

EAST 23rd STREET P.A.C. AND CAM

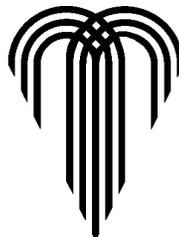
Neighborhood Assessment Report

Neighborhood Workshop Date: June 17, 1999



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

City of Fountains



Heart of the Nation

SERVICE	AGENCY OR CITY DEPARTMENT	PHONE
City Services	Action Center	513-1313
Abandoned Cars on Private Property	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-3800
Abandoned Cars on Public Property	Kansas City, MO Police Department	234-5000
Abandoned Homes	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-3800
Air Quality	Health Department	513-6314
Animal Control	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-5900
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	871-3800
Housing Code Violations	Neighborhood and Community Services	871-3800
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	871-5600
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

Underlined phone numbers will change in the next few months.

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



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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.

This community conducted the neighborhood evaluation 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 neighborhood.



P.A.C. and CAM residents talk about their neighborhood



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. 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.

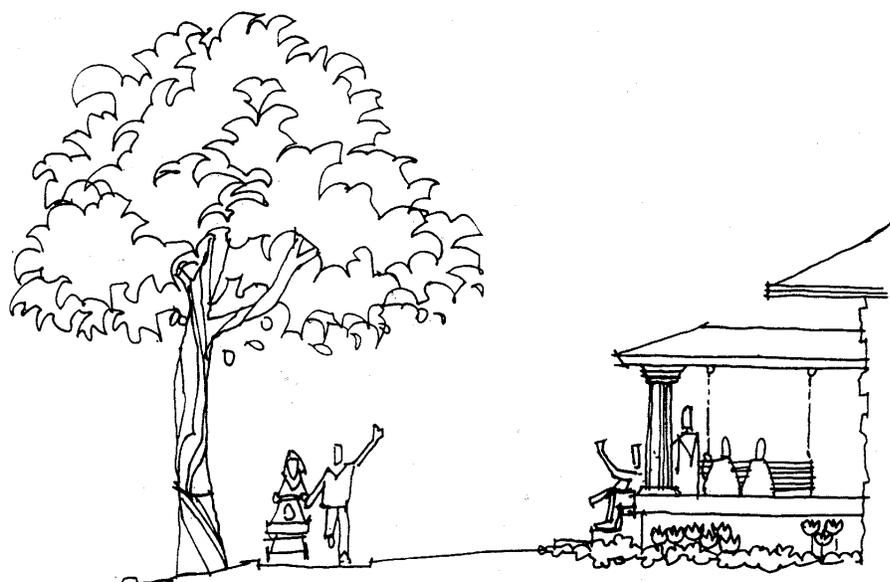
THE EAST 23RD STREET P.A.C. AND CAM PERSPECTIVE



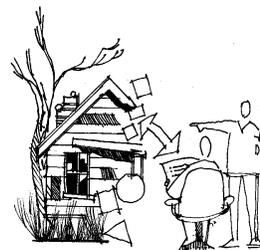
During the first half of the 20th century, the East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM neighborhoods were thriving residential districts on the East Side of Kansas City. Residents enjoyed easy access to the downtown shopping district and proximity to jobs. Many residents worked at the nearby Sears department store and distribution center, Armco Steel or Leeds Automobile assembly plant. Three major public schools, Ashland Elementary, Kensington Elementary and East High School and several parochial schools served neighborhood families. 24th street was an area of vibrant commercial activity that provided an abundance of goods and services within walking distance.

As early as 1950 the area began to experience a population loss as the residents began to age. Later, job opportunities declined as major industries closed or relocated. The construction of Interstate 70 eliminated many homes and created a barrier in and out of the area. Both neighborhood public schools, Ashland Elementary and East High, are currently closed.

East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM have struggled with many of the classic urban issues: aging homes, vacant lots, a high percentage of absentee landlords and reduced public and private investment.



THE EAST 23RD STREET P.A.C. AND CAM PERSPECTIVE

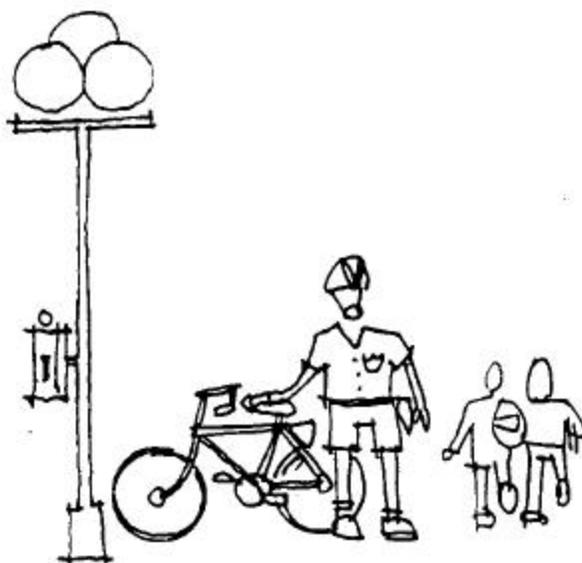


However, these neighborhoods retain many assets in the form of affordable homes, proximity to downtown, neighborhood parks and easy access to the interstate system. The physical assets of the neighborhood compliment the diverse assembly of people who call the East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM neighborhoods home.

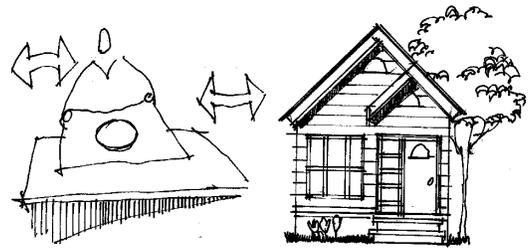
On June 17, 1999 residents met in the gymnasium of one of their long time partners, Minute Circle Friendly House, for a neighborhood self evaluation. The group was led by the presidents from the P.A.C. and CAM neighborhood associations. These leaders have worked hard for many years to make their neighborhoods good places to live.

Neighborhood leaders have organized clean-ups, secured funds for new infrastructure through the Public Improvements Advisory Committee (PIAC) and advocated for strong code enforcement.

Residents who attended the workshop spoke about the kind of community they want to build. They voted P.A.C. and CAM as redeveloping neighborhoods. They were encouraged by the construction of new homes in the area and they hope the new postal facility at 18th and Cleveland will spur investment in the community. The following report presents a brief overview of their ideas and observations. The report also documents images of the people and places that give the area a distinct identity.



PRIORITIES



Residents feel the most important issues they have before them are:

Improve Neighborhood Safety

Making the neighborhood more secure involves a comprehensive approach to reverse neglect. This includes building stronger connections among residents, combating crime and improving the physical condition of the neighborhood. .

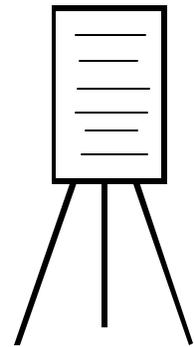
- Work in partnership with the East Patrol Station to establish Block Watch groups throughout the neighborhood
- Strengthen relationships on a neighbor to neighbor basis and encourage all residents to develop an appreciation for the cultural diversity of the area
- Continue to work for the productive use of boarded up buildings and the demolition of buildings that are beyond repair
- Organize residents to combat illegal dumping

Encourage Redevelopment

This area is a valuable asset to Kansas City because it features a high concentration of affordable homes. Re-investment is necessary to maintain the integrity of both neighborhoods.

- Focus on 24th Street and Cleveland as major corridors in the area. Both streets require curb and sidewalk improvements
- Expand the Neighborhood and Community Services Paint -Up program. Many elderly people who receive paint are physically unable to prepare and paint their homes
- Actively work with absentee landlords to improve maintenance of rental properties
- Individual residents, businesses and institutions can set a good example by keeping their own properties clean and well maintained.
- Dialogue with the KCMO School District to re-establish neighborhood schools

CHART NOTES



The East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM Neighborhood Assessment covered the area from Truman Road on the north to I-70 on the south, and from I-70 on the west to Van Brunt on the east.

Neighborhood Slogans

Residents of the East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM neighborhoods realize they will face challenges as they work to improve their neighborhood. They chose a slogan that recognizes successful redevelopment of the neighborhood will take a community effort. They chose the slogan:

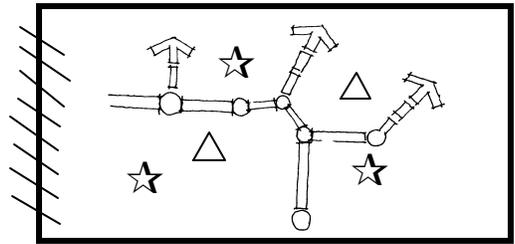
We're All In This Together

Other suggested slogans:

- Our Neighborhood is Historical
- Invitation to Nature
- Family Oriented Neighborhood
- For Future Generations
- War Zone
- Clean, Cooperative Neighborhood
- Growing for the Future



Assessment participants at work



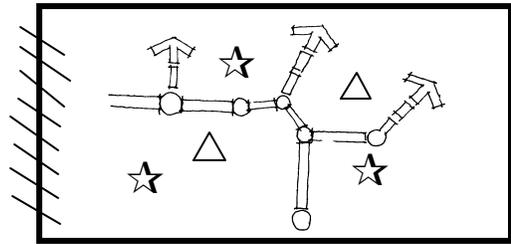
STEP 1: My Neighborhood Is

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, using the key below, and are listed on the next three pages.

- △ **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



Residents review information about their neighborhood



Landmarks

- St. Mary's Cemetery
- Original Ashland School
- Tender Care Learning Center, 24th and Van Brunt
- Santa Fe Trail Marker, 24th and Jackson
- East Patrol Station
- East High School
- Ashland School
- Galilee Baptist Church
- New Solid Rock Baptist Church
- Elmwood Cemetery
- Askew School

Activity Center

- Minute Circle Friendly House



Children enjoying a snack at Minute Circle Friendly House

Paths

- Hardesty
- Truman Road
- Van Brunt
- 23rd Street
- 24th Street

Barrier

- I-70

Features

- 23rd Street
- Chelsea Park
- Ashland Park



Feature - Chelsea Park in the East 23rd Street P.A.C. neighborhood

EAST 23RD STREET P.A.C. AND CAM IMAGES



Young residents of the East 23rd Street P.A.C. neighborhood



Public art near 26th and Van Brunt Boulevard



A view of downtown Kansas City from Van Brunt Park

EAST 23RD STREET P. A. C. AND CAM IMAGES



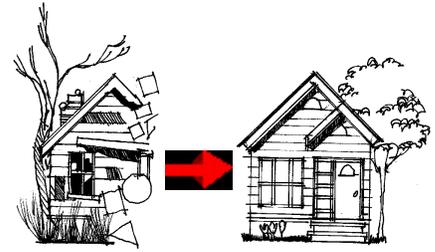
Mr. Stuart, a CAM resident, outside his home



Path: Cleveland Avenue, a main thoroughfare through the P.A.C. and CAM neighborhoods



A new home in the CAM neighborhood



STEP 2: If I Could Fix One Thing

In every neighborhood there are some things that need to be changed. These things stop residents from enjoying their neighborhood and from doing the things they like to do. Below is a list of the “fixes” that workshop participants would like to see in their neighborhoods:

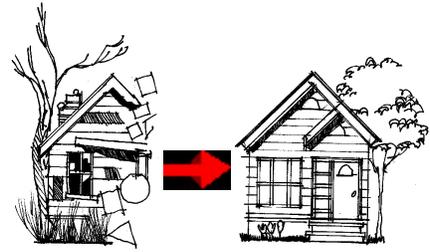
- Improve street lights
- Fix sidewalks on 23rd and Cleveland
- Increase police patrols throughout the neighborhood
- Install speed bumps on streets where there is frequent speeding
- Do a traffic study to help improve traffic flow through the area
- Improve neighborhood safety
- Repair streets and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood
- Educate residents about environmentally friendly practices
- Assist the elderly with home repair
- Clean streets and catch basins
- New sidewalks and curbs on 24th street from Jackson to Van Brunt
- Open a new supermarket in the neighborhood
- Cut the weeds on 24th street from Cleveland to Monroe



An abandoned home in the East 23rd Street P.A.C. neighborhood



A vacant lot on 24th and Monroe



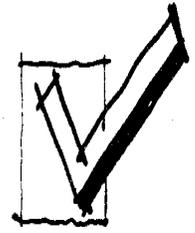
- Create more employment opportunities in the neighborhood
- Improve animal control
- Cut weeds on all vacant lots
- Improve code enforcement response time
- Build new owner occupied single family housing
- Modernize the traffic lights at 23rd and Cleveland and 24th and Van Brunt (the current configuration makes them difficult to see)
- Demolish vacant buildings
- Open more “mom and pop” businesses
- Improve the appearance of rental properties
- Eliminate drug and other illegal activity



The owner of this vacant home in CAM wants to renovate the structure and open a day care center



Could this vacant commercial property on 24th street be returned to a productive use?



STEP 3: My Neighborhood's Assets

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

- Royal Foods
- Central Bank
- Brighton Place Apartments
- Allen Hall
- Boy Scout Troop #17
- Boy Scout Troop #37
- Access to I-70
- Kensington Senior Center
- Chelsea Park
- Ashland Park
- Tender Care Learning Center
- East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM neighborhood associations
- All churches
- Minute Circle Friendly House
- New beauty shops on 24th and Jackson
- CAT officers
- East Patrol Station
- New beauty shops on Truman Road between Spruce and Kensington
- New Post Office on Truman Road and Cleveland Avenue



Mary Harbin, President of the CAM Neighborhood Association (left) and other neighborhood residents



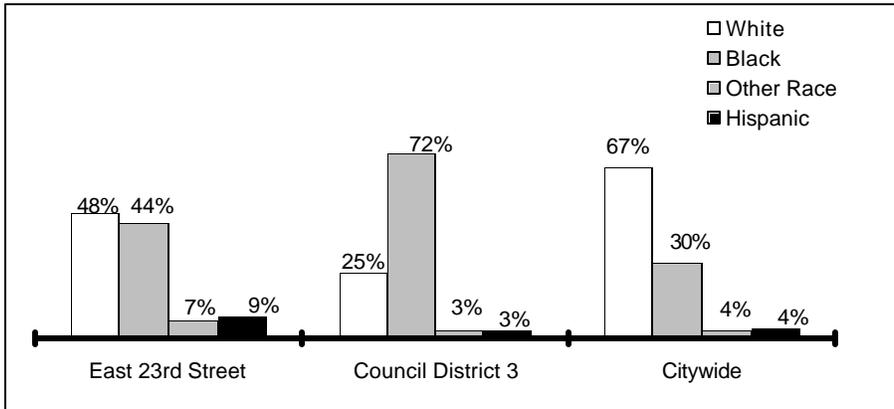
Joann Moore, Treasurer of the East 23rd Street P.A.C. Neighborhood Association, outside her home



STEP 4: Facts About My Neighborhood

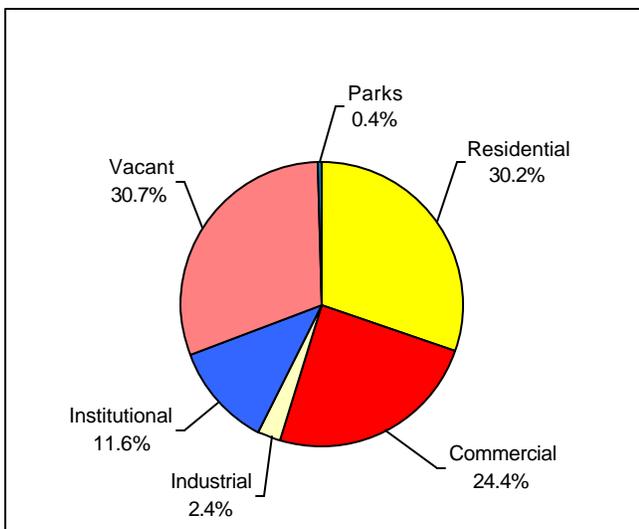
The data presented at the East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM Neighborhood Assessment was from the 1990 U.S. Census, and from 1998 information from the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and the Kansas City, Missouri City Planning and Development Department. Below are the facts that participants said were surprising or noteworthy. (See the neighborhood assessment workbook for more details.)

Racial Composition



Residents of the P.A.C. neighborhood saw their neighborhood diversity as a strength

Land Use



Vacant land in the CAM neighborhood presents an opportunity for redevelopment



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 Redeveloping.

Redeveloping

I have watched my neighborhood decline for many years now. No longer are the commercial areas as vibrant with activity as they used to be. Many residents, businesses and institutions have moved away. Many owners do not bother or cannot afford to maintain their property. The vacant houses and properties are really noticeable.

The area is already served by public improvements such as water, sewer, and roads and would be a good opportunity to attract new businesses or homes and some of the older homes and businesses could be rehabilitated. Better maintenance of public areas, roads, and sidewalks would help.

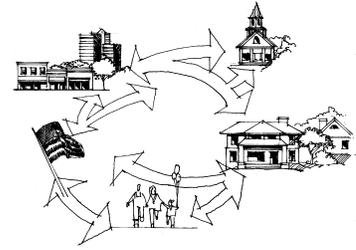
Problems are hard to fix through our neighborhood association, a call to the City, or neighbors getting together to help one another. It will take a strong commitment from the residents as well as others in the community to help strengthen this neighborhood, but it can be viable again.



One of many beautifully maintained homes in the area



A new house going up in the East 23rd Street P.A.C. neighborhood



STEP 6: Making My Neighborhood Better

Workshop participants talked about specific actions the 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. The following are ideas about what residents thought they could do to make the neighborhood a better place.

Things **We** can do by ourselves:

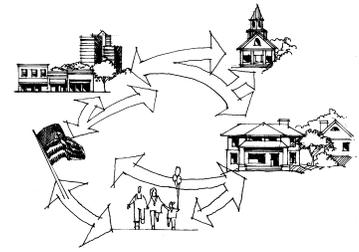
- Attend PIAC meetings to advocate for the interests of the area
- Provide alternate times for The East 23rd Street P.A.C. Neighborhood Association meetings (i.e., Saturday mornings) so people who work during the evening can attend
- Mobilize the community to re-establish a public school within the community
- Organize neighbors to cut the grass on vacant lots within the neighborhood
- People need to get to know their neighbors
- Create a strong appreciation of the cultural diversity within the neighborhood
- Plan a neighborhood celebration
- Contact the owners of rental properties that are in disrepair and ask them to make improvements
- Set a good example of neighborhood cleanliness by picking up trash
- Work with the police department to set up block watch groups



One CAM resident transformed an abandoned property into a landscaped lot



Maylo Cornelius, President of the East 23rd Street P.A.C. Neighborhood Association, speaks with Councilman Troy Nash



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

- Work with the KCMO School District to explore the possibility of re-opening Ashland School or establishing a neighborhood school at another site
- Explore resources for low-interest loans or other programs for people to receive help in fixing up their houses
- Connect with church youth groups and other sources of volunteers who could help seniors paint and make repairs to their homes



Ashland School



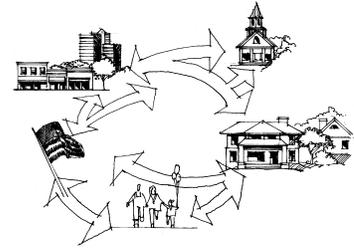
Workers repair a home on Myrtle

Things the **City** should do:

- Work closely with neighborhood residents to fight illegal dumping
- Assist the residents to obtain up to date information on the ownership of absentee landlords so the owner can be held responsible for maintenance
- Expand the Neighborhood and Community Services Paint-Up Program to include paint plus labor. Many people who receive paint are not able to paint their homes
- Install new curbs and sidewalks on Cleveland from 23rd to 25th streets
- Maintain vacant lots

Tall weeds on this lot in the CAM neighborhood are a neighborhood nuisance





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Thinking About Truman Road

The St. Louis-based consulting firm of Peckham Guyton Albers & Viets, Inc. will conduct a study of the Truman Road Corridor in upcoming months. The boundaries of this study are from 1-70 at Indiana to 1-435, and include the north and south sides of Truman Road.

During the workshop, East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM residents took some time to consider ideas relative to the upcoming Truman Road Corridor Study, keeping in mind that the success of the Truman Road Corridor Study will depend upon the housing, services, retail, and social activities along Truman Road. The Truman Road Corridor should compliment the residents' efforts to improve the neighborhood. Residents would like to see the following on Truman Road:

- Eliminate junky car lots
- Improve the appearance of all car lots
- Improve bus service
- Construct a K-Mart or Target Store
- Open of a family style restaurant (no fast food)
- Beautify the businesses and surrounding area
- Develop a mini-mall with a large retail store as an anchor
- Add a temporary employment agency
- Reduce commuter traffic



Central Bank of Kansas City is a long time a community partner on Truman Road

East 23rd Street P.A.C. and CAM Neighborhood Assessment Participants

Troy Anderson	Mary F. Harbin	Liz Rice
Onie Anderson	B. C. Harrison	David M. Ryan
Booker Armstrong	Yvonne Jones	Dick Seidelman
Helen Brown	Mr.&Mrs. Floyd May	Sareed Sipes
Fortsom Brown	Carolyn A. McCain	Mary Snead
Katie Brown	Renee McMahan	Jim Spears
Mary Butler	Mary Mittenfilner	Julie Tsang
Maylo Cornelius	JoAnn Moore	Curtis Urness
Deana Ervin	Troy Nash	H. David Whalen
Toni Findley	I na B. Nelson	Dorothy Whitney
Flo Goodson	Jarron Paronto	Larry Williams
Martin Haering	Vera Polk	Mary Wood

Sponsors and Contributors

East 23rd Street P.A.C. Neighborhood Association
CAM Neighborhood Association
Central Bank of Kansas City
Minute Circle Friendly House



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

- Vicki Noteis, AIA, *Director*
- Diane Charity, Sharon Cheers, Willie Mae Conway, Suzy Latare, Evalin McLain, Holly Mehl, John Pajor, *Neighborhood Assessment Team*

City Support

- Wei Sun, *Public Works*
- Ana Melgoza, *FOCUS Kansas City*