



# KANSAS CITY MISSOURI

# Washington Wheatley Neighborhood

## Redevelopment Action Plan

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee



# New Neighborhood Planning Process

- Kansas City's urban neighborhoods have been detrimentally impacted by a proliferation of vacant lots
- Most vacant lots are either owned by the Land Bank of Kansas City, the Kansas City Missouri Homesteading Authority
  - ❖ They acquire them after a foreclosure process with the County
- Several efforts are underway to work towards preparing these lots for redevelopment and preparing the neighborhood for revitalization
  - ❖ This plan is intended to compliment those efforts

# Washington Wheatley Neighborhood

- Washington Wheatley neighborhood was identified by Councilwoman Patterson Hazley for a pilot program called the Housing Accelerator
- Intent of the program is to provide a streamlined infill development process for a set of Land Bank-owned lots near 18th and Benton Blvd
- Additionally, Councilwoman Patterson Hazley requested that City staff work with the neighborhood to create a plan to help with revitalization efforts



# Redevelopment Action Plan Process

- Since Fall 2024, City staff have collaborated with the Washington Wheatley residents to create a "redevelopment action plan"
- Initial steps in plan creation included interviews with neighborhood leadership and other planners who have worked/are working in the area



# Redevelopment Action Plan Process

- Through public engagement meetings, residents identified key issues that impair their quality of life and act as a barrier to the redevelopment of their neighborhood
- Resulting plan has a list of recommendations for addressing these key issues within the Washington Wheatley neighborhood
  - ❖ Also contains recommendations for citywide policy discussions



# Redevelopment Action Plan Process

- Plan has also been informed by other citywide and local plans that impact the Washington Wheatley neighborhood, including:
  - ❖ KC Spirit Playbook (City's comprehensive plan)
  - ❖ Heart of the City Area Plan
  - ❖ UMKC Washington Wheatley Neighborhood Plan (2008)
  - ❖ Housing Department's Five Year Housing Policy
  - ❖ Land Bank Strategic Plan





# Plan Content

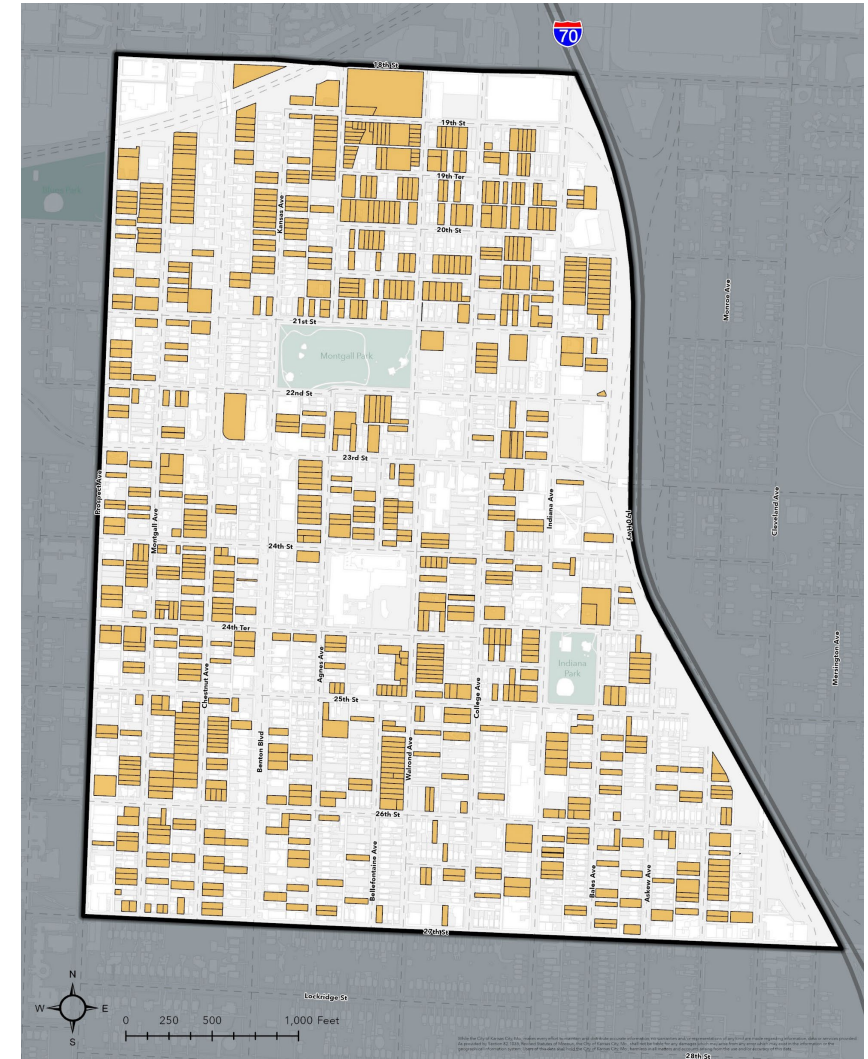
- Short history of the neighborhood, existing assets, and needed assets
- Summary of the public engagement process
- Key Concepts identified by residents
- Recommendations for addressing each Key Concept
- Related recommendations from other plans
- Additional detail on specific locations of infrastructure maintenance needs





# Vacant Lots

- Estimated that about 40% of all residential lots in Washington Wheatley are vacant
- Vacant and unmaintained properties can cause multiple issues for a neighborhood:
  - ❖ Public health issues
  - ❖ Public safety issues
  - ❖ Lowered property values
  - ❖ Reduced tax revenues
  - ❖ Illegal trash dumping
  - ❖ Insects and other pests
  - ❖ Overgrown vegetation
  - ❖ Homeless camps
- Urban lots are also likely contaminated from past industrial activities and may require remediation



# Trash Dumping

- Vacant lots and abandoned spaces with little visibility can be hot spots for illegal trash dumping
- Trash dumping can have severe impacts on a neighborhood, including:
  - ❖ Public health and safety concerns
  - ❖ Environmental contamination concerns
  - ❖ Visual blight
  - ❖ Lower property values
- Plan recommends exploring programs provided by the City to increase security in these areas





# Overgrown Vegetation

- Vacant properties should be adequately maintained to prevent the impacts of overgrown vegetation and downed trees as it can lead to:
  - ❖ Public safety issues
  - ❖ Rodents and insects
  - ❖ Illegal trash dumping
  - ❖ Homeless camps
  - ❖ Low visibility
- Plan recommends exploring programs that can help low-income and disabled owners maintain their property



# Traffic Calming

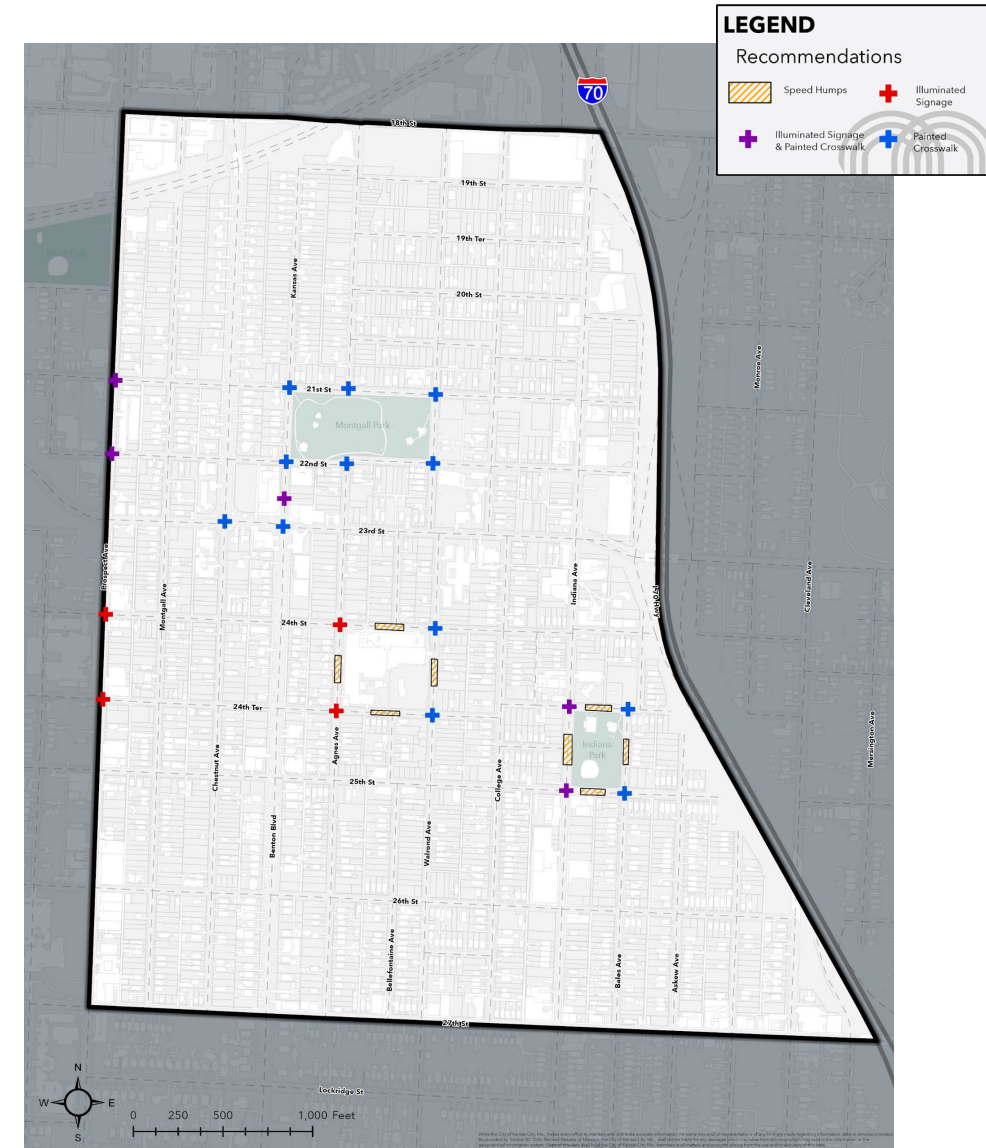
- Traffic calming infrastructure can take many forms including:
  - ❖ Improved sign visibility
  - ❖ Speed humps
  - ❖ Illuminated pedestrian crossings
  - ❖ Curb extensions
  - ❖ Traffic circles
  - ❖ Raised crosswalks
- Important to tailor the solution to the specific problem
- Redesign of 23<sup>rd</sup> St will significantly improve the pedestrian safety along this busy street
  - ❖ Intersection of Benton Blvd and 23<sup>rd</sup> St near the Seton Center has been identified as dangerous by residents
  - ❖ Additional traffic calming measures recommended in the plan





# Pedestrian Crossings

- Walkable communities foster active lives, socially and physically
- Pedestrian safety is important everywhere, but especially around neighborhood parks and schools in the neighborhood:
  - ❖ Seton Center
  - ❖ Wheatley Elementary School
  - ❖ Wendell Phillips Elementary School
  - ❖ KD Academy
  - ❖ KIPP Academy
  - ❖ Indiana Park
  - ❖ Montgall Park



# Sidewalks

- Public Works is currently working through a citywide backlog of sidewalk construction and repairs
- This plan intends to supplement those efforts and coordinate funding/PIAC requests between the City and the neighborhood
- Plan also recommends the City set clear guidelines around sidewalk construction with new development





# Alleyways

- Alleyways are common in neighborhoods that adhere to the traditional urban street grid system
- Many alleys in Washington Wheatley, particularly those adjacent to vacant lots, need significant maintenance
- Vacating an alley requires a legal process that gives maintenance responsibility to the adjacent property owners
- Plan recommends continuing to work toward a clear, citywide policy





# Neighborhood Character

- As vacant lots are redeveloped, it's important that project respect the existing character of the area
- Washington Wheatley has been working with local design professionals to create a set of "Design Guidelines" for developers to reference
- Plan recommends that the City strongly encourage any proposed development in this neighborhood to adhere to guidelines as established by the neighborhood



# Using the Plan

## Key Concept Overgrown Vegetation

Maintaining undeveloped properties and clearing overgrown vegetation are essential for neighborhood upkeep, public safety, and deterring pests like mosquitoes and rodents. Keeping these areas clear makes parcels more attractive to developers and reduces redevelopment costs. It also helps to address other neighborhood issues like illegal trash dumping and homeless camps in low-visibility areas.

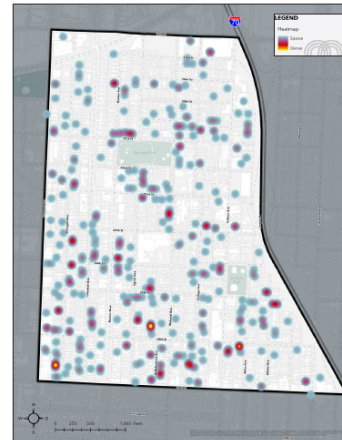
Washington Wheatley residents identified overgrown vegetation and downed trees as significant concerns. This plan recommends that the City prioritize maintaining publicly owned properties, particularly Land Bank lots, to prepare them for sale and redevelopment. The City should explore additional funding if necessary to [keep lots maintained](#). Sidewalks and alleyways should also be kept clear of overgrown vegetation to enhance accessibility and safety.

The map of 311 reports for overgrown vegetation and downed trees highlights problem areas in the neighborhood. This plan recommends that the City review its processes for identifying and citing unmaintained property to improve enforcement and deterrence. For private property owners with low incomes or disabilities, the City should consider establishing a program to connect them with reduced-cost removal services.

Click the icons below to see recommendations from related plans that are related to this topic.



Overgrown Vegetation Fall 2024



Overgrown Vegetation Reports 2022-Fall 2024

Jump to WW  
Recommendations



Clicking this icon will jump the reader to the plan's recommendations for that Key Concept

Clicking these icons will jump the reader to a recommendation from that plan that is directly related to the Key Concept



# Using the Plan



Recommendation for Washington Wheatley



Recommendation for a citywide policy or action

## Sidewalks



**WW30** The City should evaluate the appropriateness of using innovative materials for smaller, immediate repairs in the Washington Wheatley neighborhood. The City's Public Works department has recently been exploring [alternative materials](#) for sidewalks, instead of standard concrete slabs. One such material is rubberized sidewalks made from recycled rubber and can be used effectively around tree roots. Alternative materials and concrete shaving could help to address smaller, immediate sidewalk maintenance needs to make them ADA compliant until the full sidewalk block can be addressed.



**WW31** The City should explore creating a citywide policy that outlines sidewalk construction responsibility for infill development. This would provide clear direction to potential developers on what they are financially responsible for in regard to public infrastructure. This policy should take into consideration different types of infill development projects (i.e., single family homes on individual lots and multi-unit residential buildings on multiple lots).

# Using the Plan



Linked to a Key Concept

**CD-21** Continue to explore legislation and other incentives to provide the city and local neighborhoods with more say in the future of vacant properties.



**CD-22** Create and adopt a comprehensive vacant lot strategy for the city and identify specific target areas and strategies during area plan updates.

- Conduct an assessment of vacant lots to determine suitability for infill development or other uses
- Encourage and support infill development on appropriate vacant lots that use existing infrastructure
- Explore and encourage alternative uses for undeveloped vacant lots



# Using the Plan

- In the appendix, there are detailed lists of locations in Washington Wheatley where:
  - ❖ Illegal trash dumping hot spots are
  - ❖ Where the most traffic incidents occur
  - ❖ Enhanced pedestrian crossing measures are needed
  - ❖ Sidewalk maintenance is needed



## Appendix Location Lists

Below is a list of illegal trash dumping hot spots in the Washington Wheatley neighborhood that are highlighted in the map on page 9. The areas that are most frequently reported are highlighted in red.

- E 18th St and Benton Blvd
- E 18th St and Indiana Ave
- Montgall Ave Dead End at Railroad Tracks
- E 19th St and College Ave
- E 19th St and Indiana Ave
- E 21st St and Prospect Ave
- E 21st St and Kansas Ave
- E 20th Ter between Walrond Ave and College Ave
- E 20th Ter between College Ave and Indiana Ave
- E 22nd St and Chestnut Ave
- E 22nd St and Walrond Ave
- E 24th St and Benton Blvd
- E 24th St and College Ave
- E 24th St and I-70 Fenceline
- E 24th Ter and Chestnut Ave
- E 25th St between Walrond Ave and College Ave
- Prospect Ave between E 25th St and E 26th St
- Agnes Ave between E 25th St and E 26th St
- E 26th St and Benton Blvd
- E 26th St and Indiana Ave
- E 26th St between Indiana Ave and Bales Ave
- E 26th St between Monroe Ave and Cleveland Ave
- E 27th St and Chestnut Ave

Below is a list of intersections in the Washington Wheatley neighborhood that are highlighted in the Crash Incident Map on page 11. The intersections that are especially dangerous are highlighted in red.

- E 18th St and Prospect Ave
- E 18th St and Benton Blvd
- E 18th St and Indiana Ave
- E 22nd St and Prospect Ave
- E 22nd St and Benton Blvd
- E 23rd St and Prospect Ave
- E 23rd St and Benton/Chestnut Ave
- E 23rd St and Benton/Kansas Ave
- E 23rd St and Indiana Ave
- E 23rd St and I-70 On Ramp
- E 24th St and Benton Blvd
- E 24th St and Prospect Ave
- E 24th St and Chestnut Ave
- E 24th St and Benton Blvd
- E 25th St and Prospect Ave
- E 25th St and Benton Blvd
- E 26th St and Prospect Ave
- E 26th St and Benton Blvd
- E 26th St and Indiana Ave
- E 27th St and Prospect Ave
- E 27th St and Benton Blvd
- E 27th St and Walrond Ave
- E 27th St and Indiana Ave
- E 27th St and Cleveland Ave
- I-70 Off Ramp and E 27th St



Primary Intersections of Concern on E 23rd St



# Questions?

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