

# PRAIRIE POINT/ WILDBERRY

## Neighborhood Assessment Report

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Neighborhood Workshop Date: May 18, 2002



FOCUS Kansas City  
City Planning and Development Department  
City of Kansas City, Missouri

City of Fountains



Heart of the Nation



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# FOCUS KANSAS CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENTS

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**FOCUS Kansas City**, Kansas City's strategic and comprehensive plan, recognizes that neighborhoods understand best how to direct their own futures. The first initiative in the *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan* is a strategic assessment / evaluation that enables a neighborhood to evaluate its strengths and needs. Through the assessment process, a neighborhood can direct its assets towards its most critical needs. The *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan* identifies the assessment format.

There were two objectives for this neighborhood during the self-evaluation:

1. To self-identify its **neighborhood type** from the *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan*.
2. To develop **improvement strategies** that will direct neighborhood improvement, a "To Do" list/Action Steps incorporating participation by the neighborhood, community partners, and the City.

The Prairie Point/Wildberry community conducted the neighborhood assessment workshop with assistance from City staff. Residents, business people and people who work in local institutions provided input. These members mapped their community, and identified assets and priority issues in their neighborhood.



# NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE

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The FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan recognizes that not all neighborhoods in Kansas City are the same. The character and condition of where we live varies according to age, history, type of housing and other factors. Each community has different strengths and opportunities. Each has different assets and priorities that drive unique strategies for improvement. FOCUS developed four unique Neighborhood Types that generally describe Kansas City neighborhoods. These four Types (assigned the colors Blue, Orange, Purple and Green in the Neighborhood Assessment workshop) are:

## Developing    Conservation    Stabilization    Redeveloping

Each Neighborhood Type suggests what actions are required for an area to become or stay healthy. The Assessment is a beginning point from which the community can move forward and achieve quality living environments through a commitment to continuous improvement. The descriptions for these four Neighborhood Types are contained in the FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan, Appendix A, "General Neighborhood Description / Types."

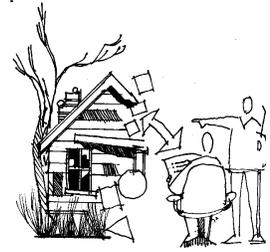
In the workshop, participants defined the tools, actions and strategies for improving their community. They will use this information to strategically apply public and private resources in a way that is based on existing conditions, trends, opportunities, strengths and needs. Once other neighborhoods identify their Type, then similarly "typed" Kansas City communities can connect and partner around common issues and projects while assisting each other in developing their organizations.



As residents from the Prairie Point/Wildberry neighborhood census area arrived they signed in with the FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment Team.

# THE PRAIRIE POINT/WILDBERRY PERSPECTIVE

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On Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002 residents of the Prairie Point/Wildberry census neighborhood gathered at the Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church for a FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment workshop. This includes the area north of NW Barry Road, east of N Amity Avenue, south of NW Tiffany Springs Road and west of I-29.

The workshop began with a quick ice-breaking exercise during which participants thought of a slogan to represent their neighborhood. "The Family Friendly Country Club of the North" was the selected slogan for the area. This slogan represents the wealth of amenities that contribute to a high quality of life for the families and individuals who live there.

Many residents praised the excellent education that the Park Hill School District provides. Within Prairie Point/Wildberry there are many churches, parks, and friendly neighbors who look out for one another. Neighbors take pride in their homes and keep their neighborhoods clean and safe. Workshop participants also enjoy the conveniences of their location in the city, such as proximity to the airport, and highways that take them anywhere in the city. Locally, they have a variety of restaurants and commercial areas to choose from. There are educational resources such as a branch of the Mid-Continent Public Library and the Maple Woods College Annex, as well as recreational amenities such as the Park Hill High School Aquatic Center, ball parks, and the future sports complex.

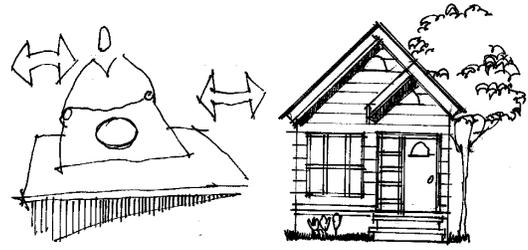
Prairie Point/Wildberry residents are very pleased with their community, however there are a few concerns that workshop participants shared. With so much growth and new development in the area, residents are seeing their neighborhood change at a very rapid pace. They would like the City to require developers to be responsible for the impact that they are having on surrounding neighborhoods. New businesses on Barry Road have increased traffic congestion that is spilling off into once quiet residential areas. Neighbors would like to see developers provide buffers to prevent this and they would like the City to install crosswalks for school children, as well as better signage to direct traffic. With Zona Rosa proposed to open in the Fall of 2003, residents would like to see a proactive approach to the future increase in traffic.

Overall, residents are pleased with their neighborhood and want to continue to invest in its future. With an active neighborhood association, Prairie Point/Wildberry will continue to be a pleasant, family-friendly community to live in.

The purpose of this report is to help clarify goals and identify resources. The following page contains the residents' priorities and some possible improvement strategies they suggested. The report also contains the lists of assets, challenges and ideas for improvement that area residents named during the workshop. Finally, a list of frequently used City and agency services is on the inside back cover.

# **PRIORITIES**

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During the workshop, residents talked about several issues that impact their quality of life. They identified several improvements they feel would enhance the livability of their neighborhood. The following are priorities that came out of the workshop:

## **Provide Sufficient Infrastructural Improvements to Accomodate New Development**

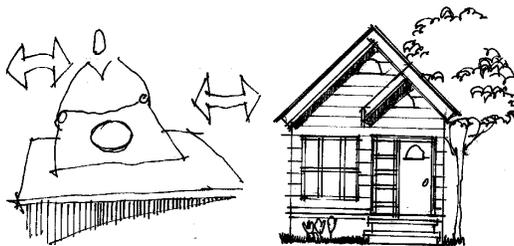
Prairie Point/Wildberry residents are concerned about the impact that new commercial developments such as the Zona Rosa commercial center will have on their neighborhoods. They would like the City make sufficient improvements to roads, sidewalks, traffic signals, etc. to control the increase in traffic. They would like to have Barry Raod widened from I-29 to N. Amity Road before the opening of Zona Rosa.

## **City Require Commercial Developers to Install Buffers for Nearby Residential Neighborhoods**

As developers create commercial areas in the Prairie Point/Wildbery neighborhood there has been an increase in traffic. Neighbors feel it is the responsibility of developers profitting from these developments to provide traffic barriers and buffers in order to preserve the safe, quiet nature of the neighborhood. Neighbors would like to see the City enforce this for all new developments.

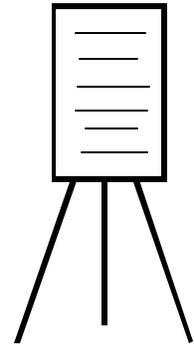
## **Inform Residents About New Developments Coming Into the Area**

Residents feel uninformed about the changes being made to their neighborhood. Only residents living adjacent to new developments are informed about future plans through public meetings. They would like the notification area to be broadened to include all residences that would be impacted by the change.



# CHART NOTES

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The Prairie Point/Wildberry Neighborhood Assessment covered the area from NW Tiffany Springs Road on the north to NW Barry Road on the south, and N Amity Drive on the west to I-29 on the east. (See map on page 9 for details.)

## Neighborhood Slogans

The attendees listed several slogans to describe their neighborhood. The slogans helped the participants to identify how they viewed their community. The slogan they chose was:

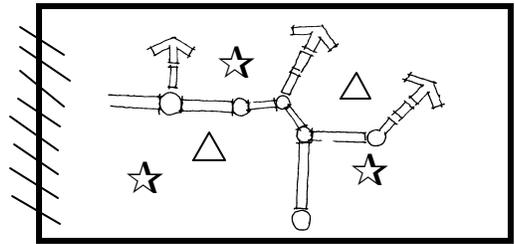
### **The Family Friendly Country Club of the North**

Other choices were:

- God's Country
- Picnic Reunions
- It Ain't Johnson County Yet



During the first exercise, workshop participants brainstormed slogans that described the character of their neighborhood.



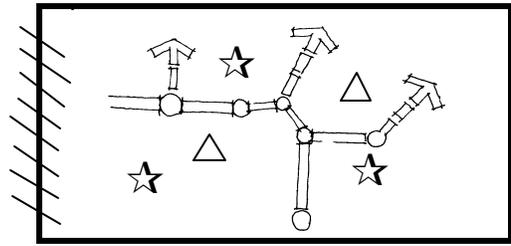
## STEP 1: My Neighborhood Is

Workshop participants identified how they experience their neighborhood, and considered those things they want to protect, preserve or enhance in the neighborhood. They thought about the landmarks, paths, activity centers, districts, edges or barriers, and features. These were noted on a wall map.

-  **Landmarks** — significant physical objects, like buildings or signs
-  **Paths** — routes people use to get places
-  **Activity Centers** — gathering places to do some activity
-  **Districts** — areas of recognizable character
-  **Edges or Barriers** — a limit or boundary that prevents people from enjoying the neighborhood or something in it
-  **Features** — things people like and would like to preserve or enhance



Prairie Point/Wildberry neighbors discussed the physical characteristics of their neighborhood during Step 1.



## Landmarks

- Fire station
- Sonic restaurant
- Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church
- Renner Elementary
- Congress Middle School
- Park Hill High School

## Paths

- N Congress Road
- N Belvidere
- N Stoddard
- N Amity Road

## Activity Centers

- Tiffany Springs Fellowship Assembly of God
- Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church
- Park Hill High School

## Districts

- Park Hill High School
- Commercial center at Highway 9 and Prairie View
- Future Zona Rosa commercial area

## Edges or Barriers

- The intersection on Barry Road and Congress Avenue needs a crosswalk
- The curb at Barry Road and Prairie View going south
- No sidewalks on Barry Road and N Congress
- N Congress north of Barry Road
- 152 highway
- I-29
- N Barry Road
- N Stoddard

## Features

- Wide greenway on Belvidere
- Wildberry Park
- Park Hill Park
- Partial sidewalks in Platte Ridge
- Street lights on N Congress
- Park Hill High School Aquatic Center
- Commercial center at Highway 9 and Prairie View
- Park Hill High School



# PRAIRIE POINT/WILDBERRY IMAGES

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## Landmark, District, Activity Center and Feature:

Park Hill High School was mentioned by workshop participants as a valuable asset in the neighborhood.



## Landmark and Activity

**Center:** Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church hosted the FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment for the Prairie Point/Wildberry area.

**Barrier:** Residents felt the intersection of Barry Road and North Congress Avenue was dangerous for students walking to and from Park Hill High School.



# PRAIRIE POINT/WILDBERRY IMAGES

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**Feature:** Park Hill Aquatic Center is a public swimming facility available to the public year round.



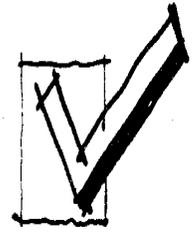
**Landmark:** Congress Middle School (above) and Renner Elementary School (left) are part of the educational excellence of the Park Hill School District that residents value.



## STEP 2: If I Could Fix One Thing

In every neighborhood there are some things that need to be changed. These issues can inhibit residents from enjoying their neighborhood and from doing the things they like to do. Below is the list of "fixes" that workshop participants said they would like to see in the Prairie Point/Wildberry area.

- Find out about the timeline for demolition of homes on Barry Road between N Congress and N Stoddard
- Inform residents about the Zona Rosa commercial development
- Developers should help fund the widening of Barry Road because they are responsible for the increase in traffic
- Keep dogs on leashes
- Install directional signage to 152 Highway from Barry Road
- Install bike trails, especially around schools, on N. Congress
- Address the traffic that backs up along Barry Road and I-29 (exit 8) because of all the new commercial development
- Be more involved with the planning of commercial and residential developments
- Build a wall behind the medical buildings at N. Congress and Barry Road to cover the back side of the buildings
- Install an access ramp at N Congress to 152 Hwy east and west
- City should hold meetings with developers about plans for the area in the evenings and weekends so residents can attend more easily
- Inform residents of the area living within more than 150 feet from the development about the plans
- Begin acquiring right of way for mass transit to handle all future traffic needs such as light rail from the airport to Zona Rosa to the rest of the city
- Install crosswalks at Congress and Barry Road (children have no safe way to cross Barry Road to school)
- Install sidewalks and curbs on the west side of N Congress
- Prohibit Platte County and KCMO Police Departments from using houses as practice (breaking in doors and walls)
- Improve the exit ramp from I-29 to Barry Road (exit 8)



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## STEP 3: My Neighborhood's Assets

Workshop participants identified assets that enhance their neighborhood. The assets include places, groups, organizations, equipment, skills, abilities and any other features that add value to the neighborhood.

- Boy Scout Troop #395
- Park Hill High School Aquatic Center
- Maple Woods College Annex
- Parks
- Children
- Education provided by the school district
- Park Hill High School has more college scholarship awards than any other high school
- Teachers
- The many restaurant choices
- Quick response from emergency departments
- Variety of churches
- Close proximity to the airport
- Mid-Continent Public Library
- Potential for building communities
- The future sports complex
- Park Hill School District
- Green space
- Clean neighborhoods
- Good and friendly neighbors
- Neighbors take pride in their homes
- Convenient proximity to almost anywhere in the City
- Safety



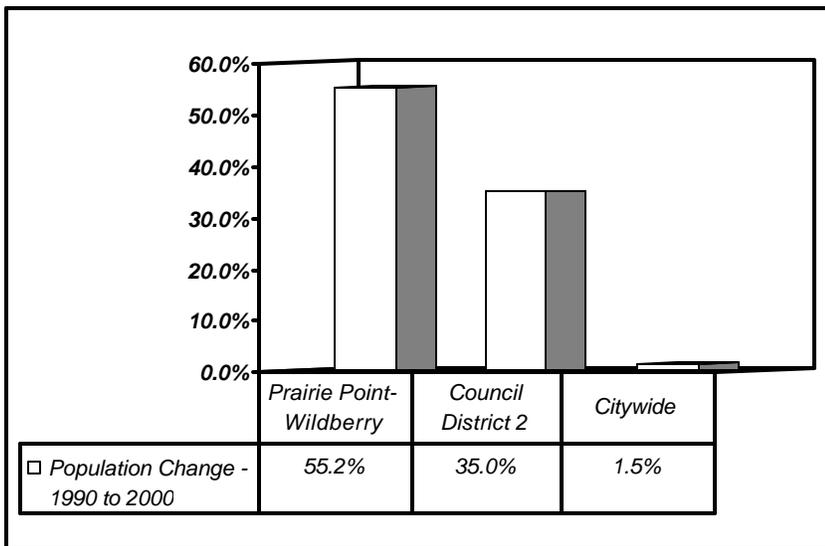
Residents enjoy many dining options in the neighborhood and along Barry Road.



## STEP 4: Facts About My Neighborhood

The data presented at the Prairie Point/Wildberry Neighborhood Assessment was from both the 2000 and 1990 U.S. Census, and from 2000 information from the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and the Kansas City, Missouri City Planning and Development Department. Below are the facts the participants said were surprising or noteworthy. (See the Neighborhood Assessment workbook for more details.)

### Change in Population 1990-2000

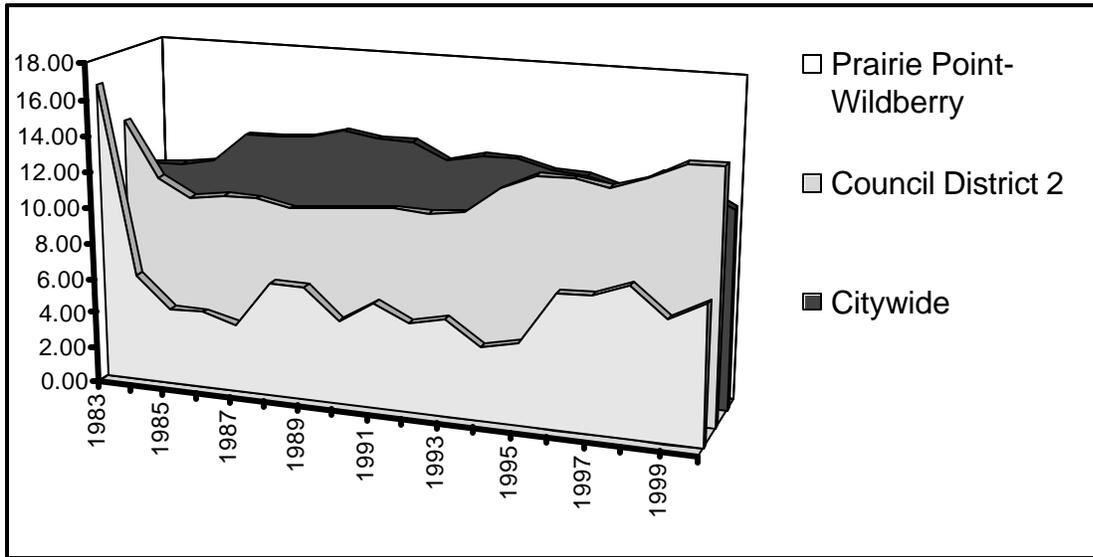


Workshop participants stated that the increase in the population of Prairie Point/Wildberry is probably from the development of the new apartments near 152 Highway and I-29.

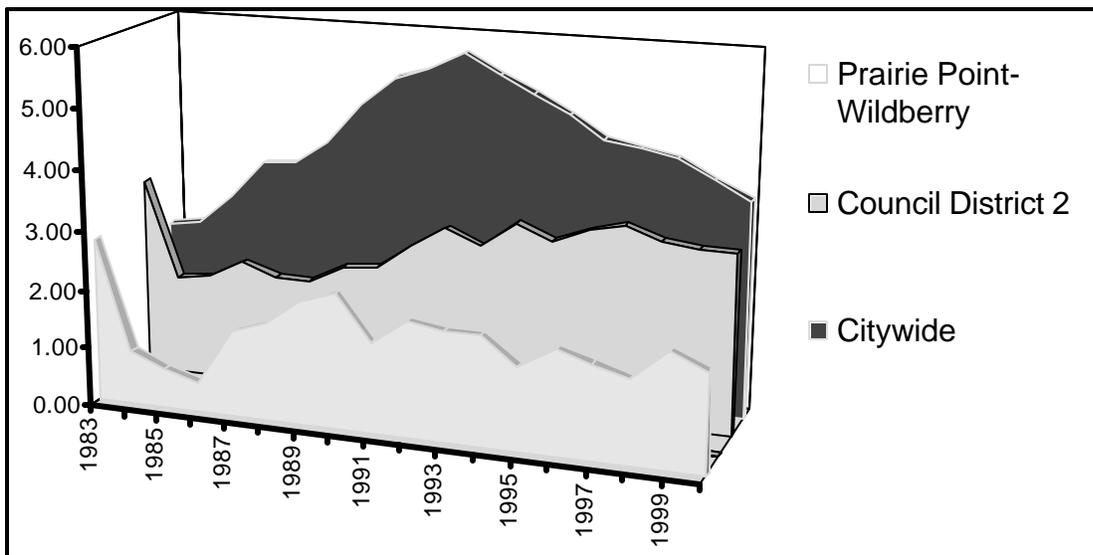


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## Non-Violent Crime



## Violent Crime



Residents reported that there are many new commercial businesses in the area, and felt that as more people come into the area, there will be an increased potential for crime.



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## STEP 5: Describing My Neighborhood

Those who attended the workshop were asked to vote on the Neighborhood Type that best described their neighborhood. Their choice was Stabilization.

### Stabilization

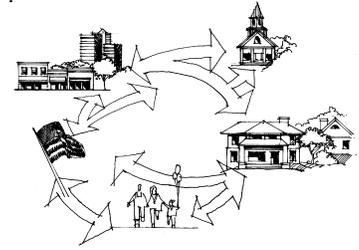
My neighborhood has been developed for some time. Several of the businesses and institutions located in the neighborhood may be changing, either recently expanding, scaling back services, just moved into the neighborhood or considering moving to another location outside the neighborhood. Places of worship, schools, recreational and entertainment facilities, and businesses provide opportunities near my home.

Tree-lined streets, historic structures or qualities, public art and/or other amenities characterize the neighborhood and give it a sense of place. Due to age, several of the streets and sidewalks need repair or replacement and the water and sewer services may also need to be upgraded. Many houses, businesses, and public areas appear to lack routine maintenance (painting, yard upkeep, tree trimming, awning repair, etc.) or are vacant. Such conditions are impacting the value of my property and I don't know if I want to invest more money in the property.

Problems are starting to add up and are becoming harder to fix through our neighborhood association, a call to the City, or neighbors getting together to help one another. There are good aspects to the neighborhood but there are also problems that need to be addressed if the neighborhood is going to continue to be a place I want to live.



Many beautiful homes are located in the Prairie Point/Wildberry area, such as this one in the Thistle Hill subdivision.



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## STEP 6: Making My Neighborhood Better

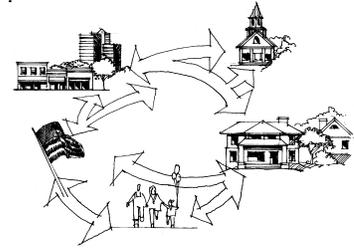
Neighbors talked about specific actions their community can take to address the issues and challenges identified earlier in the assessment. They brainstormed ideas, concentrating on those actions that can be performed by the community to improve the neighborhood. Below is a list of all the ideas mentioned by workshop participants. They voted on the ideas that they most want implemented to make their neighborhood better.

Things we can do **Ourselves**:

- Create a coalition of organizations from several neighborhoods to create solutions for the Barry Road, Congress Road issue
- Attend development meetings and advocate for evening and weekend times
- Attend school board meetings at the Board of Education on Barry Road to address the need for safe crossings on N Congress and Barry Road
- Re-activate the neighborhood association
- Obtain neighborhood stickers to address parking issues
- Contact Zona Rosa developers via [www.zonarosa.com](http://www.zonarosa.com)



Workshop participants listed action steps that should be taken to improve their neighborhood, then voted on their top priorities.

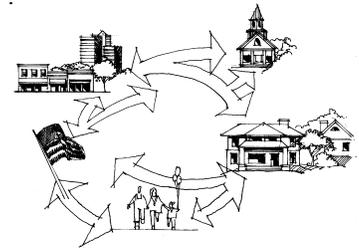


Things we can do with a **Partner**:

- Partner with Zona Rosa developers to discuss development plans and express neighborhood concerns
- Partner with PTA to address dangerous pedestrian crossings (walking access to schools)
- Collaborate with other neighborhood associations
- City collaborate with churches to communicate changes
- Establish "mom and pop" businesses

Things the **City** should do:

- Do not provide new developments if you do not have the infrastructure (i.e. roads, sidewalks etc.)
- Widen Barry Road from I-29 to N. Amity Road before developing Zona Rosa
- Inform homeowners about new developments and about issues that impact the area
- Install a cross walk at Barry Road and N. Congress
- Provide safe pedestrian access for children at the intersection of Barry Road and N. Congress such as sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.
- Provide signage along Barry Road to N. Amity to direct drivers to 152 Highway
- Allow neighbors to provide input about future developments before finalizing plans
- Convene City Planning Commission and Building and Zoning Adjustment meetings in the northland, possibly at Northland Neighborhoods, Inc. or in Platte County
- Coordinate meetings with developers that are at accommodating times for residents
- Provide a park in the vacant properties on 84<sup>th</sup> Terrace
- Expand the notification boundaries for residential areas that will be impacted by new developments



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Things the City should do, cont'd.

- Install a traffic light near Renner Elementary School to address east or west traffic flow on Barry Road
- Follow up with residents about current issues
- Start work on the proposed park and ball fields from the land swap
- Provide a park closer to residential neighborhoods
- Reconsider the zoning of 84<sup>th</sup> Terrace directly north of Barry Road and east of N Congress Avenue to address commercial developments providing a buffer for residential access
- Plant trees and or install a sound barrier (concrete or heavy wooden walls) to deflect and push back sound
- Repave N. Amity Road
- Provide more infrastructure and multi-use for small businesses
- Provide a FOCUS Center in Platte County



The Zona Rosa Town Center will open in the Fall of 2003 and feature shopping, dining, entertainment, and hotels.

# Twelve Ways to Improve Your Neighborhood Right Now!

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The KC Safe City Initiative encourages neighborhoods to adopt the following ideas for increased safety and involvement, which are based upon the KC Safe City Initiative Principles.

- 1. Report crime promptly.** Neighbors sometimes don't report criminal activity because they don't want to bother the police; they assume police are too short-staffed to respond, or they believe that there isn't much an officer can (or will) do about a given problem anyway. Whether the issue is graffiti, petty vandalism, or something much more serious, police cannot act without first hearing about the problem from citizens.
- 2. Report nuisances and other non-criminal problems promptly.**
- 3. Take away the opportunity for crime.** Lock your car and never leave valuables, even for a few minutes, in the car where would-be thieves might see them. Trim bushes or trees on your property that offer too-convenient hiding places. Make your front porch visible and make sure your home looks like someone lives there.
- 4. Meet the youth who live on your block and greet them by name.** This ensures that each adult is better able to help in an emergency and is better prepared to discuss problems immediately as they arise.
- 5. Make a list of the names and phone numbers of every neighbor on your block.** Unless you know neighbors' names and numbers, you can't call them about a concern or let them know about a neighborhood problem.
- 6. Make a list of landlords in your area.** As owners of property in the community, landlords are responsible to the neighborhood and most are rightly concerned about the health of the community in which their properties stand.
- 7. Turn your porch light on.** Crime tends to decline in neighborhoods that are well lit. Turning on porch lights is a simple way to start this process.
- 8. Walk around the block.** It sounds simple enough, but neighbors benefit over time when more responsible citizens walk about more (particularly those who are comfortable doing it) at night, every night, around their block.
- 9. Drive slowly on neighborhood streets.** You can take the lead in slowing down traffic in your neighborhood and those around you.
- 10. Pick up the litter near your home, even if you didn't put it there.** You can help stop the growth of trash in your neighborhood by taking away the existing litter that attracts it.
- 11. Stay where you are.** Stable neighborhoods are built on the commitment of long term residents who would rather live in a healthy community than move to a bigger house.
- 12. Help your neighborhood association or similar groups.** If leadership isn't your desire, at least make sure someone in your household attends local neighborhood association meetings. You'll be kept better informed of the issues facing the neighborhood and how you can help and, perhaps more importantly, you'll have the chance to shape, guide, and participate in the future of your neighborhood.

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## **Prairie Point/Wildbery Neighborhood Assessment Participants**

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Frank Webb

## **Sponsors and Contributors**

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- Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church
- Platte Ridge Homes Association

## **Getting Involved**

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To find out more about the Thistle Hill homes association (located in the Prairie Point/Wildberry census tract boundary), please contact Concetta McCombs at (816) 678-1512. For information about training and other services available to neighborhoods, call the Neighborhood Assistance Center at City Hall, (816) 513-3200.



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# Acknowledgements

The Honorable Kay Barnes, *Mayor*  
Robert L. Collins, *City Manager*

## City Council

The Honorable Ed Ford  
*First District-at-Large*

The Honorable Teresa Loar  
*First District*

The Honorable Bonnie Sue Cooper  
*Second District-at-Large*

The Honorable Paul Danaher  
*Second District*

The Honorable Troy Nash  
*Third District-at-Large*

The Honorable Mary Williams-Neal  
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The Honorable Evert Asjes III  
*Fourth District-at-Large*

The Honorable Jim Rowland  
*Fourth District*

The Honorable Becky Nace  
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The Honorable Terry Riley  
*Fifth District*

The Honorable Alvin Brooks  
*Sixth District-at-Large*

The Honorable Charles A. Eddy  
*Sixth District*

## City Planning and Development Department

- Vicki L. Noteis, AIA, *Director*
- Denise Phillips, ESQ. *FOCUS Manager*
- Diane Charity, Jermine Alberty, Sharon Cheers, Willie Mae Conway, Suzy Latare, John Pajor, Robert Rutherford, Julie Xiong, Lindsey Cook, *Neighborhood Assessment Team*

## City Support

- Terrie Scott, *City Manager's Action Center*

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>AGENCY OR CITY DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>PHONE</b>
<b>City Services</b>	<b>Action Center</b>	<b>513-1313</b>
Abandoned Cars on Private Property	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-9000
Abandoned Cars on Public Property	Kansas City, MO Police Department	234-5000
Abandoned Homes	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-9000
Air Quality	Health Department	513-6314
Animal Control	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-9800
Building Permits	Codes Administration	513-1500
Bulky Item Pick Up	Environmental Management	513-3490
Curb Reconstruction	Public Works	513-2590
Dangerous Buildings/ Demolition	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-9000
Housing Code Violations	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-9000
Illegal Dumping Hotline	Environmental Management	513-3485
Neighborhood Assistance/ Services	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-3265
Paint Program	Neighborhood and Community Services	513-3266
PIAC (Public Improvements Advisory Committee)	Public Works Department	513-2617
Parks and Community Centers	Board of Parks and Recreation	513-7500
Potholes	Public Works - Street and Traffic	513-2777
Senior Citizens Transportation	Share-a-Fare/ATA	842-9070
Sewers - Problems	Water Department After Hours	513-2180 513-2109
Sidewalks - Repair	Public Works	513-2602
Storm Drains	Water Department	513-2180
Street Light Repairs	Kansas City Power and Light	654-1400
Weatherization Program	Housing and Community Development	513-3015

# THE VISION OF FOCUS KANSAS CITY

We, as Kansas Citians, envision our city as a people-centered community. From economic development to the readability of street signs, we consider people first. Kansas City shapes and guarantees its future by examining first and foremost the impact of every decision on future generations.

We, as Kansas Citians, are full of hope. We demonstrate this hope through our investment in our families, our homes, our neighborhoods, our schools, our businesses and our city.



For more information about **FOCUS Kansas City**:

- call the office at **513-2822**,
- visit **[www.kcmo.org/focus/](http://www.kcmo.org/focus/)**, or
- e-mail **[focus@kcmo.org](mailto:focus@kcmo.org)**.

To reach the Neighborhood Assessment Team, call **513-2909**.

**FOCUS** - Forging **O**ur **C**omprehensive **U**rban **S**trategy

