

HERE'S WALDO

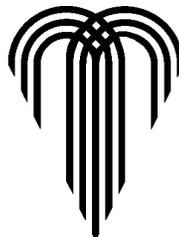
Neighborhood Assessment Report

Neighborhood Workshop Date: October 30, 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



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 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 assessment:

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

This community 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 neighborhood.



Well, it was Halloween at the Here's Waldo Neighborhood Assessment workshop, so some of the residents "dressed" for the occasion.



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.



Neighbors voting on their Neighborhood Type

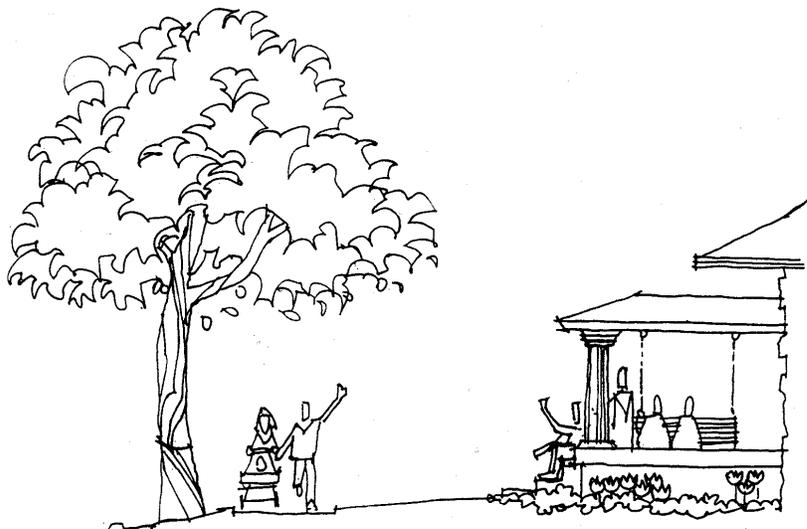
THE HERE'S WALDO PERSPECTIVE



The Here's Waldo neighborhood could easily be dubbed as Kansas City's first "suburb" because of the way the Town of Waldo emerged in the early 1800's. The area was named after Dr. David Waldo, a practicing physician, who purchased the area in 1828 as part of the federal government's Louisiana Purchase. At that time, the area was noted for its bustling residential and commercial activity. Small businesses sprouted to provide basic goods and services for the residential "suburbanite" Waldo area. By the late 1880's Waldo had also emerged as an entertainment mecca, with a racetrack and an assortment of bars, dance halls and honky-tonks.

Today, Here's Waldo's 3,200 residences and the densely situated businesses along Wornall Road remain. There are new hopes for improvements such as uniform billboard signs along Wornall Road, as well as facelifts and renovations for some of the businesses. Improvements to "the creek" to facilitate storm water drainage, and new curbs, sidewalks, and street shoulders throughout the residential areas are also anticipated.

Here's Waldo is a vibrant community under the leadership of Eula Inloes and Olive Snider. These life long residents have helped to ensure a certain quality of life for their community. Under their leadership, residents, community organizations and businesses assembled on Saturday, October 30, 1999 at the Armour Heights Baptist Church for their neighborhood self-evaluation workshop. The workshop was an opportunity for those gathered to critically look at the area in where they live, work, and play, and to shape plans for the future.



THE HERE'S WALDO PERSPECTIVE



The workshop participants discussed many issues- their neighborhood assets, the things they would like to change, data about their neighborhood, and ways in which to make their neighborhood better.

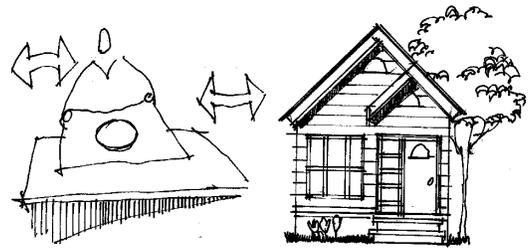
The group identified their Neighborhood Type as Stabilization. The residents appreciated the abundance of affordable homes, the young families moving into the area, the parks, and the nearby business district. At the same time, they recognized the challenges of a Stabilization neighborhood, which include the need for curbs and sidewalks on many residential streets, aging sewer and storm water systems, and lack of routine maintenance for some houses and businesses.

With this report, the residents will have documentation of the issues they discussed and a framework for on-going discussion. At the conclusion of the workshop, the residents seemed eager to work with neighboring business and home associations, City departments, and other community partners to ensure the viability of their community.



The character, charm and affordability of the homes in Here's Waldo are assets.

PRIORITIES



The following themes were the result of the workshop participants' ideas concerning ways to improve their neighborhood.

Improve Traffic Safety Throughout the Residential Area

Narrow streets within the residential area of Here's Waldo and the speeding traffic create hazardous conditions in the neighborhood. The residents suggested these actions:

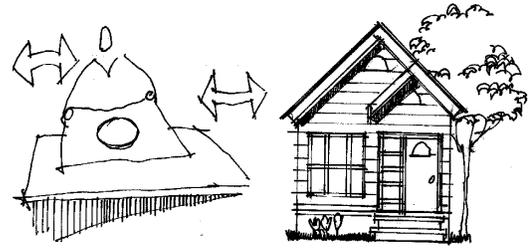
- Conduct a traffic study on 79th Street to determine what type of traffic regulations can be imposed to make the street safer for residents and pedestrians.
- Install pedestrian walking signs at 77th and Wornall. There is heavy traffic at this intersection which makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross the street.
- Work with the Area Transportation Authority(ATA) to make improvements at its bus stops to accommodate disabled persons, i.e. wider benches, larger bus shelters that can accommodate wheelchairs, etc.

Enhance the Quality of the Homes and Businesses

Residents want to see continued improvements to the homes and businesses throughout their neighborhood. They suggested the following:

- Encourage renters to participate in the neighborhood association.
- Work with Parks and Recreation Department to better maintain Sunnyside Park with frequent trash collection, closely monitor the park to deter suspicious activity in the park, and make improvements to the walking trails.
- Work with the Waldo Business Association and other surrounding neighborhood associations to develop plans for improving the appearances of the businesses, i.e. uniform sign displays, landscaping, etc.
- Invite new businesses to participate in the neighborhood association in order to develop more partnership opportunities with the businesses. (The Saturn dealership provided playground equipment in Sunnyside Park, and the new Kicks Phillips 66 erected a new fence and lighting for the residents in the 7800 and 7900 blocks of Washington. There is a new business opportunity for the vacated Piggly Wiggly grocery store space at 76th and Wornall)

PRIORITIES



Continue Public Works Improvements

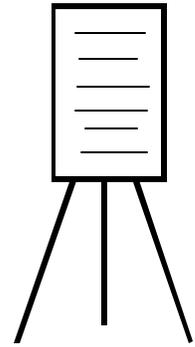
The group is pleased with the design work for improving stormwater and drainage throughout the residential area. Below are some ideas for continued involvement:

- Continue to meet with the Larkin Engineering Firm to monitor the planning and construction of storm water sewers, culverts and other drainage improvements
- Request that the City Public Works Department construct new curbs, sidewalks and shoulders on 79th Street Wornall Road to Ward Parkway Plaza
- Use the Public Improvement Advisory Commission (PIAC) process to request new curbs in the 8000 and 8100 blocks of Pennsylvania



Everyone has an opportunity to vote on their priorities for their neighborhood

CHART NOTES



The Here's Waldo Neighborhood Assessment covered the area from 75th Street to 85th Street, and Wornall Road to Ward Parkway Plaza.

Neighborhood Slogans

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

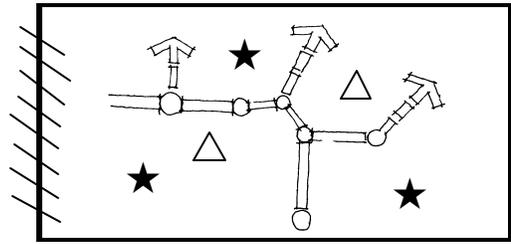
The selected slogan: **Best in the West**

Other suggested slogans:

- Nice Houses - Nice Neighbors
- Small Houses - Big Hearts
- Here's Waldo Caretakers
- Neighbors with Pride
- Tiny Houses - Huge Hearts



Residents discussing ideas for their Neighborhood Slogan



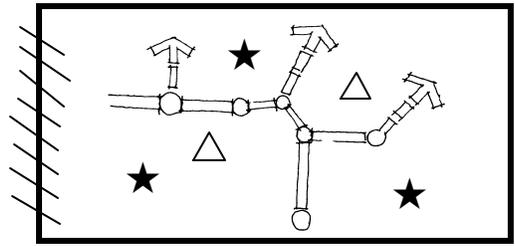
STEP 1: My Neighborhood Is

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



The Armour Home residence is a landmark in the Here's Waldo area



Landmarks

- Armour Homes (senior citizens' residence) and the Gillis Center
- Waldo neighborhood marker on the northeast corner of 75th and Wornall
- Armour Heights Baptist Church, 79th and Jarboe
- Calvary Lutheran Church and School
- Nice character of homes

Paths

- ATA (Area Transportation Authority) proposed Trolley Track Trail
- 79th Street
- 81st Street
- 75th Street
- Wornall Road
- Ward Parkway

Activity Centers

- Armour Heights Baptist Church
- Sunnyside Park
- Sunnyside Park walking trail
- Armour Homes walking trail
- Toucan Sam's bar on Wornall Road (now closed)

Districts

- Waldo business district
- Ward Parkway Shopping Center

Edges or Barriers

- No sidewalks, curbs or street shoulders on 79th Street
- No sidewalks, curbs or street shoulders on 81st Street
- The "flooding" creek that runs from 73rd and Ward Parkway to Wornall Road

Sunnyside Park: A neighborhood asset and activity center. Residents want the Sunnyside Park to be as attractive as the Jacob Loose Park with amenities such as improved walking trail and better maintained grounds



HERE'S WALDO IMAGES



Landmark and Activity Center:
The walking trail at the Gillis Center



Landmark and Feature:
New playground equipment in Sunnyside Park

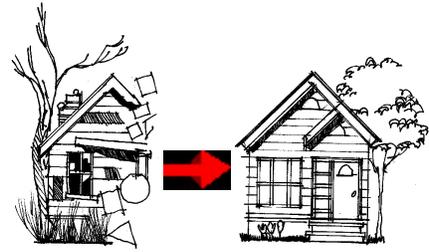
HERE'S WALDO IMAGES



District: The Waldo gallery and antique area



Activity Center: The new Phillips 66 Kicks station opened in November, 1999



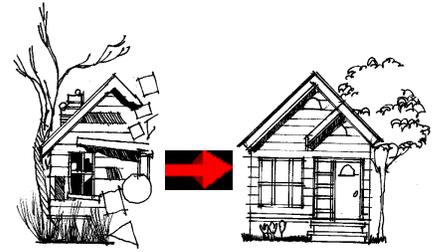
STEP 2: If I Could Fix One Thing

In every neighborhood there are some things that need to be changed. These issues interfere with residents' enjoyment of their neighborhood and can keep them 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 Here's Waldo neighborhood.

- Improve Sunnyside Park with amenities such as new picnic tables/benches, water fountains, landscaping, restrooms
- Maintain Sunnyside Park with better trash containers and frequent trash collection
- Enforce housing maintenance codes against rental properties, i.e. removal of old cars on property, clean and trim overgrown yards
- Improve the outside appearances of Wornall Road businesses, i.e. painting, uniform decor
- Design uniform and attractive signs for businesses on Wornall Road
- Decrease the number of signs that businesses have on Wornall Road; business signs clutter and obstruct the view of the streets
- Create positive public relations material about the neighborhood
- Contact City Public Works engineers and The Larkin Group engineering consultants on improving problems with the Creek, i.e. surface water flooding, inadequate drainage
- Obtain information about services for persons with disabilities, i.e. public transportation shelters and low interest loans on home improvements



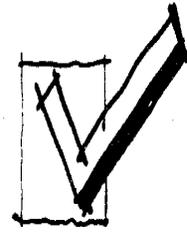
Too many businesses' signs clutter the business route along Wornall Road



- Improve health and wellness facilities and activities for residents of every age group, i.e. well-lighted walking trails
- Continue to work with City Water Department concerning stormwater and catch basin improvements
- Provide a site for a recycling center close to the neighborhood
- Work with the new Kicks Phillips 66 service station as a partner on neighborhood and business issues
- Landscape and beautify Wornall Road, and Sunnyside Park (to resemble Loose Park)
- Install proper storm drains through out Here's Waldo
- Install sidewalks in the 7700-7900 blocks of Washington
- Widen 79th Street to accommodate the heavy traffic
- Trim trees and large branches that obstruct view around traffic signs: stop signs, speed regulation signs, pedestrian signs
- Install a left turn signal for traffic lights at 75th and Wornall and 79th and Wornall
- Install a middle turn lane on Wornall Road from 75th Street to 85th Street to facilitate traffic flow



One of the many open storm sewers and culverts in the residential area that need improvement



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.

- Here's Waldo Neighborhood Association
- Ward Parkway Citizens Group
- Nice homes and nice people
- Sunnyside Park and walking trails within the park
- Indoor walking trail at Ward Parkway Shopping Center
- Wildlife, nature, mature trees
- Good geographic location close to Ward Parkway, Plaza, Brookside, and Bannister Mall shopping districts
- Good conveniences (retail stores, services, restaurants) within walking distance
- Waldo Branch Library
- Charm and character of the homes
- Armour Heights Baptist Church
- Public transportation
- Antique stores on West 75th Street
- Calvary Lutheran Church and School
- Armour Homes Campus (senior citizens residential living)



The Waldo Public Library Branch:
A neighborhood asset



The Calvary Lutheran Church and School: A
neighborhood asset

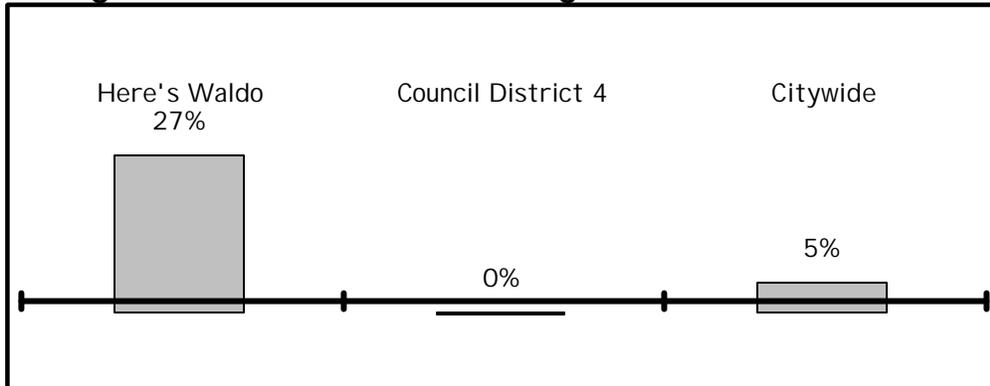


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STEP 4: Facts About My Neighborhood

The data presented at the Here's Waldo 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 the participants said were surprising or noteworthy. (See the neighborhood assessment workbook for more detail.)

Change in Number of Housing Units 1980-1990



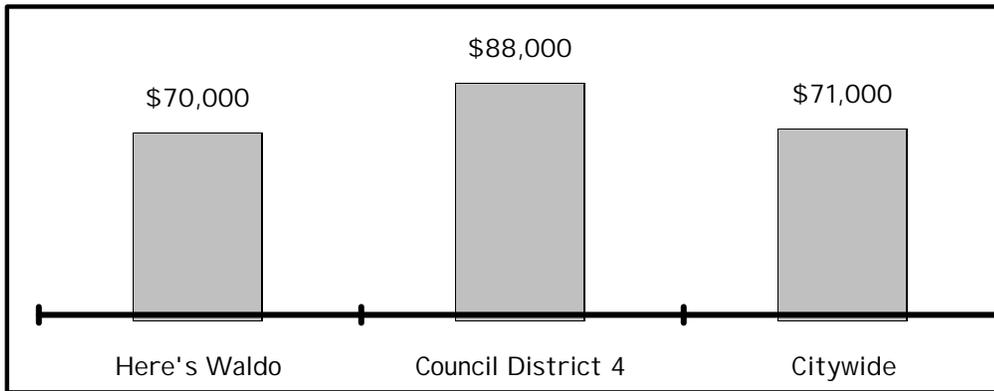
The duplexes built on Washington Street in 1983 (see picture below) account for the 27% increase in the new housing units.





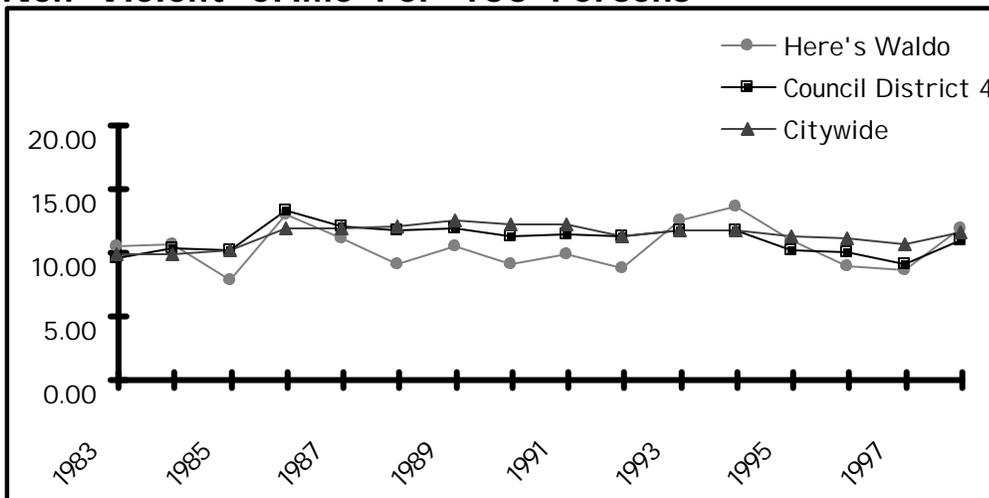
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Median Value of Single Family Homes



Residents believe the current value of single family homes maybe as high as \$80,000-\$90,000 as compared with the 1998 projection of \$70,000.

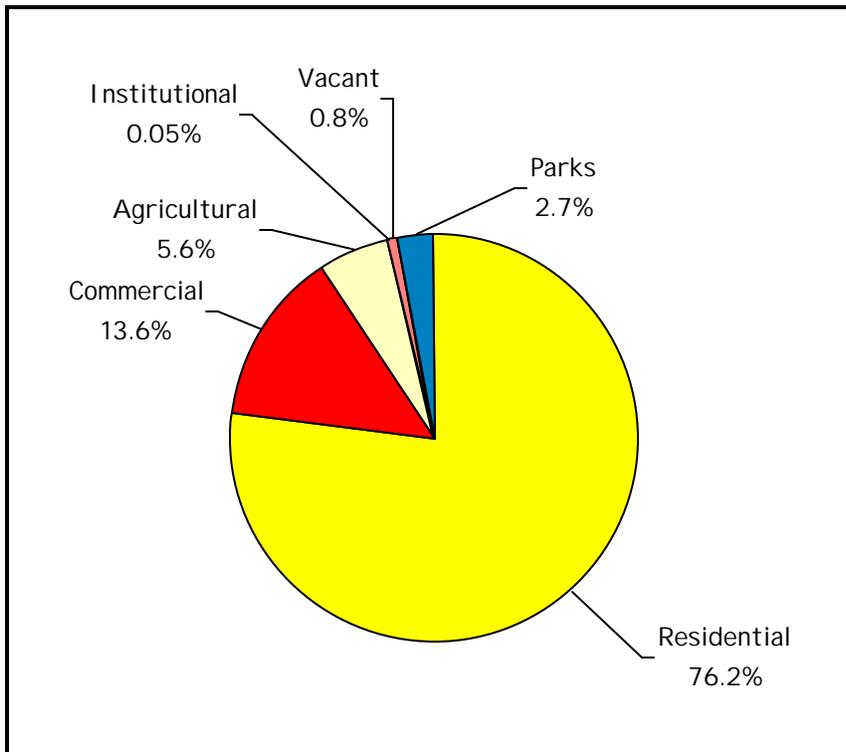
Non-Violent Crime Per 100 Persons



Here's Waldo's non-violent crime rate is low compared to the City and Council District 4. Residents attribute the crime that does exist to the businesses and commercial areas on Wornall Road. The business activity appears to correlate to certain crime problems, such as auto theft and stealing contents from autos.



Land Use



Although the commercial land use for Here's Waldo is relatively low (13.6%), residents believe that the commercial area contributes to increased crime, i.e. auto theft. Residents also want to see improvements in the commercial area, such as renovations of the businesses and uniform business signs along Wornall Road.



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

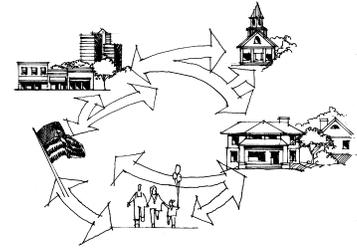
My neighborhood has been developed for some time. Several of the businesses and institutions located in the neighborhood may be changing, either recently expanding, scaling back services, just moved into the neighborhood or considering moving to another location outside the neighborhood. Places of worship,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



Residents converse about the map information



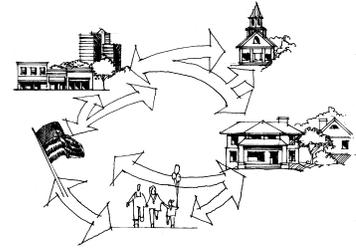
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STEP 6: Making My Neighborhood Better

Here's Waldo 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**:

- Invite City Departments to attend neighborhood meetings and ask them to address problems with the proposed plans for the Creek and storm drainage
- Utilize the resources of the Shepherd's Center to identify services for senior citizens, for example transportation to appointments, home repair services, activities for seniors, etc.
- Meet with the KCATA (Kansas City Area Transportation Authority) to discuss transportation improvements for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, such as improvement of bus shelter on 75th and Wornall, longer and wider benches, larger bus shelters to accommodate persons with wheelchairs and other devices
- Organize the neighbors to identify their role in improving Sunnyside Park, i.e. follow up on reporting problems to Parks and Recreation Department, report suspicious problems to police department
- Hold neighborhood meetings that can accommodate families with young children, publish meeting notices in the neighborhood newsletter and make childcare available
- Contact young families with children to determine how they can be more involved in their neighborhood
- Work with the Waldo Homes Association (79th to 82nd Street, Wornall Road to Oak Street) and other surrounding neighborhood associations on large scale neighborhood projects like storm water improvements, replacement of curbs/sidewalks, and other infrastructure improvements

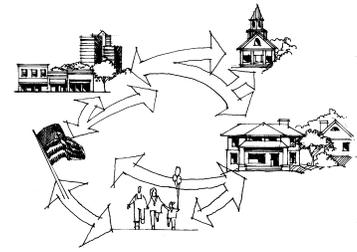


Things we can do with a **Partner:**

- Work with Waldo Homes Association and other surrounding neighborhood organizations on larger infrastructure improvement projects such as curbs and sidewalks, storm drainage
- Develop a partnership with other homes associations, Parks and Recreation Department, and surrounding neighborhood businesses to address issues involving Sunnyside Park and the vacant commercial building at 76th and Wornall Road
- Contact area businesses to assist with funding for Waldo neighborhood landmarks within the neighborhood
- Utilize existing programs through Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance (KCNA) to help identify needs for the neighborhood (attending codes academy training, hosting a capacity mapping workshop, applying for self-help grants)
- Involve the new Kicks Phillips 66 service station business with neighborhood events and other activities that would help the service station to become a good neighbor, such as clean ups of Sunnyside Park; invite Kicks representative to all of the neighborhood meetings

Residents want to work in partnership with the property manager to see a new grocery store or a nice retail business in this vacant building at 76th and Wornall Road





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Things the **City** should do:

- Install curbs and sidewalks and implement other street improvements on 79th Street from Ward Parkway Plaza to Wornall Road
- Construct new curbs in the 8000 and 8100 blocks of Pennsylvania
- Schedule quarterly leaves/brush curbside collections as opposed to the current Spring and Fall leaves/brush collections
- Allow leaves/brush to be placed in plastic bags as opposed to paper bags; paper bags are more costly than plastic bags
- Conduct a traffic study on 79th Street to determine what type of traffic regulations can be imposed for that street to make it safer for pedestrians and the residential properties that about 79th Street
- Install traffic sign(s) at 77th and Wornall for pedestrian traffic
- Keep the residents advised concerning the plans for improvements to the creek; the neighborhood has been very active in the study, plan and construction of the improvements for the creek
- Repave and fill the 6 inch deep potholes on Wornall Road (between 75th and 85th streets) that cause damage to vehicles; the City recently resurfaced/repaved this area of the street but there are still some potholes
- Work with Parks and Recreation Department to better maintain Sunnyside Park, to include: frequent trash collection, installation of additional trash containers throughout the park, additional police patrol in the part to deter suspected prostitution and drug activity
- Identify programs and services for persons with disabilities, i.e. home improvement programs, transportation services

Here's Waldo Neighborhood Assessment Participants

Kay Bode	Naomi C. "Hap" Harmon	Andre Pule
Tom Bode	Doris Hinds	Eileen Sheehan
Larine Craig	Becky Horlander	John Shipp
Mary Ann Duester	Jim Horlander	Ken Snider
George J. Duneanson	Eula Inloes	Olive Snider
Amy Eckhoff	Betty Irvin	Laura B. Ulich
Shannon Eckhoff	Donna Kester	Glenda Virtue
Shirley Fisher	Mark O'Banion	Jim Watters
Pat Foster, KCPD	Rutha Perry	Michele Watters
		MaryLou Williams

Special guest: Hideki Koizumi, *Visiting Scholar, University of Washington, Department of Urban Design and Planning; Associate Professor, The University of Tokyo, Department of Urban Engineering*

Sponsors and Contributors

Thanks to the following persons and organizations that helped to make the Here's Waldo Neighborhood Assessment possible:

- Here's Waldo Neighborhood Association
- Armour Heights Baptist Church

Getting Involved

To find out more about the Here's Waldo Neighborhood Association, call one of the neighborhood leaders: Eula Inloes (363-8790), Olive Snider (333-7205) or John Shipp (523-7851).



Armour Heights Baptist Church: a neighborhood asset, and site of the Here's Waldo Neighborhood Assessment workshop



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

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