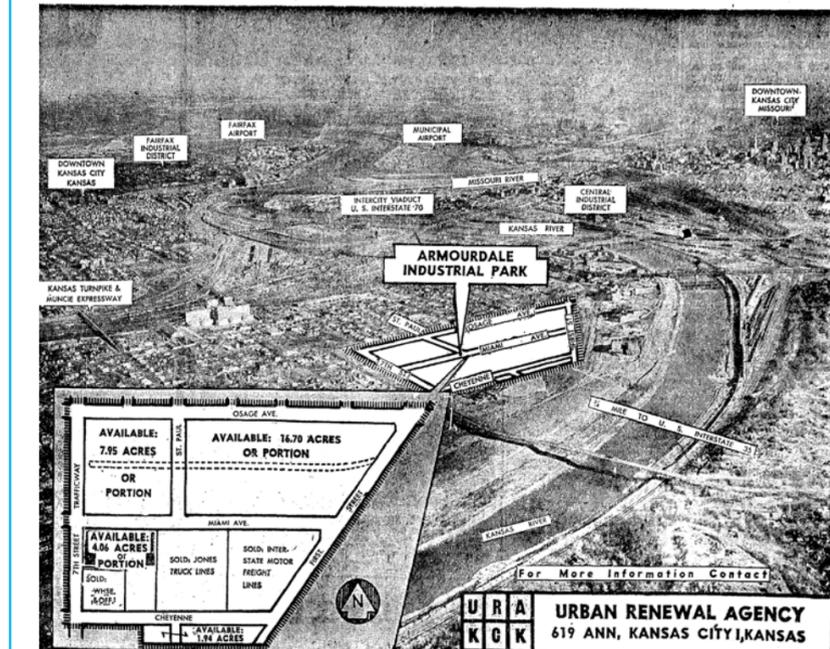
in **ARMOURDALE INDUSTRIAL PARK . . .**

a 60-Acre Planned Area Featuring

- Protective covenants assuring attractive development and creating long-term investment protection
- Street and utilities designed for industry
- Rail facilities

Current Land Purchases have been made by the Following:

- Interstate Motor Freight System (Truck Terminal)
- Jones Truck Lines (Truck Terminal)
- Pacific Coast Realty Corp. of Delaware (Lessee: Weather-Tite Corp. for Warehouse & Office)
- Sites Available from 10,000 sq. ft. to 31.80 Acres in size.



## APPENDIX 3

- |            |                                                                                                                 |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Appendix 1 | Master Plan Task 1 Site Analysis Report - Sepember 14th, 2021<br><i>Including Full Community Survey Results</i> |
| Appendix 2 | UG Existing Conditions Report - April 29th, 2021                                                                |
| Appendix 3 | Clear Air Now Report - May 2021                                                                                 |

## *CleanAirNow* Environmental Justice Recommendations:

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*Comments on the*  
**Armourdale General Plan**

*May 2021*

*CleanAirNow*  
**Environmental Justice  
Recommendations:**

**Comments on the  
Armourdale General Plan**

**May 2021**



May 2021

Gunnar Hand  
Director of Planning  
Unified Government of Wyandotte County  
Kansas City KS

**RE: Recommendations and Comments on the Armourdale General Plan**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Armourdale General Plan. CleanAirNow is an environmental justice organization focused on air pollution in the Kansas City area. We work closely with fence-line communities to address concerns about noise, odors, toxic releases and other environmental exposures from the many and varied industrial facilities in and around Kansas City.

We would like to raise concerns and provide our expertise on the environmental exposures experienced by residents of the Armourdale Community in relation to the Armourdale General Plan.

In general, CleanAirNow would like to emphasize the following concerns with more detailed recommendations to be found in the attached document:

1. CleanAirNow considers Armourdale an environmental justice community. The history and disproportionate impacts of pollution on brown, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) and low income communities living in Armourdale needs to be considered in Armourdale's General Plan.
2. Public participation is key to democracy as well as the achievement of environmental justice. A formal public participation process should be established and implemented for the Armourdale General Plan.
3. The cumulative impacts of the various pollutants and environmental exposures experienced in the Armourdale community must be considered in the Armourdale General Plan.
4. Through the Armourdale General Plan, Armourdale must establish goals of reducing pollution, reforming land use, and addressing the impacts of heavy truck traffic to advance environmental justice.
5. In every aspect of the Armourdale General Plan, health, climate change and the climate vulnerability of residents must be considered.

The Armourdale General Plan will be insufficient and incomplete without the input of community organizations and without considering the myriad, cumulative exposures experienced by the Armourdale community. Please see below for our full comment on the Armourdale General Plan and what needs to be considered for the future wellbeing of the community and the city. We have also attached relevant and pertinent literature for your review.

Sincerely



Beto Lugo Martinez  
CleanAirNow

cc: Kimberly Portillo

**Acknowledgements**

**Armourdale General Plan Recommendation: While we conducted the research for and writing of this report, we took a collaborative approach that included community members voices and organization partners in the design and draft review, to the completion of the report. The following are experts who provided and contributed to this report:**

**Brian Schath CleanAirNow, Beto Lugo Martinez CleanAirNow,  
California Environmental Justice Alliance [\\*SB 1000 Toolkit: Planning for Healthy Communities](#),  
Genna Reed Union of Concerned Scientists, Casey Kalman Union of Concerned Scientists,  
Elizabeth Friedman MD. MPH, Ivonne Gutierrez Genesis Child Care, Emily Olack  
H.E.A.T Report of the Community Health Council, Elaine Geissel  
Lourdes Vera Co-Coordinator @ [EDGI Environmental Data & Governance Initiative](#)  
[scican.org](#) [Science & Community Action Network](#)**

**Special Thanks to Armourdale Community Air Monitor Hosts**

**Louise Lynch  
Ivonne Gutierrez  
Unified Government**

**Photo Credit**

**Armourdale Resident Sarah  
Google Image with Resident Consent  
Beto/CleanAirNow**

**Infographic Outreach Material**

**Ashley Jones**

**Disclaimer**

**This report was not funded or guided by any agency, CleanAirNow does not endorse the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, or any local, county, state or federal government.**

**This Report is Available in Spanish.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

As the Armourdale General Plan steering committee works to develop a plan for the future of the neighborhood, CleanAirNow seeks to inform the plan with additional context related to our work.

### ***About CleanAirNow***

CleanAirNow is a grassroots environmental justice organization in Kansas City, and was initiated by community concerns around chemical industrial pollution, diesel emissions, hazardous toxic waste and environmental health inequities at the fenceline. From the start, CleanAirNow has sought to disrupt and dismantle the environmental racism that impacts communities in Kansas City and the surrounding region. We focus on building community power through environmental health education, equitable community-based research projects, and people-driven solutions in public policy. These fenceline communities are neighborhoods located near pollution sources in the form of noise, odors, chemical and toxin releases, legacy contaminants, or other forms of man-made pollution.

We have been conducting air monitoring studies in Kansas City, Kansas (KCK) since 2013. Originally, we focused on rail yards in KCK and Gardner/Edgerton. We monitored diesel emissions and alerted residents, the EPA, and BNSF to levels that exceeded health thresholds. Our monitoring in 2013 detected high levels of diesel emissions surrounding the BNSF railyard in Argentine. In 2015, the EPA awarded us an Environmental Justice Small Grant to continue our air pollution monitoring and begin conducting public health training and advocacy. Under this program, we developed a 25-page training guide and trained over 300 community members.

This work prompted the EPA to conduct their own study called the Kansas City Transportation and Local-Scale Air Quality Study [1]. For this study, several stationary monitoring sites were placed throughout KCK, including one at the Bill Clem Park in Armourdale. While the EPA conducted their study we continued to deploy our air monitors in several locations throughout KCK. Both studies identified several occurrences of localized emissions that exceeded health thresholds [2] that have been linked to cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and premature death. One of our sites with exceeding levels was in the residential area of Armourdale [3], while another was at the St. Margaret's Apartments just north of Armourdale. This is likely a result of the high levels of industrial pollution from facilities in Armourdale.

We are continuing to conduct air monitoring studies throughout Kansas City, and have plans to expand our community-owned air monitoring network into Armourdale this year. This network provides us with the ability to continuously monitor particulate matter at the neighborhood level with permanent monitors. This work has allowed us to build and advance environmental justice in KCK.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONCERNS**

Fenceline communities of color, indigenous peoples and tribal nations, and immigrant communities throughout the U.S., have disproportionately experienced some of the greatest environmental burdens and their related health problems. This inequity is the result of many factors: inappropriate zoning and negligent land use planning, intersecting structural inequalities, failure to enforce proper zoning or regular inspections, deed restrictions and other discriminatory housing and lending practices, limited political and economic power among certain demographics, the prioritization of business interests over public health, development patterns that tend to concentrate pollution and environmental hazards in certain communities. Combined with a lack of economic resources and unjust policy making, these

fenceline communities, or environmental justice communities as described by EJ organizations, continue to face significant barriers to their overall health, livelihood, and sustainability.

Fenceline communities are the communities that are experiencing the most intense impacts from man-made environmental pollution. They are often situated next to industrial sources of pollution and are disproportionately inhabited by people of color and the working poor [4][5][6]. It is common for many members of fenceline communities to be employed by the same industries that are poisoning their families. Community members are put in a precarious situation, where they are forced to choose between economic survival and the health of their families. Additionally, residents in fenceline communities are often unable to relocate. This is because the property value of homes in fenceline communities is often dramatically lower due to their proximity to such intense sources of industrial pollutants. This makes it nearly impossible to sell their homes at a price that will enable them to purchase property elsewhere.

In the fight against such threats, communities across the United States have confronted environmental racism and injustice through coordinated campaigns that amplify their voice in the decisions that affect their lives. These efforts have resulted in significant benefits, such as the removal of stationary or mobile sources of pollution; the creation of restrictions or prohibitions on new polluting sources; and investments such as parks, affordable public transportation, and affordable housing. These localized assets highlight another important aspect of environmental justice: while it is important to identify the problems and areas that are unfairly impacted by cumulative burdens, EJ is also about gaining equitable access to environmental benefits, investments, and other resources for low-income communities and communities of color. Such benefits can address the uneven distribution of amenities along race and class lines that reflect long legacies of racism and discrimination in land use planning and development.

As a result of these local EJ campaigns, which have contributed to the larger movement for environmental justice over time, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) Agency adopted definitions for environmental justice to guide their EJ-focused policymaking: The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental, and commercial operations or policies [7]. By looking at the history of Armourdale, it becomes clear it is an environmental justice community. [\\*SB 1000 Toolkit: Planning for Healthy Communities Section 1.4 pg.4](#)

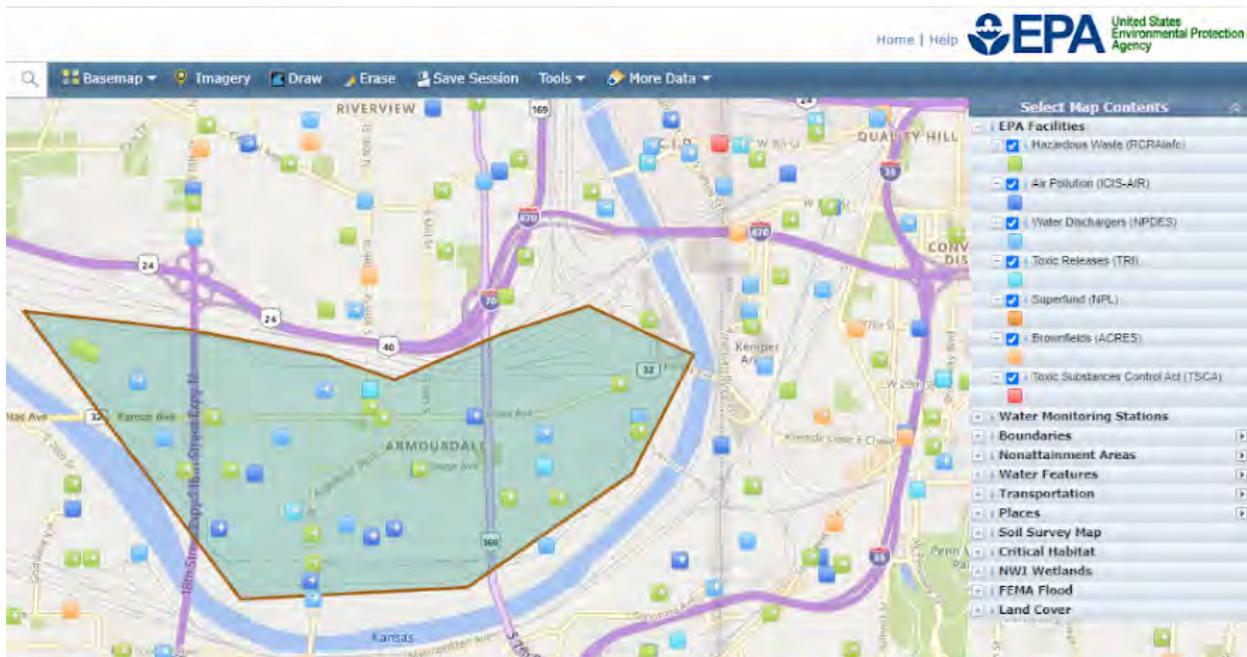
### **HISTORY OF ARMOURDALE**

The Armourdale neighborhood in Kansas City, Kansas, is nestled between the Missouri and Kansas Rivers. The region was originally home to Indigenous peoples, abolitionists, and immigrants among many others, producing a diverse neighborhood that has undoubtedly contributed to its rich history [8].

In 2010, Armourdale had a population of 5,488 [9]. The overwhelming majority of the region's inhabitants (76%) identify as people of color. With respect to the type of residence, there are 1,623 homes in the region. On the contrary, there are 1,915 housing units in the region [9]. Further, the median household income for this neighborhood is \$31,600 [10]. In comparison, neighboring regions such as Turner, Muncie, Shawnee Heights, Strawberry Hill, Argentine, and Rosedale all ranked above the median household income of Armourdale.

Armourdale, a densely populated region, is home to many different types of industries, namely, the administrative industry. The administrative industry is comprised of “administrative, support, and waste management services” such as recycling facilities [10]. A recent estimate indicates that 11.6% of the Armourdale population is employed by the administrative industry. On one hand, the presence of the administrative industry equates to employment opportunities for Armourdale residents. On the other hand, this is troubling because waste management services are notorious polluters [11]. Workers employed by the administrative industry and those who reside in Armourdale are at increased risk of developing diseases caused by air pollution [12].

Armourdale also contains several sites that are regulated by the EPA under various laws. Figure 1 below was generated using the EPA tool NEPAassist (<https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist>). It shows all facilities that are currently regulated by laws such as the Clean Air Act (CAA), Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and the Clean Water Act (CWA). While there are only a few dozen markers on the map, many markers actually represent multiple facilities. Once accounted for, the map shows 194 different polluting facilities. While not all are violating environmental laws individually, the question of cumulative impacts plays a large role, considering exposure from these pollutants from stationary sources as well as pollution from unrecorded mobile sources.



**Figure 1: Polluting Facilities in Armourdale**

The 2014 H.E.A.T study [13] showed a stark difference between people in Armourdale and those in other parts of Wyandotte County. Most notably, the average age at death, as seen in Figure 2, is lower in Armourdale than for residents in other parts of the county. While difficult to say why this is for sure, underlying health issues from long term exposure to pollutants may very well play a role. Residents can expect a lifespan up to 22 years shorter. It is important that we include these residents in conversations about what is going to happen in their own community.



Two key requirements for implementing such a strategy are to: 1) The allocation of sufficient time and opportunities for engagement. To avoid rushing the process and tokenizing community participation, this approach promotes capacity building so that community stakeholders can provide meaningful feedback and decisions; and 2) The prioritization of a sufficient budget. Maintaining an adequate budget for meaningful community engagement is important for promoting equitable access and achieving high-quality public participation. [\\*SB 1000 Toolkit: Planning for Healthy Communities Section 4.1pg.36](#)

The steering committee leading the Armourdale Master Plan has created an ecosystem of engagement for the public leading up to the development of the plan. The first round designed to inform the plan consists of an online survey and the second is an open-ended voicemail box where members of the community can leave messages that will be transcribed. PORT has also hired four community members to assist with direct community outreach, soliciting input from their neighbors and posting flyers in small businesses. These initial outreach activities described in a March 19, 2021 steering committee meeting seem designed to solicit positive feedback about community experiences and we are concerned that the survey may not fully capture the scope of the Armourdale community's concerns, resulting in a plan (and future development projects) that will not adequately benefit the residents who are bearing the burden of economic, social, and environmental inequities, including disparate pollution exposure.

The failure to create decision making structures that incorporate meaningful participation in environmental justice communities is a longstanding problem. To create a more transparent and meaningful form of public participation, we recommend the following:

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

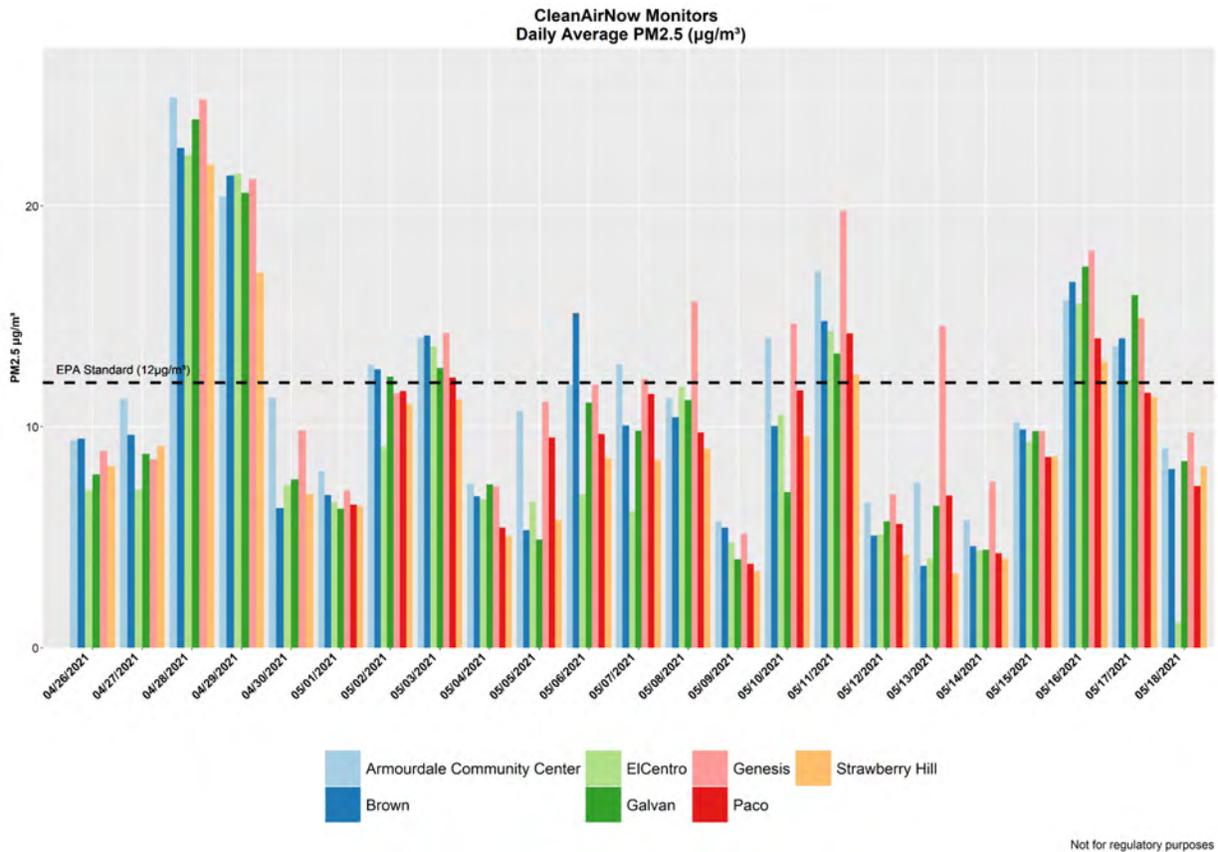
1. The survey design method, questions, responses, and information on respondents is documented prominently on the General Plan's website. The transcribed, anonymized messages on the voicemail box should also be made public.
2. A formal process for submitting public comments should be made available on the General Plan's website. This should be open as the plan is developed and comments should be actively solicited at every stage of development. The team may also consider including responses to each comment in the final report.
3. Positive stories solicited on the Armourdale Strong website can be incorporated in the plan but must be balanced by the inclusion of specific concerns of community members.
4. The creation of a General Plan should not be the end of community input on these issues. The Unified Government in partnership with the Mid-America Regional Council should charter an Environmental Justice committee that can advise the Kansas City government regularly on actions that can be taken to address inequities in the community.

## AIR POLLUTION

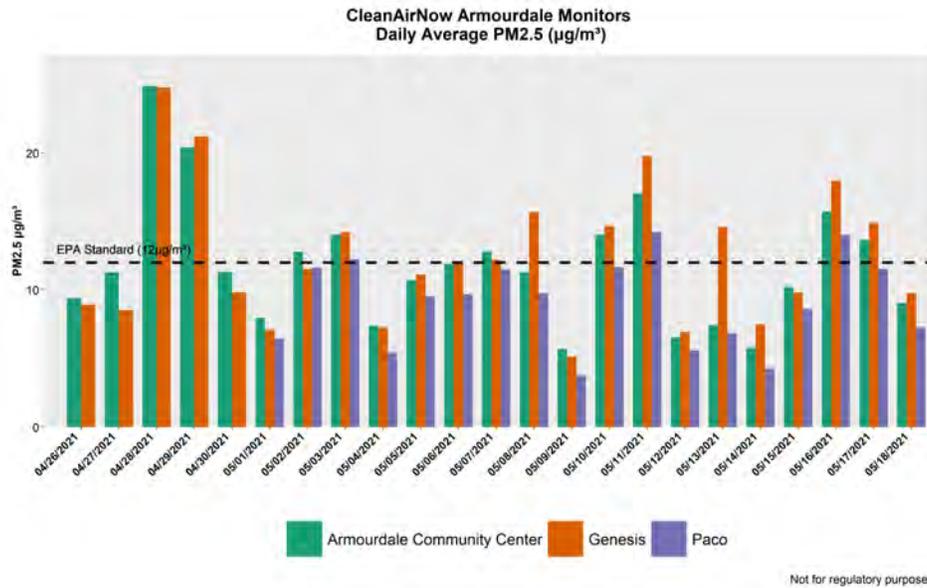
Addressing air pollution concerns is a fundamental part of achieving environmental justice. Fenceline communities like Armourdale often experience air pollution from multiple sources, making community members more susceptible to the associated health risks. Air pollution can cause many serious health risks such as, cardiovascular disease [15], cancer [16], as well as neurological and reproductive disorders. The identification of sources, types, and quantities of pollution is important and necessary to determine appropriate solutions. Although air quality is just one type of pollution exposure, improving air quality through the reduction of specific contaminants is critical to the health and well-being of all people and the environment.

While the EPA requires states to regulate several criteria air pollutants under the Clean Air Act, there are still thousands of unregulated pollutants with severe health implications to frontline communities. One of the biggest contributors to these unregulated pollutants in KCK is diesel exhaust from the transportation sector.

Two markers for diesel exhaust include elemental carbon (EC) and black carbon (BC). By sampling for these pollutants, we can assess whether or not there are localized occurrences of high levels of diesel exhaust that may cause chronic illnesses, hospitalizations, and premature deaths. Several studies have taken place in Armourdale that have identified levels of BC and EC that exceeded health thresholds.



**Figure 3: PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels in KCK as recorded by community air monitors - Armourdale Genesis Monitor**



**Figure 4: PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels at Armourdale Community Center, Genesis, and Paco sites as recorded by community air monitors - Armourdale Genesis Monitor**

Between 2015 and 2017, CleanAirNow sampled for EC on five different occasions and found one of them to be dangerously high. In the same study, the nearby St. Margaret’s Apartments exceeded the health threshold four out of eight times. CleanAirNow organized and at our request the EPA conducted its own study after analyzing the results from our study. It too found exceedances at their Bill Clem stationary site in both BC and EC, 12% and 7% of the time they sampled, respectively. These localized occurrences are often compounded due to the current meteorological conditions and are more likely to occur in colder months.

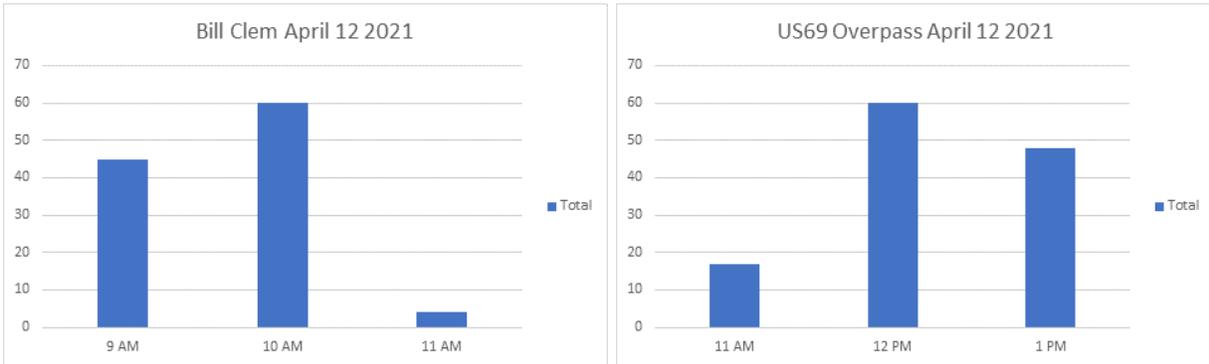
The Clean Air Act requires monitoring of six Criteria Air Pollutants: ground-level ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide [17]. There are currently 5 EPA monitors in the Kansas City Area monitoring criteria air pollutants and 2 monitoring hazardous air pollutants [18]. However these monitoring networks have been shown to be insufficient for measuring local and short-term spikes in air pollution [19]. The sampling done by CleanAirNow that detected the health threshold exceedances were not reported by the EPA monitors in Kansas City.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Do not permit the building of new, or expansion of existing, industrial facilities that are emitting air pollutants in Armourdale.
2. Enforce federal and state air pollution standards at existing facilities.
3. Create a notification system for the public to inform them when air pollution is particularly bad in Armourdale. This should be based on weather patterns that may exacerbate the community’s exposure to harmful air pollutants.
4. Immediately begin transitioning warehouses and facilities to zero emissions and set a goal for when this should be accomplished; CleanAirNow can help in setting those goals.

## TRANSPORTATION

Living and working closely to major traffic ways and other sources of transportation and mobile source pollution has shown to have adverse health effects on individuals such as cardiovascular disease [20], respiratory disease [21], and premature death [22]. A study done in 2014 found mobile source pollutants such as black carbon and nitrogen oxides may not return to background levels until approximately between 200 - 300m from their emission source [23]. Armourdale has increased amounts of truck and locomotive traffic due to its proximity to major traffic corridors, railyards, and industrial facilities.



**Figure 5, 6: Fossil Fuel Truck Counts on Kansas Ave**  
(refer to Appendix A for Black Carbon Monitoring April 12, 2021)

On April 12, 2021 CleanAirNow conducted a truck count in Armourdale, shown in Figures 5 and 6. We counted at two different locations for two hours each. The first location was at Bill Clem Park and we counted trucks that passed the intersection of Kansas Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> St. (both streets with residential houses on them). We counted 149 trucks for an average of 1.24 trucks per minute between 9am – 11am. The second location we counted at was the area around US69 and Kansas Avenue. Between 11:45am – 1:45pm we counted 415 trucks for an average of 3.46 trucks a minute.

As noted in the “Air Pollution” section of this document, high levels of air pollutants related to the transportation sector have been detected in Armourdale over the course of several studies and several years. Mobile source pollution in the area is a great risk to the health of residents in Armourdale. Because of this, CleanAirNow makes the following recommendations for the transportation sector in Armourdale.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create specific truck routes that avoid residential areas. Create new trafficways in needed areas so that trucks can easily avoid passing through streets that have families living on them.
2. Require zero emissions trucks, especially those that are only used locally. Priority should be given to environmental justice communities. During our truck count there were several trucks that made multiple passes by us. This leads us to assume they are only driving in and around Armourdale.
3. Prohibit trucks from idling.
4. Begin working now towards zero emissions facilities in Armourdale. Facilities operating in Armourdale should be required to produce no new emissions and pollutants.

5. The General Plan should prioritize zero emission fleet vehicles, medium & heavy duty trucks, equipment and supporting infrastructure at goods movement hubs, warehouses and along freight corridors.
6. Electrify new and existing warehouses to operate zero emission yard trucks, forklifts etc.

### SCRAP METAL RECYCLING FACILITIES

Scrap metal originates from end-of-life-products, structures, construction and demolition debris, or out-of-specification metal products that are recycled to recover their metal content. Scrap metal recycling facilities include feeder yards, dismantlers, and facilities with a metal crusher, baler, or shredder. Scrap metal can be sourced from discarded appliances, vehicles, electronic waste (e-waste), metal pieces generated from machining operations, and other metal-containing wastes. Regardless of whether it is being recycled, scrap metal should be managed in a way that does not cause a release of its hazardous constituents to air, soil, or water.

Armourdale has over 15 combined auto dismantlers, junk yards, and metal recycling facilities, many which are fenceline to residential dwellings. Of these, Advantage Metal Recycling is the only recycling facility currently reporting to the EPA [24]. Most recycling facilities in Armourdale are unregulated, unregistered with EPA, KDHE, UG or any agency tasked to monitor such facilities. This leads to ineffective inspections, enforcement, and non-compliance.



Image 1: Advantage Metals Recycling Facility in Armourdale (Google Earth)

#### **A community member noted:**

“I am not comfortable eating food from my own garden because my plants and garden have yellow fine particulate on them.” This yellow particulate can be associated with metal crushing. Community members having no one to provide a complaint to makes it a challenge to the already poisoned community.

#### **Other community voices:**

When we report flooding and illegal dumping to the UG, their response has been “What do you expect, you live in Armourdale, there is nothing we can do.”

**Examples:**

Advantage Recycling has two facilities in the area, which are of air and water pollution concerns from community voices mentioned above. The following images were taken in February and dust and other particles can be seen rising above the scrap yard.



*Image 2, 3, 4: Images of yellow/orange particulate in Armourdale, Episodic Event on February 1, 2021*

Another environmental justice concern are auto dismantlers facilities that have a history of polluting the environment: Auto Dismantler Kansas City CleanWaterAct [25].

No crushing, smashing, baling or reduction of metal shall be conducted on the premises unless it is conducted without producing substantial amounts of air pollution. Noise emanating therefrom, as measured from any point on adjacent property, shall be no more audible than the noise emanating from ordinary street traffic and from other commercial or industrial uses measured at the same point on the said adjacent property. Any property used for automobile dismantling yards, junk yards, scrap metal processing yards or open air storage of used materials, used equipment and used machinery shall not cause a release of its hazardous constituents to air, soil, or surface water and ensure that their treatment of the waste from these facilities is adequately protective of human health and the environment.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Recommend reviewing or updating Kansas Junkyard and Salvage Control Act[26] for compliance and land use designations, prior to the completion of the General Plan.
2. Enact new legislation: New law to regulate scrap metal dealers [27].
3. Identify facilities which are not registered or in compliance to any regulatory agency, not operating on expired permits, conditional use permits, etc.
4. Make it a priority to enclose such facilities or add protective barriers, fenceline to residences and a land use zoning consideration and clean up with a distance more than 2500 feet from a residential dwelling.
5. No new recycling facilities allowed to operate in Armourdale city limits.
6. Air monitoring at the fenceline.

## LAND USE

Among the proposed actions from the 1979 Armourdale Land Use Plan was that the city not approve any non-residential zoning and development which could be hazardous to human health or safety, result in the loss of habitable housing units, emit excessive noise, odor or other nuisances, or present a visually detrimental impact to the residential areas [28]. Despite this recommendation made over forty years ago, the Armourdale community continues to face these realities and the area is still dominated by industrial use.

Historically, residential segregation has played a major role in the development of the Kansas City Metropolitan Area. On the Kansas side, this contrast is apparent today in comparing Johnson County suburbs (which rank among the most desirable in the nation) with the residential areas of Wyandotte County, which are interspersed among the industrial areas. This distribution perpetuates urban inequality, with low-income communities suffering from pollution and heat island effects, which contribute to higher health adversity outcomes.

Urban Greening can promote physical activity through the beautification of existing surface infrastructure and through new infrastructure, such as community gardens. Separate from traditional recreational facilities, urban green spaces allow areas for informal and formal recreation. Urban greening also has environmental benefits: it can help reduce impacts of climate change by mitigating heat waves, has storm water management benefits, and can also reduce exposure to air contaminants.

General Plan policies to support urban greening can include Identifying specific green infrastructure projects located in Armourdale, promoting collaboration with community-based organizations in developing and maintaining programming, encouraging the planting of street trees and other landscaping, and identifying vacant lots and underutilized public land that can be turned into neighborhood-run community gardens.

While we support creating more green space it **is important that it complements more serious actions to address community needs. It should also not be used as the primary means of creating change through an environmental justice lens.** Many of the public spaces in Armourdale are coupled with industrial and mobile source pollution. For example, the community center often has trucks idling outside, and as we saw with our truck count, Bill Clem Park is consistently passed by diesel emitting trucks. Bill Clem was also the site of the EPA stationary monitoring during the KC-TRAQS Study that recorded several occurrences of high levels of air pollutants [1].

## CLIMATE CHANGE

It is imperative that the impacts of climate change be evaluated for the Armourdale community as authors prepare the General Plan and consider a future for residents and businesses. Local governments and planners can measure climate vulnerability for local communities, including Vulnerable or EJ Communities, through a process called a vulnerability assessment. By doing this it can determine the climate-related hazards in the community (under both current and future conditions), and how these hazards may change over time. Federal resources, such as the [U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit \[29\]](#) , can help with this process. There may also be local and regional resources available. Identify populations. A vulnerability assessment can help to select the specific populations present in the community that may be harmed by these hazards, including different populations that are considered vulnerable populations. It considers age, physical and mental health, employment, citizenship status, and other socioeconomic factors. Finally, this assessment should lead to an analysis of potential impacts. Using scientific research,

relevant reports and studies, and discussions with community members, it should assess how severe each climate change effect will be for different demographics of the population.

\*[SB 1000 Toolkit: Planning for Healthy Communities](#)

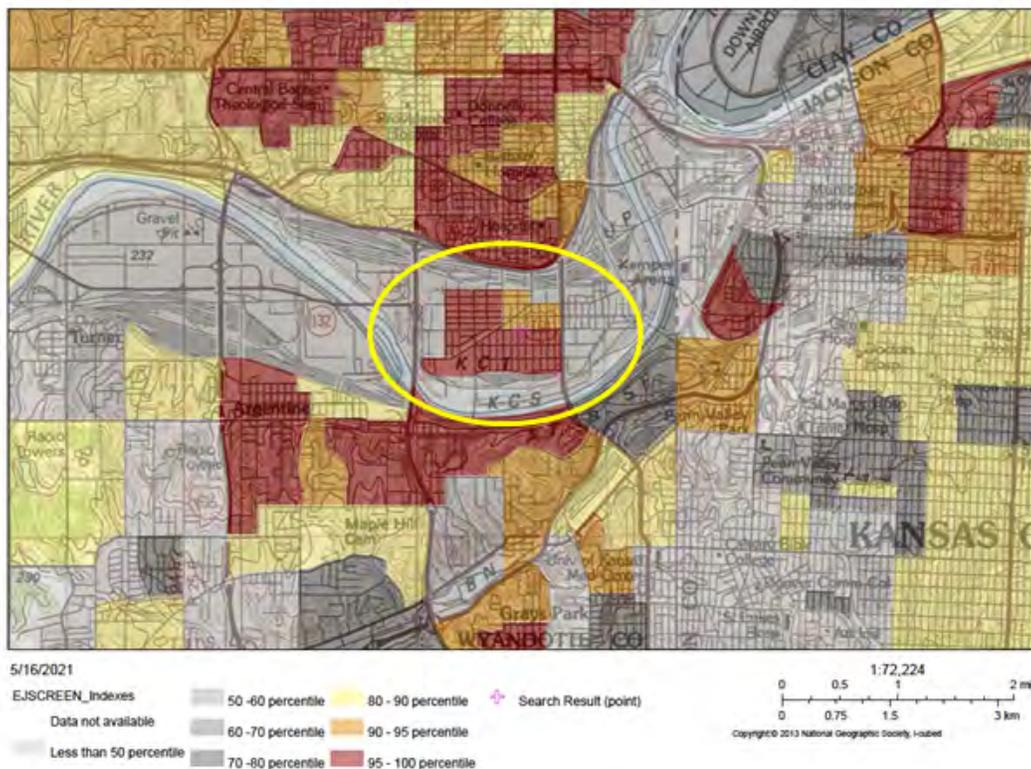
### ARMOURDALE PLAN FOR CHEMICAL AND CLIMATE DISASTERS

Due to the location of the industrial corridor in the West Bottoms along the Kansas River, residents of the Armourdale area are at greater risk of exposure to chemical emergencies, from railcars, tanker trucks on the highways and fixed chemical manufacturing, mixing and storage facilities. Prevailing westerly winds and the topography of the valley can push chemical releases from the Argentine district into Armourdale.

Emergency planning, including education of at-risk communities, is critical to reduce the public health impacts of a chemical emergency. Preparedness must include both evacuation and shelter-in-place plans for communities that might be impacted.

There are a number of "Tier 2" facilities in this industrial corridor which report a list of their hazardous materials to EPA and the Local Emergency Planning Committee(LEPC) of MARC. Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know (EPCRA) gives communities the "right to know" the chemical hazards, that includes port facilities and operations, chemical trains, bomb trains, hazardous material liquified natural gas by rail that might impact their homes, schools and workplaces. The community members can best identify high-risk locations, such as work sites, schools, nursing homes, hospitals, day care centers, etc.

Risk Management Plan/Chemical Disasters



**Figure 7: Environmental Justice (EJ) Screening Index Map, showing the high index of EJ needs in central Armourdale due to chemical disaster risk.**

**Example:**

A table-top drill was implemented by the LEPC at Harcros Chemicals several years ago. As a result of the drill, community education and creation of an industrial awareness group were proposed, primarily led by the Health Department of the Unified Government of Wyandotte Co. Little, if anything, has been done to date.[30]

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Stakeholders in the Armourdale area should have an opportunity to meet with U.G. Dept. of Health officials and the LEPC to help develop a comprehensive plan for chemical emergencies in the West Bottoms.
2. Community education should focus on awareness, communication, and reaction strategies, in English and in Spanish, using "trusted" spokespersons (teachers, religious leaders, medical officials, promotoras, community organizers, etc.)
3. Funding for these efforts could be obtained from the industrial partners in the West Bottoms and/or from LEPC grants from the Kansas Division of Emergency Management [Kansas Adjutant General's Department - Hazardous Materials Preparedness Grant \(HMEP\)](#) ([kansastag.gov](http://kansastag.gov))[31]

## **CONCLUSION**

With the Armourdale General Plan, the Kansas City government has an opportunity to follow through on decades-old recommendations of improving quality of life for Armourdale residents and to trigger actions and policy changes that can help advance environmental justice. To do this, the Unified Government and steering committee members must first ensure that the community is given opportunities to meaningfully inform the plan and institute other pathways for participation in the decision making processes moving forward. The plan must also consider the legacy of industrial development and air pollution from stationary and mobile sources in the Armourdale community and include recommendations for improving air quality and associated health outcomes and being more proactively transparent with residents. It must also incorporate the realities of climate change vulnerability in any planning scenarios, ensuring that those who stand to be most affected by the impacts of climate change, communities of color and low-income communities, are protected. Armourdale residents deserve nothing less than to have equitable access to investments that will benefit them economically and improve their quality of life and that of future generations.

**Appendix A: Community support for recommendation**

**I. List of Armourdale community members involved in drafting of this recommendation:**

Ivonne Gutierrez	Ivonne Gutierrez	05-03-21
Aura M Siquero	Aura Siquero	5-4-21
Maria Lucero	Maria Lucero	05-04-21
Yadira DeLaFuente	Yadira DeLaFuente	05-04-21
Elena Nuñez	Elena Nuñez	05-04-21
Angelica Ramirez	Angelica Ramirez	05-04-21
Eric Salazar	Eric Salazar	05/04/21
Faviola Villa	Faviola Villa	5/5/21
Magali Zarate	Magali Zarate	5/5/21
Monica Cruz	Monica Cruz	5/5/21
Luis Alvarado	Luis Alvarado	5/5/21
Jesus Gutierrez	Jesus Gutierrez	05-05-21
Cesar Ramos	Cesar Ramos	05-05-21
Karin Navas	Karin Navas	5-7-21
Vanessa Ibarra	Vanessa Ibarra	05-10-21

Ivonne Gutierrez	Angelica Ramirez	Luis Alvarado
Aura Siquero	Eric Salazar	Jesus Gutierrez
Maria Lucero	Faviola Villa	Cesar Ramos
Yadira DeLaFuente	Magali Zarate	Karin Navas
Elena Nuñez	Monica Cruz	Vanessa Ibarra

**II. The undersigned residents of Kansas City, Kansas metropolitan area support these comments:**

*Cammy Colton*  
66223

*George Groneman, J.D.*  
66112

*Mike Lundgren, M.S.*  
Biology, Exercise Physiology  
66205

*Deanna Pucci*  
66207

*Ken Schefter*  
66062

*Martha Schwartze*  
66205

*Mike Vanlandingham*  
66203

*DK Weamer, Ph.D. candidate*  
Environmental Studies,  
Nutrition  
66203

*Jon Wood*  
66207

*Helen Yeomans*  
66212

*Ronald Yeomans, M.D.*  
Gynecology  
66212

**III. The undersigned residents of Kansas City, Missouri metropolitan area support these comments:**

*Sami Aaron*  
64114

*Robin Zeplin*  
64114

*Martha Childers*  
64112

*Janice Dannhouser*  
64154

*Billy Davies, J.D.*  
64108

*Jesse DeMartino*  
64111

*Dana Lentz*  
64151

*Casey O'Malley*  
64114

*Dawson Sims*  
64081

*Elizabeth Smith*  
64138

*Jennifer Withee*  
64152

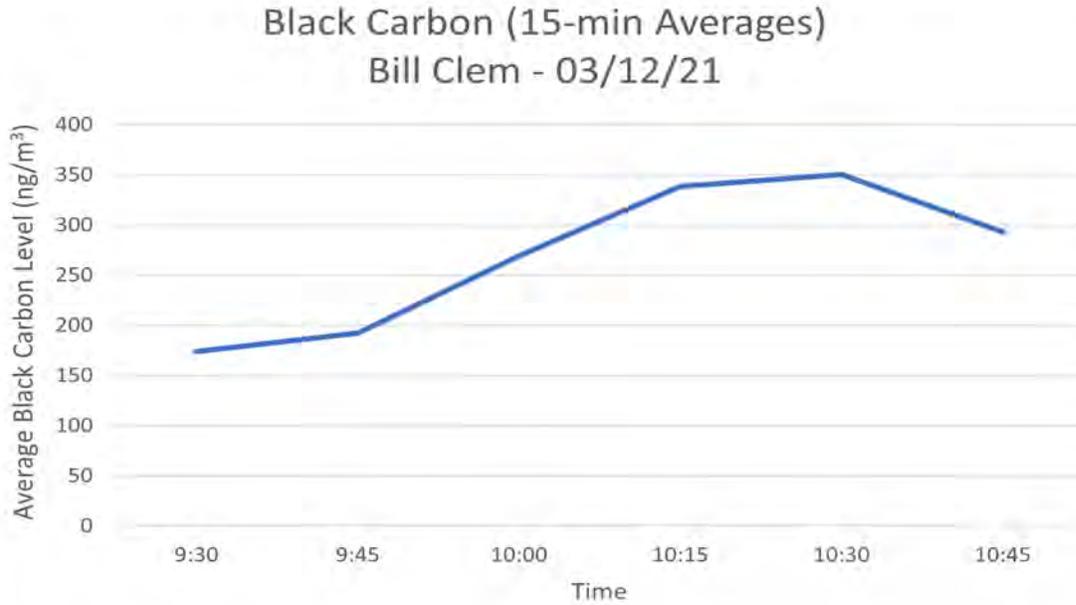
*Amrita Burdick, M.A.*  
Health Science Librarian  
64111

Additional comment: Living only three blocks from State Line Rd. on the Missouri side of the state line, I have an interest in reducing pollution on the Kansas side and firmly support

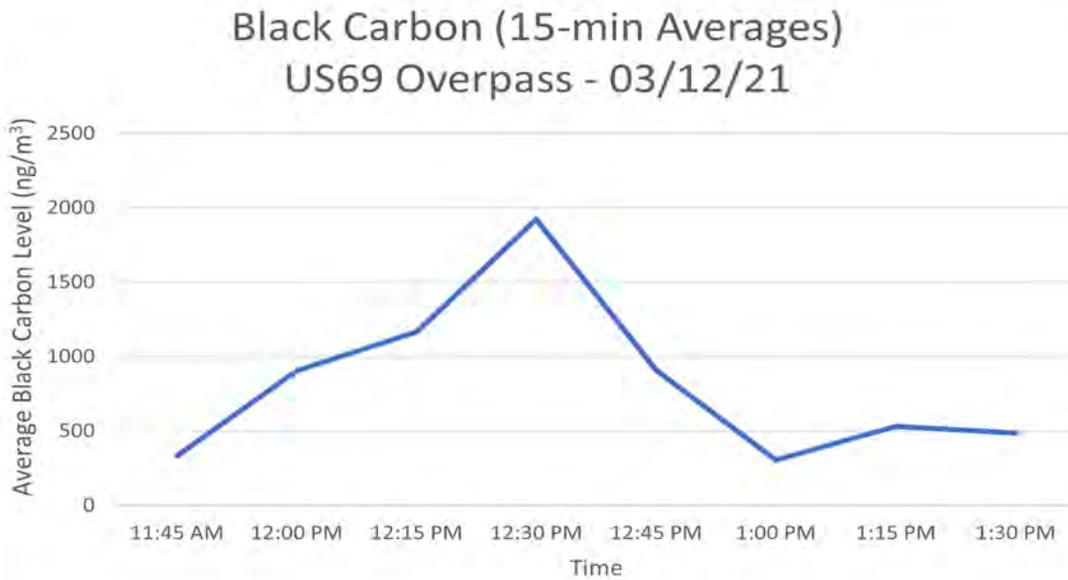
**IV. Local organizations in support of these comments:**

*El Centro, Inc.*

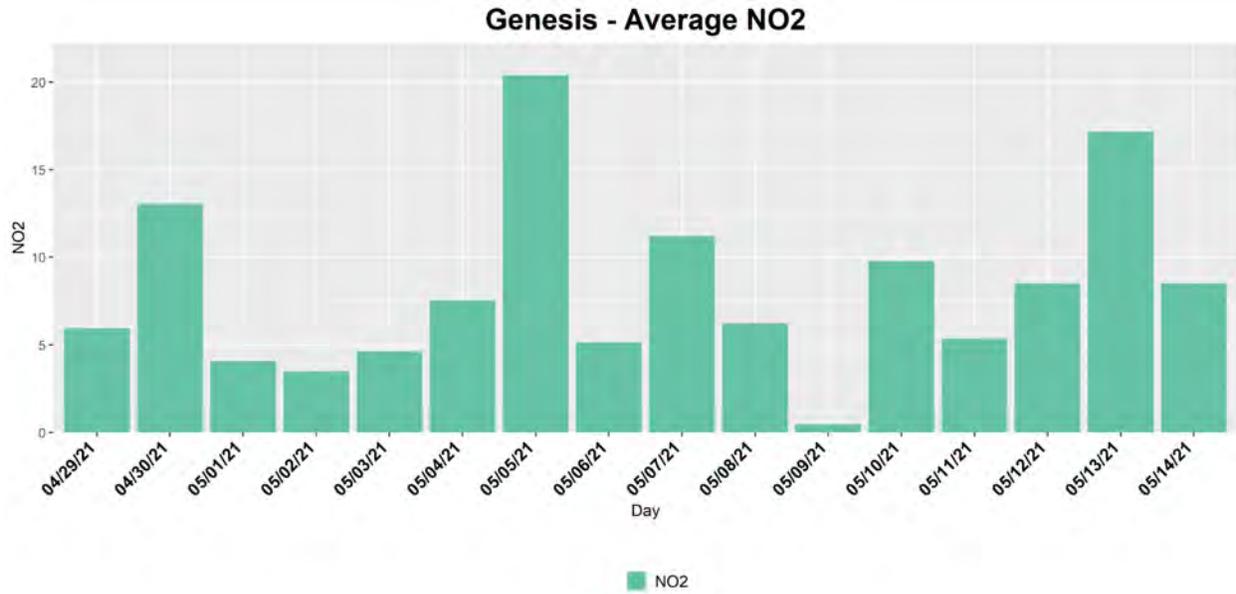
**Appendix B: Supplementary Data**



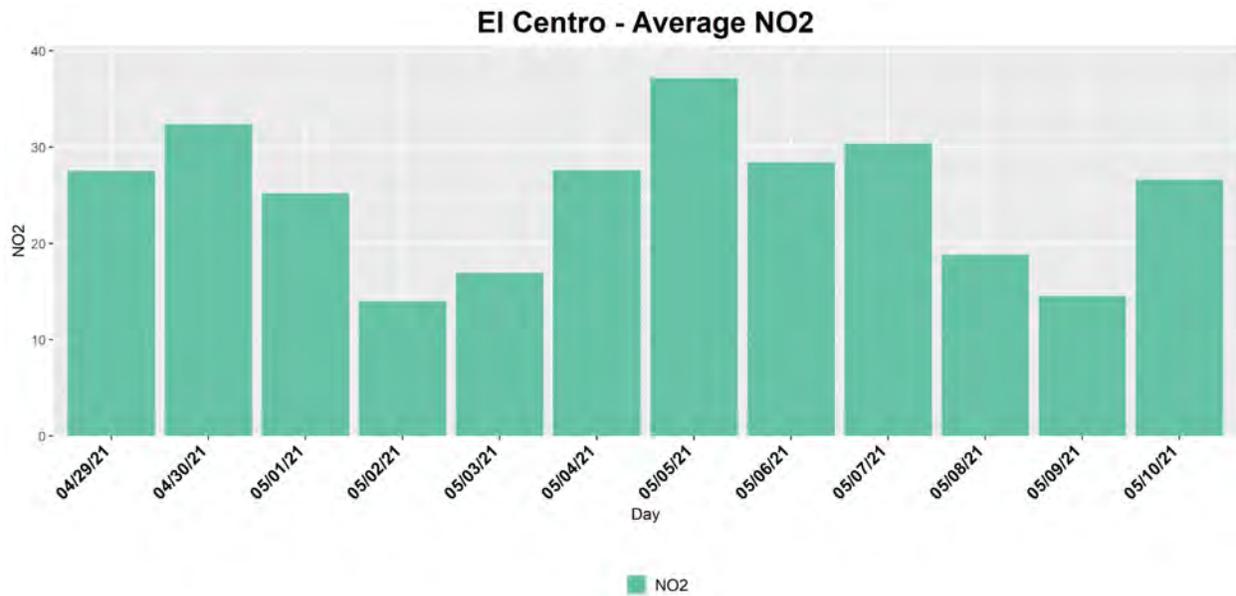
**Figure 8: Bill Clem Black Carbon 15-minute averages during Fossil Fuel Truck Count 3/12/21 Kansas Ave.**



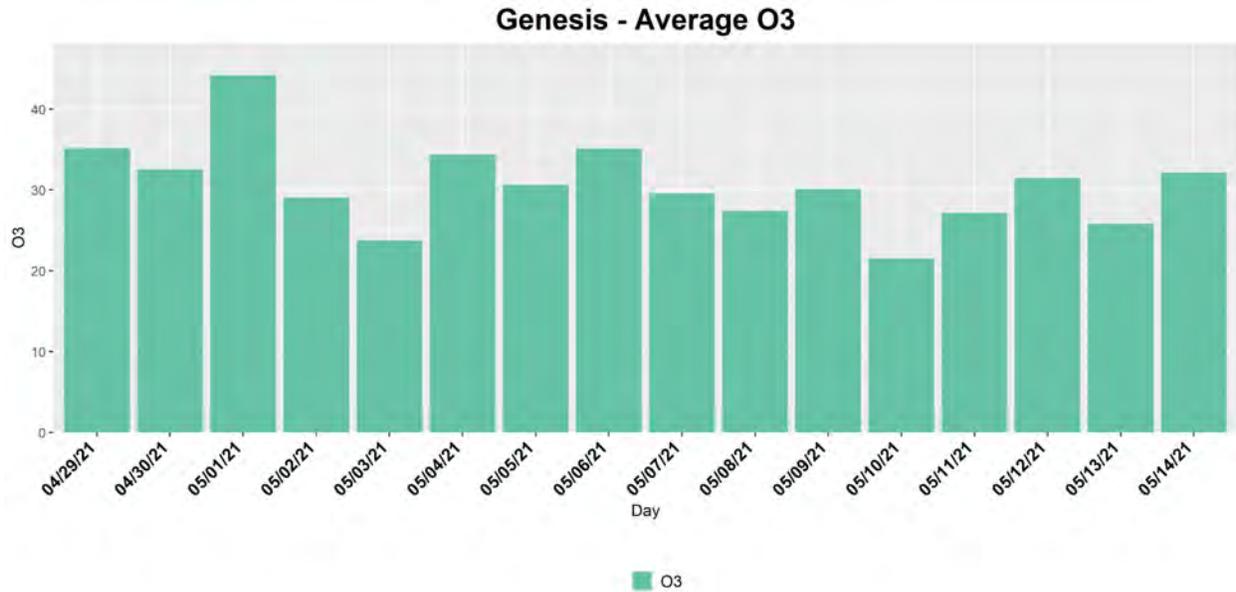
**Figure 9: US 69 Overpass Black Carbon 15-minute averages during Fossil Fuel Truck Count 3/12/21 Kansas Ave.**



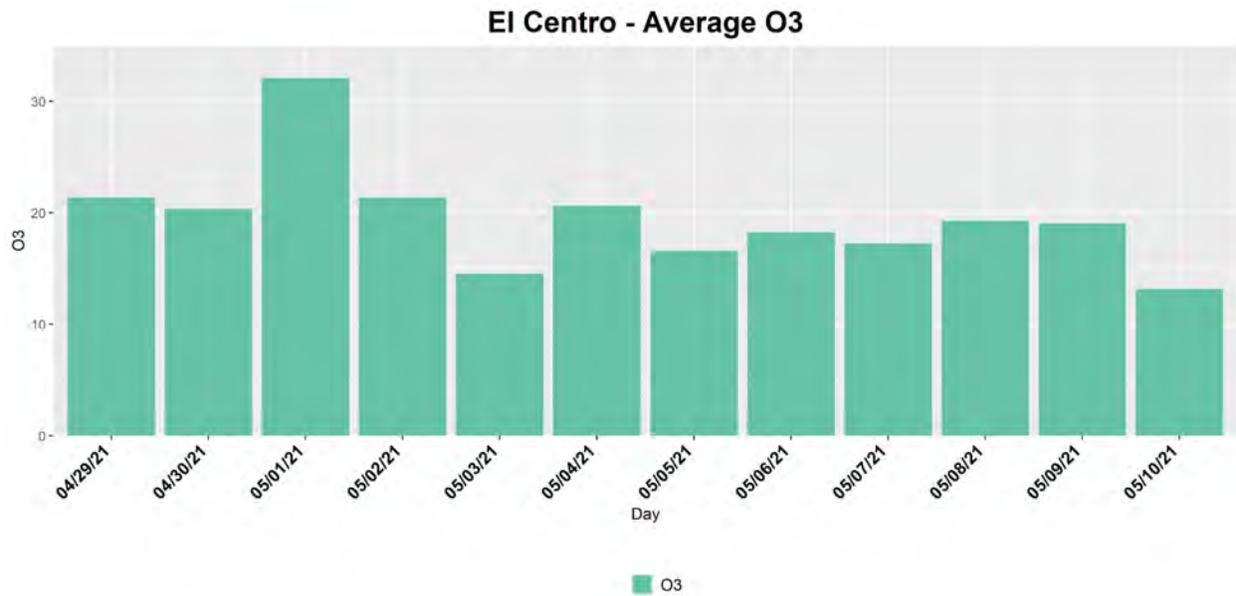
**Figure 10: Armourdale Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) averages over two weeks. 4/29/21 - 05/14/21**



**Figure 11: Minnesota & 7th Street Trfy. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) averages over two weeks. 4/29/21 - 5/10/21**



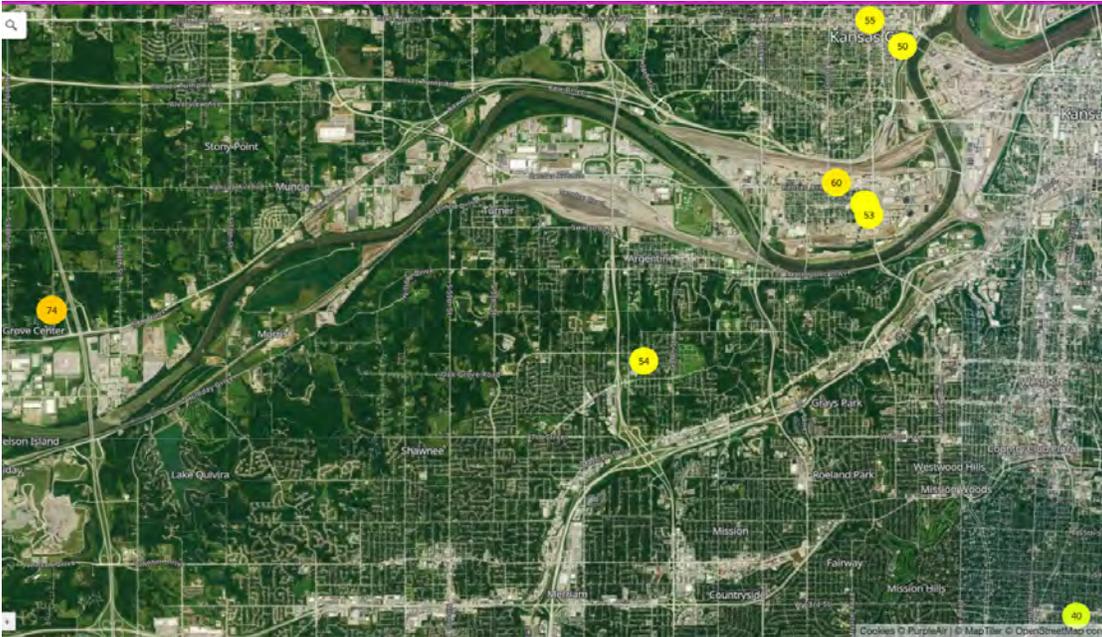
**Figure 12: Armourdale Ozone ( $O_3$ ) averages over two weeks. 4/29/21 - 5/14/21**



**Figure 13: Minnesota Ave & 7th Street Trfy. Ozone ( $O_3$ ) averages over two weeks. 4/29/21 - 5/10/21**



**Figure 14: CleanAirNow Community Based Air Monitoring Network - NO2 and Ozone**



**Figure 15: CleanAirNowCommunity Based Air Monitoring Network - PM2.5**

# ¿POR QUÉ PARTICIPAR EN EL PROCESO DE PLANIFICACIÓN?



**Participe por la salud de sus hijos**



**Participa para el bienestar de sus vecinos**



**Participe por la seguridad y protección de su familia**



**Participa por el futuro de su comunidad**



Figure 16: Spanish Infographic "Why Participate in the General Plan" Page 1

La Organización de justicia ambiental [CleanAirNow](http://CleanAirNow.org) gustaría invitarlos para una plática sobre el plan general de Armourdale.

Un **plan general** es una guía de planificación amplia para los objetivos de desarrollo futuros de una ciudad o condado y proporciona declaraciones de política para lograr esos objetivos de desarrollo. Cada ciudad y condado adopta y actualiza su Plan General para guiar el crecimiento y el desarrollo territorial de su comunidad, tanto para el período actual como para el largo plazo. El Plan General es la base para establecer metas, propósitos, zonificación y actividades permitidas en cada parcela de tierra para brindar compatibilidad y continuidad a toda la región, así como a cada individuo en el vecindario. Ha sido uno de los instrumentos más importantes en la planificación urbana y regional desde principios del siglo XX.

Plan General (también conocido como plan integral en otros estados) es un documento que proporciona un plan a largo plazo para el desarrollo físico de una ciudad.] Las jurisdicciones locales tienen libertad en cuanto a lo que incluyen sus planes generales, sin embargo, existen ciertos requisitos bajo la ley que cada plan general debe cumplir; no hacerlo podría resultar en la suspensión del desarrollo futuro. Cada plan general debe incluir la visión, metas y objetivos de la ciudad o condado en términos de planificación y desarrollo dentro de ocho "elementos" diferentes definidos por el estado como: uso del suelo, vivienda, circulación, conservación, ruido, seguridad, espacio abierto y justicia ambiental es uno de los elementos por lo que nuestra organización CleanAirNow aboga.

**Participar promueve una discusión sobre temas críticos entre Ud., otros miembros del público, y los tomadores de decisiones.** Las decisiones entonces reflejarán mejor nuestra comunidad en este condado, lo que promueve una mejor calidad de vida. Las personas que viven y son de Armourdale son los expertos en cuanto a su comunidad.

Involucrarse en asuntos cívicos y asuntos mejora su conocimiento sobre quienes hacen decisiones por nosotros sin consultar o realmente crear una verdadera comunicación con la comunidad.

El participar en este plan podrá mejorar Armourdale traer recursos que realmente beneficien a los residentes y también nos da un sentido de orgullo y compasión para este lugar que llamamos nuestro hogar. Y últimamente mejorar la salud de la comunidad.

**Que es Justicia Ambiental:** Justicia Ambiental" (EJ) está basado del principio que todas las personas deben ser protegidas de la contaminación ambiental y tienen el derecho a un medio ambiente limpio y sano. Justicia ambiental quiere decir la protección de la salud de la gente de y su medio ambiente, la igualdad en la administración de los programas ambientales del estado y la estipulación de que existen oportunidades adecuadas para que todas las personas participen en el desarrollo, la ejecución y el cumplimiento de las leyes ambientales, las regulaciones y las políticas. Así, se sostiene que la distribución equitativa de las cargas y beneficios ambientales y la participación significativa, son los elementos esenciales de este principio que sirve de orientación para la adopción de decisiones ambientales.

La **justicia ambiental** continúa siendo un componente esencial en la lucha por mejorar y conservar un medio ambiente limpio, sano y saludable, especialmente para aquellos a quienes tradicionalmente les ha tocado vivir, trabajar y jugar en las áreas más cercanas a fuentes de contaminación.

Salud **ambiental**, según la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), es "aquella disciplina que comprende los aspectos de la salud humana, incluida la calidad de vida y el bienestar social, que son determinados por factores **ambientales** físicos; químicos, biológicos, sociales y psico-sociales"

<http://cankc.org/> | [betomtz.lugo@cankc.org](mailto:betomtz.lugo@cankc.org)

**Figure 17: Spanish Infographic "Why Participate in the General Plan" Page 2**

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