

SCARRITT RENAISSANCE

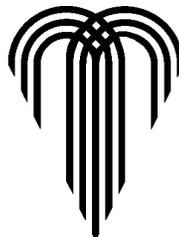
Neighborhood Assessment Report

Neighborhood Workshop Date: September 9, 2000



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

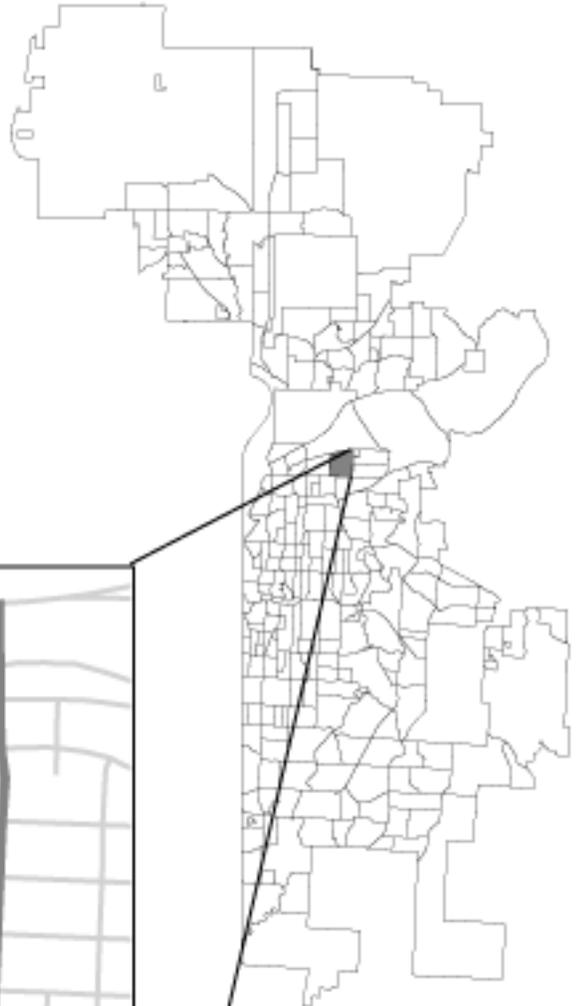
City of Fountains



Heart of the Nation

Kansas City, Missouri Neighborhoods

The Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood



SERVICE	AGENCY OR CITY DEPARTMENT	PHONE
City Services	Action Center	513-1313
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	513-1451
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
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/**, or
- e-mail **focus@kcmo.org**.

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

FOCUS - **F**orging **O**ur **C**omprehensive **U**rban **S**trategy



FOCUS KANSAS CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENTS

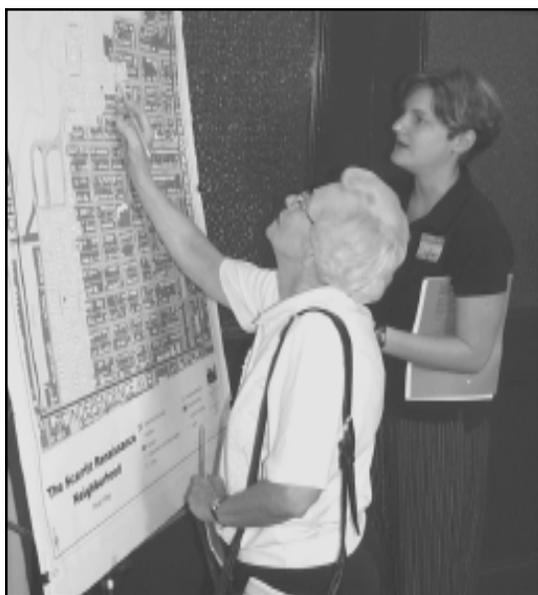


FOCUS Kansas City, Kansas City's strategic and comprehensive plan, recognizes that neighborhoods understand best how to direct their own futures. The first initiative in the *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan* is a strategic assessment / evaluation that enables a neighborhood to evaluate its strengths 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 these neighborhoods 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.

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



A Scarritt Renaissance resident finds her home on the "heart map"



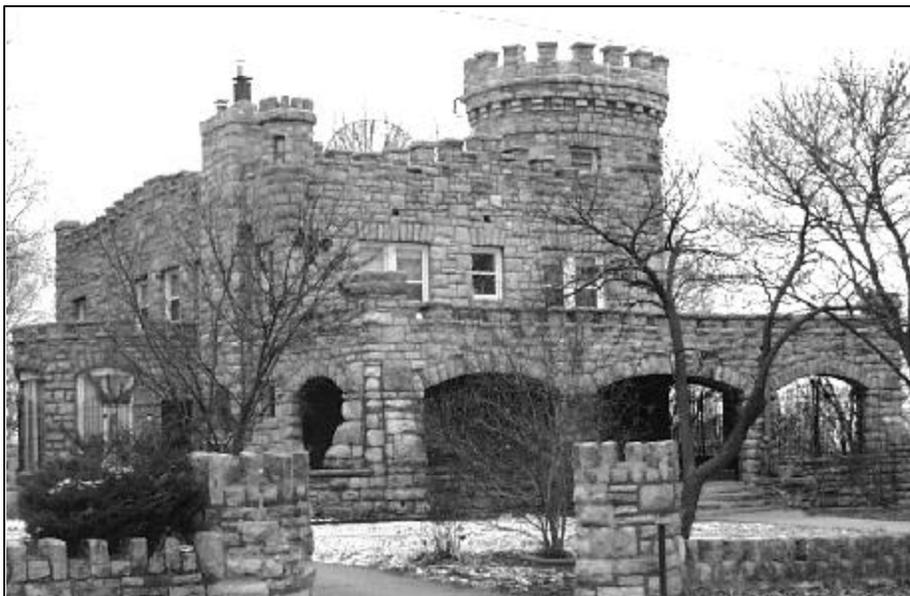
NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE

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. Each Neighborhood Type suggests what actions are required for an area to become or stay healthy. These four Types (assigned the colors Blue, Orange, Purple and Green in the Neighborhood Assessment workshop) are:

Developing Conservation Stabilization Redeveloping

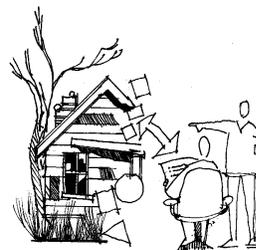
The Assessment is a beginning point from which the community can move forward and achieve quality living environments through a commitment to continuous improvement. The descriptions for these four Neighborhood Types are contained in the *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan*, Appendix A, "General Neighborhood 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.



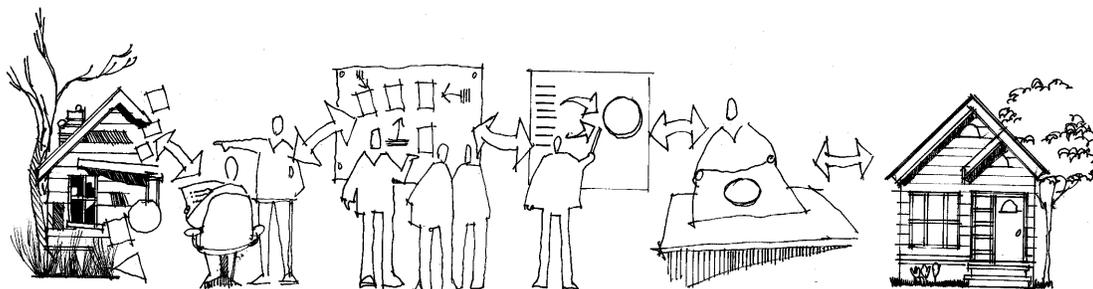
Historic homes characterize many parts of the Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood.

THE SCARRITT RENAISSANCE PERSPECTIVE



On Saturday, September 9, 2000, members of the Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood came together for a neighborhood self-evaluation workshop. The area's boundaries are Chestnut to the west, Jackson to the east, Cliff Drive to the north and Independence Avenue to the south. The workshop was held at the Independence Boulevard Christian Church where participants discussed their neighborhood's characteristics, including the things they like as well as the challenges and barriers they face.

Scarritt Renaissance has a rich history evident in the historic architecture throughout the neighborhood. The turn of the century lumber baron, R.A. Long, built the 72-room mansion now known as the Kansas City Museum. The museum attracts thousands of visitors each year. Cliff Drive and North Terrace Park were built by the well known landscape architect George E. Kessler; Cliff Drive, after recent renovations, is now recognized as a State Scenic Byway. Scarritt Renaissance is the home of many beautiful parks including North Terrace Park, Kessler Park, and The Concourse. These parks are host to area events such as the Cliff Hanger Run, the Northeast Fall Festival, and outdoor concerts. It is a quiet residential area located less than two miles from the employment, cultural, and entertainment opportunities of Downtown, the City Market, and Crown Center. It also offers easy access to I-435, I-35 and many other major highways.

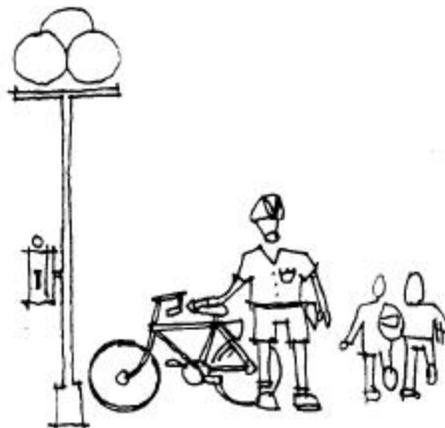




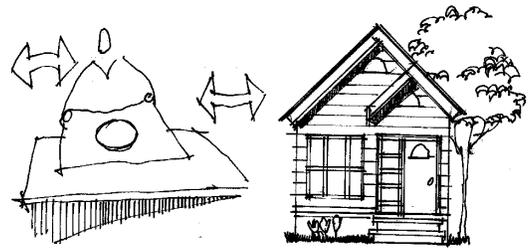
Attractive homes, diverse neighbors, active religious communities, and an enthusiastic neighborhood association are some of the attributes giving Scarritt Renaissance its strong sense of community. Participation in organizations such as the Northeast Chamber of Commerce, Old Northeast Inc., and the Northeast Restoration Corporation gives it the strength and tenacity needed to face challenges such as crime, drugs, prostitution, and blighted properties common to some urban neighborhoods. Scarritt Renaissance's great features, along with its involvement in these organizations, ensure that the future will be bright for this area as improvements are made to commercial areas along Independence Avenue, and to infrastructure such as the Anderson Bridge. Already, neighbors in the Northeast have worked with the Board of Parks and Recreation to install a new zero-depth fountain in the Concourse Park.

Issues of concern were discussed at the workshop, including combating illegal drug trade, enforcing codes violations, and encouraging landlords and all residents to maintain their properties. Participants were eager and persistent about creating positive changes in their neighborhood.

The purpose of this report is to clarify and record their main concerns and identify ways that available resources can be used to fix these problems. This report also contains the lists of assets, challenges, and ideas for improvements named by the Scarritt Renaissance residents during the workshop. Finally, a list of frequently used City and agency services is on the inside back cover.



PRIORITIES



Residents of the Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood named the following as their priority issues:

Codes Enforcement by Neighborhood Preservation Staff

It is important for all neighbors to maintain the appearance of their properties for the good of the neighborhood. Workshop participants expressed they would like to have deteriorating properties rehabilitated, and the best way to do this is through stricter City Housing Codes enforcement. The following were suggestions on how to improve codes enforcement:

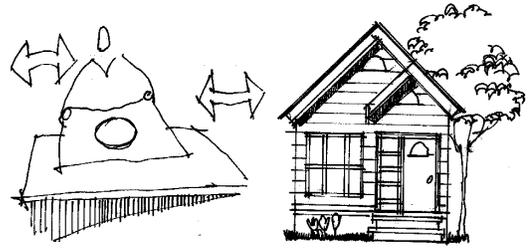
- Meet with Codes Officers in order to establish regular lines of communication with that department
- Identify problem properties for the Codes Officers so that they understand the residents' concerns
- Support Codes Officers by following through with complaints and appearing in court to testify against violators
- Assist neighbors, especially the elderly, who may need help with property up-keep
- Involve landlords in educating international residents about the norms of U.S. culture pertaining to trash and property maintenance

Enforce the Department of Codes' "Bad Apple Program"

Residents identified many of the habitual Codes offenders as landlords and property owners who do not reside in the Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood. The "Bad Apple Program" is an effort by the Codes Department to target problem rental property owners with special strategic enforcement, as a way to ensure that properties are brought up to code. Here are residents' suggestions on how to enforce Codes:

- Identify property owners with habitual codes violations and explain the neighborhood's expectations about property maintenance
- Encourage local landlords to attend Neighborhood Association meetings in order to improve understanding of property maintenance standards in the neighborhood
- Implement the "Bad Apple Program" in Scarritt Renaissance

PRIORITIES, CONT'D



Law Enforcement Against Illegal Drug Trafficking

Drug trafficking was a major concern for workshop participants. Residents are aware of and identified vacant properties that have become drug houses. Participants would like to see a concerted effort taken against this problem through stricter enforcement of the laws and the demolition of these properties. These are some things that can be done:

- Demolish vacant properties that have become drug houses
- Encourage local businesses to take a zero-tolerance stance to drug dealing on their properties
- Work with the Police Department and Community Police officers to eradicate drug dealing

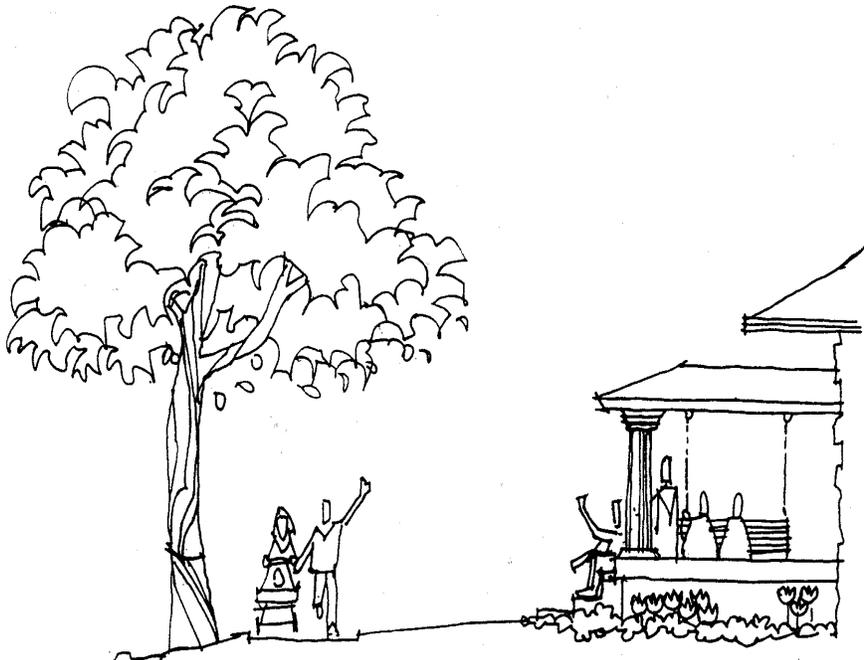
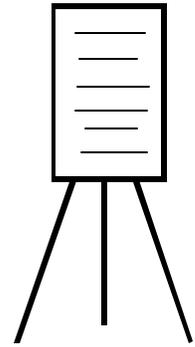


CHART NOTES



The Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Assessment covered the area from Chestnut to Jackson Avenue, and from Cliff Drive to Independence Avenue.

Neighborhood Slogans

The attendees brainstormed several slogans to describe their neighborhood. The slogans helped the participants to identify how they viewed their community.

The selected slogan:

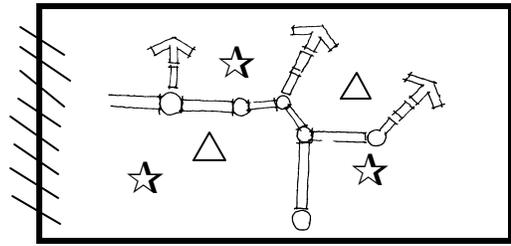
Kansas City's By-Way

Other suggested slogans:

- The Renaissance of Historic Craftsmanship
- National Historic District
- It's All About Bluffs, Cliffs and Boulevards
- The By-Way of Kansas City
- Natural Beauty
- KC's Best Kept Secret



The beautiful Cliff Drive, recently designated as a Scenic Byway.



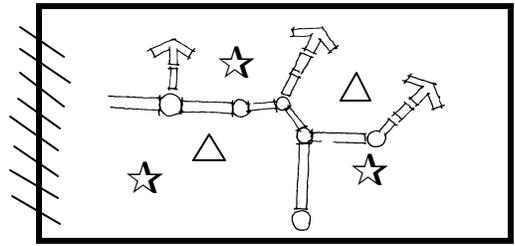
STEP 1: My Neighborhood Is

Workshop participants identified how they experience their neighborhood, and considered those things they want to protect, preserve or enhance. 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



The tree-lined Cliff Drive, an area Landmark, Path, Edge and Feature



Landmarks

- The Concourse along Gladstone Boulevard
- North Terrace Park
- Kansas City Museum
- The Colonnade/JFK Memorial on Gladstone Boulevard
- Cliff Drive
- Melrose Methodist Church
- Independence Boulevard Christian Church

Paths

- Cliff Drive

Activity Centers

- The Concourse
- Melrose Methodist Church
- Scarritt School

Districts

- 3500 Gladstone Historic District

Edges or Barriers

- The Concourse
- Cliff Drive
- Sunrise Drive
- Anderson Bridge
- South Bales Avenue
- South Indiana Avenue
- Roberts Street
- Mersington Avenue
- St. John Avenue
- Independence Avenue
- Businesses across the street from Apple Market

Features

- Kansas City Museum
- The Colonnade/JFK Memorial on Gladstone Boulevard
- Cliff Drive
- St. Anthony's Church

SCARRITT RENAISSANCE IMAGES



Landmark and Feature:

The Colonnade/JFK Memorial on Gladstone Boulevard

Landmark and Activity Center:

Melrose Methodist Church

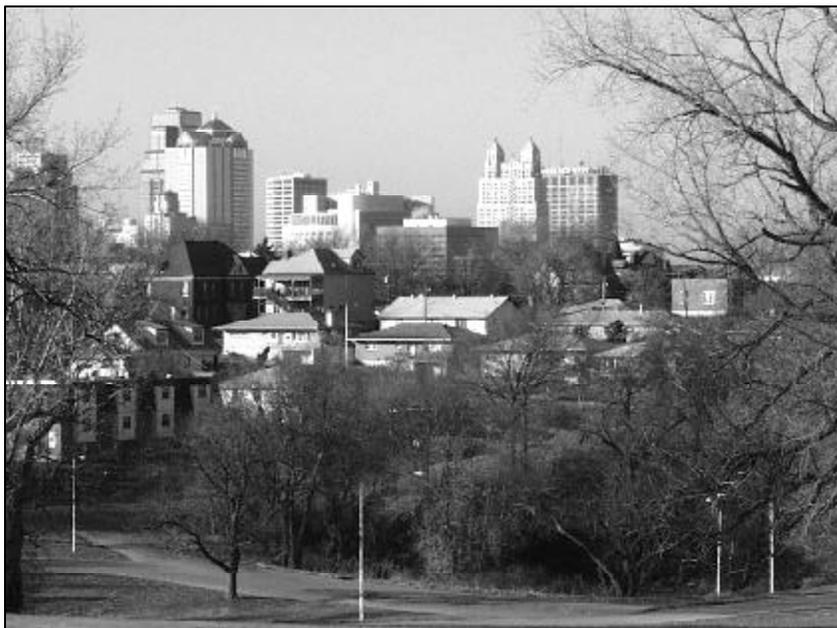


Activity Center:

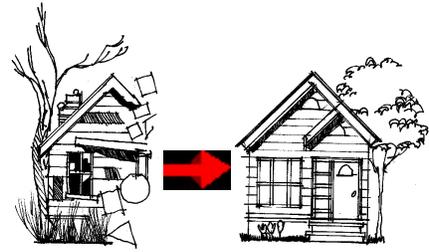
Cosentino's Apple Market on Independence Avenue.

SCARRITT RENAISSANCE IMAGES

Landmark:
Independence Boulevard
Christian Church



Feature: A view of the
downtown skyline from
Kessler Park.



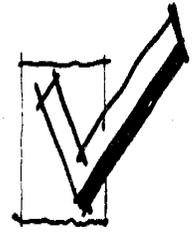
STEP 2: If I Could Fix One Thing

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 Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood.

- Improve enforcement of nuisance and property maintenance codes violations
- Reduce the amount of concentrated poverty/low-income housing
- Limit the amount of Section 8/ subsidized housing in one area
- Maintain the property at 3914 Sunrise Drive
- Return stray dogs to their owners
- Prohibit alcohol possession at the Colonnade
- Prohibit drinking and loitering at the Anderson Bridge
- Clean up trash on residential properties and neighborhood businesses
- Communicate regularly with First District Council Representatives
- Demolish or fix up vacant houses on Roberts Street and Bales Avenue that are used for drug deals, prostitution, and crime
- Eliminate criminal activity at the Fast Stop
- Encourage absentee landlords to take responsibility for run-down properties
- Improve the image of businesses and the physical infrastructure along Independence Avenue



One of the area businesses that some criminal elements tend to frequent



STEP 3: My Neighborhood's Assets

Workshop participants identified assets that add value to their neighborhood. These qualities include places, groups, organizations, equipment, skills, abilities and any other feature that adds value to the neighborhood.

- Old Northeast Inc.
- Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Association
- Historic Northeast Restoration Corporation
- Mobile Crime Watch
- The many church communities that are active in Scarritt Renaissance
- The Kansas City Museum
- The Friends of the Kansas City Museum
- Cliff Drive
- Neighborhood Tourism Development Fund
- The Public Improvements Advisory Committee
- Don Bosco Senior Center and their programs for the elderly
- The City's Clean Sweep
- Corporate sponsorship from University of Health and Sciences, Cosentino's Apple Market, and 7-Eleven
- Northeast Food Mart's neighborhood sponsorship
- Bayer Agricultural Division Plant
- University of Health and Sciences
- Central Bank
- Northeast Chamber of Commerce
- Northeast News
- Old businesses throughout the neighborhood
- Spallitto's Prescription Pharmacy
- Dairy Queen
- Mr. Bolsenga's Upholstery



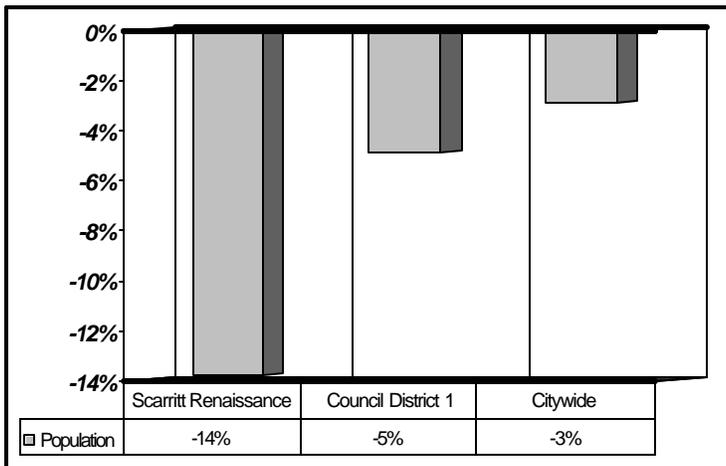
The Kansas City Museum



STEP 4: Facts About My Neighborhood

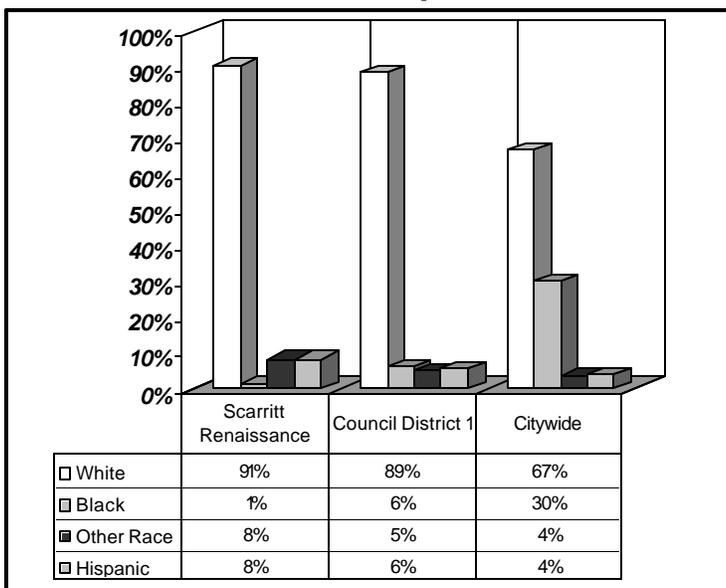
The data presented at the Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Assessment was from the 1990 U.S. Census, and from 1999 information from the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and the Kansas City, Missouri City Planning and Development Department. Below are the facts the participants said were surprising or noteworthy. (See the neighborhood assessment workbook for more detail.)

Change in Population 1980-1990



Due to recent growth in the number of residents moving into the neighborhood, residents felt the population has probably decreased by only 5% over the last 10 years, rather than decreasing by 14%.

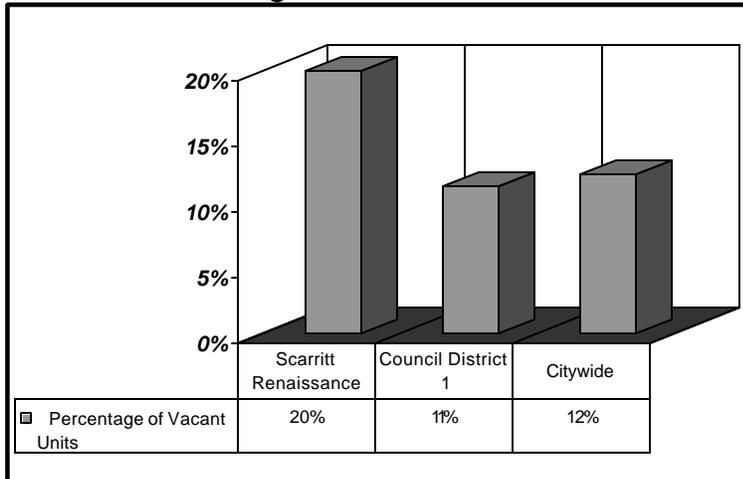
Racial and Ethnic Composition



Neighbors noticed the information about the racial and ethnic composition of Scarritt Renaissance did not reflect the growing Hispanic population. They estimated Hispanic people comprised 20%-25% of the population here. Also the Caucasian population has decreased, and the African-American population is about 2% of the overall population.

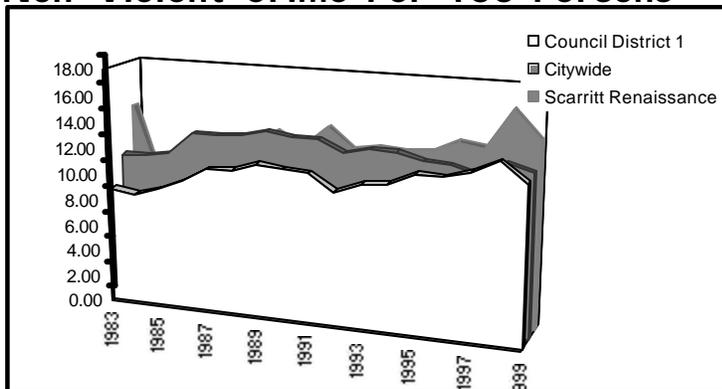


Vacant Housing Units



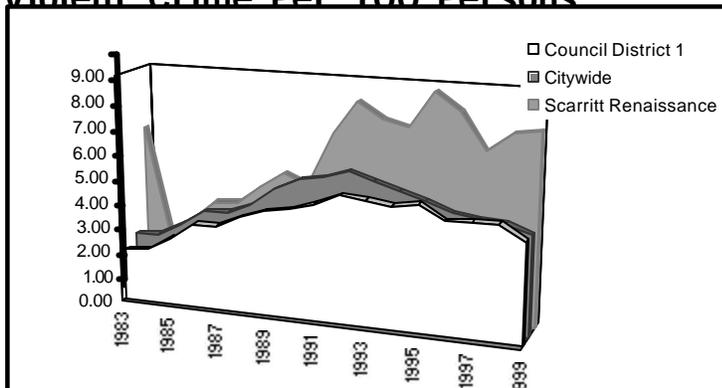
Participants noted that there are not as many vacant properties as this data suggests.

Non-Violent Crime Per 100 Persons



Neighbors agreed the 2000 crime statistics will probably be higher than the 1999 statistics. One reason for this is that the North-east is a "high auto theft" area.

Violent Crime Per 100 Persons





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STEP 5: Describing My Neighborhood

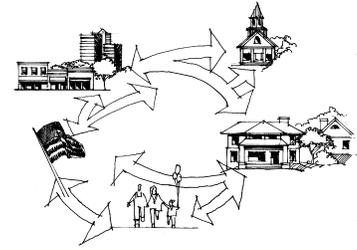
Those who attended the workshop were asked to vote on the Neighborhood Type that best described their neighborhoods. The majority chose Stabilization.

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.



STEP 6: Making My Neighborhood Better

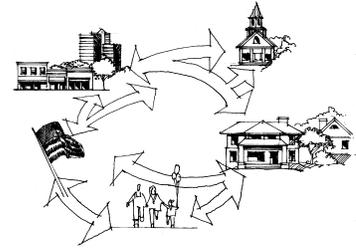
Neighbors talked about specific actions their community can take to address the issues and challenges identified earlier in the Assessment. They brainstormed ideas, concentrating on those actions that can be performed by the community to improve the neighborhood. Below is a list of all the ideas mentioned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

Things we can do **Ourselves**:

- Improve communication between the neighborhood and the City Codes Department
- Identify landlords and property managers and invite them to attend neighborhood association meetings
- Implement a Block Captain Program
- Get involved in the Neighborhood Association
- Follow-up on identified illegal drug traffickers within the neighborhood
- Register with City Planning and Development's Zoning Notification List to keep ourselves informed of any zoning changes or exemptions in the neighborhood
- Communicate with non-English speaking neighbors about trash clean-up expectations
- Make a presence in the parks in order to reduce visitors who gather there to drink
- Limit the number of liquor licenses in the area
- Combat prostitution by taking an inventory of the problem and taking a sector-by-sector approach, beginning with Chestnut Apartments
- Activate a Neighborhood Improvement District using localized taxes



Neighbors discuss what they'd like to see in the Scarritt Renaissance neighborhood

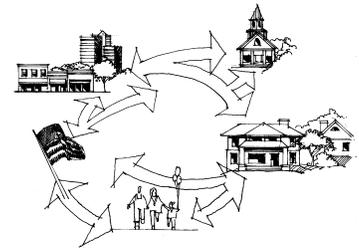


Things we can do with a **Partner:**

- Follow through with prosecuting owners of properties identified as drug houses, using the assistance of Jackson County, the City and local landlords
- Communicate with the City's Planning and Development Department about any rezoning occurring in the neighborhood
- Address concerns about alcohol abuse in the community through a partnership between local churches, the police, and the neighborhood
- Improve communication between the Neighborhood and the Neighborhood Preservation Services Department for more effective codes enforcement
- Delineate cleanliness and upkeep expectations for all neighborhood residents, including non-English speakers, with cooperation from the Don Bosco Center and local landlords
- Continue proposed repairs of Anderson Bridge with Public Improvement Advisory Committee funds



Anderson Bridge



Things the **City** should do:

- Increase law enforcement against drug-trafficking and prostitution on Independence Avenue and elsewhere
- Eliminate criminal activity on vacated properties that have become drug houses through Jackson County's COMBAT office
- Decrease the number of areas with a high concentration of poverty by changing R4 zones to R2 zones
- Provide a list of property owners to the Neighborhood Association
- Create a nickel and dime deposit for bottles and cans as an incentive to reduce trash in the neighborhood
- Increase and enforce the penalty for drinking alcohol in public
- Clear off brush on public property near Chestnut Trafficway and Indiana Avenue
- Follow through with more efficient enforcement by Neighborhood Preservation Services
- Repair the Colonnade on Gladstone Boulevard



Mary Jo Longstreth, President of the Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Association, votes on her priorities for the City

Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Assessment Participants

Cheryl Bisbee-Simpson	Ruthanne Harper	Chris Lopez
Joe Blark	Michael Hobbs	B.K. Lucas
Maria C. King	Lindee Hopkins	Jane Maddux
Officer Lionel Colón	Mary Jo Longstreth	Officer Mark Rice
Kem Cowles	Nancy Kwilas	Carol Royster
Larry F. Probst	Dan Longstreth	Maggi Wilson

Sponsors and Contributors

- Councilman Ed Ford, First District-At Large
- Councilwoman Teresa Loar, First District
- Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Association

Getting Involved

To become involved in your neighborhood, attend the Scarritt Renaissance Neighborhood Association meetings on the first Monday of each month at Melrose United Methodist Church, 200 N. Bales Ave., or call the association president, Mary Jo Longstreth, at 816-920-6823. You may also visit the Neighborhood Association website at www.synapse.com/~srna.

For more information about neighborhood organization, contact the Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance at (816) 753-8600 or the City's Neighborhood and Community Services Department at (816) 513-3200.



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
Third District

The Honorable Evert Asjes III
Fourth District-at-Large

The Honorable Jim Rowland
Fourth District

The Honorable Becky Nace
Fifth District-at-Large

The Honorable Kelvin Simmons
Fifth District

The Honorable Alvin Brooks
Sixth District-at-Large

The Honorable Charles A. Eddy
Sixth District

City Planning and Development Department

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

City Support

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- Frank Thompson, *Kansas City, Missouri Health Department*
- Ralph Davis, *Public Works Department*