Cultivating social capital: an investigation on Kansas City's vacant lots

by

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A REPORT

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Sara Hadavi

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Abstract

Social capital, a dynamic subject in academic discourse (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993), is defined in contemporary literature as the "value of support that people provide for each other through their networks, norms, and sanctions, all of which serve to facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit" (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014). This concept illustrates how elements of social and civic life establish trust within a community, thereby fostering community engagement. Despite this understanding, a gap persists in both quantifying and understanding its manifestation within communities contending with urban vacancy. Research indicates that a high proportion of vacant land leads to adverse socioeconomic and ecological consequences, yet the precise impact on the social capital of a community remains elusive (Nassauers & Raskin, 2014; Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004). This study aims to investigate how social capital manifests itself within neighborhoods characterized by high vacancy rates and to devise a comprehensive design framework that not only improves social capital but enhances quality of life.

This was accomplished by applying a four-part methodology to nine neighborhoods in Kansas City, Missouri that are characterized by high vacancy rates. First, a scoring system was implemented to evaluate community-level variables associated with social capital, determining which of the nine neighborhoods required intervention most urgently. Using this systematic approach, two neighborhoods were selected. Subsequently, factors influencing the feasibility of repurposing a given lot were assessed to pinpoint which lots within the chosen neighborhoods were deemed physically unsuitable for repurposing. These lots were then removed from consideration. Third, a scoring system was employed to further refine the selection of lots optimal for repurposing to leverage social capital. Lastly, a combination of consultation with city officials and precedent analysis was utilized to finalize site selection and devise a design solution framework that can be easily adapted to the vacant lots within the study area.

Amid various interests influencing fund allocation decisions, this tool offers an unbiased, quantitative assessment method for neighborhoods struggling with social development, particularly those facing funding shortages amidst urban vacancy issues. It holds the potential to streamline master planning practices and efficiently address vacant lots by prioritizing repurposing efforts. By establishing a foundational design framework and providing a starting point for design interventions, this tool facilitates a more accessible and inclusive process for

residents and city officials alike. Lastly, its adaptability to other locations underscores its potential as a versatile approach for addressing urban vacancy and enhancing social capital, offering a blueprint for cities worldwide.



CULTIVATING SOCIAL CAPITAL

AN INVESTIGATION ON KANSAS CITY'S VACANT LOTS

Melody Holland
2024


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AN INVESTIGATION ON
KANSAS CITY'S VACANT LOTS

MELODY HOLLAND

2024

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Cultivating Social Capital

An Investigation Into Social Capital on Kansas City's Vacant Lots

Major Professor: Dr. Sara Hadavi
Supervising Committee: Dr. Stephanie Davison & Dr. Jeffery Smith

Kansas State University
College of Architecture, Planning, and Design

Department of Landscape Architecture
and Regional & Community Planning

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ABSTRACT

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INTRODUCTION


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1.1 Urban Vacancy

In 2018, the United States saw 83% of its population residing in urban areas, with projections indicating a rise to 89% by 2050 (United Nations Population Division, 2018; see Figure 2). Despite this, a disparity in growth has led to a disproportionate prevalence of vacant properties in many US cities (see Figure 1). This phenomenon, known as urban vacancy, is primarily driven by disinvestment, lack of resources, and socioeconomic challenges that adversely impact neighborhood aesthetics and community cohesion. Consequently, urban vacancy exacerbates existing economic and social challenges, perpetuating a cycle of abandonment, fragmentation, and increased vacancy (Nassauer, 2014).

Though the challenge of urban vacancy is complex, the transformation of a single vacant lot into a community project or social gathering space can serve as a catalyst for the entire neighborhood. This phenomenon, known as social investment, has the potential to incrementally elevate the collective social capital of a community. Social capital, defined as the value of support people provide for each other through their networks, norms, and sanctions, possesses the capacity to nurture an environment where residents are empowered to build trust amongst each other that in turn, encourages the sharing of individual resources and community action (Nassauer 2014).



Fig.1 Urban Vacancy

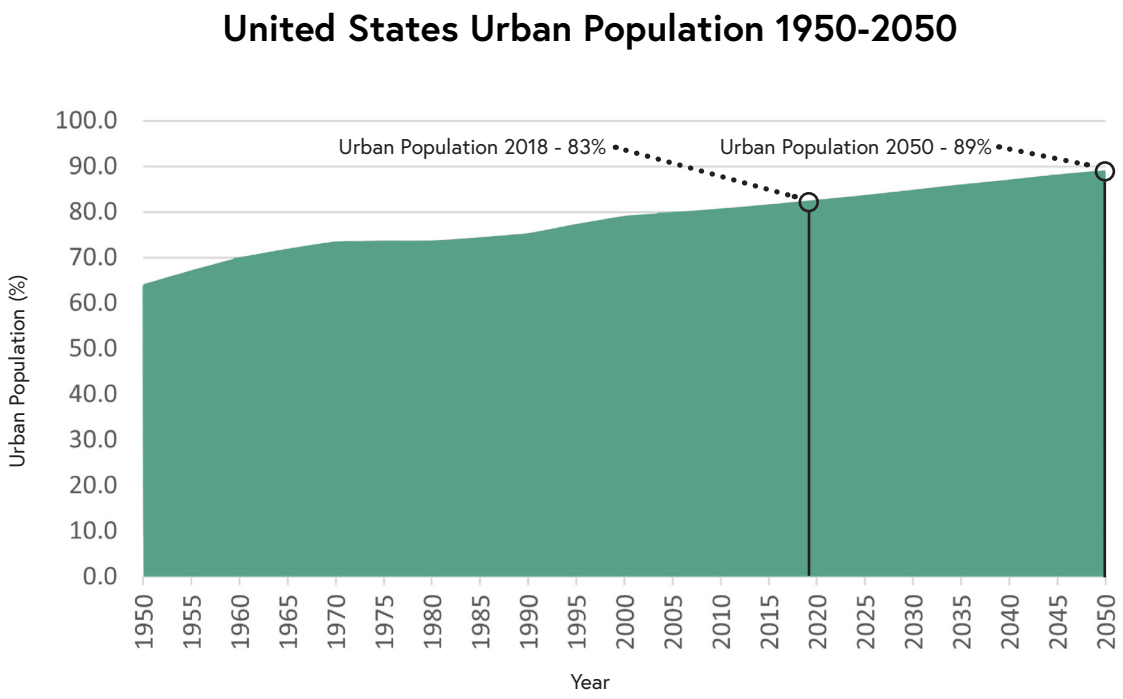


Fig.2 6% Rise in the United States Urban Population by 2050



1.2 Study Objectives

The overall purpose of this report is to investigate how social capital manifests itself within neighborhoods characterized by high vacancy rates and to devise a comprehensive design framework that not only improves social capital, but enhances the quality of life. To accomplish this, the study will answer the question; How can social capital be cultivated in neighborhoods experiencing high levels of urban vacancy?

This was accomplished by focusing on three primary study objectives:

1. Identify the neighborhoods with the highest priority for increasing social capital.

2. Determine what existing traits render vacant lots suitable for repurposing them into vehicles for social capital.

3. Identify what design attributes and affordances can be implemented on vacant lots to increase the collective social capital of the community.

To achieve these objectives, a review of available literature was conducted to gain a baseline understanding of the concepts at play. Spatial analysis was used to make an initial selection of the most viable neighborhoods and lots to proceed with. Following this, a combination of precedent analysis and discussions with city officials were used to finalize the site selection and design framework (see Figure 3).

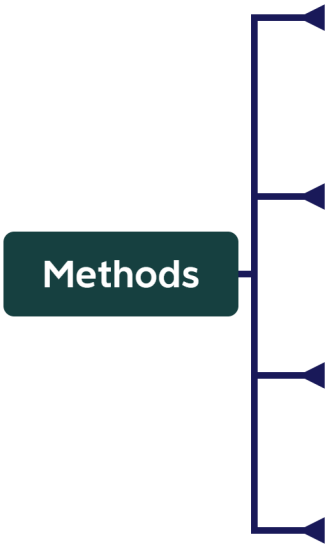
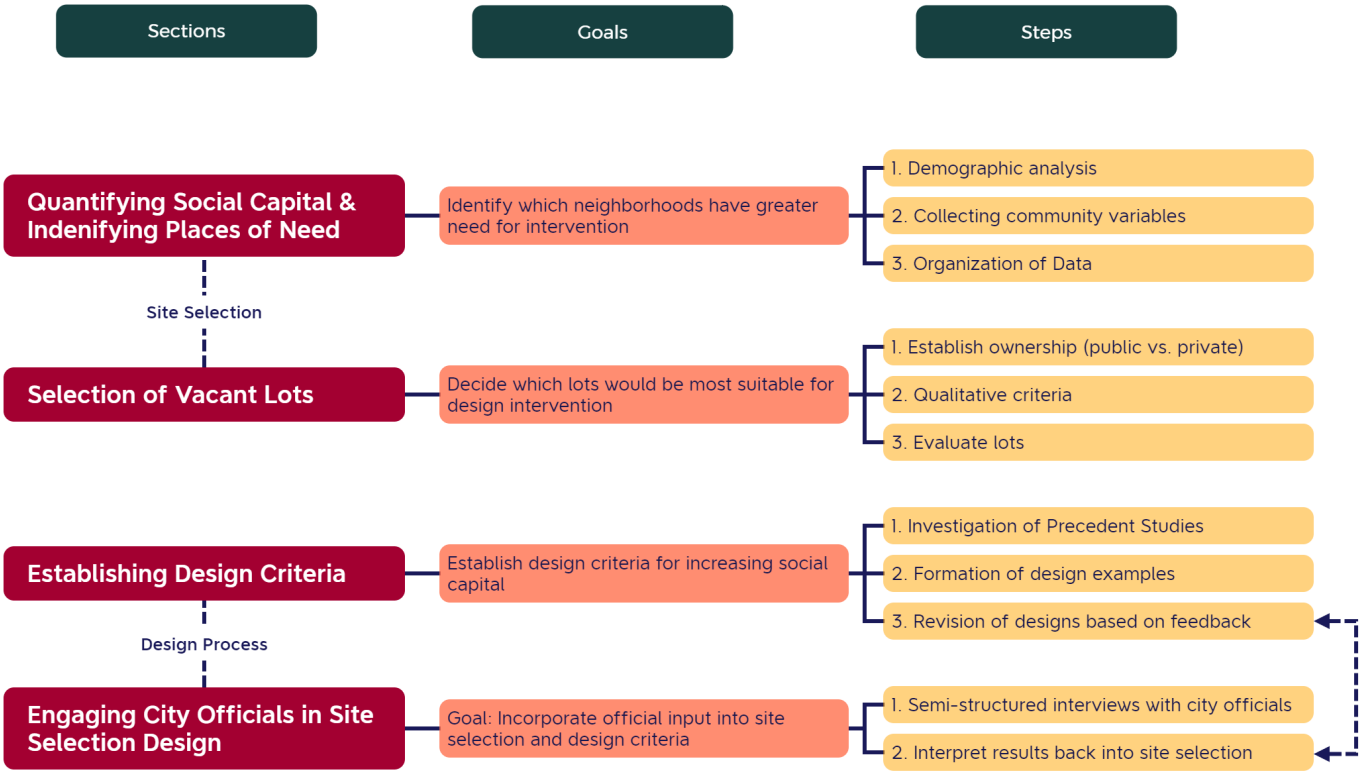


Fig.3 Study Process

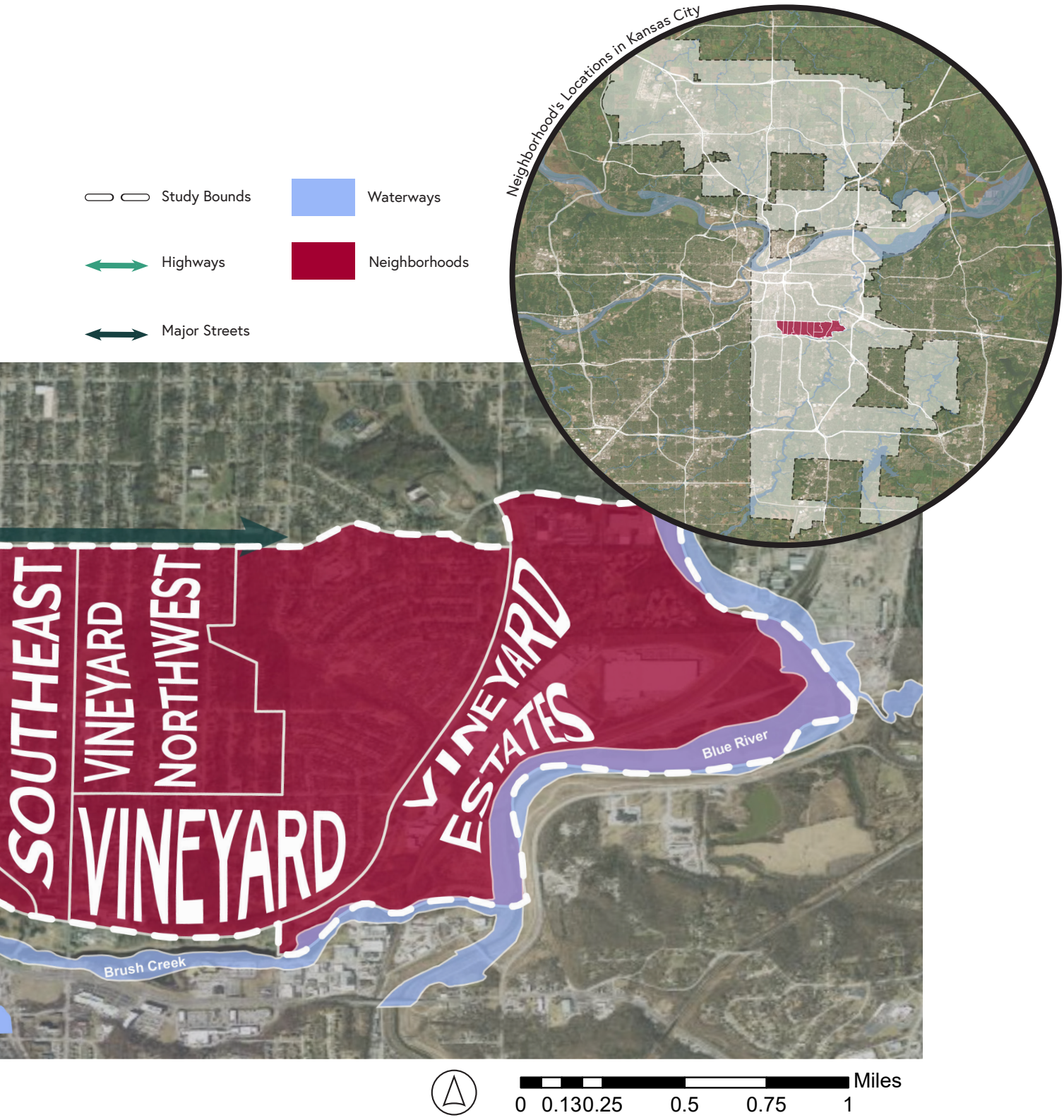

Sections
Goals
Steps
Quantifying Social Capital & Indenifying Places of Need
Identify which neighborhoods have greater need for intervention
1. Demographic analysis
2. Collecting community variables
3. Organization of Data
Site Selection
Selection of Vacant Lots
Decide which lots would be most suitable for design intervention
1. Establish ownership (public vs. private)
2. Qualitative criteria
3. Evaluate lots
Establishing Design Criteria
Establish design criteria for increasing social capital
1. Investigation of Precedent Studies
2. Formation of design examples
3. Revision of designs based on feedback
Design Process
Engaging City Officials in Site Selection Design
Goal: Incorporate official input into site selection and design criteria
1. Semi-structured interviews with city officials
2. Interpret results back into site selection

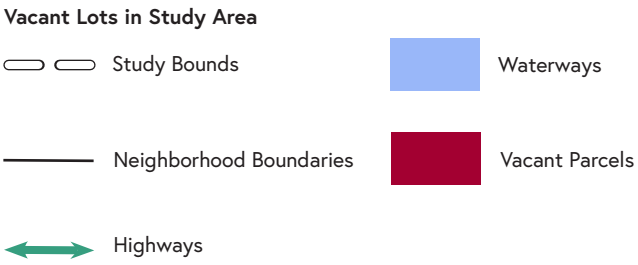
1.3 The Study Area

The study concentrates on nine neighborhoods situated in Kansas City, Missouri, initially chosen as part of an academic project aimed at inventorying aspects influenced and impacted by urban vacancy (see Figure 4). This is an ideal case for several reasons. First, these nine neighborhoods have a high level of vacancy with 18.7% of the total land area being vacant (see Figure 5 and Figure 6).



Fig.4 Study Area Overview


Neighborhood's Locations in Kansas City
Study Bounds
Waterways
Highways
Neighborhoods
Major Streets
SOUTHEAST
VINEYARD
NORTHWEST
VINEYARD
VINEYARD ESTATES
Blue River
Brush Creek
Miles
0 0.130.25 0.5 0.75 1



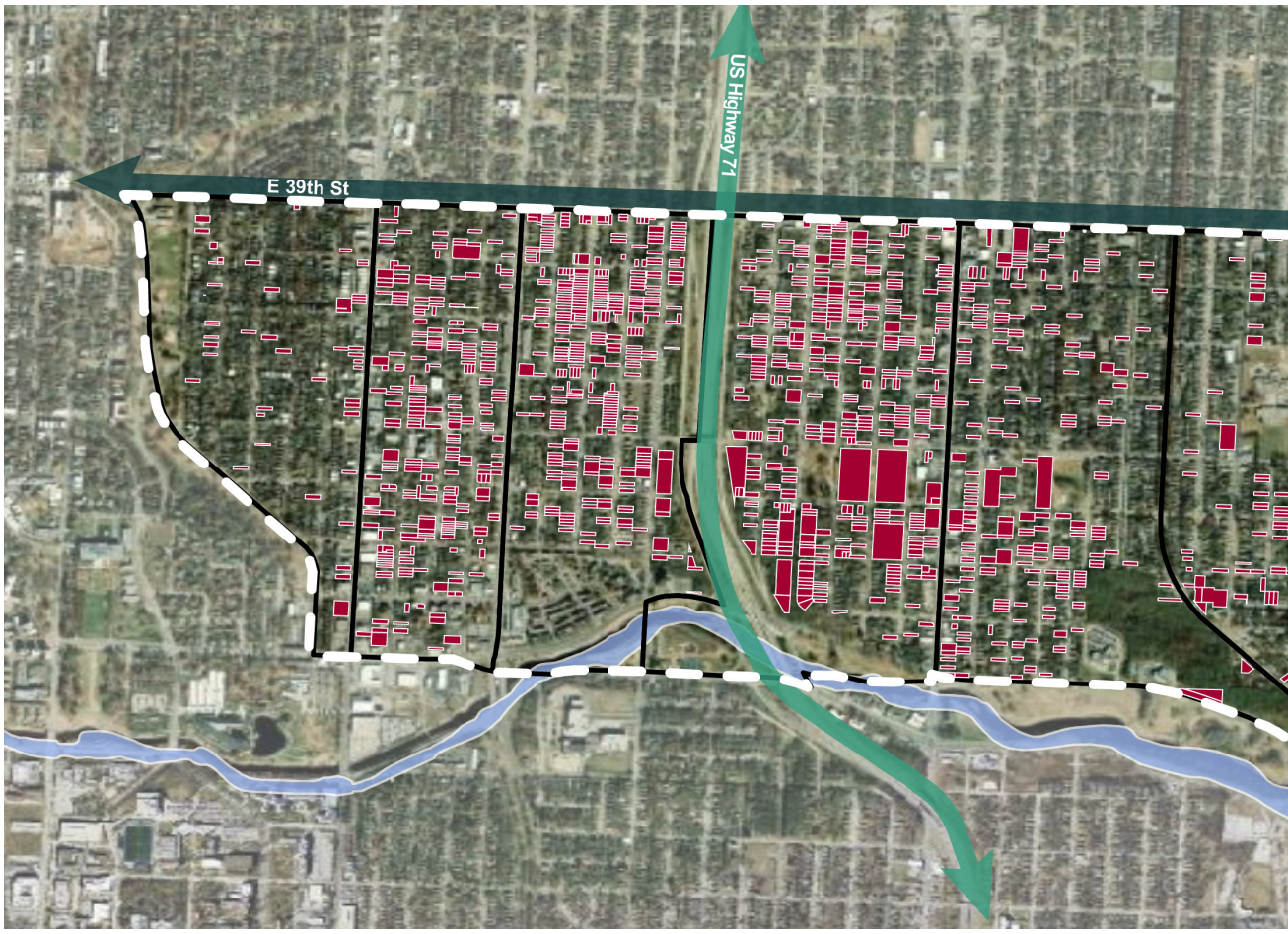
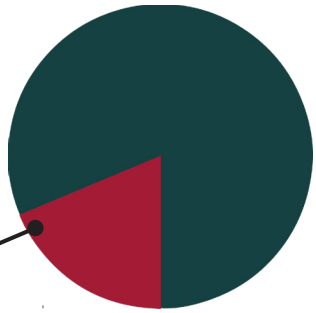


Fig.5 Vacant Lots in Study Area

Occurance of Vacancy

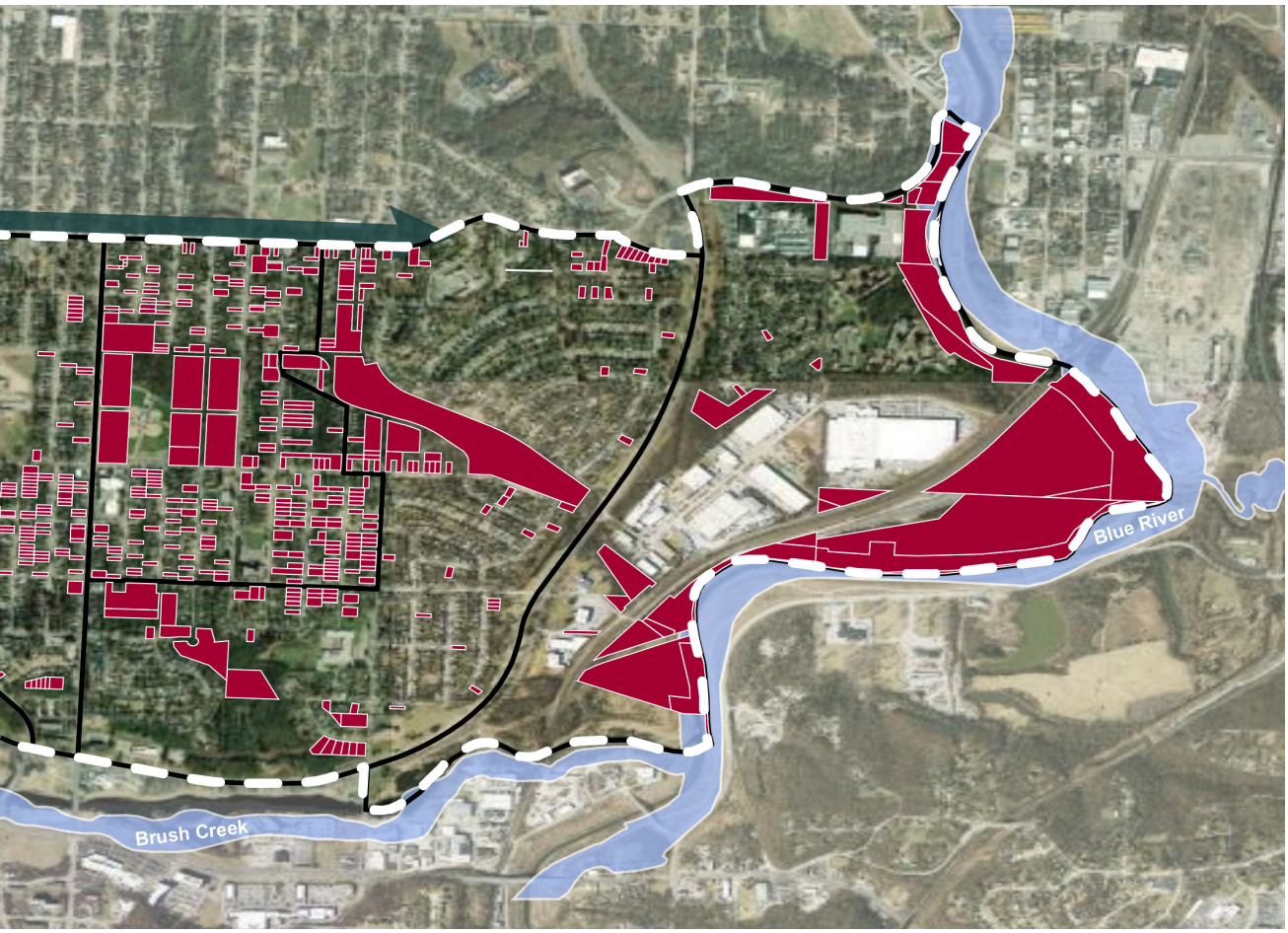
Occupied

Vacant Parcels

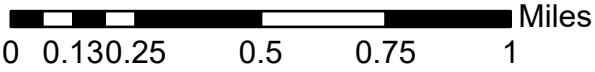


18.7% of study area is vacant land

Fig.6 Percentage of Vacant Land







The neighborhoods also exhibit distinct sociodemographic discrepancies when compared to the rest of Kansas City. Kansas City has a population of 658,262 and a demographic profile of 56.8% white, 19.6% black or African American, 10.2% Latino, and 2.6% Asian with 14.5% of individuals living below the poverty line. With a total population of 29,307, the demographic profile of the nine neighborhoods is 33.1% white, 49.4% black or African American, 9.14% Latino, and 6% Asian with 22.3% of individuals living below the poverty line (Esri Landscape, 2020; see Figure 7 and Figure 8).

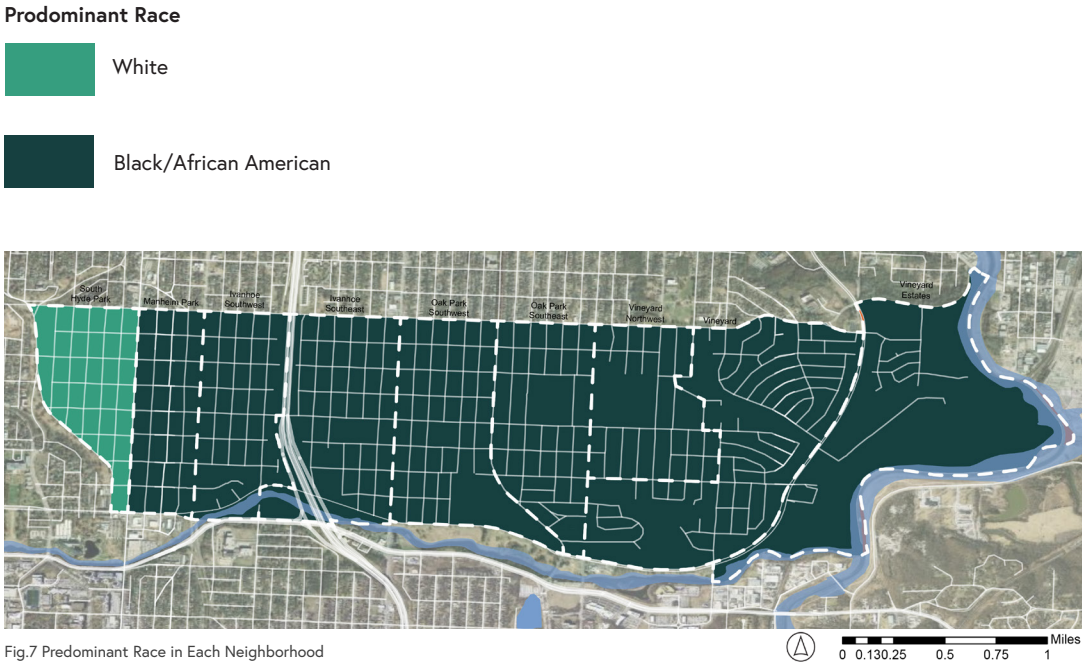


Fig.7 Predominant Race in Each Neighborhood

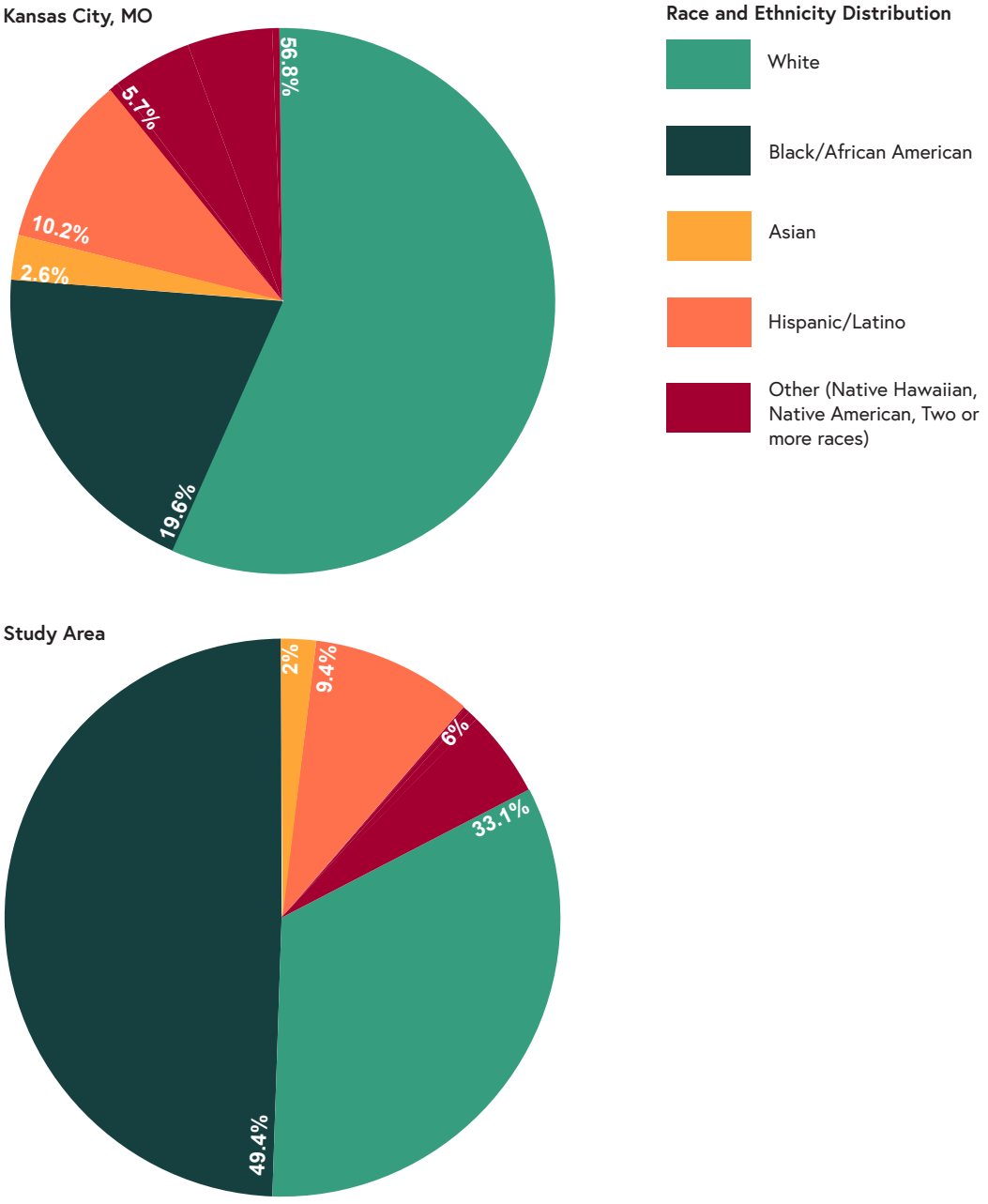


Fig.8 Racial Profile of Kansas City vs. Study Area

Historical Redlining Categories

A (Best)

B (Still Desirable)

C (Declining)

D (Hazardous)

Based on HOLC Map % of Population Below Poverty (~$30,000) in 2021.

39%

30%

20%

11%

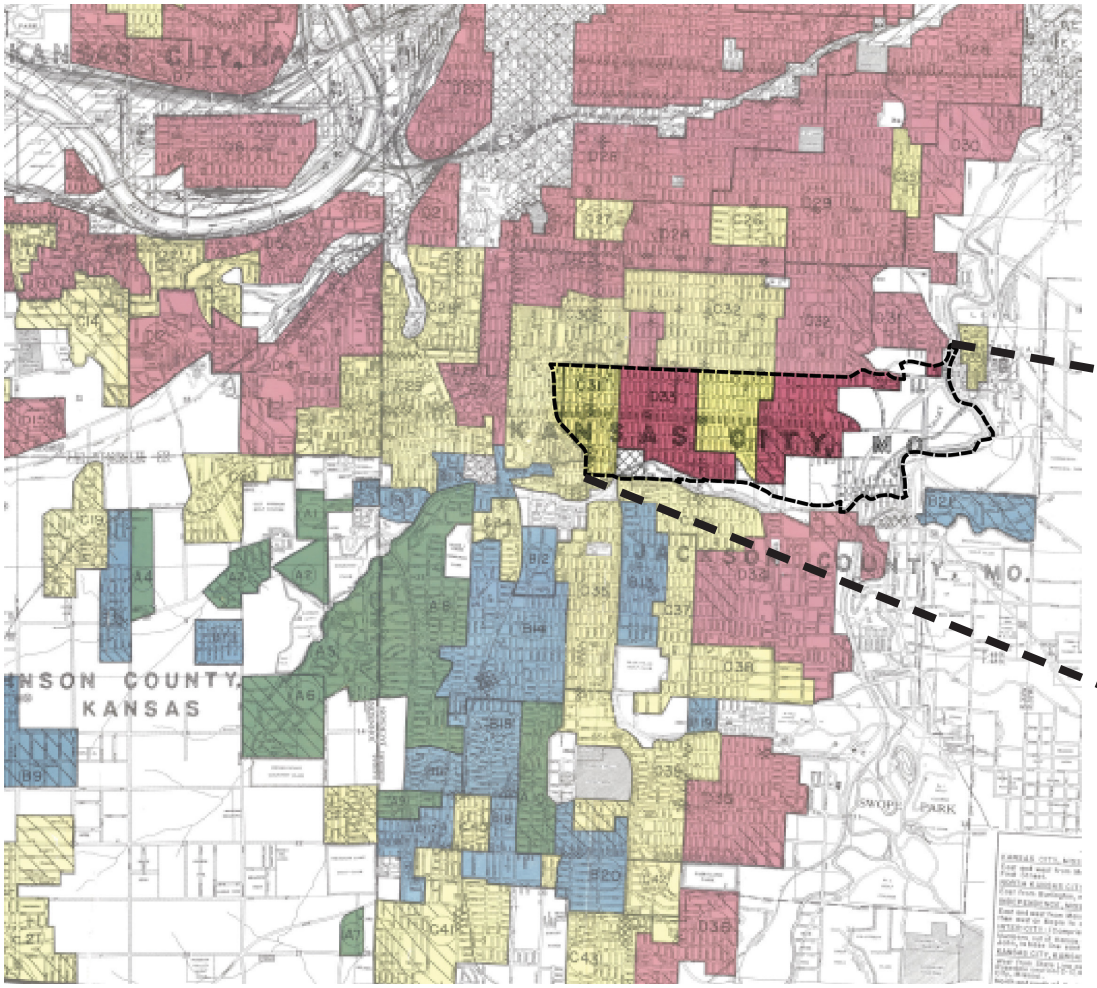


Fig.9 Homeowners Loan Coporation Map (HOLC) of Kansas City (Mapping Inequality, n.d; Schneider, 2023)

These disparities are rooted in historical injustices, notably redlining; a discriminatory practice denying financial services such as mortgages and insurance loans to residents of specific areas based on race or ethnicity, often labeling minority neighborhoods as hazardous or dangerous. Redlining was evident in Homeowners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) maps, which categorized neighborhoods as "best", "desirable", "declining", or "hazardous", leading to the exclusion of predominantly black neighborhoods from government-insured loans (see Figure 9 and Figure 10).

Despite efforts such as the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 to address these discriminatory practices and credit shortages, many outcomes persist into the modern day (Cornell Law School, n.d.). Affected neighborhoods, often situated near industrial sites (Swope et al., 2022), face compounded challenges. An initial spatial analysis of the study area revealed a lack of resources that enhance social capital, such as parks and recreational facilities, coupled with closer proximity to industrial sites.

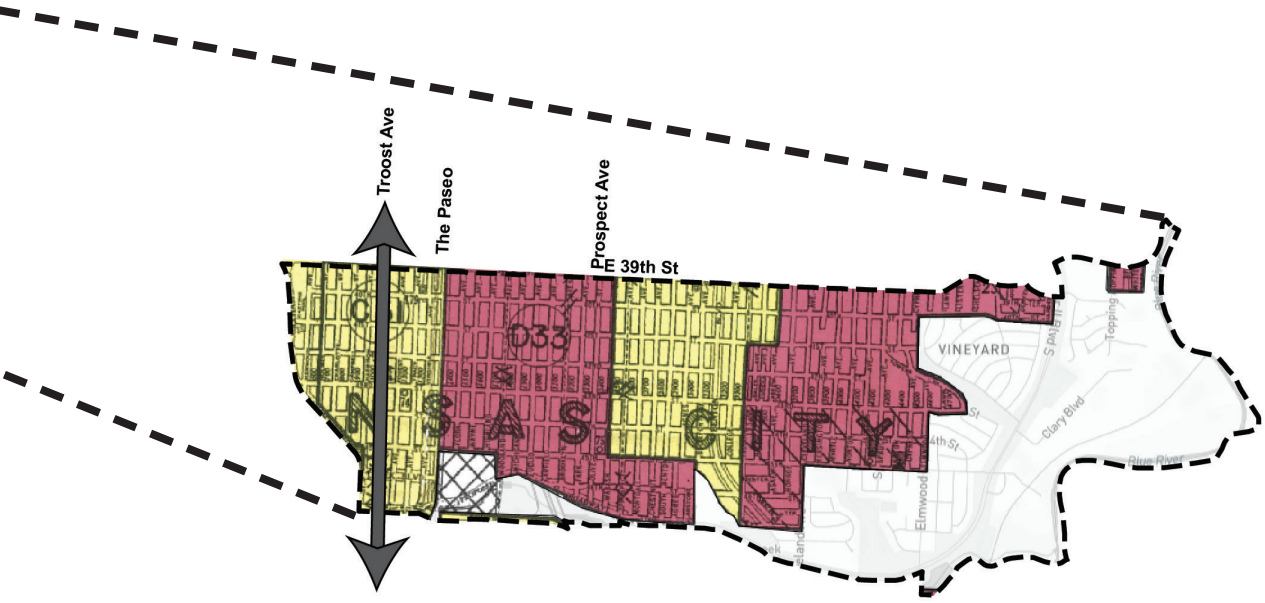


Fig.10 Homeowners Loan Coporation Map (HOLC) in Study Area (Mapping Inequality, n.d; Schneider, 2023)

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK





2.1 Social capital

2.1.1 Foundational Literature

In a pioneering paper by James Coleman, the term "social capital" was introduced, defining various elements that share two common characteristics: they are rooted in a social structure, and they facilitate individual actions within that structure (Coleman, 1988). Coleman's conceptual framework identified specific manifestations of social capital, including obligations, expectations, trust, information sharing, norms, and effective sanctions among social actors (An & Western, 2019; Coleman, 1988). The framework proposes that social capital operates productively, enabling individuals to achieve what would be otherwise unattainable (see Figure 11). This is exemplified in Coleman's farming community scenario, where farm tools and physical labor are extensively shared, allowing each farmer to complete the work with a reduced need for physical capital (Coleman, 1988).

Expanding on Coleman's work, Robert D. Putnum (1993) broadened the analysis of social capital, incorporating socioeconomic factors. Putnum emphasized the distinction between civic communities, characterized by values of solidarity, civic participation, and integrity and communities that are not civically minded, where public affairs are seen as somebody else's concern. In such communities, laws are made to be broken, but the resulting lawlessness prompts many to demand stricter discipline (Putnam, 1993). He posed that civic engagement is vital for economic success and effective governance. Networks of civic engagement foster mutual assistance and shared expectations for the future, reinforcing trust, norms, and networks across various social settings (see Figure 12). Like conventional capital, social capital tends to be accumulative. However, unlike conventional capital, it is a public good generated by public activities and generates from public engagement (Putnam, 1993).

Social capital plays a vital role in western economies by improving economic development and efficiency in economic transactions through social networks (Granovetter, 1974). Putman also highlighted the risks associated with the destruction of social capital in vulnerable communities, underscoring that the costs of disrupting social capital via government programs, such as urban renewal and public housing, can weaken the social fabric of the entire community (Putnam, 1993).

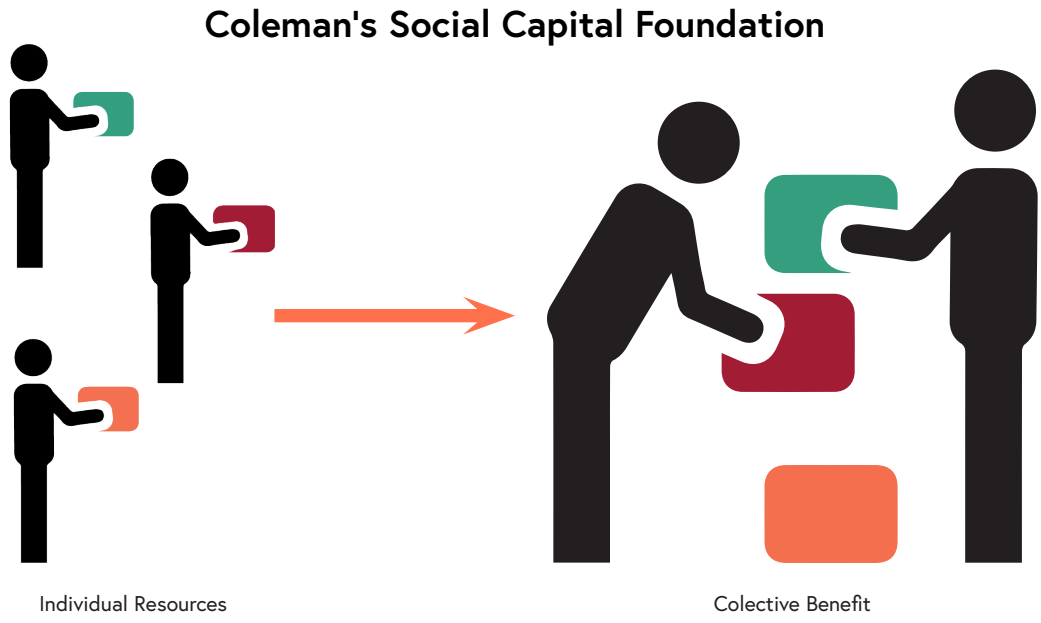


Fig.11 Coleman's Foundation of Social Capital

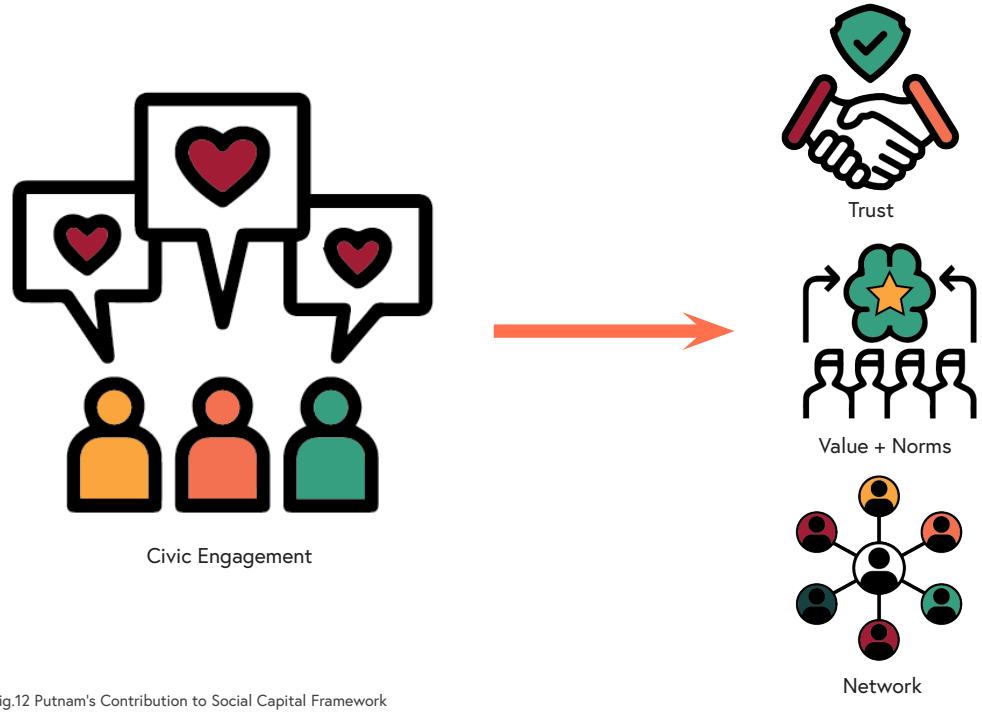


Fig.12 Putnam's Contribution to Social Capital Framework

2.1.2 Defining Social Capital

Following the initial establishment of the theoretical framework for social capital, the concept has evolved, presenting nuanced interpretations reflecting varied manifestations across different social contexts. In this research context, social capital is defined as the support that individuals provide for each other through their networks, norms, sanctions, and cooperation, creating mutual benefit (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014; Sampson & Graif, 2009). At the individual level, it is commonly described as the social resources embedded within a person's social network (Fernandez & Weinberg, 1997; Kawachi & Berkman, 2001; Lin, 2002; Perry & Pescosolido, 2015; Song, 2011).

Furthermore, social capital can manifest on the group level (Portes, 1998, 2000; Putnam, 2000; Sampson, 2012; Sampson & Graif, 2009) as represented by the four dimensions of social capital; collective efficacy, local networks, organizational involvement, and conduct norms (Sampson & Graif, 2009; see Figure 13). These dimensions occur at both the residential level and at the community leadership level and are influenced by socioeconomic status. Sampson & Graif (2009) found that shared expectations for social control, personal resources, attitudes, and behaviors may influence each other. However, they remain independent constructs, with distinct social processes of formation and consequences (Bursik, 1999; Woolcock, 1998).

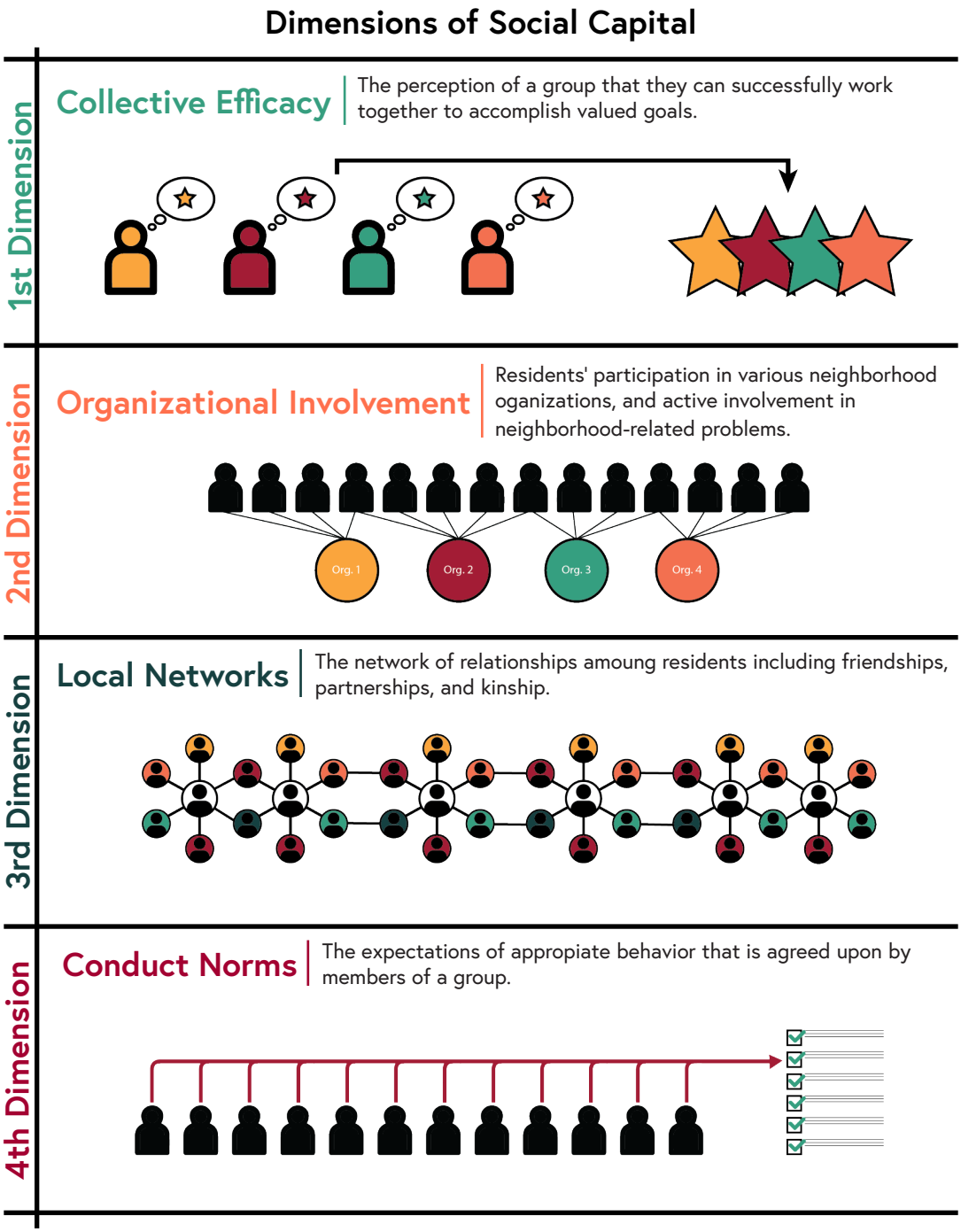
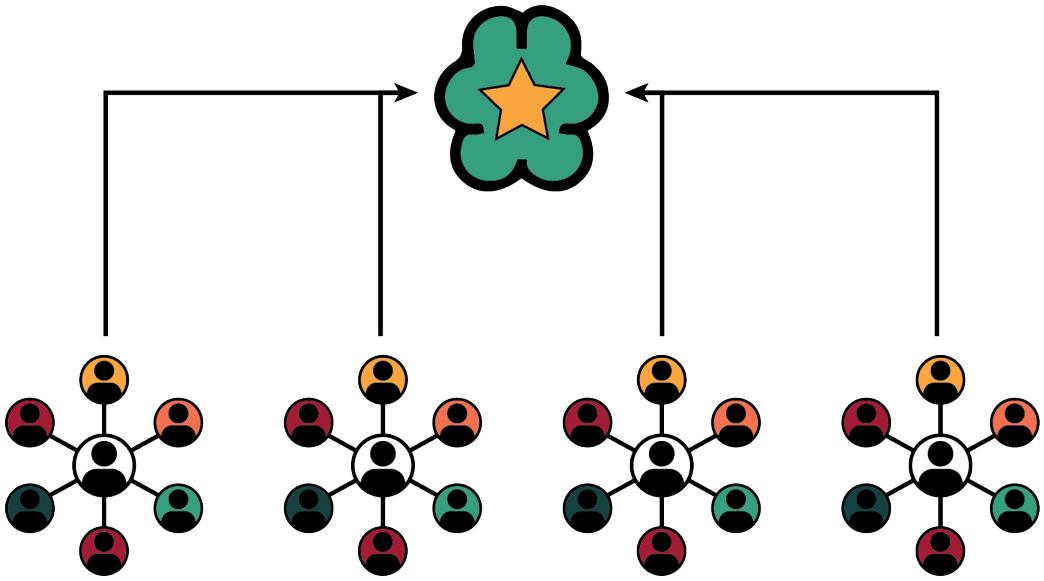


Fig.13 Dimensions of Social Capital - Adapted from Nassauer & Raskin (2014)

Another facet of social capital involves distinguishing between bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital forms among individuals who share commonalities, such as residing in the same neighborhood while bridging capital connects individuals across diverse networks, facilitating the transfer of resources from one network to another (Baum & Ziersch,2003; Burt, 2004; Brisson & Usher, 2005; Nassauer & Raskin, 2014). It is crucial to recognize that for social capital to thrive within a community, both bonding and bridging social capital must coexist (see Figure 14). Communities or organizations with only bonding social capital often lack access to a variety of resources and risk becoming information vacuums. This has been most observed in mafia groups or gangs, where relationships are confined internally, stifling the influx of new ideas or information from external resources. By incorporating bridging social capital, communities can establish connections that extend their resource networks, fostering additional layers of trust, reciprocity, and shared norms (Phillips & Pittman, 2014).

Bridging Social Capital

Networks that bridge smaller social networks together.



Bonding Social Capital

Individuals who share commonalities (neighborhoods, organizations, etc.),



Fig.14 Bridging and Bonding Social Capital - Adapted from Nassauer & Raskin (2014)

2.1.3 Sense of Community

Understanding the pivotal role of social capital in shaping community cohesion and differentiating it from the concept of sense of community is crucial. Despite their distinct characteristics, there is a significant overlap in the dimensions of social capital and sense of community. The presence of trust, cooperative norms, reciprocity, and networks that define social capital can foster a sense of community. McMillan and Chavis (1986) delineated four key components of sense of community: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connections (see Figure 15).

The concept of sense of community provides insights into individuals' connections to the community, which is central to the concept of social capital. The key components of sense of community are identifiable, assessable and have well developed instruments for measurement. These elements remain consistent across various contexts, demographics, and locations. In contrast, the concept of social capital lacks a standardized measure, possibly due to its complex nature. Understanding the relationship between individuals and their community necessitates a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods (Pooley et al., 2005).

Utilizing a conceptual framework like sense of community, with its clearly identifiable components, is one approach to inform the measurement of social capital. Given the relationship between sense of community and social capital, instruments developed to measure sense of community can inform the measurement of social capital. The Sense of Community Index (SCI) developed by Perkins, Florin Rich, and Wandersman (1990), and validated by Chavis and Pretty (1999), is the most widely used measure. This scale comprises 12 items divided evenly into four sub-scales, employing a 5-point Likert scale for resident responses. Combining quantitative methods such as but not limited to the SCI with qualitative approaches, such as interviews, is advocated by many researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of social capital within communities (Pooley et al., 2005).

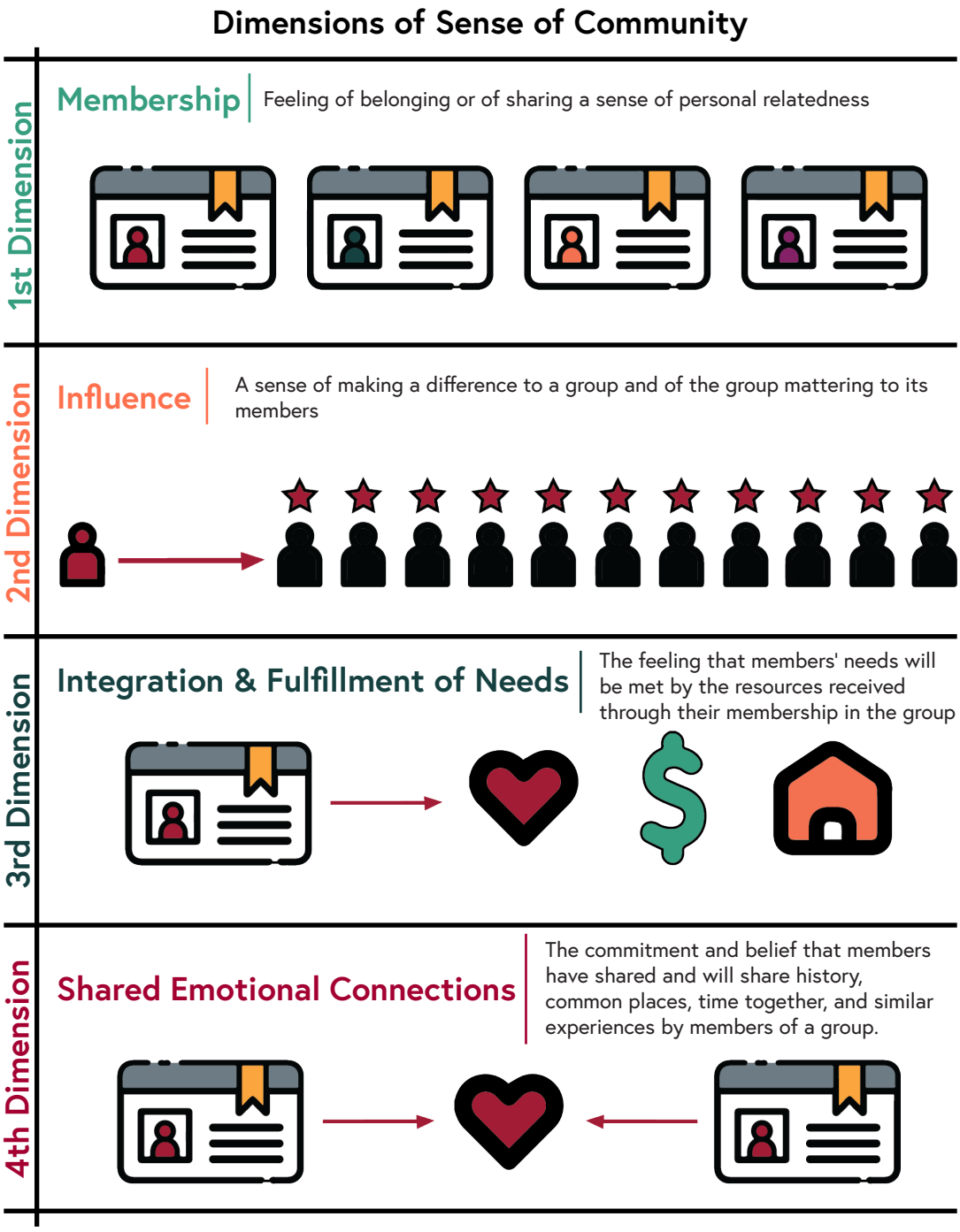


Fig.15 Four Dimensions of Sense of Community - Adapted from McMillan and Chavis (1986)

2.1.4 Influence of the Built Environment

Over the past decade, research has increasingly focused on the connection between social capital and the built environment. Social cohesion, a primary aspect of social capital, strongly correlates with the perceived safety and aesthetic quality of urban neighborhoods (Wood and Giles Corti, 2008; Nassauer and Raskin, 2014). As demonstrated in the literature concerning sense of community, sense of place, and other community concepts, various attributes and features within neighborhood physical environments can influence interpersonal dynamics, interactions, and sentiments. While specific associations have rarely been drawn in published empirical social capital studies thus far, they have surfaced in various qualitative studies (Mazumdar et al., 2018).

Notably, neighborhood factors such as local services, area history, opportunities for social interaction, and participation appear to influence the development of trust, norms of cooperation, reciprocity, patterns of mutual aid, and information exchange (Boneham & Sixsmith, 2006; Cattell, 2001). Although community participation and civic engagement are argued to foster and embody social capital (Putnam, 2000), research underscores the necessity of relevant infrastructure and opportunities within neighborhoods for 'community involvement' (Baum & Palmer, 2002) and social interaction (Altschuler et al., 2004). Opportunities for informal or casual gatherings and participation in groups and associations are conducive to the formation of social capital (Baum & Palmer, 2002; Cattell, 2001).

Existing conceptual frameworks propose relationships between the built environment and social capital through two distinct pathways, termed "activity-based" and "meaning-based" (Kim & Kaplan, 2004). The activity-based pathway is marked by chance and formal encounters facilitated by the built environment (Wood et al., 2010). The meaning-based pathway emphasizes the role of perceptions in fostering belonging, attachment, and social capital. For instance, minimal vehicular traffic (Wood et al., 2010) or the presence of green spaces (Maas et al., 2009) can influence perceptions of neighborhood friendliness and helpfulness.

These pathways can be encouraged or created through a multitude of environmental attributes. For instance, the "New Urbanist" approach to urban design advocates for pedestrian-friendly

neighborhoods equipped with accessible parks, public transport, retail spaces, high-density housing, libraries, schools, and community centers that foster interactions and collective activities. Conversely, establishments like liquor stores may exert a negative influence (Mazumdar et al., 2018). Moreover, factors such as access to nature for restoration (Korpela, 2003), housing design (Cattell, 2001; Saegert & Winkel, 1998), and safety measures (Macintyre & Ellaway, 2000; Perkins & Taylor, 1996) also contribute to the formation of social capital.

2.2 Urban Vacancy

2.2.1 Defining Urban Vacancy

The dynamics of urban vacancy are social, economic, and environmental in nature. In the context of this research, urban vacancy refers to any parcel of land that is currently uninhabited or not being used for its intended purpose within an urban setting. This definition served as the baseline for establishing the following urban vacancy criteria (see Figure 16):

Urban vacancies are characterized by a dynamic, patchy pattern that combines occupied structures, abandoned structures, and vacant, formerly occupied land (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014).

They carry the legacies of past human uses such as "contamination, altered hydrology, altered soil profiles, and introduced species, including invasives" (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014).

In the short term, urban vacancies have limited potential to attract financial investment as the real estate market tends to be weak in neighborhoods with high vacancy rates (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014)

Urban vacancy occurs in a diverse set of cities and is driven by a range of factors. While usually linked with "shrinking cities" experiencing population decline such as Detroit, MI, it also occurs in cities with stable or growing populations. In either scenario, urban vacancies rarely occur uniformly and even in cities with the highest vacancy rates, certain areas may remain occupied, while in growing cities, pockets of vacancy can emerge. Additionally, the transition from occupied to high vacancy can be rapid or gradual (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014).

2.2.2 Causes of Urban Vacancy

Urban vacancies stem from numerous factors, including economic shifts away from manufacturing, urban sprawl and suburbanization, the annexation of regional landscapes by local governments, declining public services, infrastructure disinvestment, the aging of housing, sewer, water, transportation, and communication systems. (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014). Additionally, the causes of urban vacancies are often underpinned by historical inequities such as redlining, a historical planning practice that continues to influence communities despite being prohibited by the Fair Housing Act of 1968 (Swope et al., 2022). It is essential to acknowledge that high vacancy

neighborhoods still have residents and are not "empty". Rather, they are dynamic places with unique social dynamics at play (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014).

CHARACTERISTICS

1. Characterized by a **dynamic, patchy pattern** that combines occupied structures, abandoned structures, and vacant, formerly occupied land.

2. They **carry the legacies of past human uses** such as “contamination, altered hydrology, altered soil profiles, and introduced species, including invasives”.

3. Have **limited potential to attract financial investment** as the real estate market tends to be weak in neighborhoods with high vacancy rates.

Fig.16 Characteristics of Urban Vacancy

2.3 Urban Vacancy and Social Capital: How They Impact Each Other and Quality of Life

In regions highly affected by urban vacancy, understanding the interconnectedness between social, institutional, and ecological factors is crucial to addressing this complex issue (Etherington & Jones, 2009; Nassauer et al., 2009). Neighborhood dynamics, social capital, and stakeholder values significantly influence environmental and social processes (Nassauer et al., 2009; Schilling & Mallach, 2012) influencing the movement of materials, energy, and species, as well as the overall health, safety, and well-being of residents (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014).

2.3.1 Social Impacts

Urban vacancy has far-reaching impacts on quality of life, impacting social capital by creating social fragmentation and negatively impacting community homogeneity, a pivotal factor in shaping social capital at neighborhood level. Social cohesion and community homogeneity are often products of local interactions (Mazumdar et al., 2018). The neglected appearance of vacant areas evokes fear in both residents and outsiders, undermining social capital (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004). Wilson and Kelling's (1982) "broken windows theory" suggests that visible signs of neglect due to vacancy sends a message that the area lacks oversight, creating opportunities for crime. While subsequent studies have not established a relationship between perceived disorder and crime, there is a relationship between perceived disorder and perceived risk of crime (Hong & Farley, 2008; Maxfield, 1984; Perkins et al., 1992; Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004).

In essence, a vacant landscape marked by graffiti, litter, and overgrown vegetation conveys a sense of danger regardless of the actual crime record (see Figure 17). Specific crime risks fluctuate based on the stages of vacancy that are present, landcover types, and by contextual elements (Galster and Raleigh, 2012; Mazumdar et al., 2018). Abandoned structures fall into disrepair and become vulnerable to vandalism, squatting, and arson, raising concerns about fire and crime that typically result in neighbors advocating for their demolition (Beauregard,2012; Ehrenfeucht & Nelson, 2012; Nassauer & Raskin, 2014). The absence of tangible evidence indicating a strong presence of social capital, such as community resources, increases the likelihood of residents moving, perpetuating a vicious cycle of neglect and abandonment (Nassauer & Raskin, 2014).

Overgrown Vegetation





Dilapidated Structures





Graffiti and Litter





Fig.17 Environmental Displays of Urban

2.3.2 Environmental and Economic Impacts

As vacant lots decay and begin showing signs of neglect such as overgrown vegetation and dilapidated structures, they trigger economic repercussions. On a citywide scale, abandonment and vacancy disrupts the balance between infrastructure services and revenues, leading to an increase in the need for services like police, fire protection, street maintenance, and sidewalk upkeep, resulting in diminished efficiency (Johnson et al., 2010). Investments in infrastructure made for larger populations such as municipal storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and water cannot be easily scaled down as taxpayer rates decline. Local governments also bear the burden of maintaining more publicly owned land (Keating, 2010).

On the neighborhood scale, desirability in the housing market hierarchy influences property rent, sale price, and vacancy rates, shaping the socioeconomic makeup of residents and their ownership rates. These changes negatively impact social cohesion, residents' attachment to the area, and informal social networks, further impacting investment decisions by property owners. The neighborhood's socioeconomic profile also has repercussions on local business, aesthetic standards, and everyday activities (Raleigh & Galster, 2015).

In a process described by Mallach and Brachman (2013) as disinvestment, property values plummet rapidly in neighborhoods marked by vacancy. Reduced demand and a rise in poverty often become defining characteristics. This leads to real estate speculators and international financial institutions acquiring large proportions of property at low prices or through loan defaults. Many individuals invest their savings to buy a home and struggle to afford a sale where they could lose their invested equity. In some cases, residents choose to remain in the neighborhood due to personal attachment or affordability (Mallach, 2010).

Furthermore, vacant land poses immediate environmental impacts. Deterioration over time can release various materials into the environment, disrupting otherwise healthy systems. Even after structure demolition, toxins may persist, exposing residents to contaminants at hazardous levels (Burton & Pitt, 2001; Li et al., 2004; Pickett et al., 2011; Pickett & Cadenasso, 2009). The location of vacant properties can exacerbate contamination, depending on their proximity to streets, waterways, industrial sites, or energy sources (Nassauer

& Raskin, 2014). In highly vacant areas, these environmental challenges are perpetuated by outdated engineering and infrastructure that is associated with insufficient financial resources (Pickett et al., 2011; see Figure 18).

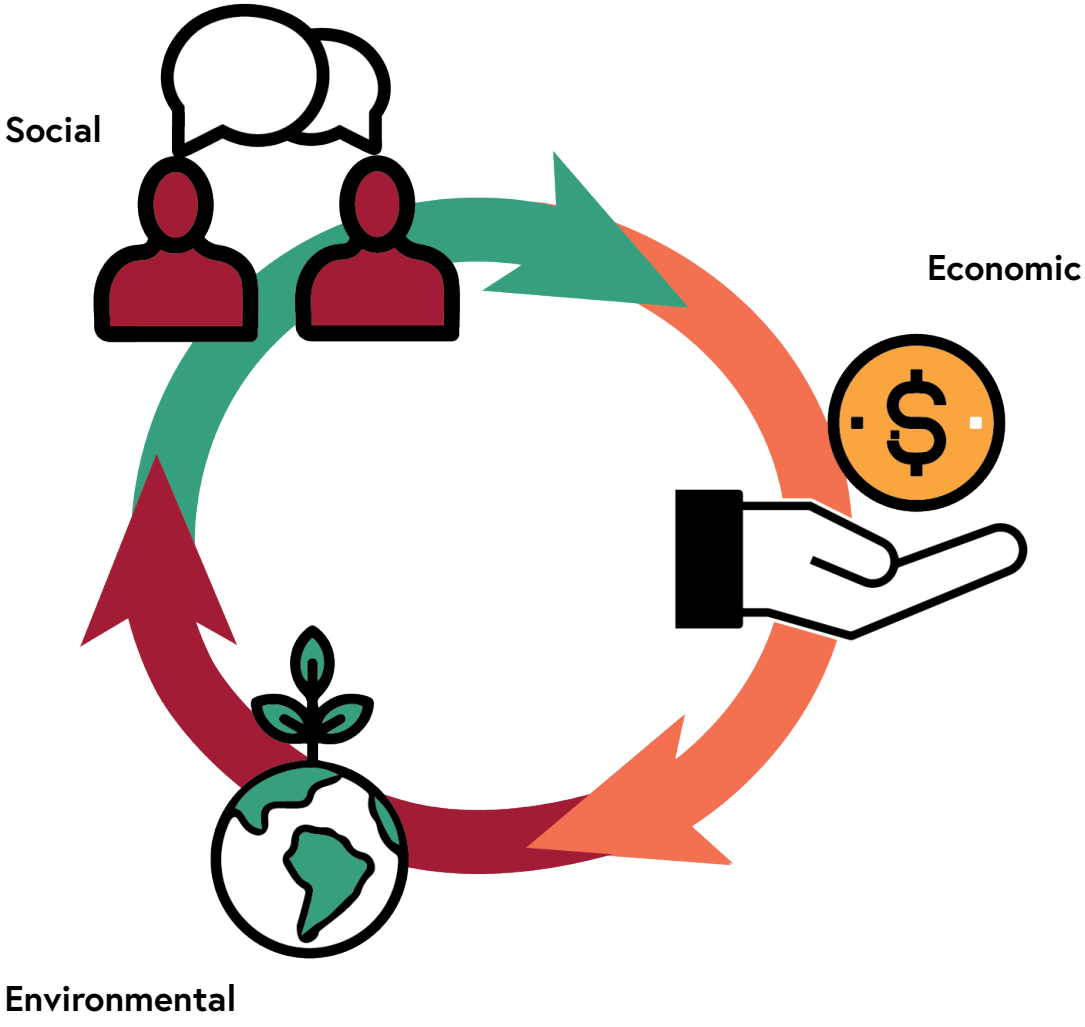


Fig.18 Impacts of Urban Vacancy

2.3.3 Quality of Life

Urban vacancy also carries extensive implications for quality of life, generating social, economic, and environmental consequences. While this research concentrates on social consequences, it acknowledges the interconnected nature of these factors. These repercussions not only foster social disintegration, but also have profound implications for the psychological and physical well-being of residents in high-vacancy areas (Burton & Pitt, 2001; Li et al., 2004; Pickett et al., 2011; Pickett & Cadenasso, 2009). The Flanagan Quality of Life Scale (QOLS) is a widely recognized tool for evaluating quality of life, focusing on five primary domains: material and physical well-being, interpersonal relationships, social and community engagement, personal development and fulfillment, and recreation (Burckhardt & Anderson, 2003).

Material and physical well-being encompasses various crucial aspects of a fulfilling life. This includes financial security, access to nutritious food, comfortable housing, personal belongings, and prospects for the future. Financial stability and monetary resources play pivotal roles in achieving these objectives, often through personal endeavors or through those of a partner. Moreover, maintaining good health and personal safety is imperative, involving freedom from illness, physical and mental fitness, and the avoidance of accidents and health hazards. Effective management of health issues constitutes a significant component of this domain (Flanagan, 1978). Interpersonal relationships form another aspect of quality of life. This involves relationships with a partner or spouse, characterized by love, companionship, effective communication, and mutual respect. It could also include parenting and nurturing relationships with children by observing their development, spending quality time with them, and actively participating in their growth. Similarly, connections with parents, siblings, or other relatives offer a sense of belonging, involving communication, shared experiences, and mutual support. Additionally, friendships provide acceptance, shared activities, support, and guidance, contributing significantly to overall happiness (Flanagan, 1978).

Social and community engagement are vital for a meaningful existence. This encompasses activities aimed at assisting or encouraging others, whether individually or as part of organizations such as churches or volunteer groups. Active involvement in local and national governance, including

staying informed, voting, and participating in political discourse is crucial. Moreover, comprehending how governing bodies and influential groups shape living conditions enhances one's social awareness and engagement (Flanagan, 1978).

Personal development and fulfillment encompass various dimensions of growth and self-actualization. This could include intellectual development involves learning, acquiring knowledge, and problem-solving, whether through formal education or self-directed pursuits. Personal reflection and planning entail gaining insight into one's life purpose, accepting personal limitations, and making informed decisions about life goals and roles. It may also entail occupational fulfillment where one finds meaningful and rewarding work that utilizes one's abilities and offers recognition. Additionally, expressing creativity through various mediums and engaging in personal projects contribute to a sense of fulfillment and self-expression (Flanagan, 1978).

Recreation also plays a pivotal role in enhancing overall well-being. This includes socializing, attending gatherings, and meeting new people, as well as participating in passive recreational activities such as watching television, listening to music, or reading. Actively pursuing recreational interests like sports, outdoor activities, or creative endeavors also promotes relaxation and enjoyment. Overall, maintaining a balanced approach to recreation contributes to mental rejuvenation and a sense of fulfillment in life (Flanagan, 1978).

While these aspects are distinct from social capital, they intersect with activities known to bolster social capital, such as civic participation and relationship-building. Additionally, the absence of these domains is known to decrease social capital, further strengthening the correlation between social capital and quality of life (Nassauer et al., 2009; Schilling & Mallach, 2012). This highlights the importance of exploring ways of strengthening social capital in high vacancy areas with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of life of residents.

2.4 Approaches in Design

2.4.1 The Built Environment

Certain neighborhood amenities such as parks, libraries, schools, and community centers play a crucial role in enhancing social capital by encouraging interactions and serving as vehicles for collective activities (Mazumdar et al., 2018). Social cohesion strongly correlates with perceived safety and aesthetic quality of urban neighborhoods, with suggested linkages between landscape characteristics and social capital, as noted by Wood and Giles Corti (2008) and Nassauer & Raskin (2014). The broader policy environment can also shape the built environment and its impact on social capital (Francis et al., 2012; Mazumdar et al., 2018; Theall et al., 2009). Landscape characteristics that signify order, care, and human presence nurture social capital by encouraging social networks and cohesion (Mazumdar et al., 2018).

2.4.2 The Gaps

While informative in many aspects, the existing social capital research presents notable shortcomings. Most prior studies lack a structured framework to adequately address the social consequences of urban vacancy. Although economic and ecological consequences have been thoroughly studied, the social ramifications are often studied secondarily to these. Very few studies focus primarily on the long-term social outcomes of urban vacancy, resulting in design solutions that do not prioritize the development of lasting social capital.

Furthermore, previous studies conducted at the neighborhood-level often lack empirical data on the dimensions of social capital (Foster et al., 2015). Instead, these studies rely more on associations between poverty rates and sociodemographic data. However, social capital encompasses more than demographic correlations. While demographic data provides a starting point, it does not quantify the ways in which spatial community level variables such as parks, schools, and neighborhood associations contribute to the collective social capital of a community (Sampson & Graif, 2009). This study examines social capital from the perspective of neighborhood spatial qualities (see Figure 19).

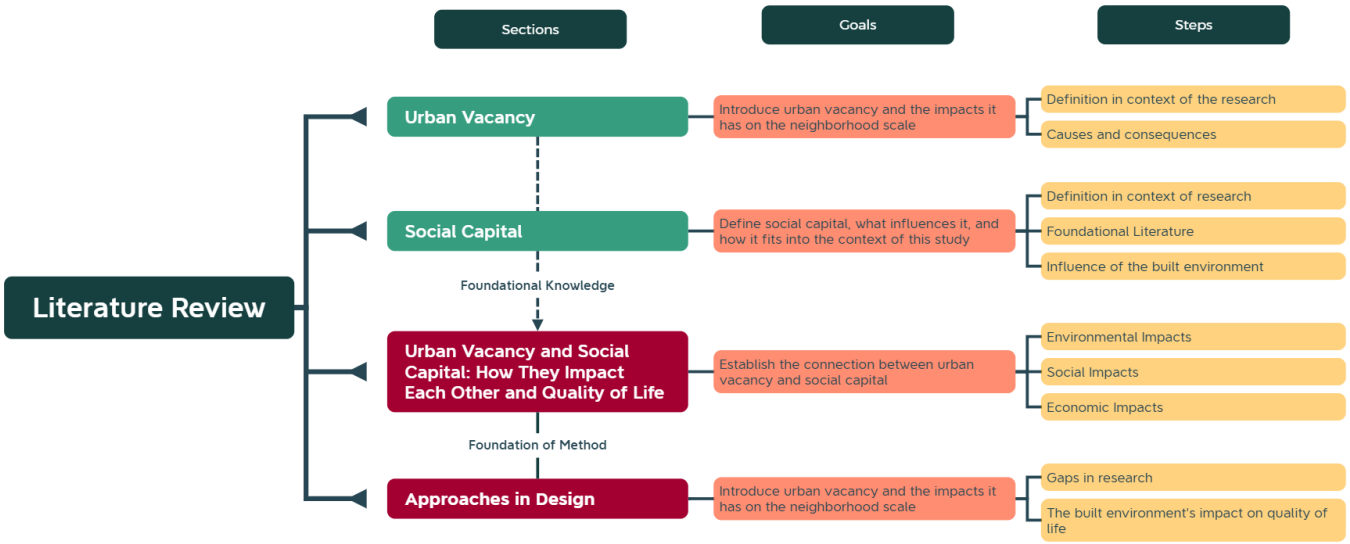


Fig.19 Literature Review Process

STUDY METHODS





This study utilized a multi-phase qualitative approach to achieve the following goals (see Figure 20):

Determine which of the nine neighborhoods in the study area are most in need of social capital improvement.

Explore which vacant lots in the selected neighborhoods have the greatest potential to evolve into assets of social capital for the community.

Investigate the implementation of environmental attributes and affordances that can be used to enhance social capital.

The study was conducted in four phases. First, an inventory of community-level variables recognized to increase social capital was taken and used to select two neighborhoods from the nine in the study area. Subsequently, an evaluation of the vacant lots within the selected neighborhoods was conducted using a set of social and environmental criteria to assess their suitability for repurposing. Following this, city officials were engaged in revising site selection. Additionally, a design framework was created that aimed to prioritize programming that enhances social capital and address the specific needs of each neighborhood. This approach is geared to reflect the shift in practice towards bottom-up design processes shaped by community feedback (Acey et al., 2014).

Addressing urban vacancy while cultivating social capital is a complex challenge. The chosen approach was designed to facilitate in-depth exploration of the unique social, economic, and environmental factors affecting distinct communities. Given the scarcity of prior research on the relationship between social capital and urban vacancy, employing a case-by-case approach is essential to fully comprehend the impact of design on this challenge. Subsequent sections elaborate on the approach taken to evaluate this multifaceted design process.

Goal 1

Neighborhood Selection



Goal 2

Vacant Lot Evaluation



Goal 3

Design Attributes and Affordances



Fig.20 Study Goals

3.1 Phase 1: Quantifying Social Capital & Identifying Places of Need

In a framework established by King and Hine et. al. (2018), community level variables and spatial attributes were used to determine the collective social capital of a neighborhood (see Figure 21) that were identified from a previous work by Markeson and Deller (Deller & Markeson, 2015). The evaluation of civic organizations' effectiveness at building social capital is gauged through metrics such as membership numbers or frequency of meetings (Rupasingha et al., 2006). However, the authors' original framework excluded search terms such as schools, parks, and playgrounds despite their significance as locations where many social connections

Variables used to describe the presence of social capital by neighborhood

Variables	Social Capital Rationale [21]
Associational - ~~Bowling alleys~~ - Civic and social associations - Physical fitness facilities - Public golf courses - Sports clubs, managers and promoters - Membership sports and recreation clubs - Political organizations - Professional organizations - Business associations - Labor organizations	Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction[30]
Religious activity - Places of worship - ~~Percentage active in a religion~~	Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships[31]
Cooperative organizations - Number of arts cooperatives - Number of child-care cooperatives - Number of educational cooperatives - Number of grocery store cooperatives	Unites communities voluntarily - these four selected per specific focus on community needs
Non-profits - Number of non-profits	Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise" (p. 62)
Composite index - ~~Sum of associations above per 10 000 persons~~ - ~~Census mail response rate~~ - ~~Voter turnout (2008)~~ - ~~Total number of non-profits per 10 000 persons~~	"Goetz and Rupasingha used principal component analysis to combine several factors that could be associated with social capital into a scalar index" (p. 63)

Fig.21 King Social Capital (King et. al, 2019)

are formed. To address this, the decision was made to include schools, parks, and playgrounds in the search criteria for this study (see Figure 22). Search terms for each variable were entered into Google Maps to identify all locations falling within the various categories in each neighborhood.

This phase of data collection occurred in October of 2023 and physical addresses, names, and zip codes were documented (see Appendix A).

Search Term	Name	Address	Social Capital Rationale	Score
Schools			Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
Places of worship				4
Civic and social associations			Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	3
Neighborhood Associations				3
Physical fitness facilities				3
Public play grounds				3
Public golf courses				3
Sports clubs, managers, and promoters				3
Membership sports and recreation clubs				3
Polical organizations				3
Bussiness associations				3
Labor organizations				3
Community gardens				3
Libraries				3
Non-profits			Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	`
Arts cooperatives	`		Unites communities voluntarily	1
Child-care cooperatives				1
Educational cooperatives				1
Grocercy store cooperatives				1
			Social Capital Factors Total:	X
			Population Density (population/land area)	÷Y
			Neighborhood Social Capital Score	Z

Fig.22 Adapted Social Capital Framework

3.1.1 Calculation of weighted scores

Following the compilation of physical addresses from Google Maps, variables were systematically categorized based on their type and contributions to the creation of social capital. To gauge the effectiveness of each variable in generating social capital, a weighted value was assigned to each, and subsequently was summed and divided by population density (social capital factors / population density = neighborhood social capital score). Population density was calculated by dividing the population of each neighborhood (2023) by the land area of that neighborhood. This was to mirror King and Hine's method of reporting social capital via the density of vehicles for social capital (labor organizations, non-profits, neighborhood associations, etc.) per zip code (King et al., 2019). However, in place of using zip codes as boundaries, neighborhood boundaries were utilized.

The allocation of these points was predominantly influenced by the significance of a location's ability to foster the development of complex relationships. The assignment of weights was grounded in the premise that fostering cooperation and facilitating information exchange – integral components for social capital formation - are most effectively created through frequent intrapersonal relationships within organizational settings. Such engagements play a pivotal role in the continuous sharing of information and foster reciprocity among participants. Membership in these groups instills trust among individuals, thereby enhancing the likelihood of collaborative efforts (Dana, 2009; Rupasingha et al., 2006).

For this reason, items that were given the largest weight (4 points) are considered as the most effective at instilling this type of trust. They bring people together at frequent intervals for a specific purpose or goal, bridging gaps between people in the community. For example, one item weighted at this scale is religious organizations. Religious involvement, particularly membership in a congregation, fosters bridging social capital through two mechanisms: selective affiliation and participation effects. Selective affiliation suggests that active members may already possess high-status connections outside their religious circles. Participation effects arise from involvement in religious activities, facilitating interactions with influential individuals and enhancing social skills. While it is challenging to determine the

dominant mechanism, religious settings likely attract individuals with status-bridging social capital. Membership in a religious congregation is significantly associated with having influential friends, such as elected officials, corporation executives, or wealthy individuals, even after considering demographic factors. These associations resemble the impact of higher education or professional employment on influential friendships (Wuthnow, 2002).

These are followed by those that represent a location where community member interactions could occur if initiated (3 points). This is due to the fact that regardless of any leadership, these locations provide a place for people to gather. So, in the worst-case scenario, these locations are stagnant but not necessarily harmful. However, in the best-case scenario, community members can leverage them to build relationships and create social bonds.

Non-profits received the next lower weight (2 points), as they ensure diverse community services but often rely on external support, lacking direct community member interaction (Deller & Markeson, 2015). Moreover, the social capital contribution of non-profits largely depends on leadership focus on fostering social relationships within the community. Leadership is viewed as an investment in organizational social capital, vital for effective operation. Leaders in non-profits inherently hold a bank of social capital, comprised of their relationships and network connections. Organizational leaders are encouraged to actively cultivate and leverage social capital through strategies such as fostering trust, nurturing authentic reciprocal relationships, and enhancing network awareness and participation. However, if organizational leaders lack the ability to leverage this social capital bank, the organization may struggle to build meaningful social connections or even damage them (King, 2004).

Lastly, cooperatives were scored the lowest as community members would need to seek them out to participate, and even then, are not guaranteed to have in-person interaction with others (1 point). This calculation resulted in a score indicating the overall level of social capital in each neighborhood (see Appendix A).

Nevertheless, relying solely on this approach for neighborhood selection is insufficient. In addition to evaluating social capital, the density of vacant lots

within each neighborhood was considered to make a more comprehensive decision. Many studies have used a more complex version of this spatial analysis through statistical mapping and spatial association (Anselin, 1995; Moran, 1948). However, the resulting framework is designed to be easily applicable, so these methods were simplified from the approaches King and others employed. These supplemental considerations account for the scenario where certain neighborhoods, while scoring low on the social capital scale, might not exhibit as significant of a vacancy issue as others (see Appendix A).

3.2 Phase 2: Selection of Vacant Lots

3.2.1 Site Evaluation

Once the neighborhoods were selected for further analysis, vacant lots most suitable for repurposing were identified. This process began with an inventory of all vacant lots using Esri Arc GIS Pro and data sourced from Open Data KC. Subsequently, a set of criteria (see Figure 23; see Appendix B) was used to qualify or disqualify lots from the selection process.

The prioritization in this selection process focused on identifying lots suitable for repurposing that are obtainable and free from costly remediation concerns. Lots owned by the Kansas City Land Bank or by the Kansas City Missouri Homestead Authority (KCMHA) were favored due to their public ownership, making them the most feasible and cost-effective options. Additionally, lots displaying apparent environmental safety concerns such as chemical contamination and flooding, were excluded from consideration. While these lots hold potential for repurposing, the substantial cost associated with their remediation makes them unattainable for a community-based project.

Following the initial screening, each lot was scored based on a set of criteria (Appendix B). These criteria represent various feasibility elements and factors that influence the establishment of social capital including factors such as home occupancy and slope. A scoring system was employed to assess these factors, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of each lot's potential (see Figure 24).

3.2.2 Lot Selection

Upon completion of the scoring process, lots were arranged in descending order, reflecting a spectrum from most to least suitable for repurposing. The assigned scores can theoretically range from -9 to 9 for each lot, although extremes of such magnitude were not anticipated. Subsequently, lots with a score of 0 or lower were excluded from further consideration. Lots which scored above 0 were deemed suitable for repurposing. It is noteworthy that while some in this final selection do not score as high as others, they have been retained to represent a diverse range of site conditions. It is essential to acknowledge that these lots may not be flawless, but their strengths surpass their weaknesses.

Goal: Narrow down vacant lots base on major feasibility considerations.

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation
Can the parcel be acquired?	Owned by either the Kansas City Land Bank or by the Kansas City Missouri Homestead Authority (KCMHA)
Does the parcel pose a contamination hazard?	Not brownfields, past/present land use does not raise concerns for contamination
Has the city deemed the parcel to have little or no use?	In their criteria for vacant lot, is the lot in one of these categories?
Does the parcel have an existing structure?	No existing structures that would present difficulty when excavating.
Does the area around the parcel present obvious concerns for safety/stability?	Obvious problems on adjacent parcels such as guard dogs, drug activity, or fast-moving vehicles

Fig.23 Automatic Qualifiers - Lot Selection

Goal: Prioritize environmental attributes that would create an ideal environment for increasing social capital.

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation	Yes (+1), No (-1), or Unsure (0)?	Total
Is the land in close to proximity to known bussinesses/uses that induce crime?	Proximity to liquor stores, bars/clubs, gas stations, etc.		_ x 2 _
Does KC see potential for this lot?			_ x 2 = _
Is there moderate home occupancy?	60% or more of the homes surrounding the parcel are occupied		_ x 1.5 = _
Is it adjacent to an already repurposed vacnt lot?	Having a already repurposed lot nearby could increase momentum.		_ x 1 = _
Is urban greening welcomed?	Neighborhood plans incorporate urban greening, urban green space is a desired potential land use, existing green reuse		_ x 0.5 = _
Does the parcel slope away from the street?	Parcels that slope from street could naturally collect street flow		_ x 0.5 = _
Is the surrounding sidewalk intact and level?	Parcels without sidewalks, or with very uneven sidewalks, would require construction (a significant community cost)		_ x 1 = _
Is there a fire hydrant present?	A fire hydrant is a potential water source		_ x 0.5 = _
Is the parcel located directly adjacent to a park or existing recreation space?	Want to avoid spaces where a recreation need is already fulfilled		_ x 1.5 = _
Is the parcel grade not significantly different from sidewalk grade?	Parcel on a hill that is positioned above street level; runoff from these parcels flows into streets		_ x 0.5 = _
		TOTAL =	

Fig.24 Initial Scoring Criteria

3.3 Phase 3: Establishing Design Criteria

The next step of the study was to begin the process of establishing design criteria. The desired outcome of this work is not focused on one formal resolution. Instead, it focuses on incorporating the specific needs of a neighborhood while using social capital as a tool to communicate landscape change (Jorgensen & Tylecote, 2007).

3.3.1 Investigation of Precedent Studies

In preparation to create the design framework, an investigation of landscape design was conducted to discover design interventions that had been previously executed on vacant lots. This exploration aimed to comprehend programming that has successfully established elements associated with social capital in locations facing similar challenges. This is essential as vacant lots present a unique set of opportunities and challenges. Vacant lots, often zoned differently from other open spaces, offer a distinct opportunity for unique activities that may not be viable elsewhere such as community gardens (Lokman, 2017).

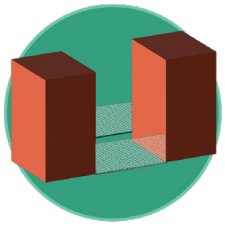
Each case study that was reviewed had its name, location, whether it was temporary or permanent, project achievements, and design attributes documented. Subsequently, each precedent was categorized based on its attributes/ achievements (see Figure 25; see Appendix C). This categorization plays a pivotal role when creating a design framework in the following step. All of the categories noted are designed to complement the goals of neighborhood renewal; a process that uses a holistic approach to improve deprived neighborhoods by focusing on a series of fundamental problems and examining them from a sustainability perspective (Li et al., 2022).

3.3.2 Development of Unique Site Intervention Framework

During the design process, the programming elements observed in precedents served as the baseline for the design framework and resulted in nine unique categories of intervention:

Precedent Name	Location	Temporary or Permanent	Project Description/Achievements	Design Attributes	Photos	Type
Lent Space	Hudson Square, New York City, NY	Temporary	"Provide a platform for citizens and interest groups to shape and transform the urban environment, through exhibitions, events and their own actions" (Lokman, 2017)	1.Movable planters with integrated seating act as a temporary tree nursery while creating 'rooms' for art installations. 2. Moveable sculptural fence		Public Art
Sunflower + Project	St. Louis, MO	Permanent	Engage the community in reclaiming vacant land, provide a low-cost solution to soil contamination,sequester carbon and attract wildlife, educate the public on sustainability issues.	1. Rotating beds of sunflowers and winter wheat 2. Community made "sustainability flags"		Natural Landscape
Chess Pocket Park	St. Louis, MO	Permanent	Engage the community in reclaiming vacant land, create a positive, education-oriented gathering place in the community.	1. Permanent chess tables and benches 2. Native plantings		Performance and Gathering
Bartokpark	Arnhem, the Netherlands	Permanent	Transform a former demolition site into a communal space, incorporate native species into the urban landscape, engage the community in management activities, integrate elements of play and art.	1. Art-based play climbing structure 2. Native planting 3. Seating		Public Art/Playground

Fig.25 Sample of Precedent Data Collection



Clean and Green: Removal of debris and unkept vegetation, often accompanied by the addition of a fence to deter unwanted activities, improving overall appearance, and preventing illegal dumping (see Figure 26).



Fig.26 A: Vacant Lot (Sableman, 2016); B: Post-demolition vacant lot, Barclay Street and E. 20th Street (northwest corner), Baltimore, MD 21218 (Baltimore Heritage Center, 2020); C: Vacant lot (Ivva, 2012); D: Fenced post-demolition vacant lot, N. Castle Street between E. Monument Street and McElderry Street, Baltimore, MD 21205. (Baltimore Heritage Center, 2016)



Natural Landscape: Allowing the growth of low-maintenance native plants, providing ecological benefits, and engaging community members in installation, often with informational signage (see Figure 27).



Fig.27 A: Wildflowers growing on post-demolition vacant lot, Barclay Street and E. 20th Street (northwest corner), Baltimore, MD 21218 (Baltimore Heritage Center, 2018); B: PHS: Garden for Greater Good (Blanchard, 2022); C: Meadow in Seattle (Mabel, 2010); D: PHS: Garden for Greater Good (Blanchard, 2022)



Community Gardens: Collaborative gardening spaces fostering teamwork, community connection, educational value, and potential income through local sales. These are equipped with planting beds, sorting tables, and irrigation systems (see Figure 28).



Fig.28 A: Colony Farm Community Garden (TJflex2, 2011) B: Colony Farm Community Garden (TJflex2, 2011) C: Community Garden - Collingwood Children's Farm (Alpha, 2008); D: Small Elementary School Garden (Newman, 2013)



Food Hub: Spaces for sharing food through on-site preparation, food trucks, or farmers markets. These usually include picnic seating and a paved area (see Figure 29).



Fig.29 A: Streeat - Food Truck Festival (Marzocchi, 2023); B: Malmö Food Truck Festival (Eklind, 2018); C: Beer Garden at the Heurich House (Flood, 2022); D: Ketanji Brown Jackson mural and Bun'd Up food truck (Flood, 2022)



Performance and Gathering: Spaces for speeches or performances, featuring seating arrangements that can be adapted for various organizational needs (see Figure 30).



Fig.30 A: Cunningham Park South td (2019-06-05) 086 - Performance Area (Tdorante, 2019); B: Reiche Sensory Garden- AFTER (Newman, 2013); C: Outdoor Classroom (Newman, 2016); D: University of Washington - Intellectual House gathering circle (Mabel, 2015)



Playground: Equipped with play structures, benches, and greenery, ranging from repurposed materials to custom builds based on budget (see Figure 31).



Fig.31 A: CC Playground Renovation (Newman, 2013) B: Playground Set, Loveland, Colorado (Goebel, 2012); C: TCC Playground Renovation (Newman, 2013); D: Wallingford Playground (Viriyincy, 2011)



Public Art: Artistic expression through sculptures, murals, furniture, or play equipment, beautifying the space and showcasing community culture. These displays can be created by local artists or residents (see Figure 32).

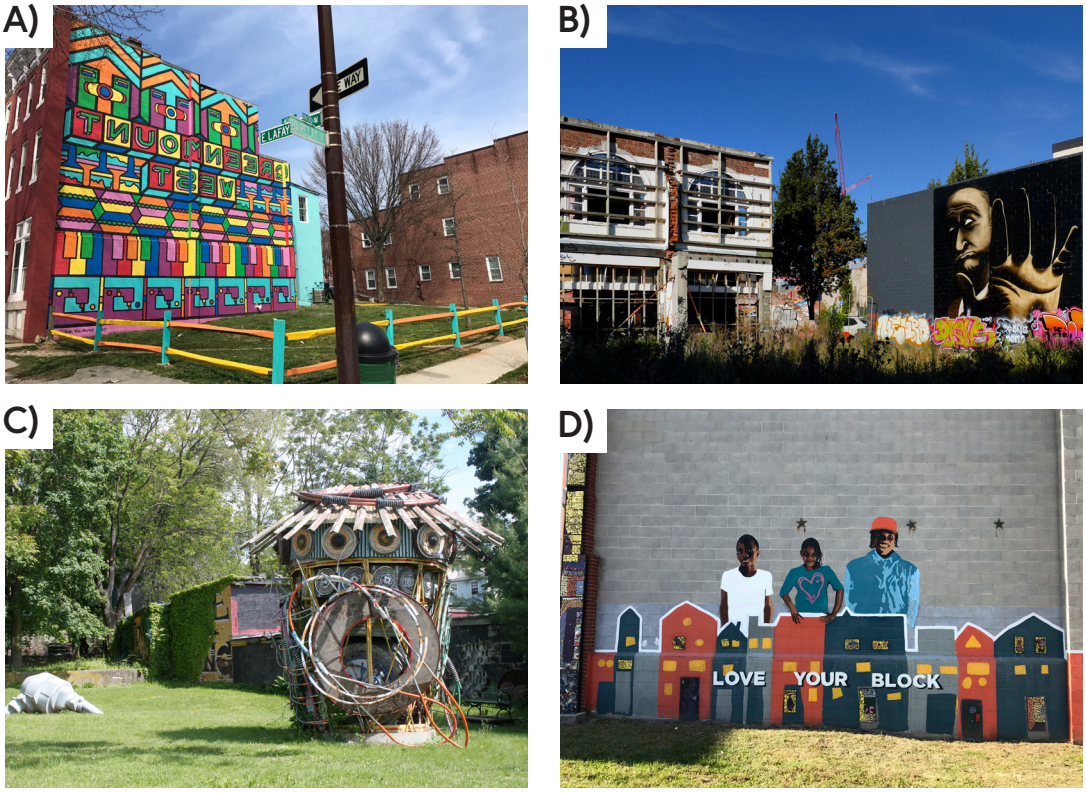
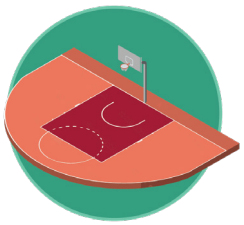


Fig.32 A: Vacant lot and Greenmount West mural, Barclay Street and E. Lafayette Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21202 (Baltimore Heritage, 2017); B: Urban Art Christchurch (Spragg, 2016); C: Main Street Sculpture Park (Joseph, 2010); D: Love Your Block" mural, Jubilee Arts, 1947 Pennsylvania Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21217 (Baltimore Heritage, 2018)



Athletic Court: Paved areas for basketball or sports, often accompanied by seating, covered shelter, and sports fencing (see Figure 33).



Fig.33 A: The yellow backboard (Spragg, 2019); B: Hudson River Park td (2021-11-01) 019 - Pier 34 Basketball Court (Tdorante10, 2021); C: 'The Bounce.' Calgary (Spragg, 2019); D: NYC - East Village: Lower East Side Playground (Gobetz, 2018)



Resource Sharing: Implementing systems like free little libraries, bike sharing, and donation boxes to encourage resource sharing among community members (see Figure 34).



Fig.34 A: Bike Share (Brainz, 2011); B: Kindness Little Free Library (Green, 2023); C: Little Free Library (2017); D: Clothing & shoe donation boxes in Eugene Oregon (2021)

In creating the design framework, site context and attributes were used to decide which use(s) would be appropriate for each lot typology. The contextual factors that were considered in the design framework were lot slope, size, exposure, and adjacencies (see Figure 35, Figure 36, and Figure 37).

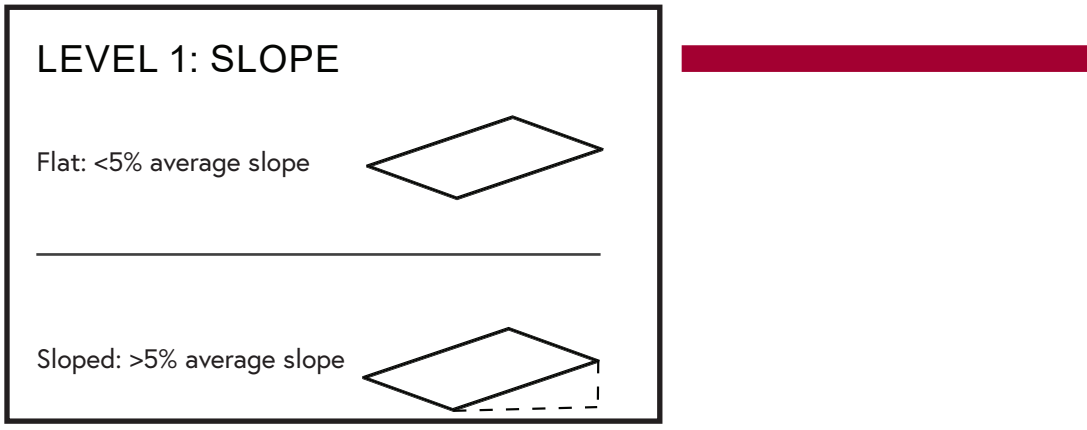
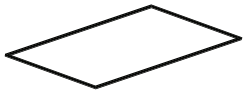


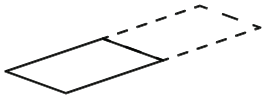
Fig.35 Site Classification

LEVEL 2: SIZE + ADJACENCY

Single: Single vacant lot



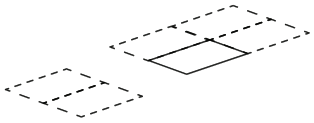
Connector: Two vacant lots with a common rear property line



Adjacent: Two vacant lots with a common side property line



Aggregate: Multiple vacant lots that share common property lines or other adjacencies



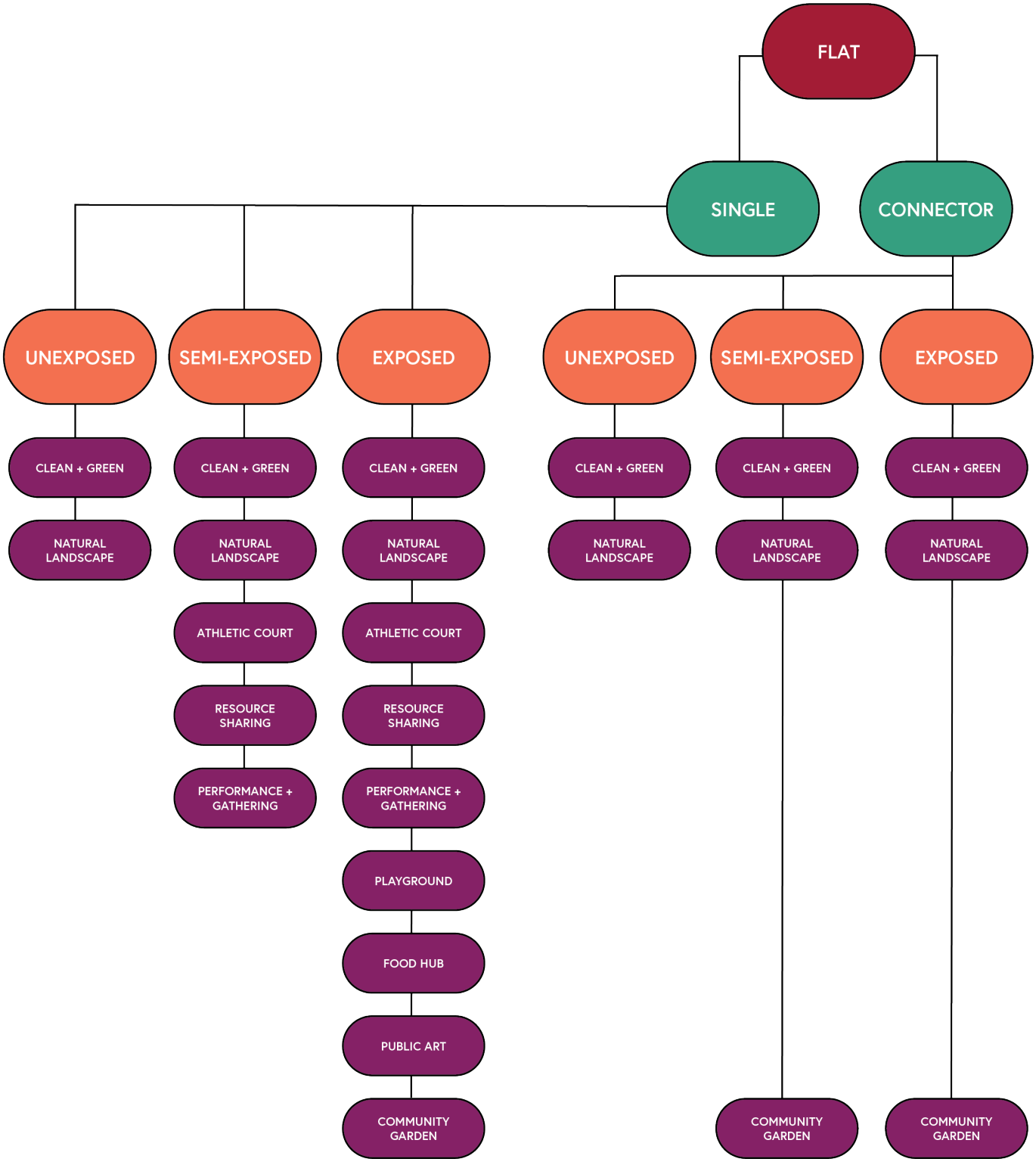
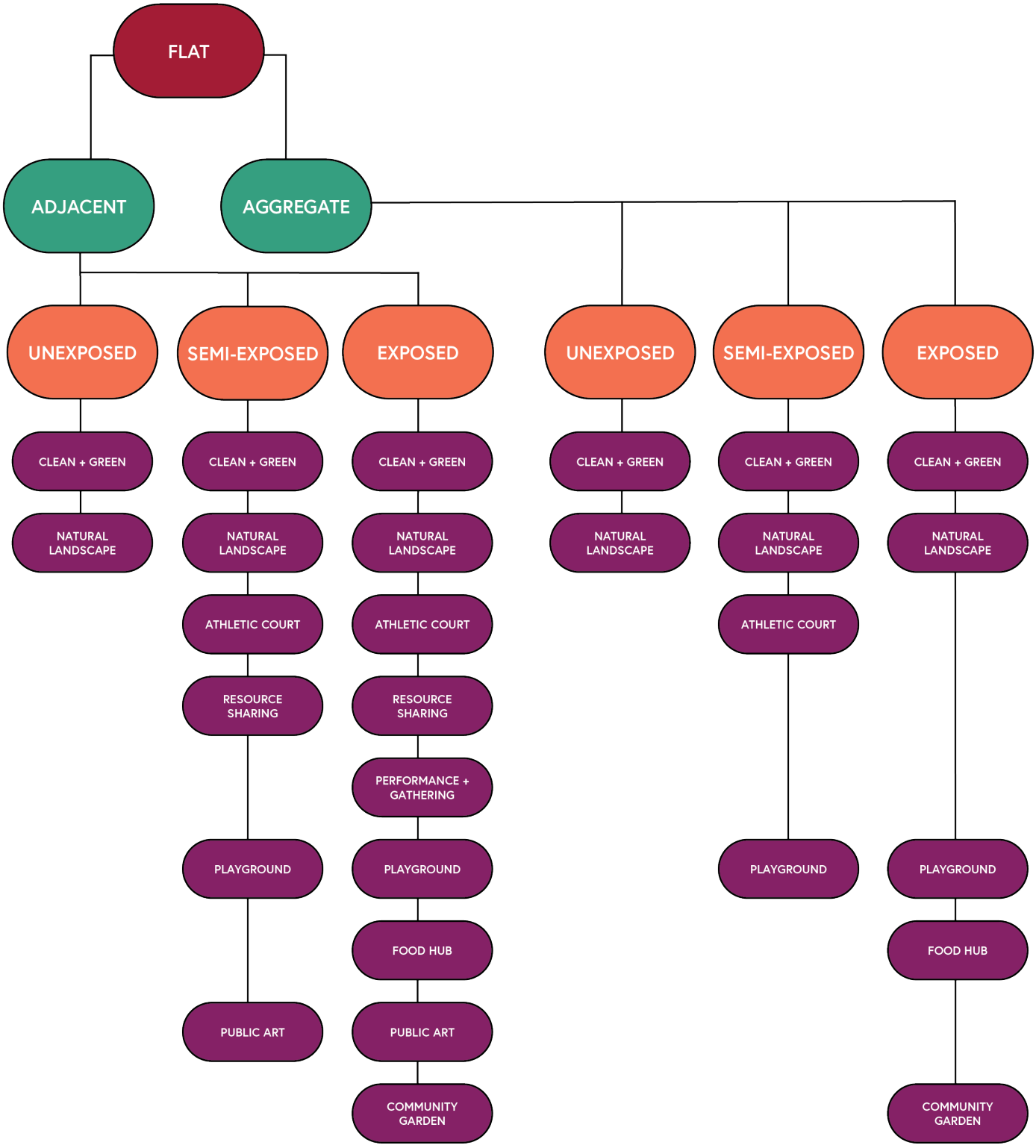


Fig.36 Design Framework for Flat Lots


FLAT
ADJACENT
AGGREGATE
UNEXPOSED
SEMI-EXPOSED
EXPOSED
UNEXPOSED
SEMI-EXPOSED
EXPOSED
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
ATHLETIC COURT
ATHLETIC COURT
ATHLETIC COURT
RESOURCE SHARING
RESOURCE SHARING
PERFORMANCE + GATHERING
PLAYGROUND
PLAYGROUND
PLAYGROUND
PLAYGROUND
FOOD HUB
FOOD HUB
PUBLIC ART
PUBLIC ART
COMMUNITY GARDEN
COMMUNITY GARDEN

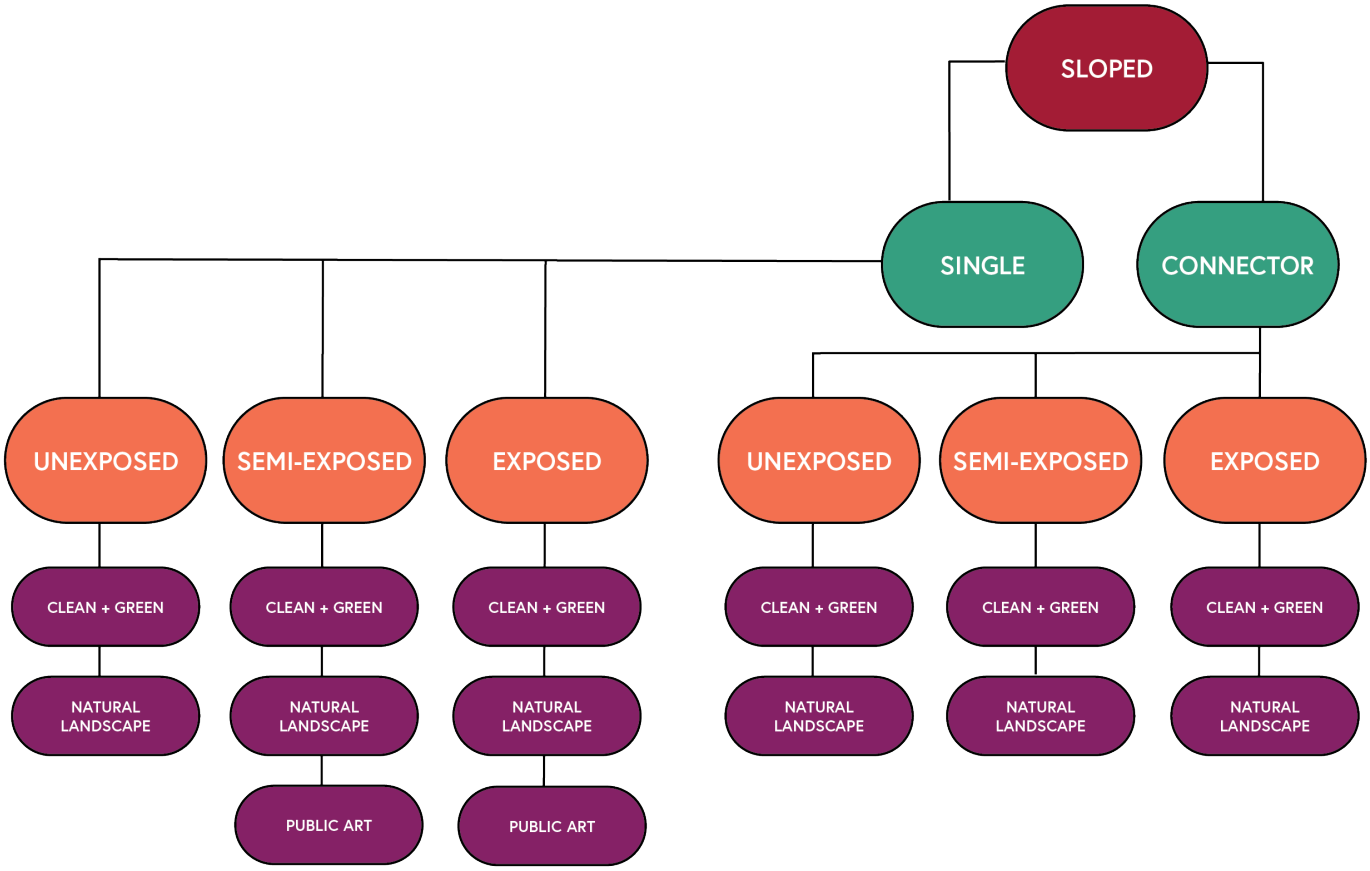
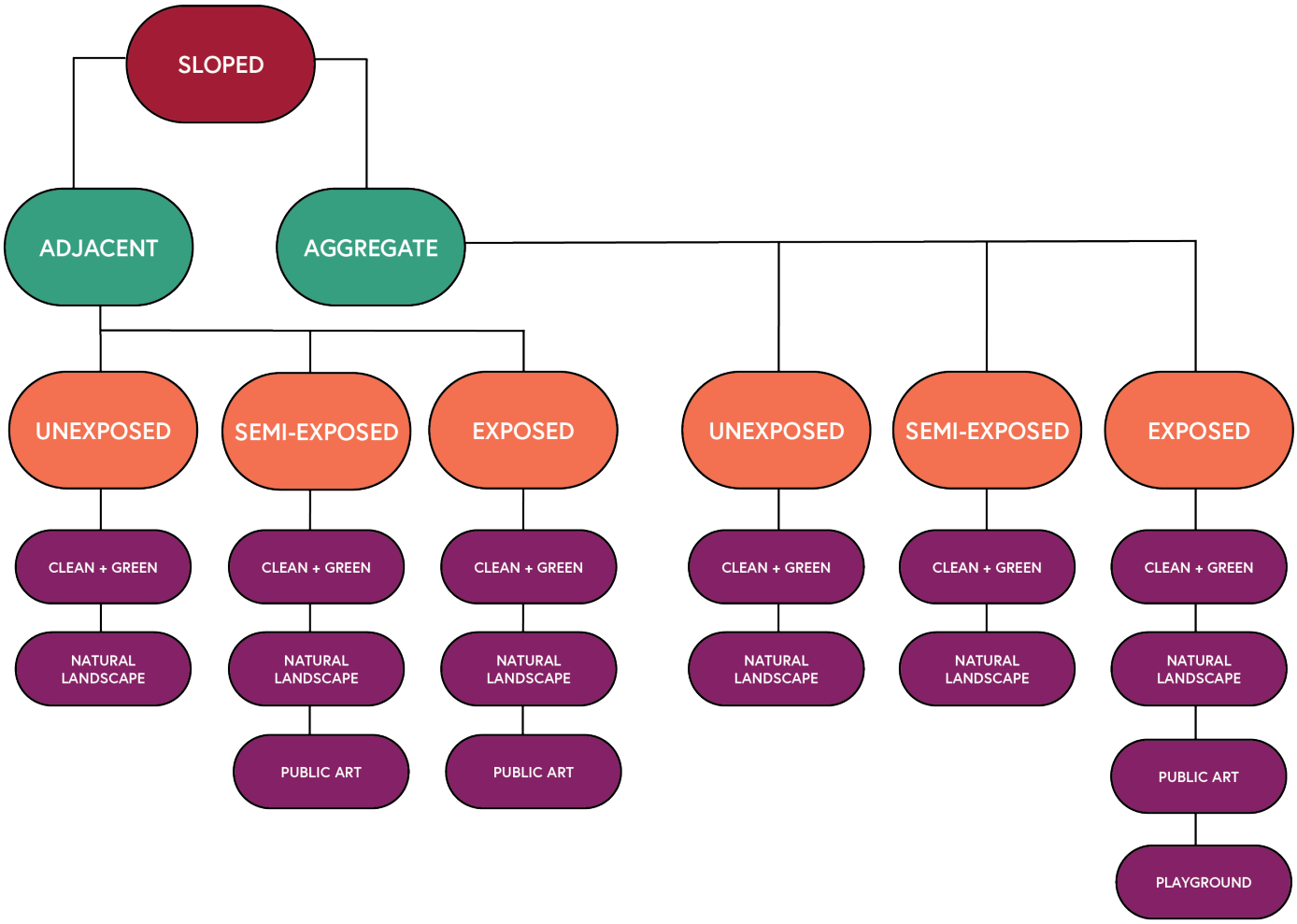


Fig.37 Design Framework for Sloped Lots


SLOPED
ADJACENT
AGGREGATE
UNEXPOSED
SEMI-EXPOSED
EXPOSED
UNEXPOSED
SEMI-EXPOSED
EXPOSED
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
CLEAN + GREEN
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
NATURAL LANDSCAPE
PUBLIC ART
PUBLIC ART
PUBLIC ART
PLAYGROUND

3.4 Phase 4: Engaging City Officials in Site Selection

This phase is designed to involve city officials in providing candid feedback on the impact of vacancy in addition to offering input on site selection and design. The aim of this strategy is to capture a diverse range of insights during the study process. The semi-structured interviews employed an informal conversational style, guided by predetermined discussion themes and visual aids. This approach was selected for participants to freely express their feedback to whatever extent they felt comfortable, thereby facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of their perspectives.

3.4.1 Recruitment Process

The focus group was comprised of three individuals recruited via email based on their city involvement and expertise in navigating land acquisition and development processes, particularly concerning publicly owned land. Once each interviewee agreed to participate, a date and time for a Zoom meeting was arranged using a Doodle Poll.

The first representative was from Parks and Recreation, selected for their comprehensive understanding of how recreational and city-owned green spaces function in the study area. Given Kansas City's extensive park network, incorporating proposed designs within this framework is essential for successful implementation. Moreover, the ways in which parks and recreational spaces are managed and funded varies significantly from city to city. This individual's insights into diverse parks funding mechanisms were invaluable for understanding funding distribution and sources used by Kansas City.

The second participant was the lead planner of District 3, where the study area is located. Their involvement was pivotal due to their rich knowledge of study area specific information, including its alignment with broader Kansas City master plans, zoning practices, and ongoing projects. They also had a wide breadth of knowledge on area-specific zoning practices, challenges, and what projects are being emphasized currently. Their close collaboration with the community and neighborhood associations within the district also enabled them to convey specific concerns and issues faced by the residents, which helped close a little bit of the gap in understanding the residents' specific needs.

Lastly, the deputy director of Housing and Community Development contributed to the focus group, offering a profound understanding of citywide development and permitting processes that was particularly valuable. Their insights into the challenges individuals encounter during permitting

and development process were particularly valuable. Additionally, their position afforded them in-depth knowledge of not only future city plans and goals, but what avenues exist for community involvement in influencing these plans.

3.4.2 Data Collection Tool

Engagement with city officials took place through a 90-minute semi-structured interview conducted as a focus group. This approach aimed to tap into the unique expertise of city officials regarding zoning laws, development regulations, and legal considerations, especially as it relates to the selected neighborhoods and vacant lots. This provided a nuanced understanding of influential perspectives on neighborhood futures, which is crucial for refining site selection criteria.

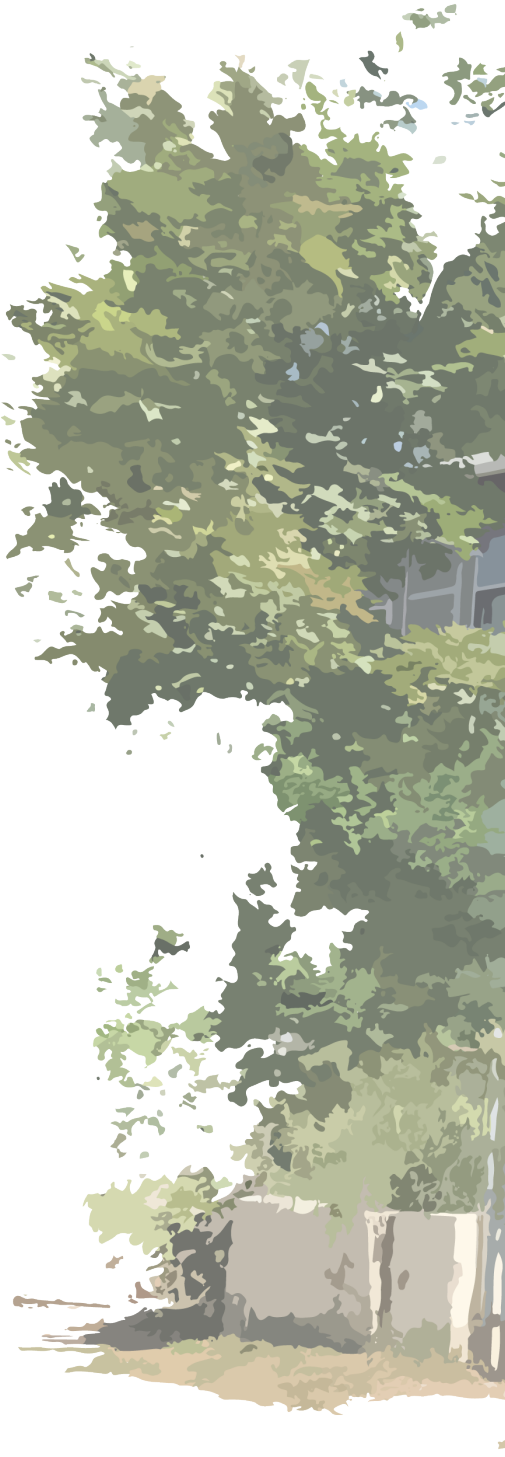
Prior to the semi-structured interview, city officials were presented with a verbal informed consent statement by the graduate student researcher and had the opportunity to ask clarifying questions. Subsequently, participants responded to questions focusing on the feasibility of repurposing lots within neighborhoods, available financial and organizational support, and future community plans. The discussion also touched upon the criteria for selecting vacant lots suitable for intervention that were previously defined by the researcher. This provided the opportunity for officials to provide direct feedback on how to best adapt them to meet community needs. Upon conclusion, officials received a debriefing statement via email (see Appendix D and Appendix E).

The primary benefit derived from the discussion with city officials was gaining a deeper understanding of contextual factors influencing site selection and design. While the researcher initially laid out a research-informed framework for site selection, it lacked consideration of demographic, political, and development dynamics specific to the study area. City officials offered unique insights into these aspects, particularly within the dynamic setting of a focus group where they could exchange and build upon each other's perspectives, which led to revision of the site selection criteria.

3.4.3 Use Interview Results to Revise Site Selection Criteria

After collecting, transcribing, and interpreting data from the focus group (see Appendix E), revisions were made to the site selection criteria based on their feedback. These updated criteria were then applied to re-evaluate lots within the study area,

STUDY OUTCOMES




GMC

4.1 Phase 1: Quantifying Social Capital & Identifying Places of Need

4.1.1 Calculation of weighted scores

Following the evaluation based on the scoring detailed in section 3.1, Oak Park Southeast and Vineyard Northwest were selected for further assessment (see Figure 38). The primary factor influencing the selection of these neighborhoods was their low social capital score, ranking 7th and 8th respectively among the 9 neighborhoods in the study area (see Appendix A). Additionally, they exhibit a high density of vacant lots when compared to the other neighborhoods that were considered (see Figure 39).

While several neighborhoods within the study area displayed either low social capital scores or substantial levels of vacant land, they may not have the population density required to warrant prioritized intervention. This is the primary reason that neighborhoods such as Ivanhoe Southeast and Vineyard Estate, which are primarily industrial or business land use, were removed from further consideration.

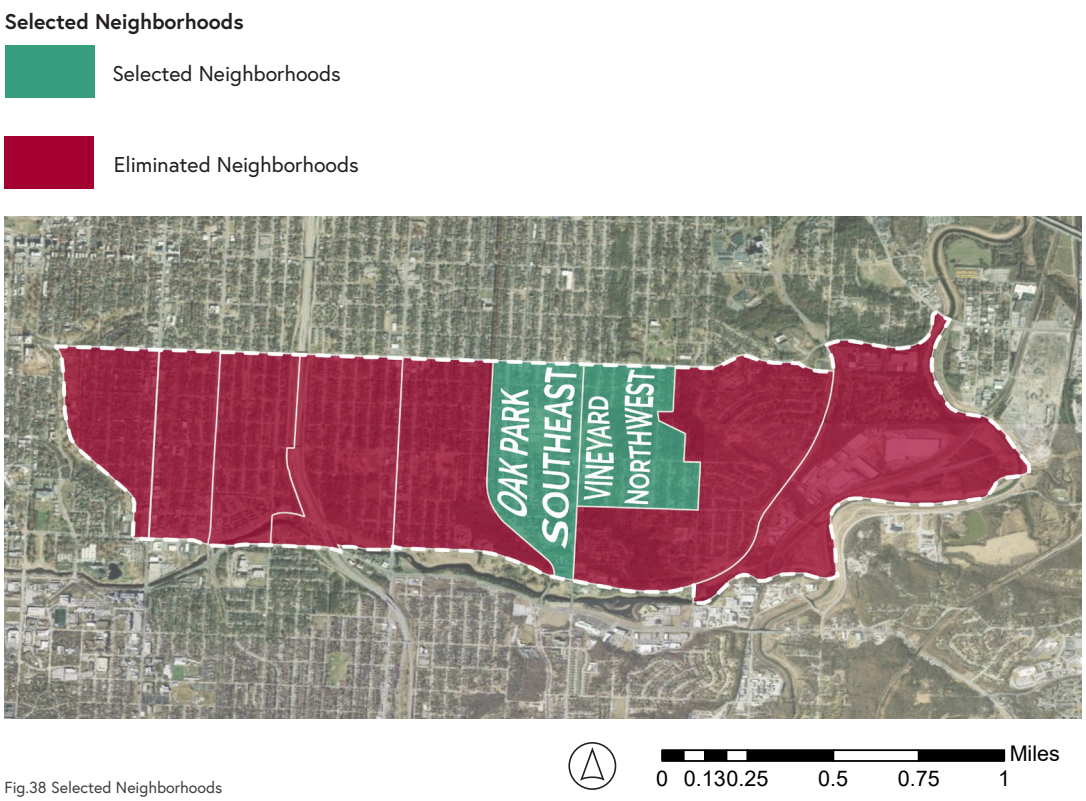


Fig.38 Selected Neighborhoods

Vacancy

Vacant Lots

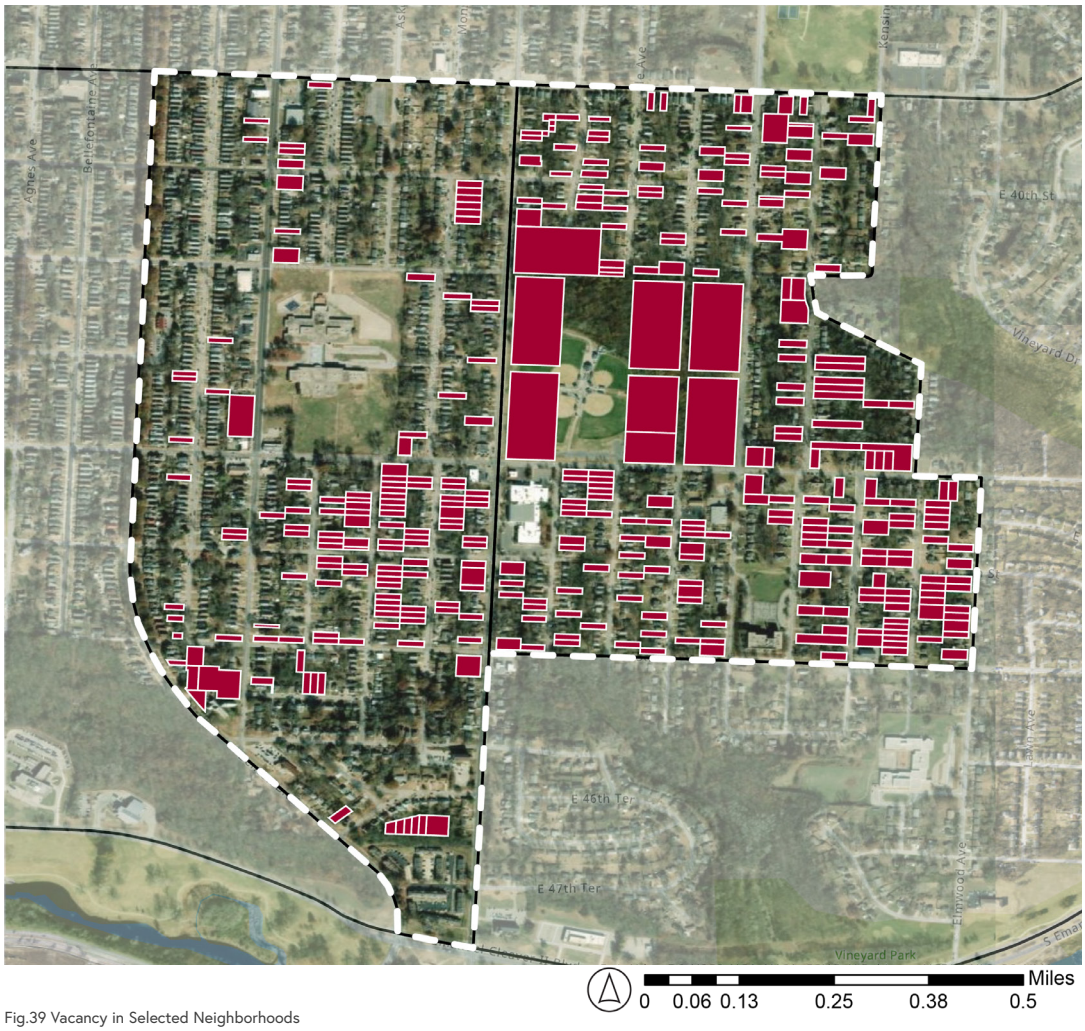


Fig.39 Vacancy in Selected Neighborhoods

4.2 Phase 2: Selection of Vacant Lots

4.2.1 Site Evaluation

After the selection of the two neighborhoods, both were evaluated using the criteria outlined in section 3.2. First, it was determined that between the two neighborhoods there are 172 vacant lots that are under ownership of the Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri or Kansas City MO Homesteading authority. Next, using EPA guidelines, lots that posed immediate environmental concerns were ruled out in addition to those with a structure on the premises. Lastly, lots deemed by the city to have "little or no use" were also removed from consideration (see Figure 40).

First Round of Elimination

Viable

Non-Viable

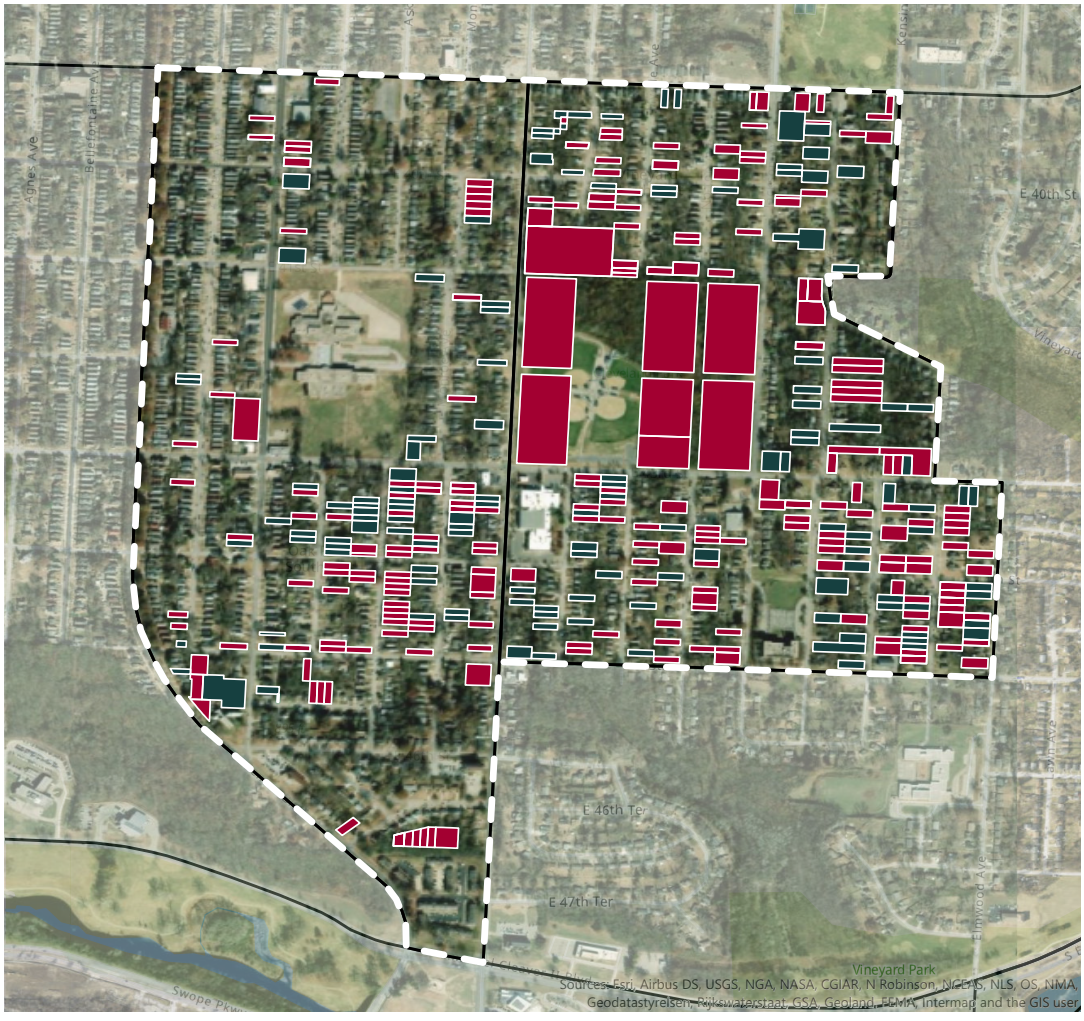


Fig.40 First Round of Elimination Based on Initial Site Selection Criteria

4.2.2 Lot Selection

After the initial screening process was complete, 147 lots were deemed suitable to be repurposed. Each lot was scored based on the final evaluation criteria that resulted from the discussions with city officials. This resulted in each lot having a score ranging from 5 points (strongest suitability for repurposing) to -5 points (weakest suitability for redevelopment). With these scores in mind, 56 additional lots were removed from consideration, as their scores were lower than or equal to -1. This resulted in 90 remaining lots out of the original 361 within the two neighborhoods (see Figure 41; see Appendix B).



Fig.41 Final Lot Selection Based on Scoring

4.3 Phase 3: Establishing Design Criteria

3.3.1 Implications of a Site Design Framework

During the investigation of the precedent studies, nine categories emerged as typologies for how vacant lots have been repurposed in the past. Each precedent was categorized based on these categories (see Appendix C). While diverse in their approaches, each of these intervention types contributes three main assets to the social capital of a neighborhood. First, they engage residents in hands-on tasks, creating a sense of accomplishment and yielding tangible results that encourage individual social investment from community members (Kim & Kaplan, 2004; Wood et al., 2010). Second, these initiatives can significantly increase neighborhood aesthetics, reducing perceived danger and nurturing trust among residents, boosting, or creating neighborhood identity (Hong & Farley, 2008; Maxfield, 1984; Perkins, Meeks, & Taylor, 1992; Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004). Lastly, these projects act as platforms that offer valuable opportunities for individuals to meet and collaborate with their neighbors, fostering a sense of unity and shared accomplishment through collective effort (Kim & Kaplan, 2004; Wood et al., 2010).

In essence, the proposed designs hold promise for bolstering social unity by nurturing trust, cooperation, and reciprocity among participants in communal endeavors such as playing together, gardening together, or sharing resources. These designs facilitate cooperative conduct by establishing communal guidelines for utilizing public areas, encompassing responsibilities like maintaining cleanliness, adhering to operating hours, and preserving the overall condition of the space. Over time, these measures foster trust, paving the way for spontaneous acts of assistance, both within and beyond the designated areas. For instance, neighbors might collaborate in tending to a community garden by jointly harvesting vegetables. Such bonds forged within these spaces can extend to reciprocal gestures outside their confines, such as providing childcare support, helping with home repairs, or lending a variety of resources (Kim & Kaplan, 2004; Mazumdar et al., 2018; Wood et al., 2010). Additionally, while these areas are likely to attract people who live in the neighborhood, there exists the potential to broaden social circles by inviting friends from diverse neighborhoods to partake in activities such as basketball. These dynamics collectively strengthen community ties and foster a sense of cohesion (see Figure 42).

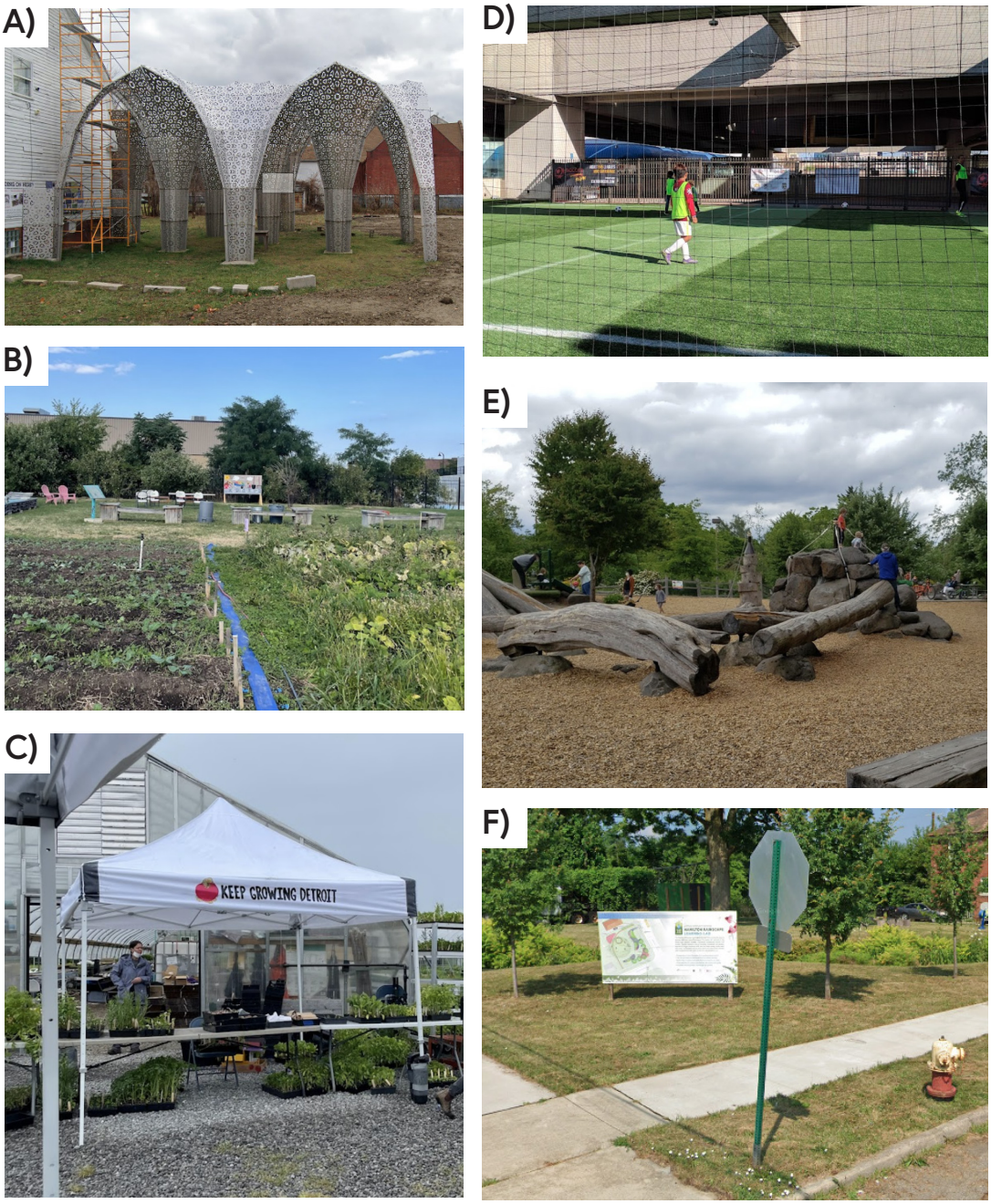


Fig.42 A: The American Riad (Google Maps, n.d); B: Keep Growing Detroit Farm (Galang, 2022); C: Keep Growing Detroit Farm (Galang, 2022); D: Station-Soccer (Scalia, 2017); E: Westmore Park (Dawson, 2022); F: Hamilton Rainscape Learning Lab (Google Maps, n.d)

4.4 Phase 4: Engaging City Officials in Site Selection

4.4.1 Data Preparation

This interview was conducted and audio recorded using Zoom. The discussion lasted approximately 90 minutes and occurred on the afternoon of Friday, January 19th, 2024. Following the interview, the recording was saved to the researcher's personal computer. The audio was then transcribed in a Microsoft Word document and anonymized. Subsequent to the transcription of the data, the recording was destroyed. After the researcher reviewed the content of the word document, the transcription was organized into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, categorizing responses by question and participant (see Appendix E).

4.4.2 Data Analysis

Several Microsoft Excel spreadsheets were used to interpret the responses given by participants. On Spreadsheet A, the researcher extracted the primary points that were covered in each participant's answers from the raw-text transcript. This was done with the goal of further distilling the responses into more tangible and concise pieces of information that could later be applied. Once complete, the researcher sorted this condensed version of the information using four distinct categories that revealed themselves.

The first category was future plans and goals. These range from information on individual park projects to city wide initiatives to address specific issues. The second category includes challenges. This category addresses any issues the city has encountered in the development and management of vacant lots. The third category included resources and processes for acquiring funding. The last category was advice for success in navigating city processes, especially when considering vacant lots (see Figure 43).

This information was then transferred to Spreadsheet B, C, D, and E (one for each category), allowing the researcher to further draw out themes within each of the categories. This was then used to make final decisions on what changes needed to be made to the site selection and design criteria based on the information received.

1. Future Plans and Goals



2. Challenges



3. Funding Resources



4. Advice for Success



Fig.43 Main Themes of Interviews

4.4.3 Findings

Future Plans and Goals

A few major themes emerged in this section. Firstly, there was a significant emphasis on developing more affordable housing, particularly within the study area and surrounding areas. This aligns with Kansas City's goal to establish 10,000 affordable housing units by 2027. Efforts to procure unused lots for development or redevelopment, often through partnerships with the land bank, were also highlighted.

Secondly, there was a major emphasis on the development of parks and other public infrastructure. Significant improvements have been made over the years to playgrounds, walking trails, and overall maintenance, aligning with the objectives of the "Quality-of-Life Investment District". This initiative is dedicated to providing heightened investments in walkability on trails along Brush Creek and to enhance connectivity in neighborhoods like Vineyard. The recent approval of an $80 million geo bond program, with $60 million allocated evenly among the six council districts for various projects including park enhancements, underscored this emphasis.

Thirdly, the Parks Department is in the final stages of crafting its strategic master plan for the entire park system. Although these efforts didn't specifically target the areas of interest, park master plans have been developed for individual parks like Oak Park by the Center for Neighborhoods.

Challenges

The participants highlighted that in the neighborhoods of focus, an aging population necessitates infrastructure improvements for sidewalks, transit, and housing renovations. Additionally, well-organized neighborhoods like Vineyard and Oak Park face challenges, particularly compared to areas like Ivanhoe, which may receive more funding, exacerbating disparities between neighborhoods. The area faces significant challenges, with the biggest identified as residents feeling disenfranchised and disconnected from adequate funding for city services and new development. The two neighborhoods' history was also highlighted during this discussion. It was stated that industrial departures and suburban growth contributed to a decline in the area, making it challenging to attract residents. The housing stock, primarily post-World War II range-style houses, is deemed insufficiently attractive to entice people back.

The primary challenge discussed was regarding development processes and regulations, with significant emphasis on the difficulties associated with attracting developers to the east side and preparing sites for development. It was noted a multitude of times that many people struggle to navigate the processes surrounding the acquisition and development of vacant lots. The very nature of the city environment means that there is high administrative turnover and constantly shifting goals. This further exacerbates challenges related to limited budgets, time constraints, contamination issues, and aligning various funding sources. Furthermore, development efforts are further complicated by the unclear ownership of many lots, with many being owned privately by somebody who does not live in the area.

Lastly, the lack of adequate funding was discussed. One of the primary challenges regarding funding was the fact that funding for parks primarily comes from taxes or grants, which districts/departments have to compete for. Existing parks are prioritized for expansion due to difficulty in maintaining current park acreage. Each council district, including district 3, typically oversees around 60 parks, with funding ranging from $1 to $2 million, which may be inadequate for significant capital improvements.

Funding Resources

The primary topic of discussion related to this category was the Central City Economic Development (CCED) Program, funded by a one-eighth cent sales tax. This was approved by Kansas City citizens, with various projects within the selected area receiving crucial support. CCED funds are specifically designated to bolster initiatives such as affordable housing and infill development within its boundary area. Additionally, funding for these development projects often involves the layering of various sources, including CCED funding, Public Improvements Advisory Committee (PIAC) funding, private funding, Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) funding for affordable housing, and tax credit funding.

The CCED sales tax is emphasized as a crucial tool in addressing funding disparities and supporting community development efforts. Moreover, the funding allocation process involves grading scales, internal staff recommendations to boards, and ultimate

approval by the city council, which has the ability to adjust recommendations or reallocate funds as needed.

This process highlights the important role of experienced developers who can adeptly navigate the complexities of securing multiple layers of funding. Meanwhile, Planning Sustainable Places grants, provided by the Mid America Regional Council, play a vital role in supporting planning initiatives like streetscape plans and overlay districts, which serve to lay the groundwork for future development projects.

Advice for Success

City officials emphasized the importance of understanding and complying with city regulations and processes before initiating any development project. This is particularly important when discussing the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. This process includes attending community meetings and workshops that provide detailed information about available funds, their potential uses, and application procedures. For those interested in developing vacant lots, attendance of these meetings is crucial to fully understanding the breadth of resources available. This begins a successful process of stakeholder engagement. Effective communications continued to be stressed. Encouraging effective communication within neighborhoods, with city council members, and various city departments is crucial to addressing concerns that any given neighborhood may have. This allows them to advocate for the best chance of making necessary improvements and achieving positive outcomes.

Lastly, proactive measures taken by neighborhoods like Lykins in the Northeast area were highlighted. This neighborhood addressed vacant land issues in their own community by making themselves present at workshops, engaging with local leaders, and familiarizing themselves with available funding. These efforts resulted in increased home ownership and neighborhood revitalization, setting a precedent for what can occur if the right initiative is taken.

4.5 Use Interview Results to Revise Site Selection Criteria

Based on insights provided by city officials, several modifications were implemented in the lot scoring criteria. Firstly, the consideration of whether the lot is a corner lot was included. Officials discussed that such lots not only alleviate safety concerns but also are more readily rezoned for alternative uses. Additionally, the proximity to public transit was incorporated into the criteria. Officials noted that residents in these neighborhoods often lack access to vehicles or are elderly and unable to drive, making public transit vital for ensuring accessibility to proposed lot uses.

Apart from these additions, the discussion reinforced existing items in the preliminary site selection and scoring criteria. For instance, concerns regarding contamination hazards were highlighted. Officials emphasized how environmental issues could impede even well-funded projects by established developers. Furthermore, the importance of maintaining intact sidewalks in the proposed area was stressed. This is crucial as many residents in these neighborhoods are elderly and may face mobility challenges, making access to the lot difficult without proper sidewalk infrastructure (see Figure 44).

Original Scoring Criteria

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation	
Is the land in close to proximity to known bussinesses/uses that induce crime?	Proximity to liquor stores, bars/clubs, gas stations, etc.	
Does KC see potential for this lot?		
Is there moderate home occupancy?	60% or more of the homes surrounding the parcel are occupied	
Is it adjacent to an already repurposed vacnt lot?	Having a already repurposed lot nearby could increase momentum.	
Is urban greening welcomed?	Neighborhood plans incorporate urban greening, urban green space is a desired potential land use, existing green reuse	Subjective
Does the parcel slope away from the street?	Parcels that slope from street could naturally collect street flow	Adjusted to fit design framework
Is the surrounding sidewalk intact and level?	Parcels without sidewalks, or with very uneven sidewalks, would require construction (a significant community cost)	
Is there a fire hydrant present?	A fire hydrant is a potential water source	Unable to map
Is the parcel located directly adjacent to a park or existing recreation space?	Want to avoid spaces where a recreation need is already fulfilled	
Is the parcel grade not significantly different from sidewalk grade?	Parcel on a hill that is positioned above street level; runoff from these parcels flows into streets	Adjusted to fit design framework

Revised Scoring Criteria

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation	
Is the land in close to proximity to known bussinesses/uses that induce crime?	Proximity to liquor stores, bars/clubs, gas stations, etc.	
Does KC see potential for this lot?	KCMO catergorizes vacant lots based on their potential uses/if they could potentially be used for programs the city has going on. This helps the lot selection fit in with the cities current plans.	
Is it a corner lot?	Corner lots increase visibility and reduce concerns for safety	Easier to rezone
Is there moderate home occupancy?	60% or more of the homes surrounding the parcel are occupied	
Is it adjacent to an already repurposed vacant lot?	Having a already repurposed lot nearby could increase momentum.	
Does the parcel have a realitively flat slope (<5%)	Lots with a low slope are much more flexible when devloping them.	Adjusted to fit site design framework
Is the parcel adjacent to a bus/public transit stop?	In this community, many of the residents depend on public transit. This increases access to any site interventions	Aging population
Is the surrounding sidewalk intact and level?	Parcels without sidewalks, or with very uneven sidewalks, would require construction (a significant community cost)	Reinforced/Aging population
Is the parcel located directly adjacent to a park or existing recreation space?	Want to avoid spaces where a recreation need is already fulfilled	

Fig.44 Revisions to Site Selection Criteria Based on City Official Feedback

PROJECTIVE DESIGN





5.1 Introduction

In the subsequent section, the previously outlined framework is applied to a variety of lots within the study area. These lots vary in condition, size, and location, demonstrating the diverse range of site conditions present in any given neighborhood. The following design examples showcase some of the various uses outlined within the design framework. This is designed to exemplify the breadth of possibilities when repurposing vacant lots (see Figure 45).

The designs presented were developed using the final stages of the methodology outlined in previous sections of this report. Initially, a scoring system was employed to eliminate lots unsuitable for alternative use. Subsequently, the remaining lots were scored based on factors favoring their feasibility for proposed uses and their potential to enhance social capital within the neighborhood. Each lot was assessed against predetermined criteria, gaining or losing points accordingly. These scores informed a final assessment to identify viable lots for repurposing as vehicles of social capital. Lots with negative scores, indicating more negative traits than positive ones, were excluded from consideration (see Figure 45).

Following the outlined design framework, a variety of sample lots representing distinct categories were chosen to exemplify the diverse conditions observed within the study area (see Figure 46). Notably, none of the lots fell under the "connector" category as none of this typology met the scoring criteria for consideration. Moreover, the precedents examined in phase 3 were revisited to inspire the design attributes and features implemented on the selected lots. It's worth emphasizing that many of these designs incorporate multiple proposed uses within a single lot. This multidimensional approach recognizes that optimal use of vacant space often necessitates integrating diverse design solutions to create a more holistic and efficient outcome. Finally, when applied in practical scenarios, resident involvement in both the selection of potential uses and design decisions would be paramount in this process. While not used in this study, resident input would ensure the creation of results that are finely tuned to the needs of the community they serve.

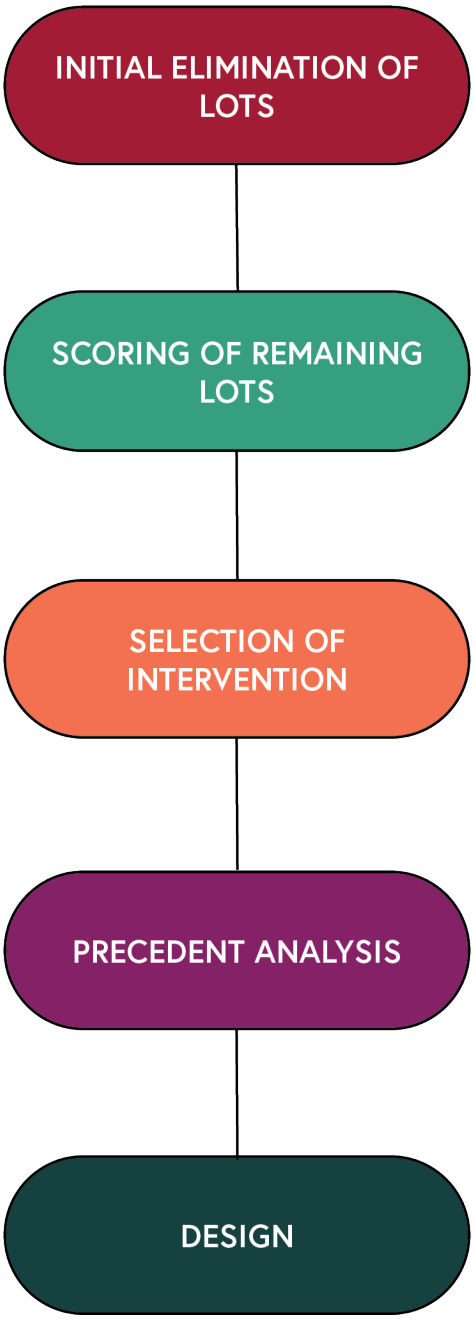


Fig.45 Design Process

Lot Viability

Selected Lots



Fig.46 Selected Lots

Designed Lots

Selected Lots

Designed Lots



Fig.47 Designed Lots

5.2 4001 Indiana Ave.

5.2.1 Existing Conditions

Located on the corner of Indiana Ave. and E. 40th street, this lot is located along a relatively busy arterial street in Oak Park Southeast. At 0.32 acres, this single lot presents as relatively clear with minimal vegetation, mostly comprised of mowed grass. However, there is one notable exception in the form of a large canopy tree along E. 40th street and a few understory trees/saplings along the property line. Surrounded by two inhabited residential properties, and with the majority of neighboring lots also being inhabited residential properties, it integrates well within the local community. The surrounding sidewalk remains relatively intact, although some overgrown grass is noted along E. 40th street. Additionally, the area is quite flat topographically, providing a stable foundation for potential development. Notably, on the scoring system, this lot received 5 points, placing it at the higher end of the scores given, indicating its potential for a variety of uses (see Figure 48).

A)



B)



Fig.48 A: Current Site Conditions; B: Existing Tree Stump

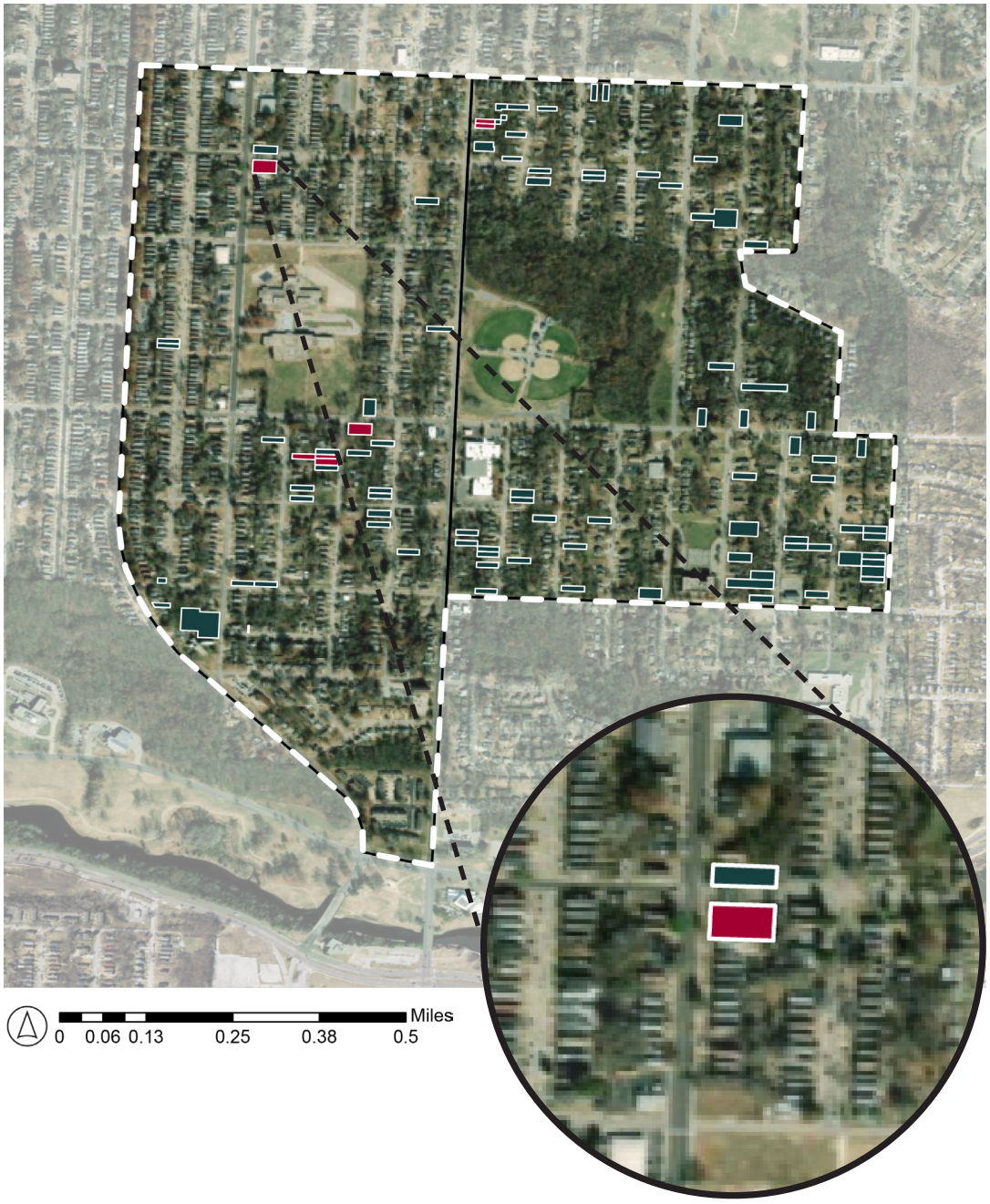
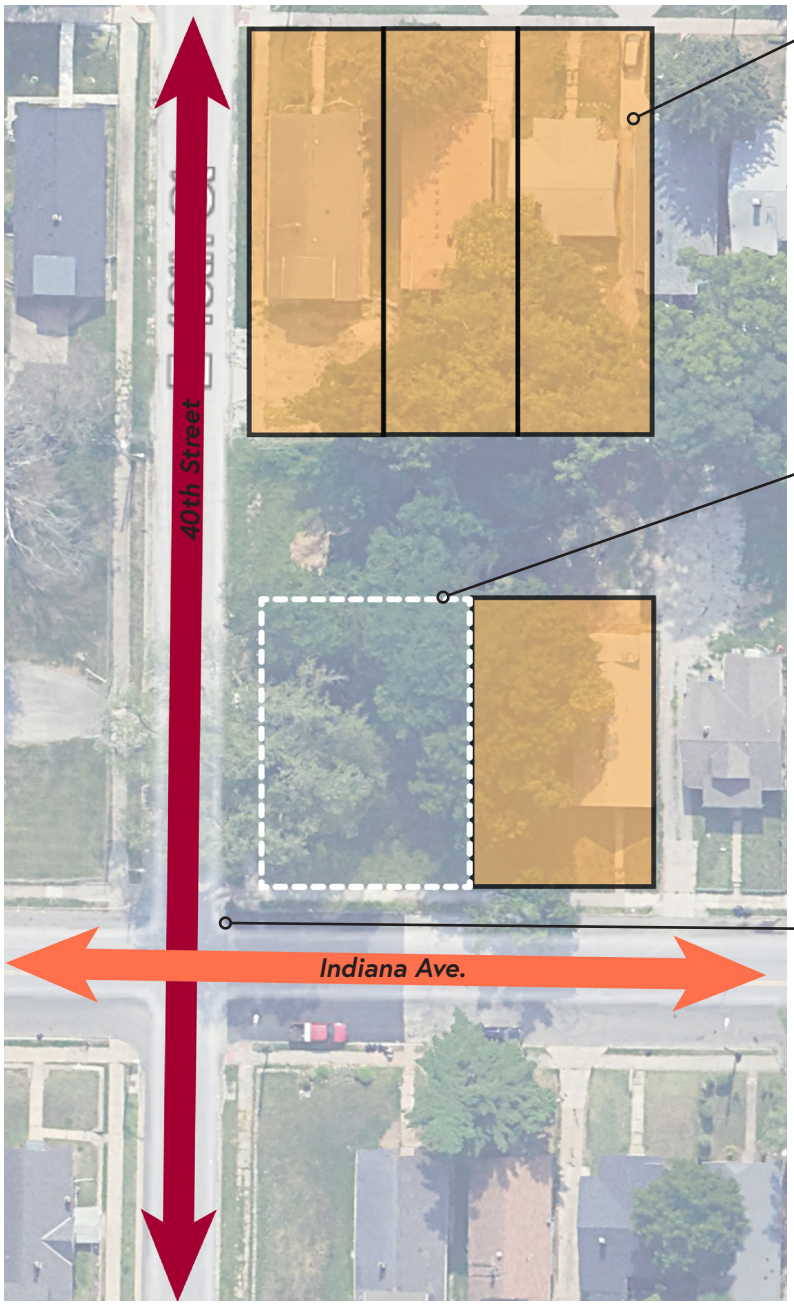


Fig.49 Site Context



Inhabited Residential Properties: Ensures passive monitoring of the site while making it more visible to potential users: increases potential design choices due to high visibility

Project Site: Currently clear of any vegetation and almost completely flat: increases potential design solutions as it is essentially a "blank slate"

Corner of Indiana Ave. and 40th Street: Located on a well trafficed street corner, enhancing visibilty that ensures both safety and connection to residents: increases potential design choices due to high visibility

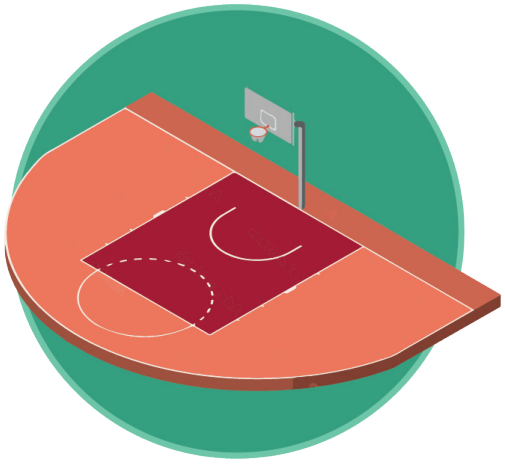
Fig.50 Site Analysis

5.2.2 Environmental Affordances

This lot is categorized as flat due to its low slope, making it suitable for various interventions. Being a single lot and positioned on the corner of a relatively busy residential street, it is inherently exposed, offering high visibility from all angles to passing pedestrians and drivers. Moreover, its proximity to inhabited residential properties ensures continuous passive monitoring, enhancing security and community engagement (see Figure 51).



Given its prominent location and the surrounding residential population, a playground along with an athletic court was selected as the preferred design solution. This combination is beneficial for families in the area, providing recreational opportunities for different age groups. The high visibility of the lot presents an opportunity to create a safer environment for play, with neighbors acting as informal supervisors. The size of the site allows for multiple uses, and the selection of these two complementary features aligns with practical applications often seen elsewhere. By selecting two uses that cater to different age demographics, this approach maximizes the lot's potential to serve the broader community.



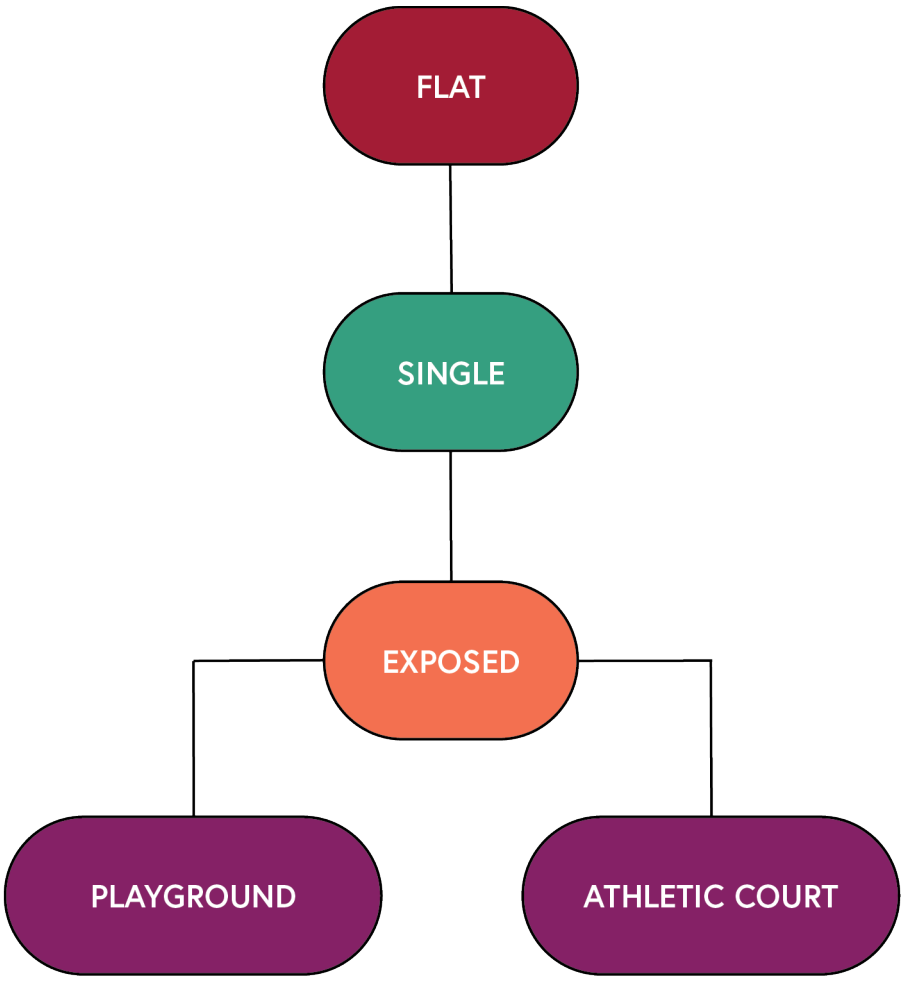


Fig.51 Environmental Affordances

5.2.3 Precedents

The first precedent that informed this design was Pleasant Park, located in the South Hill neighborhood of Grand Rapids, MI. What was once an abandoned lot and parking space has been transformed into a vibrant green space, showcasing the potential of neglected areas. The project, spearheaded by the Friends of Grand Rapids Parks and neighborhood residents, involved extensive fundraising efforts and collaboration with city officials. Through a combination of grants, private donations, and a special assessment district, the park was successfully funded and constructed by 2014. The park not only fulfills a recreational need but also serves as a symbol of community pride and unity. Its design, influenced by the surrounding architecture and neighborhood preferences, emphasizes spaciousness and greenery. Safety considerations, such as gated access and open visibility, enhance its appeal to families. Pleasant Park has become a cherished gathering spot for residents of both Heritage Hill and South Hill neighborhoods, fostering connections and a sense of belonging. Its unprogrammed green space and annual cleanup events further engage the community, ensuring its continued vitality and attractiveness to potential residents (Carter, 2021).

The second precedent that informed the design of this lot was POPCourts! in Chicago, IL. This project emerged from ARC, a Chicago-based initiative formed in 2020 during the pandemic that is aimed at revitalizing communities on the city's south and west sides. Led by local designers, planners, and organizers, ARC focuses on creating safe, healthy, and economically resilient neighborhoods. POPCourts! is ARC's second project, which developed a vacant parking lot at the corner of W. Chicago and N. Lockwood Avenues into a multi-use area that currently includes a basketball court, a seating area, and flex space (POPCourts!, n.d.).

Both Pleasant Park and Pop Courts exemplify how the repurposing of vacant lots can create vibrant social hubs within the community, alongside their successful design outcomes. These projects are driven by the community, with residents actively participating in decision-making and execution. Beyond merely providing playgrounds or athletic courts, both spaces offer diverse programming options to meet the varied needs of the community.
In terms of design, Pleasant Park served as an inspiration for its overall layout and design. Notably, the park incorporated

extensive vegetated buffers, crucial for mitigating disruptive noise in a residential setting, thus demonstrating consideration for adjacent residents. Additionally, it featured open spaces that serve as flexible areas for various activities, inspiring the decision to leave small patches of grass available for such uses. Moreover, the inclusion of multiple entrances, including a distinctive corner entrance, ensures accessibility while avoiding feelings of entrapment.

POPCourts! contributed significantly to the aesthetics of the space. While the programming is relatively simple, the use of bright and unconventional colors, especially on the basketball court, adds vibrancy to the environment. This visually captivating approach makes the space more inviting and interesting, enhancing its appeal without requiring a substantial financial investment (see Figure 52).

Pleasant Park

A)



B)



POPCourts!

C)



D)

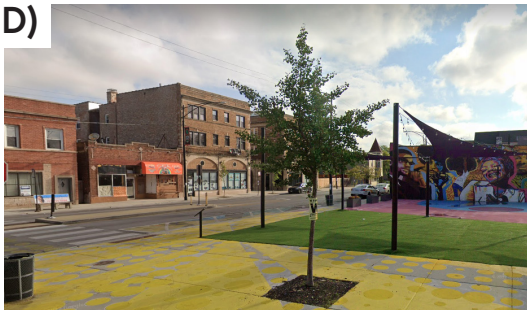


Fig.52 A: Pleasent Park Entrance (Google Maps, n.d); B: Pleasant Park Playground (Google Maps, n.d); C: POPCourts From Street Corner (Google Maps, n.d); D: POPCourts Surrounding Sidewalk (Google Maps, n.d);

5.2.4 Design Solution

The design of the site incorporates several key features aimed at enhancing accessibility and functionality. First, three entrances have been strategically positioned to facilitate easy passage throughout the area, ensuring convenient access for visitors. To bolster visibility, a prominent monument sign was placed at the corner of Indiana Ave and 40th Street, serving to increase awareness and attract attention to the site. Moreover, to optimize visibility and maintain unobstructed lines of sight, vegetation along the streets has been deliberately kept minimal.

In terms of recreational amenities, the design includes a play structure and a multi-purpose court, catering to various interests and activities. To accommodate visitors seeking relaxation, numerous seating options have been dispersed throughout the site, providing ample opportunities for rest. Additionally, the preservation of a large existing canopy tree over a small lawn area adds natural beauty and shade to the space. Furthermore, the implementation of a vegetative buffer serves the dual purpose of enhancing aesthetics and ensuring privacy for neighboring residents (see Figure 53).

Playground and Athletic Court Lot

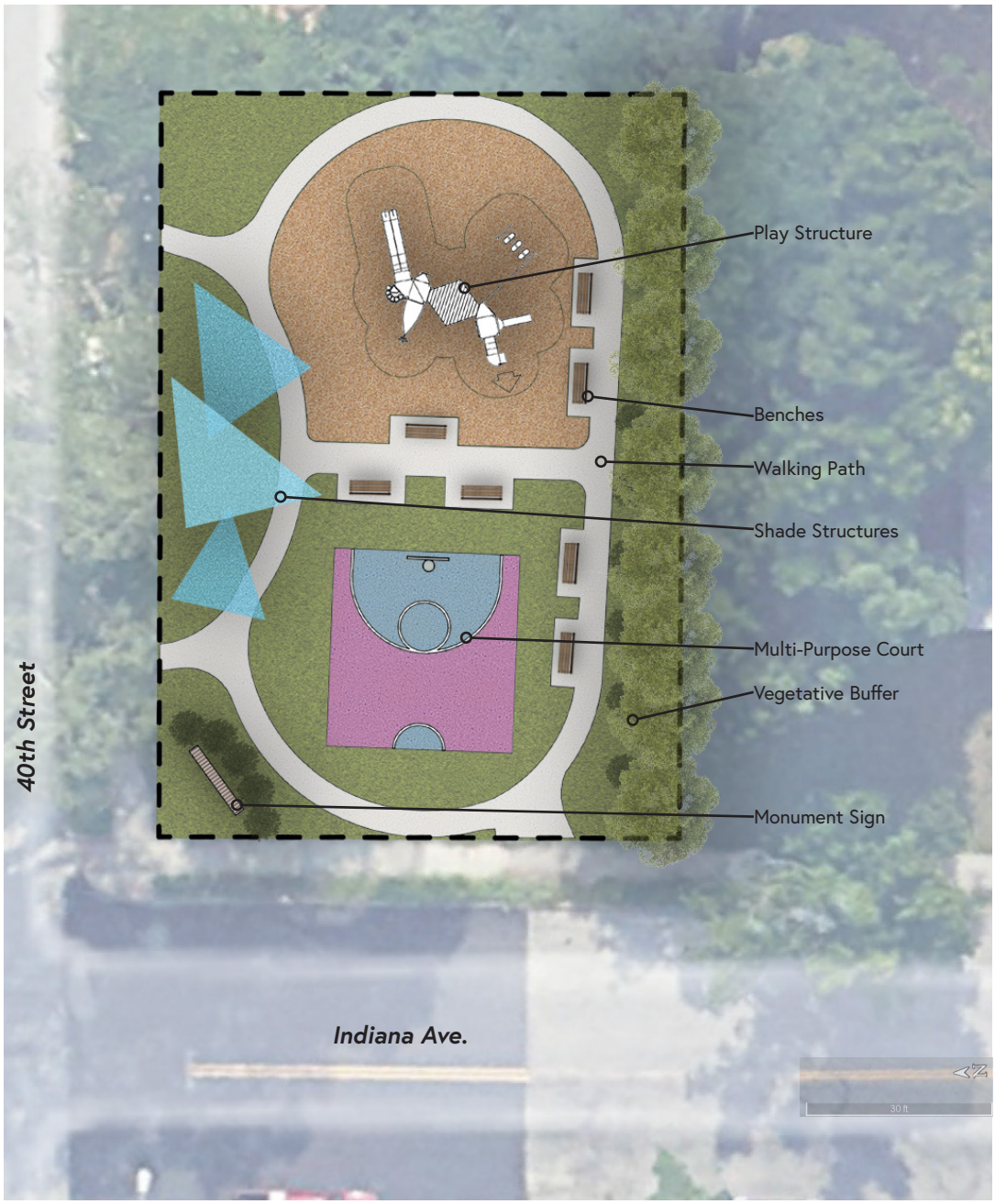


Fig.53 Site Plan

5.3 3925 Cleveland Ave and 3927 Cleveland Ave

5.3.1 Existing Conditions

3925 and 3927 Cleveland Ave. are a pair of connector lots with a combined area of 0.184 acres in Vineyard Northwest. Positioned on Cleveland Ave., an arterial street with considerable traffic flow. 3925 Cleveland Ave boasts a landscape primarily characterized by mowed grass. However, it is interspersed with shrubs and understory trees along its rear property line and its shared boundary with 3927 Cleveland Ave. Surrounded by two residential properties that are currently occupied and with most nearby lots serving residential purposes, these connector lots command notable visibility within the local residential community. The adjoining sidewalk remains largely intact, and both lots exhibit a level topography. Scoring-wise, they both garnered 3 points, placing them within the middle range of scores among considered lots, indicative of their potential for diverse utilization or developmental pursuits (see Figure 54, Figure 55, and Figure 56).

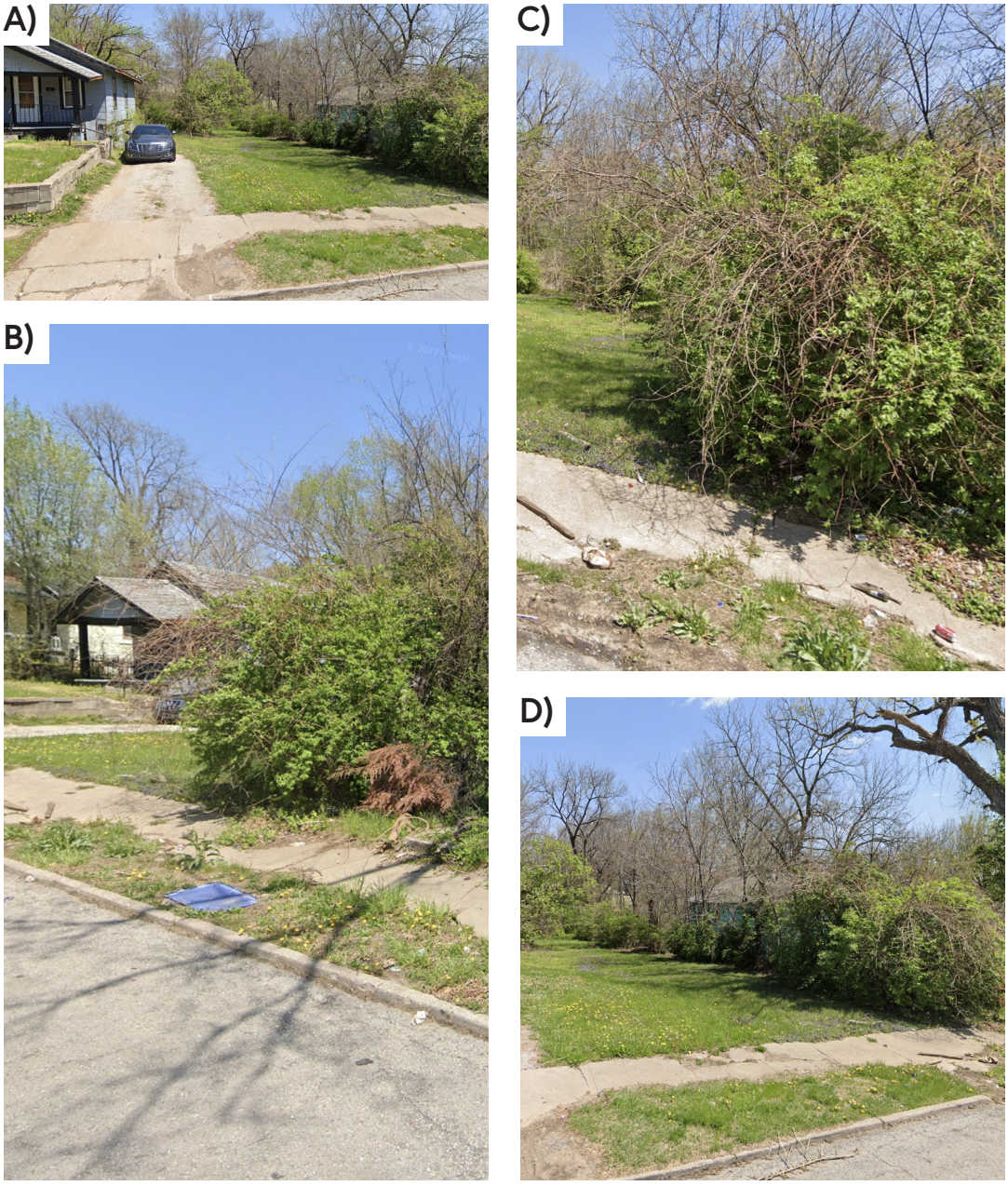


Fig.54 A: Surrounding Sidewalks; B:Vegetaion and Neighboring Home; C: Overgrown Vegetation; D:Vegetation Along Property Line

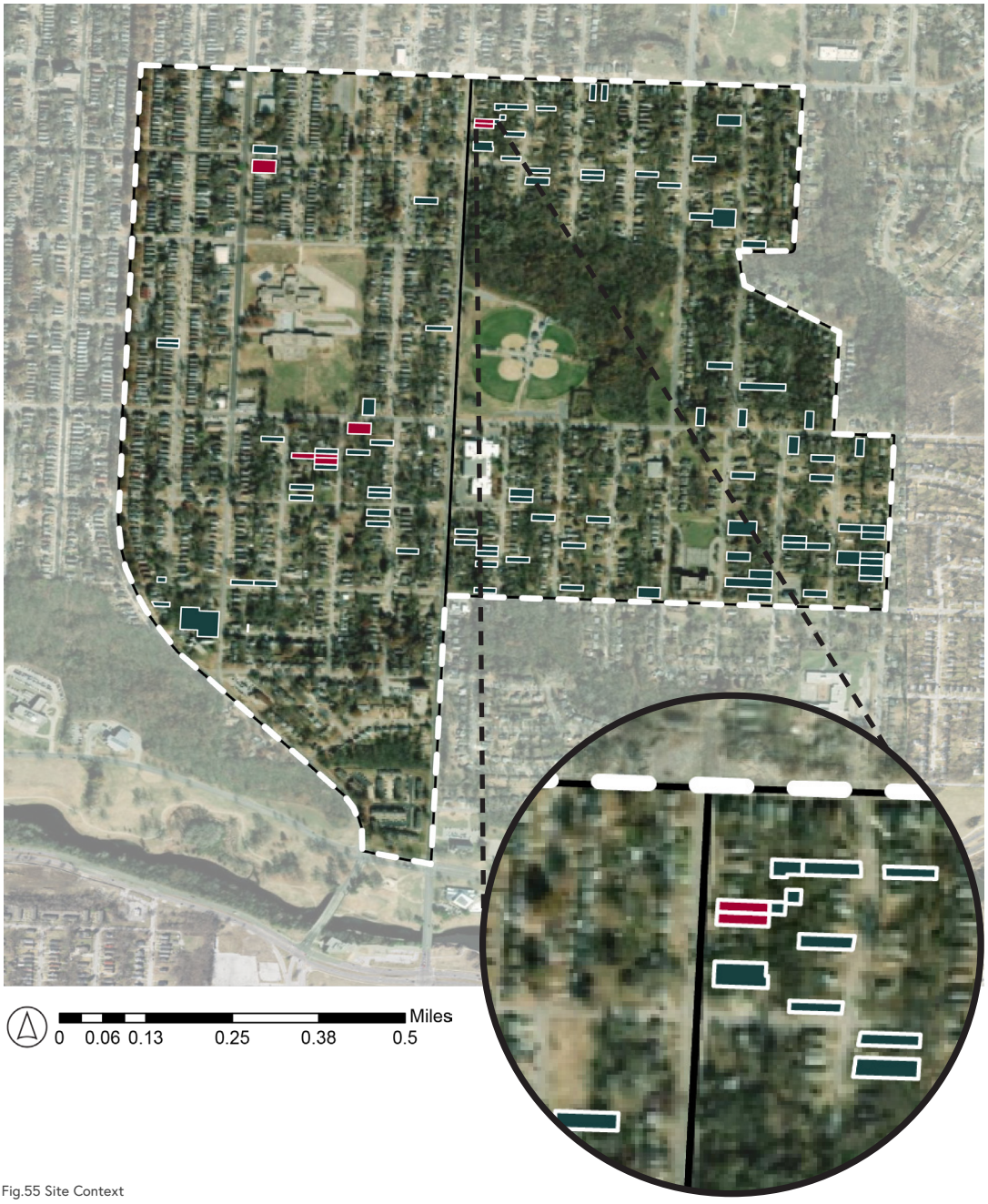


Fig.55 Site Context

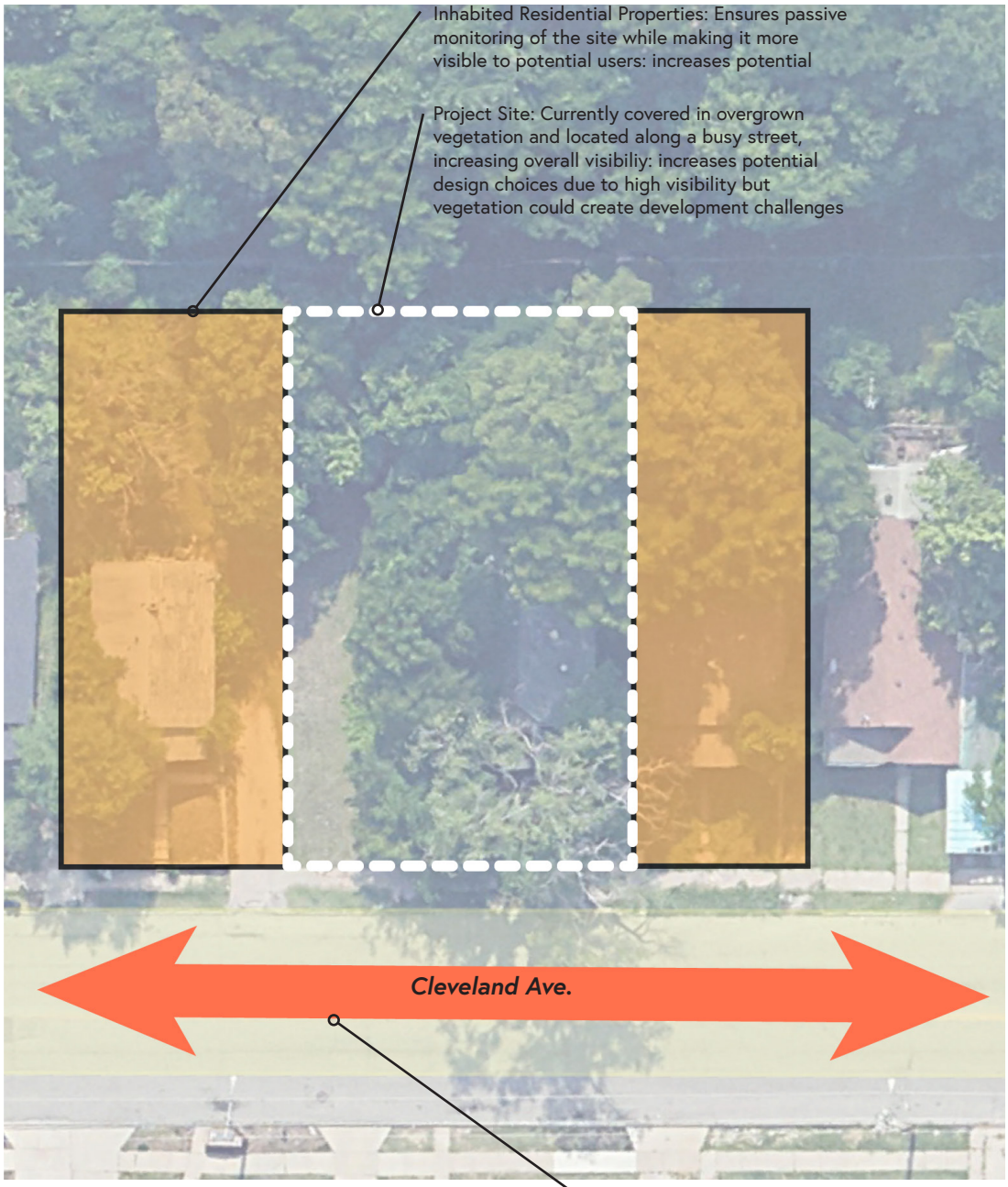


Fig.56 Site Analysis

5.3.2 Environmental Affordances

This lot is categorized as flat due to its low slope, providing versatility for potential developments. Additionally, it is labeled as a connector due to its shared side lot line with adjacent properties. It was categorized as semi-exposed, as being flanked by two properties somewhat diminishes its visibility; however, its location on an arterial street ensures constant traffic of cars and pedestrians, contributing to overall visibility. Furthermore, surrounded by inhabited residential properties, it is subject to passive monitoring from the surrounding community, enhancing security (see Figure 57).

For this site, a community garden was chosen as the preferred design solution. Given the relatively high residential population in the vicinity, a community garden presents an opportunity for shared initiative and meaning. These gardens typically operate quietly day to day, minimizing disruption to neighboring residents. Moreover, its clear landscape provides a blank canvas conducive to resident-led construction efforts, aligning with the participatory nature often associated with community gardens. With ample space across the combined sites, the potential for such a use is maximized. The location on an arterial street could generate interest in the project, as passersby may be drawn to participate or learn more. Additionally, its proximity to the Boys and Girls Club and several local churches offers opportunities for community partnerships, further enhancing its potential impact and reach within the neighborhood.



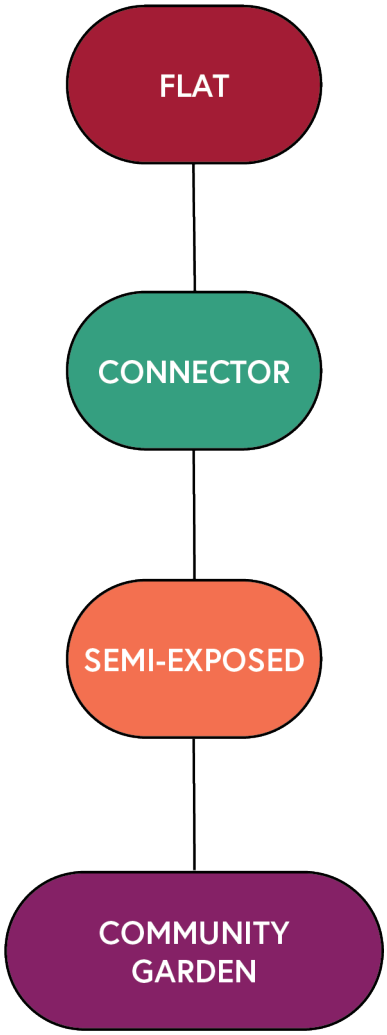


Fig.57 Environmental Affordances

5.3.3 Precedents

The first precedent that informed this design was Neighbors Building Brightmoor. The Brightmoor subdivision, established in 1922 as affordable housing for Southern migrants employed in Detroit's expanding automobile industry, deteriorated by 2006 into an abandoned, crime-ridden area. Community leader Riet Schumack's arrival sparked a transformation, beginning with a youth garden that eventually led to the formation of Neighbors Building Brightmoor (NBB). Through NBB, youth learned agricultural skills while fostering values like responsibility and teamwork. Today, NBB oversees fifteen blocks of agricultural land, attracting new families committed to self-sufficiency and environmental concerns. The area features diverse agricultural projects, including an edible playscape, orchard, and community garden, alongside initiatives for water conservation and public spaces (Neighbors Building Brightmoor - DFC: A Field Guide Working with Lots, n.d.).

The second precedent that informed this design was Cully Community Garden. Designed by Jason King, the Cully Community Garden received the 2014 Oregon Brownfields Award for its remarkable transformation of a vacant brownfield site near a capped landfill in Portland into a thriving community space. Engaging local residents and a team of middle school students from a diverse neighborhood, the project embraced a collaborative design process, yielding a productive garden that enriches the surrounding area. The design features numerous large garden plots, raised beds, and a micro-orchard, while also incorporating several storage areas and communal gathering spaces throughout the plot (Cully Community Garden Wins 2014 Oregon Brownfields Award – Herrera, 2014).

Both of these initiatives thrive on active community involvement, engaging a diverse range of participants, including children, throughout their development stages. They serve as prime examples of communities uniting to achieve a shared goal. Notably, the accomplishments of NBB demonstrate how a single small-scale project can catalyze further community engagement, yielding cumulative benefits for the community. Both projects offer invaluable blueprints for the essential components of a community garden, encompassing raised and ground-level beds, storage facilities, and communal spaces. Drawing inspiration from the Cully Community Garden, the design blueprint for the proposed layout mirrors its size and context, making it an ideal model to emulate.

This inspiration informs various aspects such as the sizing and distribution of raised beds, garden plots, sheds, gathering areas, and orchard trees. Furthermore, the Cully Community Garden serves as a guide for implementing measures to both protect the garden and minimize disruption to residential neighbors. Notably, it features not only perimeter fencing but also a diverse array of buffer types including vegetated buffers and trellises (see Figure 58).

Neighbors Building Brightmoor - Detroit, MI

A)



B)



Cully Commons - Portland, OR

C)



D)



Fig.58 A: Neighbors Building Brightmoor Green House (Google Maps, n.d); B: Neighbors Building Brightmoor Tool Shed (Google Maps, n.d); C: Cully Commons Planting Beds (Google Maps, n.d); D: Cully Commons Fence (Google Maps, n.d)

5.3.4 Design Solution

In terms of produce production, the area offers an array of features such as garden beds, a greenhouse, raised planting beds, and a micro-orchard, catering to different gardening needs and preferences. In addition to these facilities, storage sheds have been incorporated to store materials and supplies, while picnic tables serve versatile purposes, from sorting produce to hosting gatherings. Security measures have been implemented to safeguard the space, including the installation of a fence around the perimeter. This fence features one pedestrian entrance and another entrance wide enough to accommodate vehicles for the convenient pick-up and drop-off of supplies. Moreover, to respect the privacy of neighboring residents, a vegetated trellis has been erected along the property line, offering both visual screening and aesthetic enhancement (see Figure 59).

Community Garden



Fig.59 Site Plan

5.4 4321 Bales Ave, 4318 Askew Ave, and 4316 Askew Ave

5.4.1 Existing Conditions

4321 Bales Ave., 4318 Askew Ave., and 4316 Askew Ave. comprise a group of aggregate lots exhibiting various existing conditions and a combined area of 0.349 acres in Oak Park South East. The two properties situated on Askew Ave. share a side property line, and they both share a rear property line with the lot on Bales Ave. 4321 Bales Ave. is located on a minor residential street with minimal through-traffic. The lot is completely clear with mowed grass and enclosed by a chain-link fence. It is flanked by two inhabited residential properties, and the adjacent sidewalk remains relatively intact. The terrain is flat, and on the scoring system, this lot received 3 points, positioning it in the mid-range of the scoring system.

The properties on Askew Ave., which is also a minor residential street with minimal through-traffic. Both lots are engulfed in unkempt vegetation comprised of overgrown grass, shrubs, mature canopy trees, and small understory trees/saplings. While one vacant residential property neighboring them was disqualified due to private ownership, the remaining surrounding lots are predominantly inhabited residential properties. According to Kansas City's records, the sidewalk is intact, though accessibility may be impeded by the overgrown vegetation on the property itself. With similarly flat topography, these lots both scored 1 point on the scoring system, placing them at the lower end of acceptable scores (see Figure 60, Figure 61, and Figure 62).

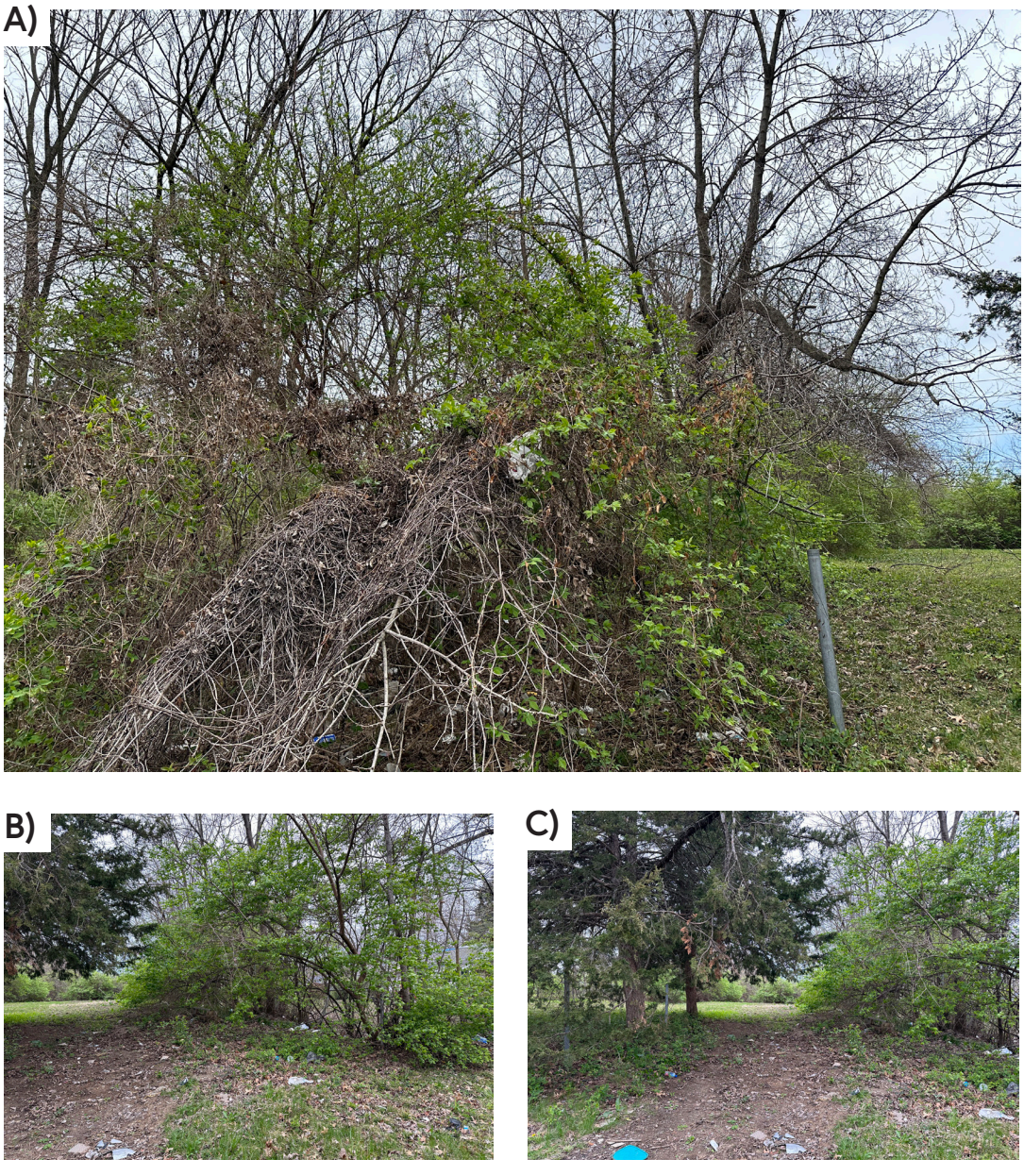


Fig.60 A: Overgrown Vegetation; B: View Onto Property: C: View Onto Property

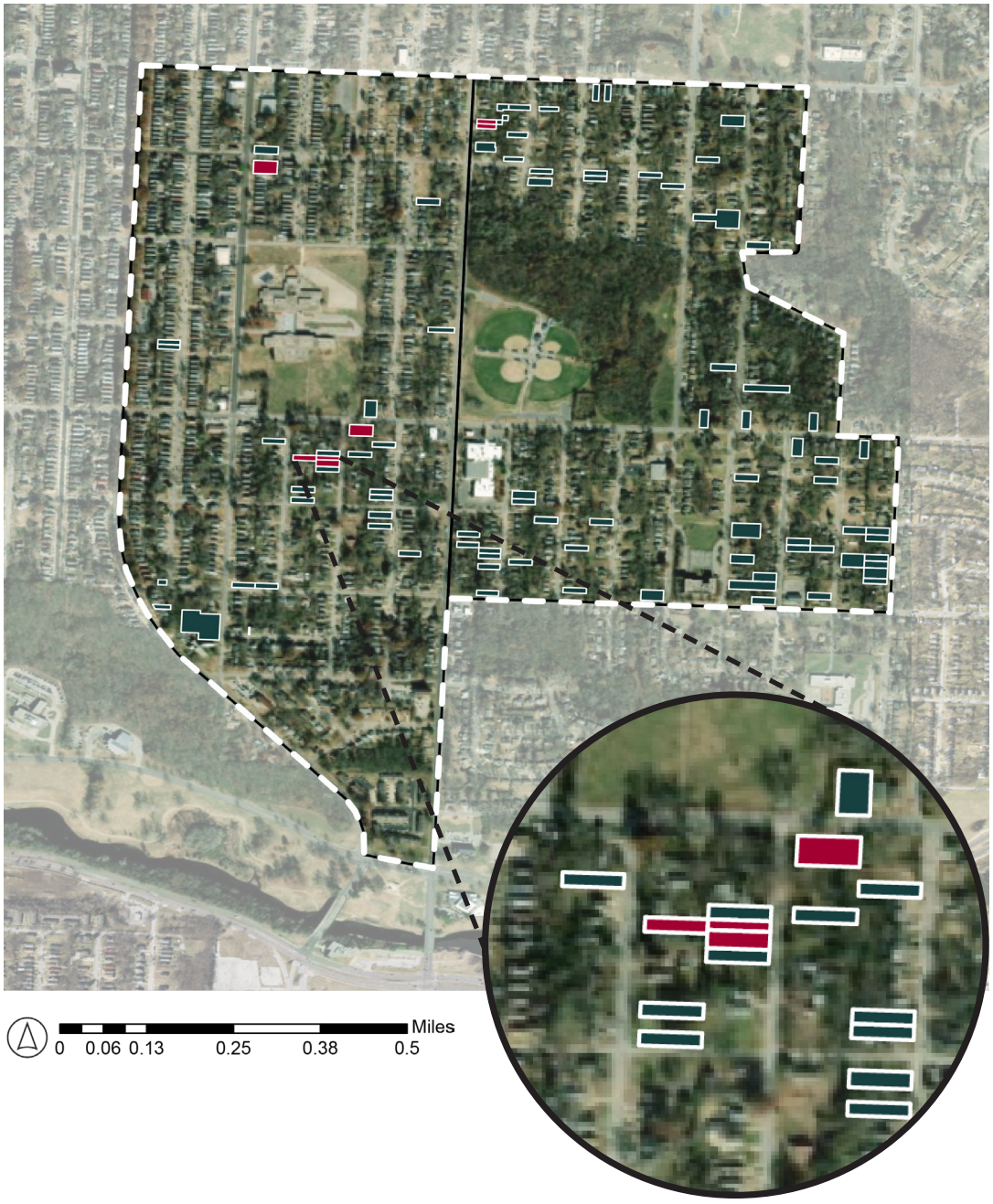


Fig.61 Site Context



Askew Ave.: Minor residential street with little through traffic: reduces visibility and may cause safety concerns

Project Site: Currently overgrown with vegetation, but is adjacent to two inhabited properties and is surrounded by other inhabited properties, increasing visibility: increases passive monitoring and potential user base

Vacant Residential Properties: Currently have no residents, reducing visibility: creates more of a safety risk due to lack of passive monitoring

Inhabited Residential Properties: Ensures passive monitoring of the site while making it more visible to potential users: increases potential design choices due to high visibility

Bales Ave.: Relatively well trafficed residential street, increasing visibility: increases potential user base and safety

Fig.62 Site Analysis

5.4.2 Environmental Affordances

This site is characterized as flat due to its low slope. Additionally, it is categorized as an aggregate, consisting of more than two lots with an irregular arrangement. While semi-exposed, its location on a minor street reduces its overall visibility; however, once cleared, it could provide a clear line of sight from one street to another. Surrounded by inhabited residential properties, it remains highly visible to the surrounding residents, facilitating passive monitoring.

For this site, the chosen design solution includes a playground alongside a natural landscape. This combination caters to a diverse age range, offering both passive and active recreational opportunities. Informational materials can be tailored to appeal to both children and adults, enhancing educational value. The integration of nature with play has gained popularity in recent years, providing children multiple ways to engage with their surroundings. Purposefully placed native plants would significantly enhance the visual appeal of the space, transforming it from its current state of unruly vegetation. Given the aggregate nature of these lots, developing several high-impact solutions could pose financial challenges. However, by combining a cost-effective intervention with another solution, overall costs can be mitigated while still achieving a meaningful transformation of the space (see Figure 63).





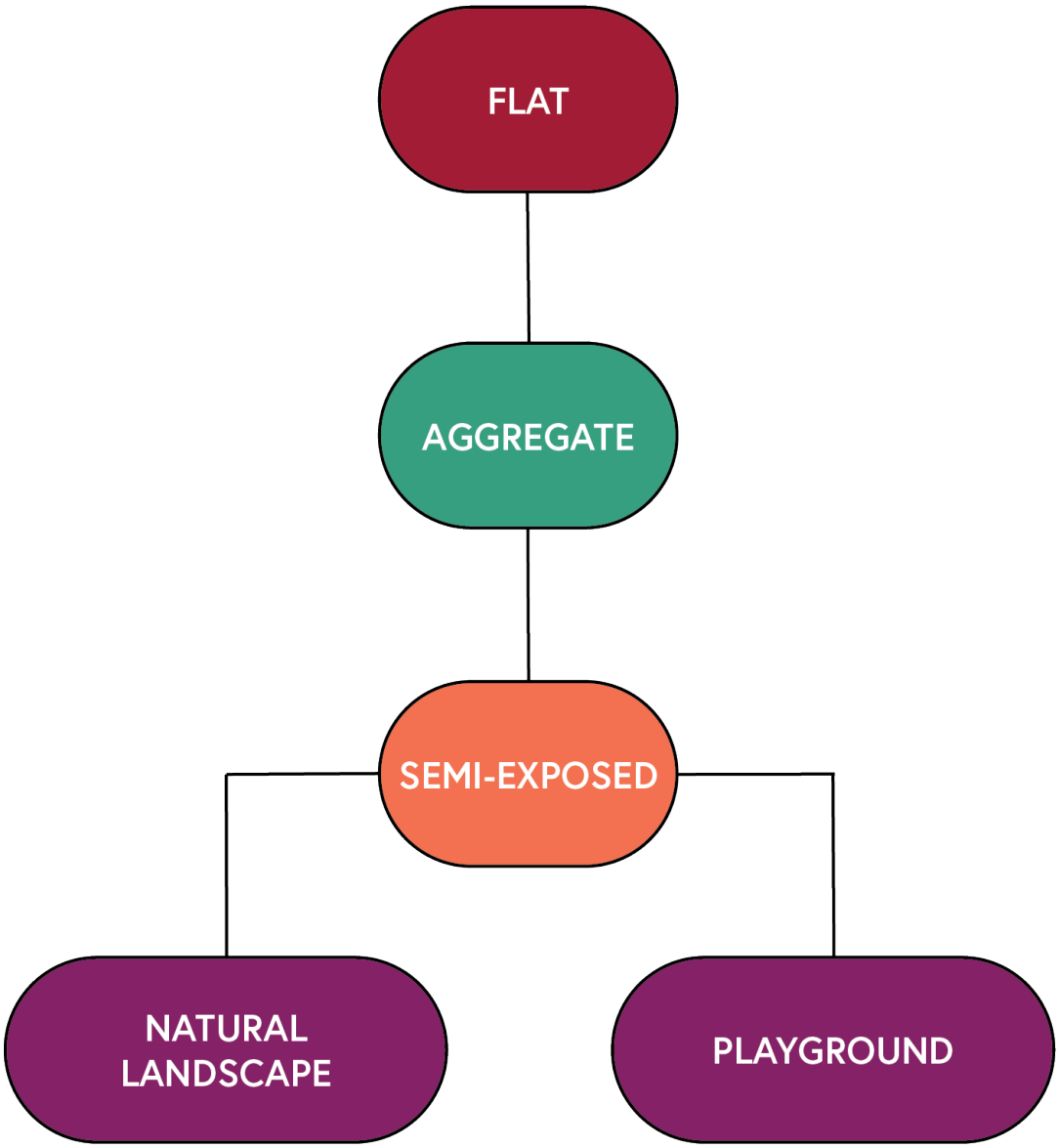


Fig.63 Environmental Affordances

5.4.3 Precedents

The initial inspiration for this design stems from the Sunflower+Project in St. Louis, MO, which focuses on revitalizing vacant urban lots by cultivating sunflowers and winter wheat. These plants are renowned for their ability to extract contaminants such as lead from urban soils. Over a span of two years, the team implemented four crop rotations, alternating between sunflowers and winter wheat, to evaluate the effectiveness of soil remediation. Additionally, the project contributes to neighborhood beautification efforts by replacing overgrown vegetation with something far more visually appealing. Since its establishment in 2013, significant milestones have been achieved, including successful growing seasons for sunflowers and winter wheat, installation of sustainability flags and educational signage, and the addition of gabion benches.

The second precedent explored was Heron's Head Park, situated along the San Francisco waterfront. Spanning 12,000 square feet, this play space was conceived by children, featuring interactive elements such as logs and boulders that encourage engagement with natural surroundings. The design promotes equitable access to outdoor play and nature, particularly in an area of San Francisco characterized by persistent disinvestment. Acknowledged in the Safe, Clean, Sustainable, and Child-Friendly Environments category by UNICEF, the project enhances Heron's Head Park's role as an environmental education center for young people. It specifically addresses disparities in access to play and nature, particularly in underserved communities like Bayview Hunter's Point, where the Nature Exploration Area is situated.

The Sunflower+Project stands as a testament to community collaboration in devising an affordable remedy for addressing aesthetic challenges associated with vacancy. By replacing untamed vegetation with visually striking native plants and integrating informative signage, the area undergoes a transformation from neglect to intentional design. This case underscores how small-scale initiatives can set off a chain reaction, potentially growing into something far more substantial. Moreover, the locale of Heron's Head Park shares many contextual similarities with the study area. Like the study area, this vicinity has grappled with historical disinvestment and a lack of access to quality green spaces. Although larger in scale than the proposed site, it provides valuable inspiration for programming, especially in integrating natural elements

into areas designed for climbing and play. This park exemplifies the benefits of granting children access to educational landscapes that seamlessly blend playful activities with nature (see Figure 64).

Sunflower + Project - St. Louis, Missouri

A)



Heron's Head Park

B)



Fig.64 A: Sunflower + Project: STL (Sustainable Land Lab from Vacant to Vital, 2013); B: Nature Exploration Areas (San Francisco Children & Nature, n.d)

5.4.4 Design Solution

The design of the area is characterized by prominent entrances located on both Askew Ave. and Bales Ave., each with informative signage to guide visitors. Positioned at the center of the design is a nature-inspired play structure, surrounded by seating areas and expanses of native plantings. This arrangement facilitates easy access to natural surroundings for both children and their families, fostering an immersive and engaging experience.

As visitors progress towards Bales Ave., the layout transitions to a more relaxed atmosphere, marked by a winding path and seating nestled amidst the native plantings. This variation in programming offers a quieter retreat for those seeking moments of tranquility and relaxation amidst the natural beauty of the surroundings.

Furthermore, deliberate efforts have been made to buffer the property lines shared with nearby residents, minimizing potential disturbances. However, careful consideration has also been given to maintaining clear lines of sight from Bales Ave. to Askew Ave., ensuring visibility and safety within the space (see Figure 65).

Natural Landscape and Playground

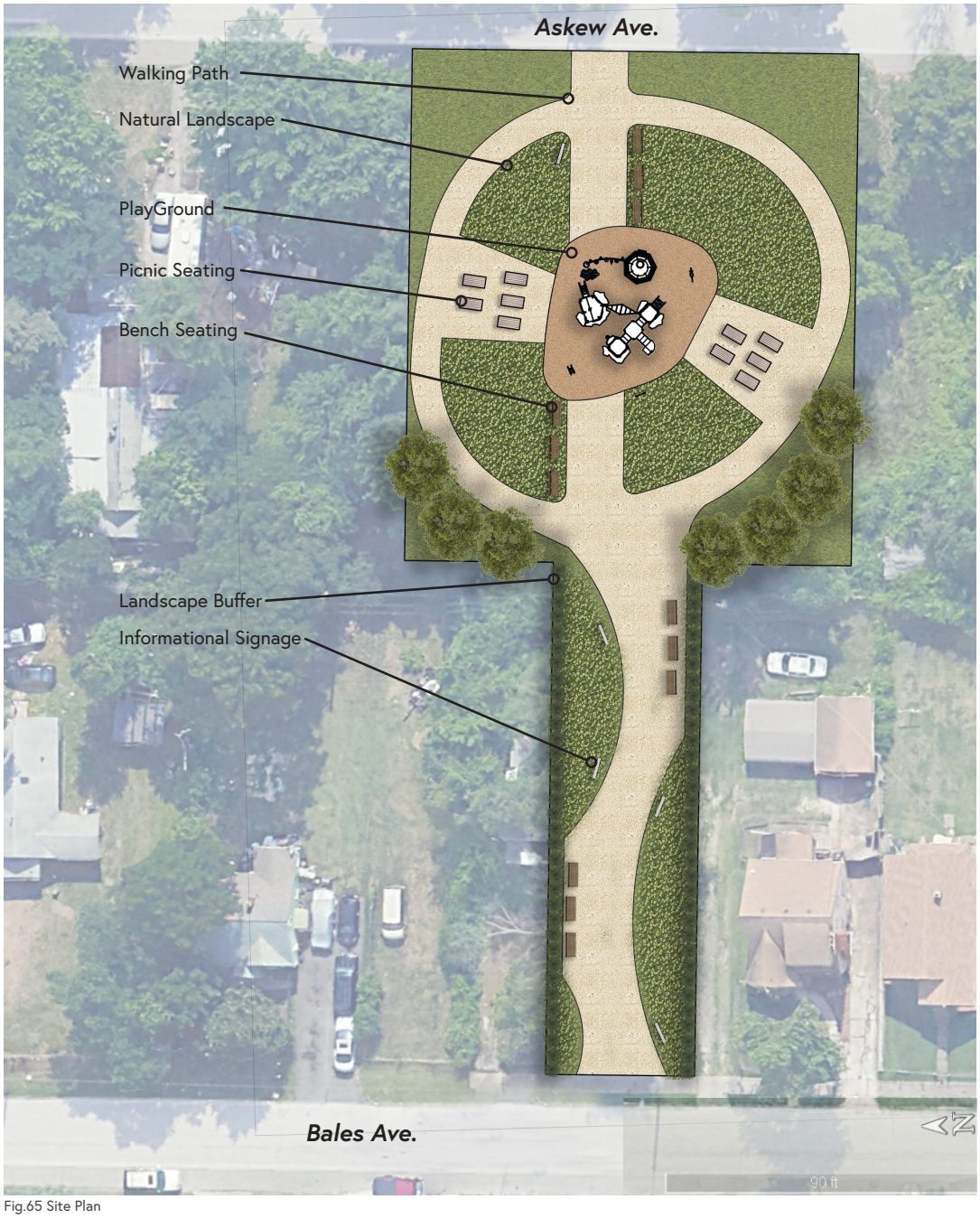


Fig.65 Site Plan

5.5 4400 Monroe Ave.

5.5.1 Existing Conditions

4400 Monroe Ave is a 0.154 acre single corner lot in Oak Park Southeast. It is positioned at the intersection of Monroe Ave. and E. 44th St., both of which are residential streets characterized by minimal traffic flow. At present, the lot maintains a relatively neat appearance with trimmed grass, though some shrubs are present along the rear and side property lines. Surrounded by inhabited residential properties, this lot integrates into the local residential fabric. While the sidewalk lining Monroe Ave. remains intact, there is not a sidewalk along E. 44th street. The terrain exhibits a generally level topography, with a gentle incline towards the property line along Monroe Ave. This lot attained 5 points on the assessment scale, positioning it at the upper level of scores assigned (see Figure 66, Figure 67, and Figure 68).



Fig.66 A: View Towards the Street; B: View From Street Corner; C: Cleared Lot

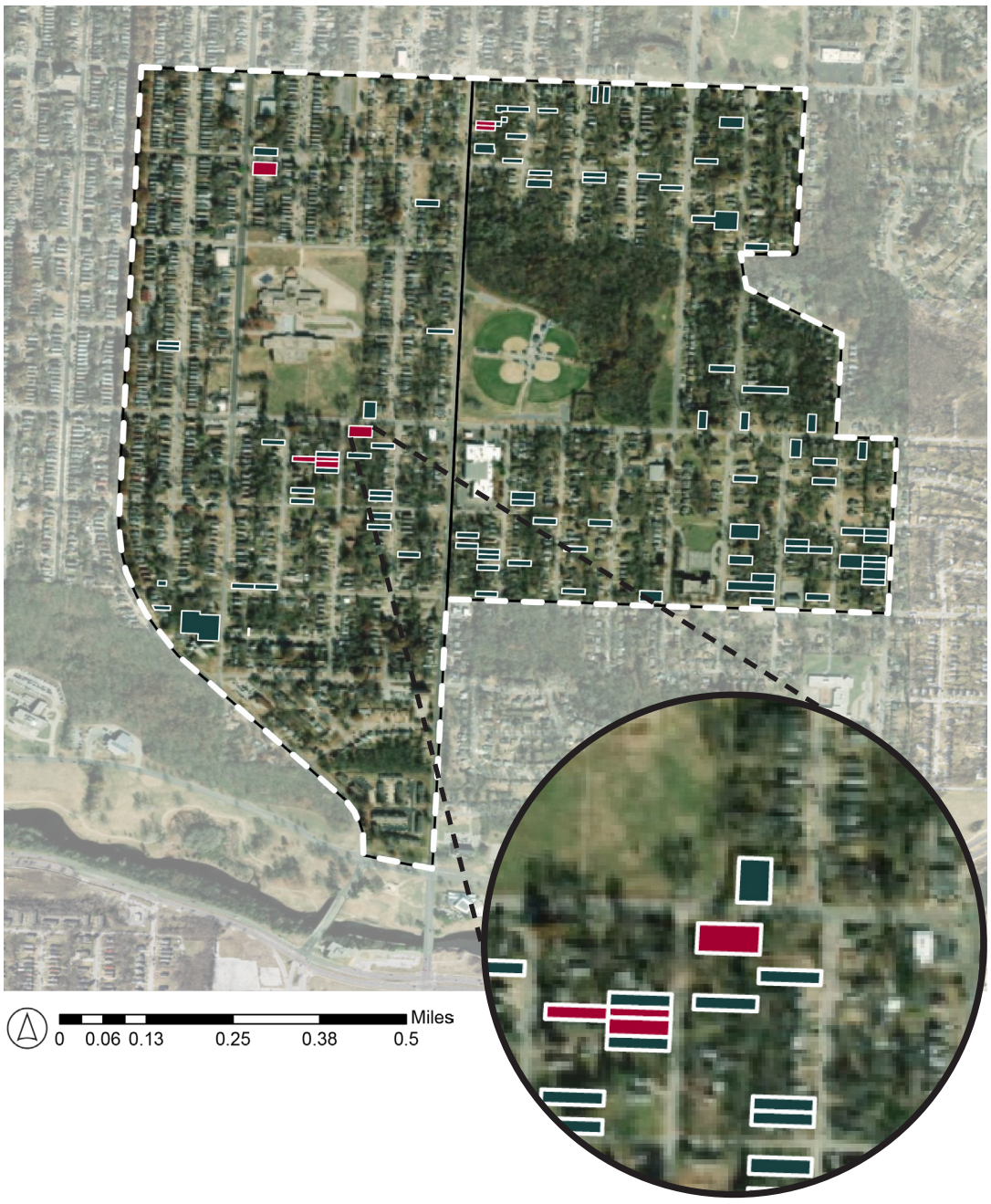


Fig.67 Site Context



Fig.68 Site Analysis

5.5.2 Environmental Affordances

This lot is flat due to its low slope and classified as single since it encompasses only one lot. Positioned on a street corner, it's exposed, offering high visibility to surrounding residents. Moreover, being surrounded by inhabited residential properties ensures it's high visibility to the entire community, leading to passive monitoring.

The chosen design solution is a food hub. Situated near an existing park, it avoids replicating recreational offerings already present there. Instead, it serves as a potential amenity for the adult population of the area. Its versatile space could accommodate a variety of seasonal events, businesses, or catering services. Given the scarcity of food options in the neighborhood, initiatives like food trucks provide a less impactful yet effective means of introducing economic and social boosting initiatives (see Figure 69).



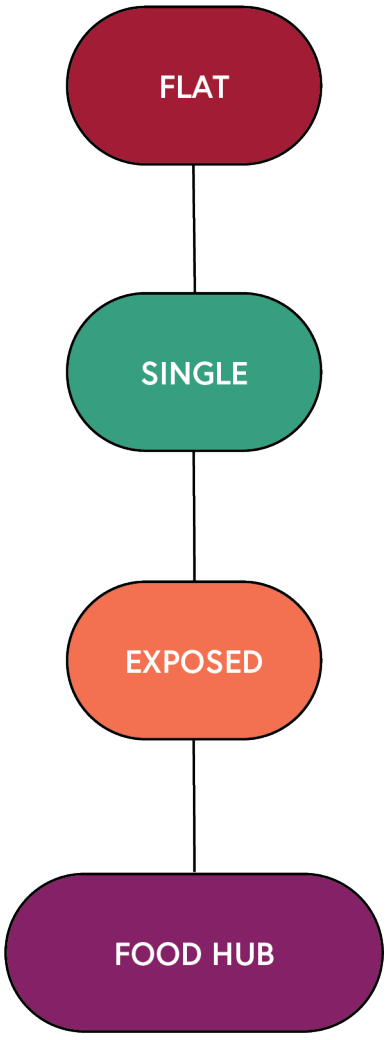


Fig.69 Environmental Affordances

5.5.3 Precedents

The MLK Food Park, situated in South Dallas's Forest District, is a vibrant space designed by the Better Block as part of The Real Estate Council's Dallas Catalyst Project. This initially temporary park aimed to address various community needs: providing essential community space, supporting culinary entrepreneurs, and serving as a pilot for policy changes regarding mobile food vending in Dallas. Placed on what was once a vacant parking lot, the design featured shipping container storefronts, food trailers, and carts. Additionally, it provided a wide range of seating options, games, and shade cover. Designed with community input, it offers a safe outdoor gathering space while promoting affordable food vending options.

In the design process of this site the programming elements of the MLK Food Park significantly influenced the choices incorporated into the overall layout. The "do-it-yourself" (DIY) ethos was one that was carried into the design of this space. While permanent and costly versions of such spaces exist, the MLK food park epitomizes the creation of a dynamic environment for communal food sharing and community building using accessible materials and resources. Notably, diverse vending options—including shipping containers, carts, and trucks—were integrated into the design with flexibility in mind, allowing for easy reconfiguration to meet varying needs. Moreover, careful consideration was given to the inclusion of various seating options, movable potted plants, and recreational activities to enhance the park's design and functionality (see Figure 70).

MLK Food Park - Dallas, TX



Fig.70 A: Arial Image (Tovar, 2022); B: Seating and Booths (Tovar, 2022); C: Booths (Tovar, 2022); D: Seating (Tovar, 2022); E: Signage (Tovar, 2022)

5.5.4 Design Solution

The design incorporates practical features to facilitate smooth access for vendors, notably with a U-shaped drive allowing for easy entry onto the site. Positioned at the center of this drive is a central seating area, designed to accommodate various needs. Here, visitors can find restrooms and storage space, along with seating arrangements, raised planters, and a small lawn suitable for games or flexible activities.

Furthermore, to mitigate potential disturbances to adjacent residential properties, the site is walled along its borders, providing a barrier between the higher-impact activities and its neighbors. Additionally, a short protective wall surrounds the seating area, offering a safeguard against potential traffic from Askew Ave (see Figure 71).

Food Hub



Fig.71 Site Plan

CONCLUSION



6.1 Contributions

6.1.1 Building Upon Existing Frameworks

Numerous cities across the United States are contending with varying degrees of urban vacancy, posing not only aesthetic challenges but also significant social, economic, and environmental impacts. Urban vacancy often perpetuates a decline in social capital that stems from reduced access to essential resources and networks crucial for community prosperity. While numerous studies explore related concepts, such as sense of community and quality of life, the social capital implications of urban vacancy remain largely unexplored. This study addresses this gap by developing a quantitative system for measuring social capital using community-level variables, alongside proposing strategies for lot selection and design interventions aimed at enhancing social capital.

6.1.2 Building Upon Sense of Community Frameworks

While the formation of a sense of community has been extensively studied in academic literature, social capital has received comparatively less attention (Carpiano & Hystad, 2011; McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Pooley et al., 2005). Scholars have long debated the concept of social capital and have not yet shared a cohesive understanding regarding an assessment technique for social capital (Li et al., 2022). Understanding the pivotal role of social capital in shaping community cohesion and differentiating it from the concept of sense of community is crucial. Despite their distinct characteristics, there is a significant overlap in their dimensions. The aspects of trust, cooperative norms, reciprocity, and networks that define social capital work together to foster a sense of community. Understanding the relationship between individuals and their community requires a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. Utilizing a conceptual framework like sense of community, with its identifiable components, informs the measurement of social capital (Pooley et al., 2005). By using quantitative analysis techniques, this study offers a method to augment our understanding of social bonds and their formation. While the measurement systems for sense of community most often focus on qualitative data gathered from residents, this study bridges the gap between qualitative data on residents' sentiments and quantitative data on spatial community dynamics. By integrating these approaches, comprehensive solutions for fostering social capital in neighborhoods grappling with

urban vacancy begin to take shape.

6.1.3 Enhancing Quality of Life

Urban vacancy has profound implications for quality of life, encompassing social, economic, and environmental consequences. This study specifically addresses social consequences while recognizing their interconnectedness with other factors. All of these factors have repercussions that not only lead to social disintegration but also significantly affect the psychological and physical well-being of residents in high-vacancy areas (Burton & Pitt, 2001; Li et al., 2004; Pickett et al., 2011; Pickett & Cadenasso, 2009).

Although this study does not directly investigate environmental or economic concerns related to urban vacancy, addressing social capital directly contributes to enhancing the dimensions of quality-of-life. While distinct from social capital, the domains of quality of life intersect with activities known to strengthen social capital, such as recreation, civic participation, and relationship-building. The absence of quality-of-life domains decreases social capital, underscoring the correlation between social capital and quality of life (Nassauer et al., 2009; Schilling & Mallach, 2012). Thus, exploring ways to strengthen social capital in high vacancy areas is essential for improving residents' quality of life.

6.1.4 Practical Applications of Evidence Based Design Framework

The established method that resulted in the Evidence-Based Design Framework is the greatest contribution of this study, particularly given the widespread challenges cities face regarding fund shortages and allocations; struggles that are even more prevalent in cities grappling with vacancy. Amidst the multitude of voices influencing fund allocation, decisions can often be muddled, favoring groups with stronger representation in city council and public meetings. This tool offers researchers and city officials a less biased way to quantitatively assess neighborhoods lagging in social capital compared to others in the city. The continued development of such a tool holds promise for streamlining master planning practices.

Furthermore, resources are frequently squandered on attempting to develop lots plagued by significant issues such as contamination. This exacerbates the challenge of urban vacancy by generating numerous lots in limbo, neither developed nor available for alternative uses. The proposed tool for eliminating and prioritizing vacant lots offers a solution to this issue. By providing a straightforward framework for identifying lots likely to pose significant challenges and those most desirable for repurposing, potential buyers and developers are afforded the best opportunity for success when implementing design interventions.

Additionally, design processes are inherently costly, time-consuming, and fraught with challenges, especially when addressing less-than-ideal site conditions in neighborhoods grappling with social development issues as is often the case with vacant lots. Despite their diversity, these interventions offer three main assets to neighborhood social capital. First, they engage residents in hands-on tasks, fostering a sense of accomplishment and encouraging individual social investment. Second, they enhance neighborhood aesthetics, reducing perceived danger, nurturing trust, and fostering a sense of identity. Lastly, they serve as platforms for residents to meet and collaborate, fostering unity and shared accomplishment through collective effort.
These designs hold promise for bolstering social unity by nurturing trust, cooperation, and reciprocity among participants.
They facilitate cooperative conduct by establishing communal guidelines for public space use, fostering trust over time and leading to spontaneous acts of assistance. These dynamics collectively strengthen

community ties and foster cohesion. Offering communities and city officials nine established options for potential site interventions as a starting point to navigate towards a feasible design direction. By furnishing these tools to streamline decision-making in design, valuable time, energy, and resources can be conserved for other projects and initiatives. Additionally, the design framework is crucial to making this process more accessible to residents. Starting from scratch can be intimidating, even for designers, let alone the average community member. By providing this framework as a foundation, the design process becomes far more approachable and inclusive.

While this methodology was applied to nine neighborhoods in Kansas City, its adaptability to other locations makes it a versatile approach for tackling urban vacancy and bolstering social capital. In essence, it provides a streamlined process for site selection and design that serves as a blueprint for enhancing social capital in any city or community grappling with vacancy issues (see Figure 72).

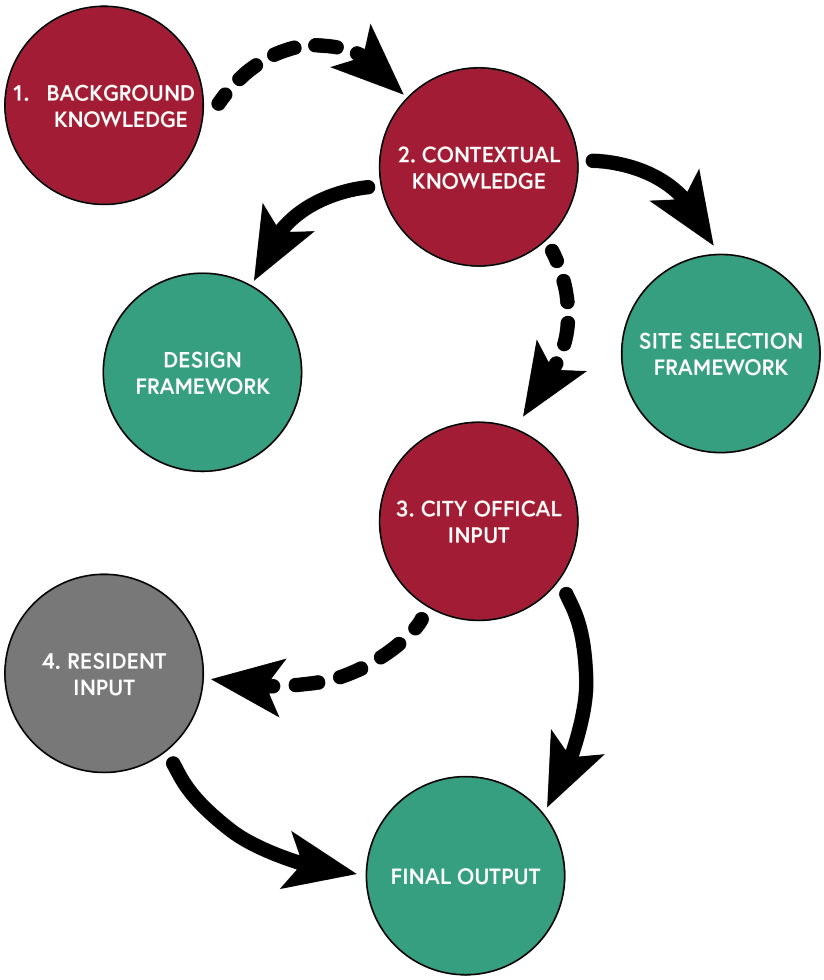


Fig.72 Evidence Based Design Approach

5.2 Applications and Implications

6.2.1 Potential Next Steps – Engaging Residents

With the relationship between social capital and quality of life in mind, a crucial next step to this process would be engaging residents of the community in the design process. This would be done with the goal of combining the data collected during the study with the perceptions that the community has of their own neighborhood. The following section outlines the method future researchers could use to do so (see Figure 73; see Appendix F).

Data Collection Tool

The primary tool for collecting this data would be a photoset. Fifty-four photos depicting a variety of commonly used design intervention strategies on vacant lots were selected and downloaded from the internet. These photos were chosen to represent the nine categories of design interventions identified during phase 3. Each photo should be resized to 5" × 3" for comfortable use on a support board without sacrificing legibility. These photos should be printed in color and arranged on a 48" x 36" movable board in six columns to facilitate the study (see Appendix H). To ensure equal representation, photos were grouped based on dominant design intervention, with one photo from each group assigned to a column. Randomization of photos within each column was performed to eliminate bias. Additionally, the selected photos did not include human subjects to remove bias. The use of photos has several benefits. It allows for people to not only visualize design solutions but also discuss their preferences. Participants can point to specific design attributes and affordances within the photos facilitating discussion. Additionally, a set of questions should be asked to each resident to gauge their perceptions of vacancy within the neighborhood. All responses should be audio recorded and transcribed. Following transcription, there should be documentation of which photos were selected and how many times. Furthermore, residents' comments while selecting the photos should be associated with the photo. Lastly, a similar method of tracking data during the city official interviews should be applied to track responses to other questions, and extract themes that emerge during the discussion.

Selection and Recruitment of Participants
The community engagement process could be initiated in several ways. First, the researcher could make contact with community leaders through local

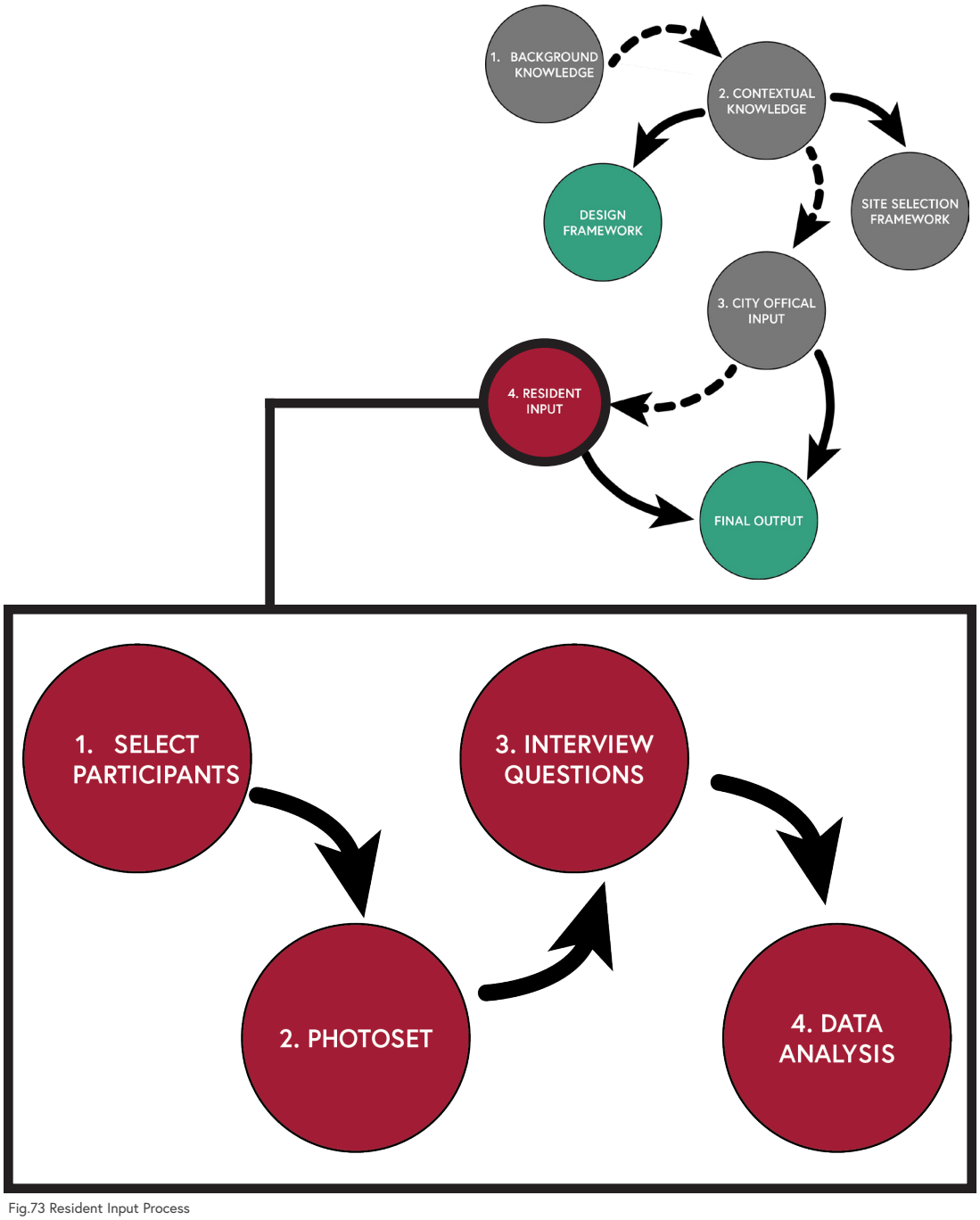


Fig.73 Resident Input Process

organizations. The benefit of this approach is the ability to gain the insight of individuals who have a wide range of experiences with the community. Another approach to gathering this data would be to utilize convenience-sampling, where the researcher could locate themselves at a place within the study area (coffee shop, library, park, etc.) and interview individuals at random. Although less targeted, this approach has the benefit of quickly gathering diverse input, enhancing the comprehensiveness of feedback.

Interview Process

During the interview, participants should be prompted to choose two images from each column in the photoset that best represents their preferred elements for repurposing vacant lots in their neighborhood.
This iterative selection process allows participants to express preferences across diverse options. Following selections, participants should be asked why specific photos appealed to them, offering insights into their perceptions and the factors influencing their choices (see Appendix G). Additionally, a series of questions should be asked in the semi-structured interview to gain further insight into residents' perceptions of the neighborhood and the role that vacancy plays within it.

Use Interview Results to Update Designs

After engaging in discussions with residents, feedback should be transcribed for analysis and utilized to tailor the design framework to the individual study area. This involves prioritizing solutions in the existing design framework that were the most popular selections amongst residents during the selection of photographs. Solutions that were not selected should be excluded from the framework, except in cases where they are the sole proposed solution for a specific site condition. Furthermore, feedback obtained during the semi-structured interview process should serve as a secondary consideration in refining the design framework.

6.3 Limitations

One significant limitation to this study is its inherent focus on fostering bonding social capital within communities. While the study is adept at enhancing internal bonds and trust amongst community members through the creation of high-quality social interaction spaces, it does not include the equally crucial aspect of forming connections beyond the community, known as bridging social capital. A truly socially connected community has not only strong internal ties, but also links into larger networks that offer additional resources. Although the study briefly addresses this through interactions with city officials, a more extensive investigation is warranted to adequately incorporate bridging social capital.

Another primary limitation arises from the dynamic nature of neighborhoods, where even those with stable development patterns undergo daily changes. In areas experiencing high levels of urban vacancy, factors such as vacant lot counts, condition, ownership, and availability of social capital services fluctuate frequently. Thus, while the collected data was accurate at the time of the study, it may become outdated in the months or years following.

Additionally, the study faces constraints due to its relatively short timeline, spanning approximately eight months. This necessitated expediting many processes that would benefit from a more in-depth investigation. For instance, the scoring of vacant lots relied on available community data and mapping software, which while efficient, can contain inaccuracies. Conducting in-person assessments of each lot would most likely yield more accurate results but requires additional time.

Furthermore, due to time constraints, this research lacked a community engagement component, which is crucial for refining a design framework tailored to the specific needs of the area. While not completed in this study, the following section outlines the process for collecting such data and implementing necessary changes.

As mentioned during the review of the literature, many researchers suggest layering aspects of measuring sense of community with quantitative data that was collected this research. This would occur during the engagement of residents, creating a more comprehensive study.

6.4 Closing points

Urban vacancy presents a complex and pervasive challenge in cities across the United States, manifesting in abandoned buildings, empty lots, and neglected spaces. These vacant areas not only detract from the visual appeal of neighborhoods but also contribute to a range of social, economic, and environmental issues. Within this context, addressing social capital—the networks, relationships, and trust within a community—is essential for fostering community resilience and prosperity.

This study proposes a rigorous quantitative approach to measure social capital within vacant urban areas. By developing a systematic method for assessing social capital and suggesting specific strategies for lot selection and design interventions, it offers a comprehensive framework for enhancing community cohesion and well-being. These interventions may include creating community gardens, establishing public art installations, or implementing shared recreational spaces, all aimed at revitalizing vacant areas and strengthening social ties among residents. The introduction of the Evidence-Based Design Framework represents a significant contribution, providing a structured and unbiased approach for evaluating neighborhoods and guiding intervention efforts. This framework not only aids city officials in decision-making processes but also actively involves residents in shaping the future of their communities. Through collaborative engagement and participatory design, residents are empowered to contribute to the enhancement of social capital and the revitalization of vacant spaces in their neighborhoods.

Moreover, the study acknowledges the intricate relationship between urban vacancy and quality of life, with a particular emphasis on social ramifications. While it does not directly delve into environmental or economic factors, it recognizes that addressing social capital can have positive ripple effects on residents' overall well-being. By fostering a sense of belonging, facilitating social interactions, and improving neighborhood aesthetics, interventions to enhance social capital contribute to creating more vibrant communities.

Furthermore, the study underscores the broader implications of its findings beyond the specific context of the research. By offering a blueprint for addressing social capital in communities grappling with urban vacancy, it provides valuable insights and

practical guidance for urban planners, policymakers, and community organizers nationwide. The spatial analysis and design framework developed in this study offer adaptable tools that can be tailored to diverse urban contexts, facilitating informed decision-making, and fostering inclusive and sustainable development practices.

Despite its limitations, such as focusing primarily on social aspects and a single geographical area (initially Kansas City), this study represents a significant step forward in understanding the complex dynamics of urban vacancy and social capital. By laying the groundwork for future research and intervention efforts, it contributes to advancing knowledge and practice in urban planning, community development, and social resilience.

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Fig. 72 Holland, M. (2024). *Evidence Based Design Approach*. [Diagram]. Adobe Illustrator.

Fig. 73 Holland, M. (2024). *Resident Input Process*. [Diagram]. Adobe Illustrator.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Neighborhood Social Capital Scores

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – South Hyde Park

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Mt. Olive MBC	4000 Harrison St, Kansas City, MO 64110
Places of worship	Grace Assembly of God	4101 Harrison St, Kansas City, MO 64110
Places of worship	St. James Catholic Church	3909 Harrison St, Kansas City, MO 64110
Places of worship	Penn Valley Quaker Meeting	4405 Gillham Rd, Kansas City, MO 64110
Public play grounds	Gilham Park playground	3915 Gillham Rd, Kansas City, MO 64110
Non-profits	Uzazi Village	4232 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Non-profits	Bishop Sullivan Center	3936 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
	4
	4
	4
Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	3
Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**23**
Population Density (population/land area (m^2))	**0.002** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**11,500**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Manheim Park

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Immanuel Lutheran Church	4205 Tracy Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Places of worship	Christian Fellowship Church	4509 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Places of worship	Forest Avenue Church	4300 Forest Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Civic and social associations	Footprints: Wayne D. White Recovery Community Center	4501 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Civic and social associations	CAG	4501 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Membership sports and recreation clubs	Full Circle Yoga KC	4327 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Labor/professional organizations	SEIU Local1	4526 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64110
Labor/professional organizations	Jewish Vocational Service	4600 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64110
Community gardens	Manheim Gardens	4229 Forest Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Non-profits	SWAGG Inc.	4327 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Non-profits	A SPLASH of LIFE KC	4337 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
	4
	4
Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	3
	3
	3
	3
	3
Unites communities voluntarily	3
Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**34**
Population Density (population/land area (m²))	**0.002** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**17,000**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Ivanhoe Southwest

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Heartland Presbytery	3210 Michigan Ave # 200, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Macedonia Baptist Church	1700 Linwood Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	St. Vincent de Paul Church	3106 Flora Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	World Harvest Ministries	3400 Woodland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	I Can Ministries	3544 Highland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Shalom Missionary Baptist Church	3621 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Grace Christian Fellowship Church	3721 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Spirit of Truth	3827 Flora Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Ambassadors for Christ In Christ (AFCIC) Nondenominational Church	3906 Woodland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110
Civic and social associations	Kansas City Boys Choir	3200 Wayne Ave, Kansas City, MO 64111
Civic and social associations	Margarets Place	3501 Woodland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Neighborhood Associations	Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council	3700 Woodland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Community gardens	Dirt Beast Farm	4222 Highland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	3
	3
	3
Unites communities voluntarily	3

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Ivanhoe Southwest (Cont.)

Non-profits	Mid-City Towers II	3136 Flora Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Non-profits	ReDiscover's Woodland Office	3211 Woodland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Non-profits	AltCap	3200 Wayne Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Non-profits	Kansas City Mothers In Charge	3200 Wayne Ave #124, Kansas City, MO 64109
Non-profits	Habitat for Humanity of Kansas City (Administrative Office)	1423 Linwood Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64109
Non-profits	Sunlight Missionary Baptist Church - Food Distribution Center	4444 Woodland Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110

Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
	2
	2
	2
	2
	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**60**
Population Density (population/land area (m²))	**0.0018** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**33,333**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Ivanhoe Southeast

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Metropolitan Missionary Baptist	2310 E Linwood Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Linwood United Church	3151 Olive St, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses	2000 E 34th St, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Mount Washington Missionary Baptist Church	3551 Wabash Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	MT. SINAI BAPTIST CHURCH	3635 Brooklyn Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Greater Metropolitan Church of Christ	3735 Wabash Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Ark of Triumph Ministries	3700 Brooklyn Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Places of worship	Rock of Ages Baptist Church	3806 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64128
Places of worship	Centro Cristiano Fuente De Vida (Christian Center Fountain of Life)	3943 Brooklyn Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Prince of Peace Missionary Church	4301 Wabash Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Greater Metropolitian Church	4240 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Libraries	Kansas City Public Library: Lucile H. Bluford Branch	3050 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64128
Non-profits	Vernell's Pantry - Food Distribution Center	3634 Brooklyn Ave, Kansas City, MO 64109
Non-profits	Angels Encamped Foundation	4215 Euclid Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	2
Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**50**
Population Density (population/land area (m²))	**0.00015** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**333,333**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Oak Park Southwest

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Deeper Life In Christ Church	4425 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Rising Star Missionary Baptist	2701 E 43rd St, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Mt Ararat Baptist Church	4101 Agnes Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Greater Grace Temple Pentecostal Church	3900 Bellefontaine Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Blue Valley Missionary Baptist	3908 Agnes Ave, Kansas City, MO 64128
Places of worship	Mt Vernon EAJ Fellowship Hall	3911 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Mt Vernon Missionary Baptist	3935 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Neighborhood Associations	Oak Park Neighborhood Association	4435 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Public play grounds	Oak Park	4401 S Benton Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Libraries	Mt Vernon Library	3915 Prospect Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Non-profits	ISI Ministries	4219 Montgall Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
	4
Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	3
	3
Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**38**
Population Density (population/land area (m²))	**0.0019** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**20,000**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Oak Park Southeast

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Greater Mt Zion Baptist Church	4600 Cleveland Ave., Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	St Andrew United Methodist Church	4601 Benton Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church	4545 Benton Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64130
Places of worship	Allen St.John AME Church	4125 Benton Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64130
Non-profits	Beyond the Conviction	4042 Indiana Ave, Kansas City, MO 64110

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
	4
	4
	4
Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**18**
Population Density (population/land area (m^2))	**0.0002** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**90,000**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Vineyard Northwest

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Deliverance Temple Church	4441 Kensington Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Neighborhood Associations	Vineyard Neighborhood Association	4301 E 43rd St, Kansas City, MO 64130
Public play grounds	Kaboom! Playground	4401 Cleveland Ave., Kansas City, MO 64130
Membership sports and recreation clubs	Forever Dance	3832 E 43rd St, Kansas City, MO 64130
Community gardens	Global One Urban Farming	4409 Cypress Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Non-profits	Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City - Thornberry Unit	3831 E 43rd St, Kansas City, MO 64130

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	3
	3
	3
Unites communities voluntarily	3
Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**18**
Population Density (population/land area (m²))	**0.00017** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**105,882**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Vineyard

Search Term	Name	Address
Places of worship	Ebenezer AME Church	3808 Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64130
Schools	Genesis School	3958 Chelsea Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130
Schools	George Melcher Elementary	3800 E 44th St, Kansas City, MO 64130
Schools	George Washington Carver School	4600 Elmwood Ave, Kansas City, MO 64130

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
	4
	4
	4
Social Capital Factors Total:	**16**
Population Density (population/land area (m²))	**0.0014** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**11,429**

Neighborhood Social Capital Score – Vineyard Estates

Search Term	Name	Address
Civic and social associations	Hammerspace Community Workshop & Makerspace	5200 E 45th St, Kansas City, MO 64130
Labor organizations	Teamsters Local 41	4501 Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64130
Number of non-profits	Harvesters - The Community Food Network	3801 Topping Ave, Kansas City, MO 64129

Vacancy Density

Neighborhood	Social Capital Score	Vacancy Density (area vacant land/total land area)
Vineyard Estates	22,500	30.70%
Vineyard Northwest	117,647	30.46%
Ivanhoe Southeast	333,333	21.88%
Manheim Park	18,000	18.57%
Oak Park Southwest	20,000	17.94%
Ivanhoe Southwest	33,333	17.94%
Vineyard	11,429	14.64%
Oak Park Southeast	120,000	8.52%
South Hyde Park	11,500	3.46%

Social Capital Rationale	Score
Representing locations where individuals can interact and build complex relationships	4
Representing a location where (or vehicle for) community member interaction	3
Non-profits are more likely to ensure a "service is available in the community regardless of the economic viability of the enterprise"	2
Social Capital Factors Total:	**9**
Population Density (population/land area (m²))	**0.0004** ÷
Neighborhood Social Capital Score	**22,500**

Appendix B: Lot Selection and Scoring

Automatic Qualifiers for Lot Selection

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation
Can the parcel be acquired?	Owned by either the Kansas City Land Bank or by the Kansas City Missouri Homestead Authority (KCMHA)
Does the parcel pose a contamination hazard?	Not brownfields, past/present land use does not raise concerns for contamination
Has the city deemed the parcel to have little or no use?	In their criteria for vacant lot, is the lot in one of these categories?
Does the parcel have an existing structure?	No existing structures that would present difficulty when excavating.
Does the area around the parcel present obvious concerns for safety/stability?	Obvious problems on adjacent parcels such as guard dogs, drug activity, or fast-moving vehicles

Yes, No, or Unsure?

Sample of lot tracking system – Highlighted cells are disqualified from consideration

Parcel Number	Owner Name	Address	Land Use Code	Property Type
JA31340043802000000	Gregory Rupert O	<Null>		
JA31420171300000000	Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church	<Null>		
JA31410311600000000	Wharton Doris F	<Null>		
JA31420012600000000	Hoeft Aaron R & Christina C	<Null>		
JA31420171400000000	Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church	<Null>		
JA31420172100000000	Warren Willard F-Trustee &	3301 E 45th St		
JA31410231300000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3408 E 45th Ter	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31410231300000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3408 E 45th Ter	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31410230400000000	Robinson Arthur	3421 E 45th St		
JA31410231800000000	Anderson Cherika	3424 E 45th Ter		
JA31410231900000000	Anderson Cherika	3428 E 45th Ter		
JA31410232000000000	Anderson Cherika	3432 E 45th Ter		
JA31410063000000000	Cardenas Ignacio	3601 E 43rd St	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340210700000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3616 E 43RD ST	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31410311200000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3616 E 47th St	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31410311200000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3616 East 47 Terrace	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31410311300000000	Caspar Properties LLC	3618 E 47th St		
JA31410311400000000	Park Place Real Estates LLC	3620 E 47th St		
JA31410311500000000	Bonwell Geraldine	3625 E 46th St		
JA31410311700000000	Dial Ronald	3632 E 47th St		
JA31340080100000000	Pink Orchids LLC	3900 Bales Ave		
JA31340010100000000	55th Street Realty Group LLC	3900 Jackson Ave		
JA31410030200000000	Boys & Girls Clubs Of	3901 E 43rd St		
JA31410032700000000	Boys & Girls Clubs Of	3903 E 43rd St		
JA31340012400000000	Clark Mattie	3910 Jackson Ave		
JA31230062400000000	Stanley Derryl A & Dorothea M	3910 Kensington Ave		
JA31230072602000000	Alexander Rowena L	3912 Spruce Ave		
JA31340043700000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3913 Cleveland Ave LAND	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340043500000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3914 Mersington Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31230073100000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3916 Spruce Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340030900000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3917 Mersington Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31230062702000000	James Sharon	3917 Spruce Ave		
JA31340043900000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3919 Cleveland Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340012000000000	Collins Willie	3920 Jackson Ave		
JA31230073200000000	Kansas City MO Homesteading Authority	3921 Jackson Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31330012800000000	Tbour Alaeddin	3922 Indiana Ave		
JA31340012800000000	Collins Willie & Elloise	3922 Jackson Ave		
JA31230062100000000	Holden Todd & Gloria	3922 Kensington Ave		
JA31340031200000000	Bray Travis	3923 Mersington Ave		
JA31230072200000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3924 Spruce Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Improved
JA31340041400000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3925 Cleveland Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340041300000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3925 Cleveland Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340031300000000	Bray Travis	3925 Mersington Ave		
JA31340041500000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3927 Cleveland Ave	1111 - Single Family (Non-Mobile Home Park)	Residential Improved
JA31340011300000000	Nguyen Hue Thi	3929 Norton Ave		
JA31340042800000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3930 Mersington Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340021400000000	Adams Earline	3931 Myrtle Ave		
JA31230062800000000	Kansas City MO Homesteading Authority	3931 Spruce Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31330012400000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3932 Indiana Ave	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant
JA31340080600000000	Jones Lee Arthur & Arnetta	3935 Indiana Ave		
JA31340031700000000	Rogers Tony A & Alpha S	3935 Mersington Ave		
JA31340080700000000	Land Bank of Kansas City Missouri	3937 INDIANA AVE	9500 - Vacant Residential	Residential Vacant

Type	Zoned	Neighborhood	Potential	Market Valu	SQFT	Land Condition	Reason for Disqualification
	R-2.5				1452.074467		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				10594.31739		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5524.616166		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5541.555957		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				7921.790992		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				11871.64184		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	Side Yard	200	323.636319	Vacant lot or land - little or no use	Little to no use
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast			323.63917		
	R-2.5				6069.571647		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				6038.399552		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				6041.906646		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				6045.097805		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	<Null>	5350	11717.54	<Null>	Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	Side Yard	4300	8999.064097	Vacant lot or land - usable	
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast			4613.594288		
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	Side Yard	2600	4613.607083	Vacant lot or land - little or no use	Little to no use
	R-2.5				4559.988247		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				4636.617252		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5130.710837		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				16606.88171		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5188.035869		Privately Owned
	B1-1				7981.177053		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				6200.764637		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5545.705333		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				4133.79531		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5569.397396		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				2783.720247		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Side Yard	1750	3098.332292		
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	<Null>	2900	5143.1		
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Side Yard	5250	11126.34177		
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Side Yard	2050	3627.941875		
	R-2.5				5602.538651		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Side Yard	750	1342.989444		
	R-2.5				5517.614145		Privately Owned
KCMHA	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	<Null>	8600	27165		
	B3-2				4386.794059		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5524.03058		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				11138.07007		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				4646.159868		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Affordable Housing	13163	11095.93		
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Assemblage	2250	4021.623542		
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Assemblage	700	1217.805729		
	R-2.5				4777.623785		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	Affordable Housing	12727	4018.26		
	R-2.5				8227.189919		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest			4832.765511		
	R-2.5				5497.484983		Privately Owned
KCMHA	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	<Null>	5250	11183		
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	Side Yard	2450	4384.143056	Vacant lot or land - usable	Environmental Concern
	R-2.5				5221.227913		Privately Owned
	R-2.5				5418.084651		Privately Owned
Land Bank	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	Side Yard	3250	5780.92941	Vacant lot or land - usable	Environmental Concern

Individual Lot Scoring - Prior to Meeting w/ City Officials

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation
Is the land in close to proximity to known bussinesses/uses that induce crime?	Proximity to liquor stores, bars/clubs, gas stations, etc.
Does KC see potential for this lot?	
Is there moderate home occupancy?	60% or more of the homes surrounding the parcel are occupied
Is it adjacent to an already repurposed vacnt lot?	Having a already repurposed lot nearby could increase momentum.
Is urban greening welcomed?	Neighborhood plans incorporate urban greening, urban green space is a desired potential land use, existing green reuse
Does the parcel slope away from the street?	Parcels that slope from street could naturally collect street flow
Is the surrounding sidewalk intact and level?	Parcels without sidewalks, or with very uneven sidewalks, would require construction (a significant community cost)
Is there a fire hydrant present?	A fire hydrant is a potential water source
Is the parcel located directly adjacent to a park or existing recreation space?	Want to avoid spaces where a recreation need is already fulfilled
Is the parcel grade not significantly different from sidewalk grade?	Parcel on a hill that is positioned above street level; runoff from these parcels flows into streets

Yes (+1), No (-1), or Unsure (0)?
TOTAL =

Individual Lot Scoring - Revised After Meeting w/ City Officials

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation
Is the land in close to proximity to known bussinesses/uses that induce crime?	Proximity to liquor stores, bars/clubs, gas stations, etc.
Does KC see potential for this lot?	KCMO catergorizes vacant lots based on their potential uses/if they could potentially be used for programs the city has going on. This helps the lot selection fit in with the cities current plans.
Is it a corner lot?	Corner lots increase visibility and reduce concerns for safety
Is there moderate home occupancy?	60% or more of the homes surrounding the parcel are occupied
Is it adjacent to an already repurposed vacant lot?	Having a already repurposed lot nearby could increase momentum.
Does the parcel have a realitively flat slope (<5%)	Lots with a low slope are much more flexible when devloping them.
Is the parcel adjacent to a bus/public transit stop?	In this community, many of the residents depend on public transit. This increases access to any site interventions
Is the surrounding sidewalk intact and level?	Parcels without sidewalks, or with very uneven sidewalks, would require construction (a significant community cost)
Is the parcel located directly adjacent to a park or existing recreation space?	Want to avoid spaces where a recreation need is already fulfilled
Is the parcel grade not significantly different from sidewalk grade?	Parcel on a hill that is positioned above street level; runoff from these parcels flows into streets

Yes (+1), No (-1), or Unsure (0)?
TOTAL =

Scoring of Remaining lots - Sample of Full Data Set

Parcel Number	Address	Zoned	Neighborhood	Is the land in close to proximity to known bussinesses/uses that induce crime?	Does KC see potential for this lot?	Is it adjacent to an already repurposed vacant lot	Does the parcel slope have a low slope?
JA31410091500000000	4445 Indiana Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	-1
JA31410110100000000	4400 MONROE AVE	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31420151100000000	4452 College Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31340020500000000	4007 E 39th St	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31340030900000000	3917 Mersington Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31340140200000000	4001 Myrtle Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31520040500000000	4401 E 43rd St	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31520100100000000	4400 Elmwood Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31340090200000000	4001 INDIANA AVE	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31410071300000000	4347 Bales Av	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31520081100000000	4448 Kensington Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31340080900000000	3943 Indiana Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	-1	-1	1
JA31410061900000000	4342 Monroe Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31410082700000000	4312 Bales Av	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31410112600000000	4406 Monroe Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31410120900000000	4417 Monroe Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31410121000000000	4421 Monroe Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31420172000000000	4516 Indiana Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31230192800000000	4210 E 43rd St	B1-1	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31340020700000000	4003 E 39th St	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31340041400000000	3925 Cleveland Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31340041500000000	3927 Cleveland Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31340041900000000	3939 Cleveland Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31340043700000000	3913 Cleveland Ave LAND	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31410031200000000	4339 Mersington Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31410130400000000	4411 Cleveland Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31410130600000000	4417 Cleveland Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31410151300000000	4445 Myrtle Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31410161600000000	4450 Jackson Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	-1
JA31520030300000000	4507 E 43rd St	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31520080300000000	4305 E 44th St	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31520091400000000	4442 Cypress Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31410070600000000	4321 Bales	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	1
JA31340130200000000	4001 Mersington Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	1
JA31340202700000000	4112 Cleveland Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	1	-1	-1
JA31410050500000000	4309 Monroe Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	-1	-1	-1	1
JA31410050700000000	4317 Monroe Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	-1	-1	-1	1
JA31410050800000000	4321 Monroe Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	-1	-1	-1	1
JA31410052500000000	4316 Cleveland Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	-1	1	-1	-1
JA31410060600000000	4309 Askew Ave	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	-1	-1	-1
JA31340133400000000	4002 Myrtle Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31520051700000000	4338 Kensington Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	1
JA31230073100000000	3916 Spruce Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	1	-1	-1
JA31230193400000000	4232 Spruce Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	-1
JA31230194000000000	4210 Spruce Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	-1
JA31230194400000000	4136 Spruce Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	-1
JA31230194600000000	4128 Spruce Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	-1
JA31410081800000000	4340 BALES	R-2.5	Oak Park Southeast	1	-1	-1	-1
JA31230073200000000	3921 Jackson Ave	R-2.5	Vineyard Northwest	1	-1	-1	-1

Is the surrounding sidewalk intact and level?	Is the parcel located directly adjacent to a park or existing recreation space?	Is there a nearby bus stop?	Is there moderate home occupancy?	Is it a corner lot?	Total
1	1	1	1	1	5
1	1	-1	1	1	5
1	1	-1	1	1	5
1	1	1	1	-1	5
1	1	-1	1	1	5
1	1	-1	1	1	5
-1	1	1	1	1	5
1	1	-1	1	1	5
1	1	-1	1	1	5
1	1	-1	-1	1	3
1	1	1	-1	1	3
1	1	-1	1	1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
-1	1	1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	1	3
1	1	1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	1	1	-1	3
1	1	1	1	1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	1	1	3
1	1	-1	1	1	3
1	1	-1	1	-1	3
1	1	-1	-1	1	3
1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-3
1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
-1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
-1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
-1	-1	-1	1	-1	-3
1	-1	-1	1	-1	-3
1	-1	-1	1	-1	-3
1	-1	-1	1	-1	-3
1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3
-1	-1	-1	1	-1	-5

Scores ranging from 1 to -1

Appendix C: Precedent Studies

**For copyright reasons, photos have been removed.*

Precedent Name	Location	Temporary or Permanent
Lent Space	Hudson Square, New York City, NY	Temporary
Sunflower + Project	St. Louis, MO	Permanent
Chess Pocket Park	St. Louis, MO	Permanent
Bartokpark	Arnhem, the Netherlands	Permanent

Project Description/Achievements	Design Attributes	Photos	Type
"Provide a platform for citizens and interest groups to shape and transform the urban environment, through exhibitions, events and their own actions" (Lokman, 2017)	1.Movable planters with integrated seating act as a temporary tree nursery while creating 'rooms' for art installations. 2. Moveable sculptural fence		Public Art
Engage the community in reclaiming vacant land, provide a low-cost solution to soil contamination,sequester carbon and attract wildlife, educate the public on sustainability issues.	1. Rotating beds of sunflowers and winter wheat 2. Community made "sustainability flags"		Natural Landscape
Engage the community in reclaiming vacant land, create a positive, education-oriented gathering place in the community.	1. Permanent chess tables and benches 2. Native plantings		Performance and Gathering
Transform a former demolition site into a communal space, incorporate native species into the urban landscape, engage the community in management activities, integrate elements of play and art.	1. Art-based play climbing structure 2. Native planting 3. Seating		Public Art/Playground

Precedent Studies (Cont.)

Pleasant Park	Grand Rapids, MI	Permanent
Neighbors Building Brightmoor	Detroit, MI	Permanent
Oakland Avenue Artist Coalition	Detroit, MI	Permanent
103rd Street Community Garden	Manhattan, New York	Permanent
Creston Avenue Playground	Bronx. New York	Permanent

Prevent crime through environmental design, enhance community support,.devloped a parking lot into a neighborhood park	1. Natural design elements and play epquipment 2. Native plantings		Playground
Youth garden program generated $3,000 in produce sales,encourage youth to learn how to construct the plant beds, plant, maintain, harvest and market the products of their labor while practicing responsibility, ownership, hard work, patience, planning, and teamwork, create a network of previously vacant lots.	1. Edible playscape and flower lot 2. Orchard 3. Green house 4. Community garden beds 5. Water wall 6. Gathering place for children - hosts music performances and festivals 7. Permaculture garden		Community Garden
Put on the area's first healing festival, which engaged over 30 artist and youth members from the community and ultimately formed the coalition, work in tandem with green infrastucture and art	1. murals, art backdrops, transforming community artifacts to useful creations. 2. mini orchard that may even be a job opportunity once the trees are fully grown.		Public Art
Interest in the area surged following the Disney Company's partnerships with NYRP and the community in 2004 and 2011. In 2011, the community actively participated in shaping the garden's design by contributing their ideas.Collaborative design endeavors engaged SCAPE Landscape Architecture and KaBOOM!. The renovation unveiled a fresh Disney Junior inspired playground and garden.Generously sponsored by The Walt Disney Company Foundation, the entire renovation project unfolded.Presently, the garden boasts amenities such as a playground, basketball court, open lawn, and vegetable garden.A lively celebration marked the official reopening of the garden in September 2011.Raised bed enhancements were implemented in the garden during 2019 and 2020.	1. Performance space 2. lawn 3. playground 4. barbeque grill 5. basketball court 6. free book-share box		Community Garden/Performance and Gathering
Back in 2001, NYRP collaborated with members of the local community to transform an abandoned lot into a cozy park. This park featured a vibrant playscape courtesy of KaBOOM!, a national non-profit dedicated to establishing play areas for children.The garden is embellished with ornamental plantings along its front and sides, enhancing its visual appeal.Community picnic tables are available, promoting a sense of togetherness among residents.Throughout the park, benches are strategically placed, providing resting spots for parents and elderly neighbors alike.In 2020, the NYRP Operations team expanded the garden by incorporating raised beds, creating additional space for growing produce.	1. Playground 2. Ornamental Plantings 3. Benches 4. Raised planting beds 5. Picnic Tables		Playground

Precedent Studies (Cont.)

POPCourts	Austin, TX	Permanent
Cully Commons	Portland, OR	Permanent
Better Block in a Box	Nationwide	Temporary
MLK Food Park	Dallas, TX	Permanent

In Austin, the objective was to establish a distinct sense of place and identity for a community facing challenges in accessing public open areas. The team endeavored to convert an empty lot situated at the intersection of W. Chicago and N. Lockwood Avenues into a vibrant hub for various activities, communal gatherings, and commercial endeavors.	1. Basketball Court 2. Picnic Shelter 3. Public Art 4. Moveable Seating 5. Food Truck Parking		Athletic Court/Food Hub/Public Art
The Cully Community Garden, featuring landscape design by Jason King, received the prestigious 2014 Oregon Brownfields Award. This initiative involved transforming a vacant brownfield site near a capped landfill in Portland into a thriving community garden. The project engaged in a comprehensive public consultation process, collaborating closely with community members and a design team comprising middle school students from one of Portland's most diverse neighborhoods. Through this inclusive approach, the garden emerged as both aesthetically pleasing and highly productive, earning recognition with the Oregon Brownfields Award.	1. Planting Beds 2. Picnic Tables 3. Sheds 4. Screening Trellis 5. Micro-Orchard		Community Garden
Created by the Better Better Block Project, the better block in a box comes in a compact shipping container with all the tools nessecary to create an outdoor plaza.	1. Picnic Tables 2. Umbrellas 3. Decrorative Elements 4. Food Trucks 5. Food Truck Parking		Food Hub
The Better Block team collaborated with the City of Dallas Arts and Culture office, alongside The Real Estate Council (TREC), to realize the community's vision of a food park. Linda McMahon, President and CEO of TREC, has actively sought innovative solutions and investment prospects through TREC's Catalyst Project. Reflecting on the challenges faced during the pandemic and the resilience of small businesses, particularly in low-income and minority communities, Linda expresses optimism about the potential impact of this demonstration project. She believes that prioritizing small-scale initiatives focused on supporting local businesses can foster positive community outcomes, demonstrating that every neighborhood can thrive with access to essential amenities available elsewhere in Dallas.	1. shipping container storefronts 2. food trailers 3. Covered seating 4. Turf Patch w/ games 5. Raised pots/planters		Food Hub

Precedent Studies (Cont.)

Mix N' Match Meadow	Detroit, MI	Permanent
The American Riad	Detroit, MI	Permanent
Keep Growing Detroit Farm	Detroit, MI	Permanent
Outdoor Theatre	Detroit, MI	Permanent

This project seeks to beautify and add ecological benefits to a vacant lot in Detroit.	1. Hedge-lined boarders 2. Native Meadow Plantings		Natural Landscape
The Oakland Avenue Artist Coalition, Ghana ThinkTank, North End Woodward Community Organization, and Detroit Justice Center have established a collaboration with artist think tanks in Morocco, Indonesia, and Syria. Together, they aim to revitalize this corner using arts and culture, transforming it into a riad—a communal space featuring art and gardens within a central courtyard.	1. Traditional Moroccan Riad 2. Central, shared courtyard 3. Felxible seating options 4. Informational Signage		Public Art/Performance and Gathering
The Keep Growing Detroit Farm serves as the focal point for our collective efforts. Here, various initiatives converge: it's where half of the Garden Resource Program's transplants are nurtured, and where we cultivate the Motown Music garlic seed. Our farm serves as a hub for numerous workshops, providing a space for growers of all ages to refine their skills. Additionally, it's where Keep Growing Detroit (KGD) cultivates our share of Grown in Detroit produce and engages with food enthusiasts from Detroit and beyond. Located in the Eastern Market District of Detroit, the Keep Growing Detroit Farm offers a platform to explore the flavors, scents, and textures of fresh, seasonal, and diverse fruits and vegetables..	1. Raised planting beds 2. Garden plots 3. Greenhouse		Community Garden
Carrie Morris Arts Production (CMAP) fosters and champions performance art and creative exploration with an emphasis on inclusivity, intimacy, and community engagement. Since 2012, CMAP has been dedicated to providing opportunities for artists who are often marginalized within the arts community, as well as supporting those who lack access to traditional funding sources. Their mission extends beyond the artistic realm, striving to involve local residents in the rejuvenation of their neighborhood. Through collaboration with community groups, neighbors, and non-arts organizations, CMAP creates performances that resonate deeply with the community they serve. Using the Working with Lots grant, CMAP plans to implement the Mounds of Fun Lot Design. This installation is a part of CMAP's broader initiative to establish an outdoor amphitheater, a welcoming public green space, and a children's playscape across 12 vacant lots, benefiting the West Campau/Banglatown neighborhood.	1. Ampitheater		Performance and Gathering

Precedent Studies (Cont.)

Hamilton Rainscape Learning Lab	Detroit, MI	Permanent
Westmoreland Park	Portland, OR	Permanent
Southside Blooms	Chicago, IL	Permanent
Playgrounnds for Useful Knowledge	Philadelphia, PA	Temporary
Beer Treehouse	Sacramento, CA	Permanent

The Hamilton Rainscape project originated from community initiatives aimed at tackling blight and stormwater challenges. Through a collaborative community engagement process, residents and designers worked closely together to determine the project's location and design elements. The development of the project involved ongoing interaction between residents, ECN staff, and InSite Design Studio. Together, they envisioned a captivating open space that not only serves as a gathering place but also effectively redirects stormwater from the streets into rain gardens. Additionally, the Rainscape serves as an educational resource for the community, highlighting sustainable stormwater management practices.	1. Rain garden plantings 2. Informational signage 3. Gathering space		Natural Landscape/Performance and Gathering
In Southeast Portland, a beloved park undergoes enhancements with the restoration of Crystal Springs Creek and the addition of a new play area designed to encourage children to explore the natural surroundings. This nature play area, a pioneering initiative in Portland, features a diverse array of elements including logs, boulders, sand, water features, vegetation, and terrain variations. It also offers opportunities for imaginative play and creativity with "loose parts" like branches, sticks, and pinecones, fostering a deeper connection with nature.	1. Natural play equipment (climbing boulders, logs, etc.)		Playground
Blooms operates as a farm-to-vase florist, offering distinctive and trend-setting floral arrangements. Our commitment remains unwaveringly focused on both environmental sustainability and community betterment. Our flowers are cultivated in environments that actively sequester carbon, surpassing mere emission reduction efforts. Each flower acquisition from Southside Blooms fosters employment opportunities for at-risk youth, transforms vacant lots into secure and fruitful	1. Native plantings		Natural Landscape
occupied a vacant lot in South Philly, providing a space for the exchange of both collective and individual knowledge. The LandHealth Institute partnered with Restored Spaces and CohStra to reimagine and repurpose litter and debris found on the lot as cultural artifacts, design elements, and educational resources. Through a series of	1. Flexible seating		Performance and Gathering
This aims to be a placemaking resource for all communities. Their recent projects include constructing outdoor spaces and seating areas on vacant lots, like this beer treehouse.	1. Various seating options (picnic, hammock, etc.) 2. Biergarten 3. Decorative elements		Food Hub

Precedent Studies (Cont.)

Prarie Gardens	Kalamazoo, MI	Temporary
Marquette Community Art	Marquette, MI	Permanent
StationSoccer	Atlanta, GA	Permanent
Lots of Love	Belleville, IL	Temporary
CommunityCare	Pittsburgh, PA	Permanent

The Kalamazoo County Land Bank is currently engaged in projects focused on restoring native plants to specific sites. These plantings serve the dual purpose of stabilizing lots as they await redevelopment.	1. Native plantings		Natural Landscape
The Marquette County Land Bank has transformed two blighted lots into a fresh art park, featuring weather-resistant display frames designed to exhibit artwork crafted by local youth.	1. Art frames		Public Art
StationSoccer has developed into a community initiative, fostering connections among youth and adults in safe transit-adjacent environments. This endeavor promotes social equity, inclusion, life skills development, and other valuable benefits, all while celebrating the beloved sport of soccer.	1. Soccer fields 2. Benches 3. Sports fencing		Athletic Court
HeartLand Conservancy is converting vacant lots to native habitats. Working on government-owned properties instead of purchasing lots allows them to operate without significant resource burdens.	1. Native plantings		Natural Landscape
Grounded collaborated with participants of the Homewood program to develop the CommunityCare initiative, which integrates meaningful financial incentives to effectively offset the time commitment required for stewardship activities. The program operates on a seasonal basis, with maintenance tasks conducted from May to October, and training and educational sessions held during the winter and spring months. Through feedback gathered from multiple cohorts of stewards, the program has been refined: stewards now tend to more prominently located "gateway" lots in their communities, carry business cards to recruit future stewards, and mark adopted spaces with signs, showcasing their pride in their work while discouraging littering. CommunityCare varies in each community, tailored to the needs of participants and prioritized activities aligned with neighborhood goals and plans. In Homewood, community stewards are highly visible and actively engaged in their neighborhood. They undertake maintenance tasks to enhance pedestrian walkways and report instances of illegal dumping. In essence, they serve as champions of hypervacancy reduction, addressing the underlying causes of systemic disinvestment.	1. Mowed lawns/manicured vegetation		Clean and Green

Precedent Studies (Cont.)

The Alley Project	Detroit, MI	Permanent
Lafayette Greens	Detroit, MI	Permanent

The Alley Project (TAP) is a network of places and programs along the alley developed to facilitate creative processes, positive youth-adult partnerships, and community building. TAP includes a transformed vacant corner lot into a community-designed park for informal gatherings, recreation and formal programming.	1. Plaza and market space 2. Public art 3. Gathering rooms		Performance and Gathering/Public Art
Lafayette Greens stands as an urban oasis nestled in downtown Detroit, adjacent to the renowned Coney Islands and facing the exquisite Westin Book Cadillac Hotel. This green space and urban garden offer a tranquil retreat for visitors, city employees, and local residents alike. Throughout the summer, individuals can unwind amidst the lush surroundings, observing the growth of vegetables and flowers while partaking in seasonal programming. The Greening cultivates a variety of chemical-free fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers annually, enriching the community with its vibrant harvests.	1. Raised Planting Beds 2. Orachard Trees 3. Storage Sheds 4. Moveable seating		Community Garden/Performance and Gathering

Appendix D: IRB Exemption Letters

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | University Research Compliance Office

TO: Sara Hadavi
Landscape Archit & Comm Plan

Proposal Number: IRB-11972

FROM: Lisa Rubin, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 12/13/2023

RE: Proposal Entitled, "Cultivating Social Capital on Kansas City's Vacant Lots."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written – and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, **45 CFR §104(d), category:Exempt Category 2 Subsection ii.**

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.

Electronically signed by Lisa Rubin on 12/13/2023 3:25 PM ET

203 Fairchild Hall, Manhattan, KS 66502 | (785) 532-3224 | fax: (785) 532-3278

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | University Research Compliance Office

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203 Fairchild Hall, Manhattan, KS 66502 | (785) 532-3224 | fax: (785) 532-3278

Appendix E: City Official Interviews

Interview Procedure - City Officials

Interview Procedure – City Officials (Conducted online via Zoom)

Verbal Informed Consent Statement

[Prior to the commencement of the semi-structured interview, the city officials will have the informed consent statement read to them by the graduate student researcher (Melody Holland) and will have the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions].

Hello and thank you for participating in today's interview. My name is Melody Holland, and I am a Landscape Architecture graduate student from Kansas State University and my masters project research aims to explore how the formation of social bonds are impacted by high rates of urban vacancy.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. You are free to decline to answer any question that you choose and may drop out at any time. There are no incorrect answers. This discussion is expected to last 90 minutes and will be audio recorded and transcribed following our discussion. Your responses will not be used in future research and will not be used for profit. Audio will be deleted once transcribed and only be accessible to the graduate student researcher (myself). During this discussion you will be asked to answer a series of questions. These questions will primarily be centered around your experiences working with the neighborhoods of focus in the study, policies affecting the development of vacant lots, and current programs/resources in place to manage vacancy in Kansas City. Following this, I will present you with a selection criteria being used in my research and ask for your feedback.

Thank you again for your participation and I am excited to hear your input regarding this topic! If you have any questions about this study, please contact:

Melody Holland

Graduate Student at Kansas State University

melodyh01@ksu.edu

Dr. Sara Hadavi

Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at Kansas State University

sarahadavi@ksu.edu

Dr. Lisa Rubin

IRB Chair at Kansas State University

Interview Questions

Prior to the questions, participants will be shown a context map to align themselves with the study area.

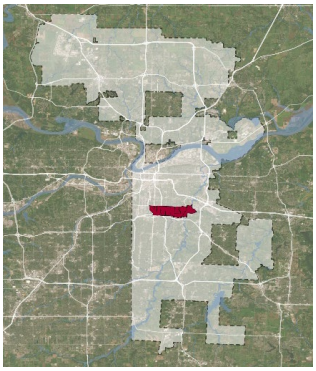


Figure 1: Study area in context of Kansas City, MO

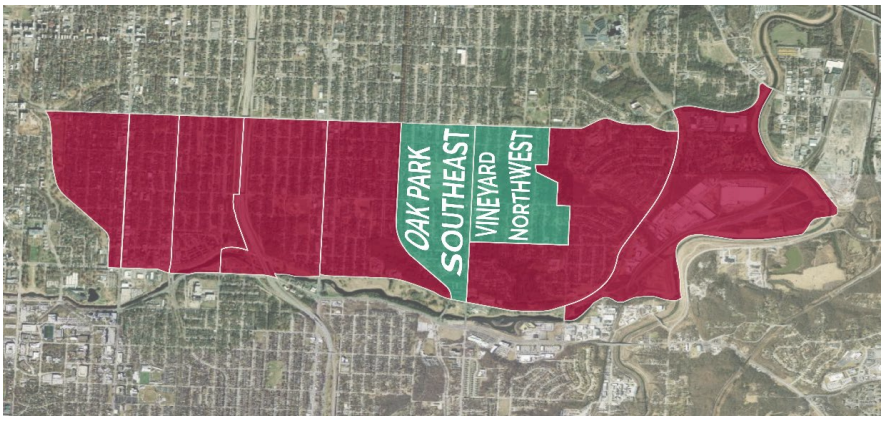


Figure 2: Neighborhoods of focus

Feasibility

1. Will you all describe past experiences working in/with the selected neighborhoods (Oak Park Southeast and Vineyard Northwest)?
2. What are the biggest challenges you have experienced while trying to complete work or plan for these neighborhood?
    a. What have you taken away from these experiences? What do you wish you knew before going into these projects?
3. What bureaucratic or local practices are in place when dealing with vacant lots?

   a. Who can purchase them? Are they sold at market value or are there programs to reduce the cost?
   b. Are there any restrictions when developing them?
   c. How regulated are zoning practices in these neighborhoods? What uses are restricted? What uses are encouraged?
   d. Are they allowed to be developed for public use? If not, are there loopholes around this?
4. What would the process of city approval be like for repurposing vacant lots?
   a. What could cause hiccups in the process?

Support

1. How is distribution of city funds determined?
   a. Where are the city's current investments (especially in parks and rec)?
   b. How involved is the public?
2. What avenues could neighborhood associations/residents take to gain support from the city?
   a. How involved have they been in the past?
3. How much support can other local organizations provide?
4. What is the community's best route to success?
   a. What things could get in the way of tackling this problem?

The Future of the Community

1. Do any of your divisions have any future you can share for the future development of these neighborhoods?
   a. What went into these plans? What is the reason behind them?
2. What are, in the broader sense, the future goals for these neighborhoods?
3. In an ideal world, what are the best outcomes for these neighborhoods?

Presentation of Lot Selection

At this point, the participants will be presented with the following images. These images depict the criteria used for lot selection that was implemented by the graduate student researcher, and the resulting lot selection. At this time, participants will be briefed on the lot selection process, and asked to reflect on its strengths, its weaknesses, and how city regulations and plans could be factored into it. They will also be given the opportunity to give any additional feedback.

Selection Criteria

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation	Yes, No, or Unsure?
Can the parcel be acquired?	Owned by either the Kansas City Land Bank or by the Kansas City Missouri Homestead Authority (KCMHA)	
Does the parcel pose a contamination hazard?	Not brownfields, past/present land use does not raise concerns for contamination	
Has the city deemed the parcel to have little or no use?	In their criteria for vacant lot, is the lot in one of these categories?	
Does the parcel have an existing structure?	No existing structures that would present difficulty when excavating.	
Does the area around the parcel present obvious concerns for safety/stability?	Obvious problems on adjacent parcels such as guard dogs, drug activity, or fast-moving vehicles	

Figure 3: Initial lot selection criteria

Question	Potential Indicators/Explanation	Yes (+1), No (-1), or Unsure (0)?	Total
Is the land in close to proximity to known bussinesses/uses that induce crime?	Proximity to liquor stores, bars/clubs, gas stations, etc.		_ x 2 _
Does KC see potential for this lot?			_ x 2 = _
Is there moderate home occupancy?	60% or more of the homes surrounding the parcel are occupied		_ x 1.5 = _
Is it adjacent to an already repurposed vacnt lot?	Having a already repurposed lot nearby could increase momentum.		_ x 1 = _
Is urban greening welcomed?	Neighborhood plans incorporate urban greening, urban green space is a desired potential land use, existing green reuse		_ x 0.5 = _
Does the parcel slope away from the street?	Parcels that slope from street could naturally collect street flow		_ x 0.5 = _
Is the surrounding sidewalk intact and level?	Parcels without sidewalks, or with very uneven sidewalks, would require construction (a significant community cost)		_ x 1 = _
Is there a fire hydrant present?	A fire hydrant is a potential water source		_ x 0.5 = _
Is the parcel located directly adjacent to a park or existing recreation space?	Want to avoid spaces where a recreation need is already fulfilled		_ x 1.5 = _
Is the parcel grade not significantly different from sidewalk grade?	Parcel on a hill that is positioned above street level; runoff from these parcels flows into streets		_ x 0.5 = _
		TOTAL =	

Figure 4: Detailed lot selection criteria

Site Selection Progress

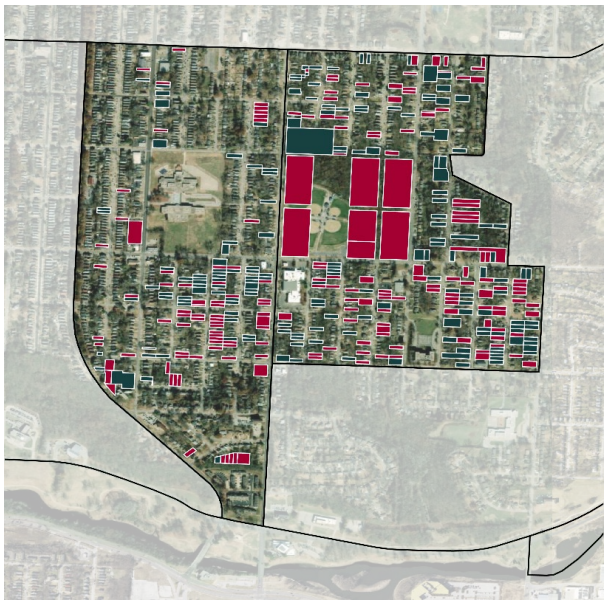


Figure 5: Current lot selection progress - those in red have been removed from consideration while those in green have been deemed fit for repurposing

Debrief

Once the interview is complete, the city officials will receive a PDF copy of the debrief via e-mail.

Debriefing Statement

Hello, and thank you once again for participating in the interview process. As previously mentioned, the research aims to explore the connections between social bonds and urban vacancy, while also devising design solutions to enhance social bonds in areas affected by urban vacancy. Your input holds immense value and will significantly contribute to the study's outcomes. The insights you provided have deepened understanding of the factors and policies influencing development in Kansas City, informing adjustments to site selection and proposed design interventions.

To reiterate, your responses will not be attached to your names and will not be utilized in any additional studies. If you have any questions or concerns about the study or would like to receive the results upon completion, please feel free to reach out to:

Melody Holland

Graduate Student at Kansas State University

melodyh01@ksu.edu

Dr. Sara Hadavi

Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at Kansas State University

sarahadavi@ksu.edu

Dr. Lisa Rubin

IRB Chair at Kansas State University

comply@ksu.edu

Thank you all for your participation!

Spreadsheet A Interview Summary - City Officials

Question	Participant 1
Will you all describe past experiences working in/with the selected neighborhoods (Oak Park Southeast and Vineyard Northwest)?	1. The speaker introduces the project they're working on, called Prospectus, funded by the federal transit administration. 2. The project focuses on land use and transportation planning along Prospect corridor from 75th to 12th street. 3. It involves neighborhoods in the 3rd and 5th districts of Kansas City, with the speaker being the 3rd district planner. 4. They've participated in meetings with neighborhood leaders along the corridor. 5. Specific issues in Vineyard neighborhood include trash pickup due to vacant lots. 6. Vineyard requested city help with trash pickup, involving various city departments like public works, city manager, planning department, and housing. 7. CCED (Central City Economic Development), funded by a one-eighth cent sales tax approved by Kansas City citizens. CCED funds support projects like affordable housing and infill development within its boundary area, including the project area discussed.
What are the biggest challenges you have experienced while trying to complete work or plan for these neighborhood?	1. The speaker identifies the biggest challenge for neighborhoods in the area as residents feeling disenfranchised and disconnected from adequate funding for city services and new development. 2. They highlight the significance of the CCED sales tax, which provides designated funding for projects in the area. 3. Another challenge mentioned is the presence of an older population in some neighborhoods, requiring infrastructure improvements for sidewalks, transit, and housing renovations. 4. Specific mention is made of Vineyard and Oak Park neighborhoods being well-organized, but facing challenges in comparison to other neighborhoods like Ivanhoe, which may receive more funding. 5. There's a tendency for residents to compare their neighborhood's resources and funding with others in the area.
What bureaucratic or local practices are in place when dealing with vacant lots?	1. The speaker discusses an ordinance aimed at simplifying the building permit process, particularly for affordable housing projects, with expedited permits for basic plans. 2. They mention challenges related to vacant lots in the area, including issues with unclear ownership and zoning restrictions. 3. Efforts to repurpose vacant lots for infill development, particularly for affordable housing, are highlighted, referencing Councilwoman [name] 522 plan. 4. Challenges related to zoning and understanding development regulations are discussed, with a focus on the need for public education on zoning and development processes. 5. Different categories of vacant lot ownership are outlined, including private individuals, homestead authority, city-owned lots, and absentee owners speculating on property. 6. Code enforcement procedures for addressing violations on vacant lots are explained, operating on a complaint basis through 311 services. 7. Zoning practices in the neighborhood are described as mainly residential, with some areas zoned for mixed-use development along arterial streets. Street corners are also often zoned differently, and can be rezoned.
What would the process of city approval be like for repurposing vacant lots?	1. The speaker describes the process individuals go through when they want to develop a property in the city. 2. The initial step is the Adapt Meeting, or Development Assistance Team meeting, where the person discusses their project idea with a team of representatives from different city departments, including planning, water, parks, public works, police, and fire departments. 3.The purpose of this meeting is to provide initial recommendations and guidance to the individual. 4. If the project progresses, the next step is a Pre-Application Meeting, where the person meets with the same or a smaller group of representatives to discuss their project in more detail, including zoning regulations and development requirements. 5. The individual submits their plans to CompassKC, a part of the permit process, which may involve rezoning, submitting a development plan, or other administrative processes depending on the nature of the project. 6. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding and complying with the city's regulations and processes before starting any development project.
How is distribution of city funds determined? | What avenues could neighborhood associations/residents take to gain support from the city? | What is the community's best route to success?	1. City Planning and Development primarily focuses on planning initiatives rather than construction projects or infill development. 2. They work with neighborhood groups to determine their needs and preferences, which inform planning initiatives and create plans for the future development of neighborhoods. 3. Funding for development projects often involves layering various sources, including CCED funding, PIAC funding, private funding, MHDC funding for affordable housing, and tax credit funding. 4. More experienced developers may be adept at navigating the complexities of securing multiple layers of funding, while smaller developers may focus on securing specific types of funding. 5. Planning Sustainable Places grants, funded by the Mid America Regional Council, support planning initiatives such as streetscape plans and overlay districts, which help lay the groundwork for future development projects.

Participant 2	Participant 3
1. The speaker discusses projects within the housing department, mentioning they have several projects in specific and surrounding areas. 2. They offer to provide links to reports and information detailing the various projects. 3. CCED (Central City Economic Development) is highlighted as a significant program supporting projects in the area. 4. Various agencies and programs like the housing trust fund, HOME, and CCDE are mentioned as supporting projects. 5. There's an emphasis on affordable housing, aligning with the goal of reaching 10,000 affordable housing units in the Kansas City metro area by 2027. 6. Efforts to acquire unused lots for development or redevelopment through partnerships with the land bank or individuals applying for land bank properties are mentioned.	1. Various improvements have been made to these parks over the years, focusing on playgrounds, walking trails, and overall maintenance. 2. These parks are part of the Quality of Life Investment District, aiming to provide a higher level of maintenance and investment. 3. Discussion about neighborhood transitions and the need for representation in neighborhood associations. 4. Projects like the Brush Creek Cultural Heritage Trail highlight local civil rights contributions. 5. Investments in walkability, such as trails along Brush Creek and efforts to increase connectivity in areas like Vineyard Park. 6. Mention of a HUD grant for park improvement to mitigate the effects of highway construction dividing neighborhoods, specifically mentioning the Bruce R. Watkins Connecting Park.
1. The speaker identifies COVID-19 as a significant challenge, affecting economic development and necessitating adjustments to plans moving forward. 2. They highlight difficulties in attracting developers to the East side and preparing sites for development, including title clearance and environmental reviews. 3. Challenges related to limited budgets and time constraints are mentioned, with a focus on site preparation and development opportunities, specifically contamination. 4. Education of developers about city processes and procedures is emphasized as crucial for successful project completion. 5. Issues with aligning different funding sources and managing statutory limits are discussed, illustrating potential delays and complications in the development process.	1. The speaker discusses how the neighborhood is physically divided by highways and natural barriers, creating a sense of isolation. 2. They mention a decline in the area due to the departure of industries and suburban growth, leading to challenges in attracting residents. 3. The housing stock, primarily post-World War II range-style houses, is described as not attractive enough to draw people back to the area. 4. Funding for parks in the area comes from either taxes or grants, and competition for funding within Council District 3, where the area is located, is highlighted as a challenge. 5. Despite challenges, there's optimism about momentum for development along Brush Creek and Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard potentially spreading to the area.
. 1. They mention efforts to increase efficiency in preparing vacant lots for development, including initiatives to pre-approve plans for affordable housing. 2. The city manager's directive to pre-approve drawings and plans for affordable housing aims to streamline the development process, provided that the site and title are clear. 3. Plans involve partnering with developers to expedite the development of affordable housing projects on residential lots.	1. The speaker addresses a question regarding the potential use of residential lots for park purposes, indicating that there is generally not much interest in converting residential lots into parks. 2. They mention that residential lots are typically considered for uses like playgrounds or tot lots rather than being converted into standalone parks. 3. Existing parks are prioritized for expansion rather than adding new properties, due to the challenge of maintaining the city's current park acreage with existing funding. 4. They note the presence of watersheds in the area, which divide up neighborhoods and may influence development considerations. Water Services has been involved in projects to manage water runoff before it reaches the creek, with Andy Shively mentioned as someone to contact for further information.
	1. The speaker highlights that park property is protected by a charter, making it challenging to sell or repurpose park land. 2. Any proposal to sell park land would need to be approved by both the public and city council. The process involves a vote of the public specific to the lot in question, followed by approval from the city council and the park board. 3. This process is in place to prevent the decimation of the park system and ensures that any decision regarding park land is carefully considered and approved by the community and relevant authorities. 4. The speaker acknowledges that this process can be time-consuming and challenging, especially if there is a desire to repurpose park land for other uses.
1. The funding process typically begins with a Request for Proposals (RFP) process, where community meetings and workshops are held to provide detailed information about the available funds, their potential uses, and how to apply. 2. However, there may be steps missing in the process, particularly in ensuring that the RFPs are detailed enough and that workshops adequately cover all necessary information, including contracting procedures and expectations. 3. It's crucial for the right people to attend these workshops to receive the information needed for successful application and project implementation. 4. The funding allocation process involves grading scales, internal staff recommendations to boards, and ultimately, approval by the city council. The council has the final determination and can adjust recommendations or reallocate funds as needed. 5. The specific details and procedures of the funding process vary depending on the funding source and program requirements.	1. Parks primarily receive funding from three sources: local sales tax revenue, grants, and general obligation bonds (geo bonds). 2. The sales tax revenue is collected and divided evenly among the six council districts, with funds competed for by various city departments like public works, parks, water, and city planning. 3. Each council district typically has around 60 parks, and the funding received, usually ranging from $1 to $2 million per district, may not be sufficient for significant capital improvements, which can cost anywhere from $300,000 to $2 million per project. 4. Grant projects require a local match, and the available grant money is often limited and tied up in different funding programs. Examples include federal highway administration funds for trails, HUD projects, and National Park Service grants. 5. Securing funding often involves project development, advocacy from elected officials, and investment in planning efforts to pursue grants. 6. Recently, the city passed an $80 million geo bond program, with $60 million allocated to be split between the six council districts, providing each district with $10 million to invest in various projects, including parks.

Spreadsheet A Interview Summary - City Officials (Cont.)

Do any of your divisions have any future you can share for the future development of these neighborhoods?	1. The comprehensive plan, known as the KC Spirit Playbook, is a long-term plan for the entire city, outlining development goals and recommendations for the next 20 to 30 years. It provides guidance on future development in all neighborhoods, including the ones in question. 2. City council also approves a plan that sets the direction for the city's development, which likely includes considerations for future neighborhood development. 3. Area plans, such as the Heart of the City Area Plan for the specific neighborhood, offer detailed recommendations for housing, land use, transportation, and recreational amenities based on input from neighborhood groups and stakeholders. 4. The planning department relies on these plans when evaluating proposed developments to ensure they align with the community's vision and goals. 5. Neighborhood-specific plans, if available, provide additional detail and goals for future development within the neighborhood. 6. While there may not be specific construction projects identified for the neighborhood at the moment, there are ongoing initiatives like the Prospectus Grant Project that may impact the area's development.
What are, in the broader sense, the future goals for these neighborhoods? | In an ideal world, what are the best outcomes for these neighborhoods?	1. Effective communication is key to fostering successful neighborhoods. This includes not only communication within the neighborhood itself but also reaching out to city council members and various departments within the city. By actively engaging with local authorities and resources, neighborhoods can address concerns, advocate for improvements, and work towards positive outcomes.
What else would you like to share?	In the Northeast area, neighborhoods like Likens have taken proactive measures to address vacant land issues. They've worked with their local leaders to control certain lots, ensuring that any potential buyers must go through the neighborhood organization. Additionally, they've implemented strategies like Request for Proposals (RFPs), where developers are chosen to build houses on these lots, leading to increased home ownership and revitalization of the neighborhood. This approach could serve as inspiration for other communities facing similar challenges.

1. The department's website provides comprehensive information about their plans and initiatives related to housing and community development. Relevant reports and documents, such as the HUD Consolidated Plan and the Vision for Housing Report, are accessible on the website. 3. These reports outline actionable items and goals, including strengthening relationships with officials, addressing barriers to housing, securing rental housing, and reducing evictions. 4. Specific goals include creating 10,000 new housing units by 2027, preserving affordable housing, addressing emergency and transitional housing needs, and repurposing vacant lots. 5. The website aims to be community-friendly, providing resources and documentation to address the questions and concerns of residents effectively.	1. The Parks Department is finalizing its strategic master plan for the entire park system. 2. They conducted a mail-out survey, public meetings, and utilized social pinpoint to gather input from residents. 3. While these efforts didn't specifically focus on the areas of interest, the Center for Neighborhoods developed park master plans for individual parks. 4. Oak Park has received significant funding for capital projects in recent years, with Pat Clark leading the efforts to secure funding. 5. There is momentum for the Cultural Heritage Trail project in the Brush Creek area, which is located in the southern portion of the area of interest.
1.Goalpost always moving 2. Importance of knowing points of contacts 3. Emphasizes the need for accurate information 4. People fail to make connections for needed information 5. City environment can have high turnover 6. Encourages reaching out and making connections 7. Continuity is crucial for understanding development	1. Encourages gathering feedback from all types of communicators 2. Highlights the importance of including quieter voices in the conversation 3. Acknowledges that quieter individuals may have valuable insights 4. Suggests finding ways to engage those who may not feel comfortable speaking up 5. Emphasizes the value of diverse perspectives in reporting

Spreadsheet B - Future Plans and Goals

Primary Themes	Goal 1	Goal 2
Affordable Housing	The speaker discusses projects within the housing department, mentioning they have several projects in specific and surrounding areas. There's an emphasis on affordable housing, aligning with the goal of reaching 10,000 affordable housing units in the Kansas City metro area by 2027.	Efforts to acquire unused lots for development or redevelopment through partnerships with the land bank or individuals applying for land bank properties are mentioned.
Parks and infrastructure	Various improvements have been made to these parks over the years, focusing on playgrounds, walking trails, and overall maintenance. These parks are part of the Quality-of-Life Investment District, aiming to provide a higher level of maintenance and investment. Projects like the Brush Creek Cultural Heritage Trail highlight local civil rights contributions	Investments in walkability, such as trails along Brush Creek and efforts to increase connectivity in areas like Vineyard Park.
Simplifying Processes	The speaker discusses an ordinance aimed at simplifying the building permit process, particularly for affordable housing projects, with expedited permits for basic plans. Efforts to repurpose vacant lots for infill development, particularly for affordable housing, are highlighted, referencing Councilwoman [name] 522 plan.	They mention efforts to increase efficiency in preparing vacant lots for development, including initiatives to pre-approve plans for affordable housing. The city manager's directive to pre-approve drawings and plans for affordable housing aims to streamline the development process, provided that the site and title are clear. Plans involve partnering with developers to expedite the development of affordable housing projects on residential lots.
Comprehensive Plans	The comprehensive plan, known as the KC Spirit Playbook, is a long-term plan for the entire city, outlining development goals and recommendations for the next 20 to 30 years. It provides guidance on future development in all neighborhoods, including the ones in question. City council also approves a plan that sets the direction for the city's development, which likely includes considerations for future neighborhood development. Area plans, such as the Heart of the City Area Plan for the specific neighborhood, offer detailed recommendations for housing, land use, transportation, and recreational amenities based on input from neighborhood groups and stakeholders. The planning department relies on these plans when evaluating proposed developments to ensure they align with the community's vision and goals. Neighborhood-specific plans, if available, provide additional detail and goals for future development within the neighborhood. While there may not be specific construction projects identified for the neighborhood at the moment, there are ongoing initiatives like the Prospectus Grant Project that may impact the area's development.	The department's website provides comprehensive information about their plans and initiatives related to housing and community development. Relevant reports and documents, such as the HUD Consolidated Plan and the Vision for Housing Report, are accessible on the website. These reports outline actionable items and goals, including strengthening relationships with officials, addressing barriers to housing, securing rental housing, and reducing evictions. Specific goals include creating 10,000 new housing units by 2027, preserving affordable housing, addressing emergency and transitional housing needs, and repurposing vacant lots. The website aims to be community-friendly, providing resources and documentation to address the questions and concerns of residents effectively.

Goal 3	Goal 4
The department's website provides comprehensive information about their plans and initiatives related to housing and community development. Relevant reports and documents, such as the HUD Consolidated Plan and the Vision for Housing Report, are accessible on the website. These reports outline actionable items and goals, including strengthening relationships with officials, addressing barriers to housing, securing rental housing, and reducing evictions. Specific goals include creating 10,000 new housing units by 2027, preserving affordable housing, addressing emergency and transitional housing needs, and repurposing vacant lots. The website aims to be community-friendly, providing resources and documentation to address the questions and concerns of residents effectively.	
Recently, the city passed an $80 million geo bond program, with $60 million allocated to be split between the six council districts, providing each district with $10 million to invest in various projects, including parks.	The Parks Department is finalizing its strategic master plan for the entire park system. They conducted a mail-out survey, public meetings, and utilized social pinpoint to gather input from residents. While these efforts didn't specifically focus on the areas of interest, the Center for Neighborhoods developed park master plans for individual parks. Oak Park has received significant funding for capital projects in recent years, with Pat Clark leading the efforts to secure funding. There is momentum for the Cultural Heritage Trail project in the Brush Creek area, which is located in the southern portion of the area of interest.

Spreadsheet C - Challenges

Primary Themes	Challenge 1	Challenge 2
Infrastructure and Neighborhood Challenges	The presence of an older population in some neighborhoods, requiring infrastructure improvements for sidewalks, transit, and housing renovations.	Specific mention is made of Vineyard and Oak Park neighborhoods being well-organized, but facing challenges in comparison to other neighborhoods like Ivanhoe, which may receive more funding.
Development Process and Regulations	The speaker identifies COVID-19 as a significant challenge, affecting economic development and necessitating adjustments to plans moving forward.	Challenges related to limited budgets and time constraints are mentioned, with a focus on site preparation and development opportunities, specifically contamination. Issues with aligning different funding sources and managing statutory limits are discussed, illustrating potential delays and complications in the development process.
Park Funding and Management	Funding for parks in the area comes from either taxes or grants, and competition for funding within Council District 3, where the area is located, is highlighted as a challenge.Existing parks are prioritized for expansion rather than adding new properties, due to the challenge of maintaining the city's current park acreage with existing funding.	Park property is protected by a charter, making it challenging to sell or repurpose park land. Any proposal to sell park land would need to be approved by both the public and city council. The process involves a vote of the public specific to the lot in question, followed by approval from the city council and the park board. This process is in place to prevent the decimation of the park system and ensures that any decision regarding park land is carefully considered and approved by the community and relevant authorities.
Grant Funding Challenges	Grant projects require a local match, and the available grant money is often limited and tied up in different funding programs. Examples include federal highway administration funds for trails, HUD projects, and National Park Service grants.	
Process and Personal Challenges	Goalpost always moving	People fail to make connections for needed information

Challenge 3	Challenge 4
The speaker discusses how the neighborhood is physically divided by highways and natural barriers, creating a sense of isolation.	They mention a decline in the area due to the departure of industries and suburban growth, leading to challenges in attracting residents. The housing stock, primarily post-World War II range-style houses, is described as not attractive enough to draw people back to the area.
Education of developers about city processes and procedures is emphasized as crucial for successful project completion.	Challenges related to zoning and understanding development regulations are discussed, with a focus on the need for public education on zoning and development processes.
Each council district typically has around 60 parks, and the funding received, usually ranging from $1 to $2 million per district, may not be sufficient for significant capital improvements, which can cost anywhere from $300,000 to $2 million per project.	
City environment can have high turnover	

Spreadsheet D - Funding

Primary Themes	Funding 1
Central City Economic Development (CCED) Program	Highlighted as a significant program supporting projects in the area.
Funding Sources and Layering	Various agencies and programs supporting projects, including the housing trust fund, HOME, and CCDE
Challenges and Disenfranchisement	Biggest challenge identified as residents feeling disenfranchised and disconnected from adequate funding for city services and new development.
Planning Initiatives and Grants:	Planning Sustainable Places grants, funded by the Mid America Regional Council, supporting planning initiatives like streetscape plans and overlay districts.
Funding Allocation Process	Involves grading scales, internal staff recommendations to boards, and approval by the city council.

Funding 2	Funding 3
Funded by a one-eighth cent sales tax approved by Kansas City citizens	CCED funds support projects like affordable housing and infill development within its boundary area.
Layering of funding sources including CCED, PIAC, private funding, MHDC for affordable housing, and tax credit funding.	Importance of experienced developers in navigating multiple funding layers.
Highlighting the significance of CCED sales tax in addressing funding disparities.	
Importance of these grants in laying groundwork for future development projects.	
City council has final determination and can adjust recommendations or reallocate funds as needed.	

Spreadsheet E - Advice for Success

Primary Themes	Advice 1
Regulatory Compliance and Process Understanding	Emphasizing the importance of understanding and complying with the city's regulations and processes before commencing any development project.
Funding Process and Workshops	The funding process typically begins with a Request for Proposals (RFP) process, accompanied by community meetings and workshops providing detailed information about available funds, their potential uses, and application procedures.
Stakeholder Engagement and Effective Communication	Stressing the importance of attending workshops with the right individuals to gather necessary information for successful project application and implementation.
Community Engagement Strategies	Importance of knowing points of contact and obtaining accurate information for successful project development.
Case Study and Proactive Measures	Highlighting proactive measures taken by neighborhoods like Likens in the Northeast area to address vacant land issues. Implementation of strategies like Request for Proposals (RFPs) and working with local leaders to control lots, leading to increased home ownership and neighborhood revitalization.

Advice 2	Advice 3
Encouraging effective communication within neighborhoods and with city council members and various city departments to address concerns, advocate for improvements, and achieve positive outcomes.	
Encouraging outreach and connection-making, ensuring continuity and understanding in development processes.	Gathering feedback from diverse communicators and including quieter voices in conversations to ensure all perspectives are considered.

Appendix F: Resident Interview Procedure

Proposed Procedure for Resident Interviews

Interview Questions

Assets

1. How long have you lived in this neighborhood?
    a. In what ways has the neighborhood changed since you lived here?
2. What is your favorite part about living here?
    a. What are your favorite places to spend your days off? Where do you spend time with your friends/family?
    b. What are you most proud of in your community? Why?
3. Are you involved in any community organizations, or do you know of any that are active in the community (this could include non-profits, neighborhood associations, places of worship, etc.)?
    a. What kind of work do they do/how do you think they help the community?
    b. If you have children, what kind of activities are they involved in/ where do they spend their time outside of school?
4. What kind of relationship do you have with your neighbors?
    a. Are you close? Do you see them in passing? Not at all?
5. Can you think of any person that has had a significant impact on the community?
    a. How do they work to bring people together?
    b. What challenges have they addressed?
6. What are your hopes for the future of the community?

Challenges

1. What amenities would you like to see more of in your community?
    a. What impact do you think they would have/what benefits would they provide?
2. How do you think the city officials view your community (elected officials, law enforcement, parks and rec, planners, etc.)?
    a. What projects have you seen from the city? Have they been effective?
    b. Do you feel that your neighborhood receives the same resources as others in KC? Why or why not?
3. What do you think your communities' biggest challenges are?
    a. What has been done in the past to address them? Do you feel it was effective? Why or why not?
    b. How does this challenge affect you and others?
4. Do you think the parks/green spaces in your community serve the needs of the residents here? What do you like about them? What do you think is missing?

Vacant Lots and Quality of Life

1. What is your perception of the vacant lots in the neighborhood?
    a. How have they affected the community?
    b. Do any of them currently serve a purpose (informal gathering, play, etc.)
    c. Have you seen efforts to repurpose them? How effective were they?
2. What solutions have you seen/heard about that address vacancy in the area?
    a. Are they city or resident driven?
3. Are there any that make you fear for your safety? Why?
4. How do you think the vacant lots affect outsider's perception of your community?
    a. How does this make you feel?
5. How would you feel if these spaces became an official public space?
    a. Have you seen anything in the past that worked well?
    b. Are there any specific lots or areas that you would have in mind? Why those?
6. How does your neighborhood or the city maintain vacant lots?
    a. Do you think it is effective?

Presentation of Photoset

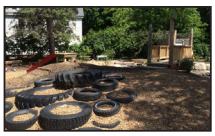
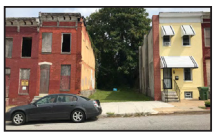
At this point, each participant will be presented with the photoset (see final page of this document) and will be prompted to choose two images from each column that best represent their preferred elements for repurposing vacant lots. Following selections, participants will be asked to describe why they made their selections and what aspects the selected photos most appealed to them.

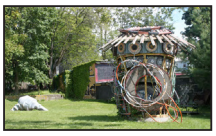
Once the selection process is complete, the graduate student researcher (Melody Holland) will document which photos were selected by recording a code on the back of each image.

Debrief

Once the interview is complete, the residents will be given a printed copy of the debrief by the graduate student researcher (Melody Holland) and will have the opportunity to ask any further questions.

Procedure for Resident Interviews - Photo Set

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Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		


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MASTER'S PROJECT REPORT

Landscape Architecture
2024

Fig.74 Cover Image