



Hispanic Economic Development Corporation

*Equitable Neighborhood
Development Action Plan*

Developed in partnership with



Mission

The Hispanic Economic Development Corporation is dedicated to improving the lives of Latinos within the greater Kansas City. HEDC achieves this area through business development and economic and community wealth creation initiatives.

Hispanic Economic Development Corporation

Equitable Neighborhood Development Action Plan

Table of Contents

01 Introduction	4
02 About the Neighborhood	6
03 Vision for the Neighborhood	12
04 Action Plan: Goals, Strategies, and Actions	14

01 | Introduction

The Hispanic Economic Development Corporation of Greater Kansas City (HEDC) was founded in 1993 for the purpose of developing and implementing economic development initiatives that would improve the quality of life for Latinos in the Greater Kansas City Area.

This action plan is intended to guide the organization's work in shaping the Westside into a neighborhood in which all can prosper economically and culturally. This plan provides an overview of the primary actions that will be taken by HEDC in an effort to advocate for equitable policies, improve economic opportunities, empower the community to be publicly engaged, and prevent potential displacement of existing residents and businesses.



02 | About the Neighborhood

The Westside neighborhood, adjacent to Kansas City's Downtown, was the settling point for many Mexican immigrants in the early 1900s and remains home to many 1st-3rd-generation Mexican-Americans. Today this neighborhood is home to over 2,500 people, over half of whom are Hispanic, and is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the city, not only in terms of race and ethnicity, but also in terms of education level, income levels, and more. The Westside also features many thriving businesses, particularly along Southwest Boulevard. There are four neighborhood associations and one additional association that represents the entirety of the Westside, which provide opportunities for residents to be engaged in the broader workings of the neighborhood.

Over time, the Westside has experienced a decline in population. From 2010 to 2017, the neighborhood lost 1,000 residents. During that same timeframe, the Hispanic population decreased from 66% to 59%. As this change occurs, there is concern about the potential loss of the neighborhood's cultural identity.

The Westside's proximity to downtown has had significant impact on life on the Westside. For decades, residents and small businesses in the Westside neighborhood were plagued by disinvestment. Today, median household incomes for Westside residents are approximately \$20,000 less than the median household income for all Kansas City residents, and the median home value in the Westside is approximately \$50,000 lower than the median home value for the city (see table).

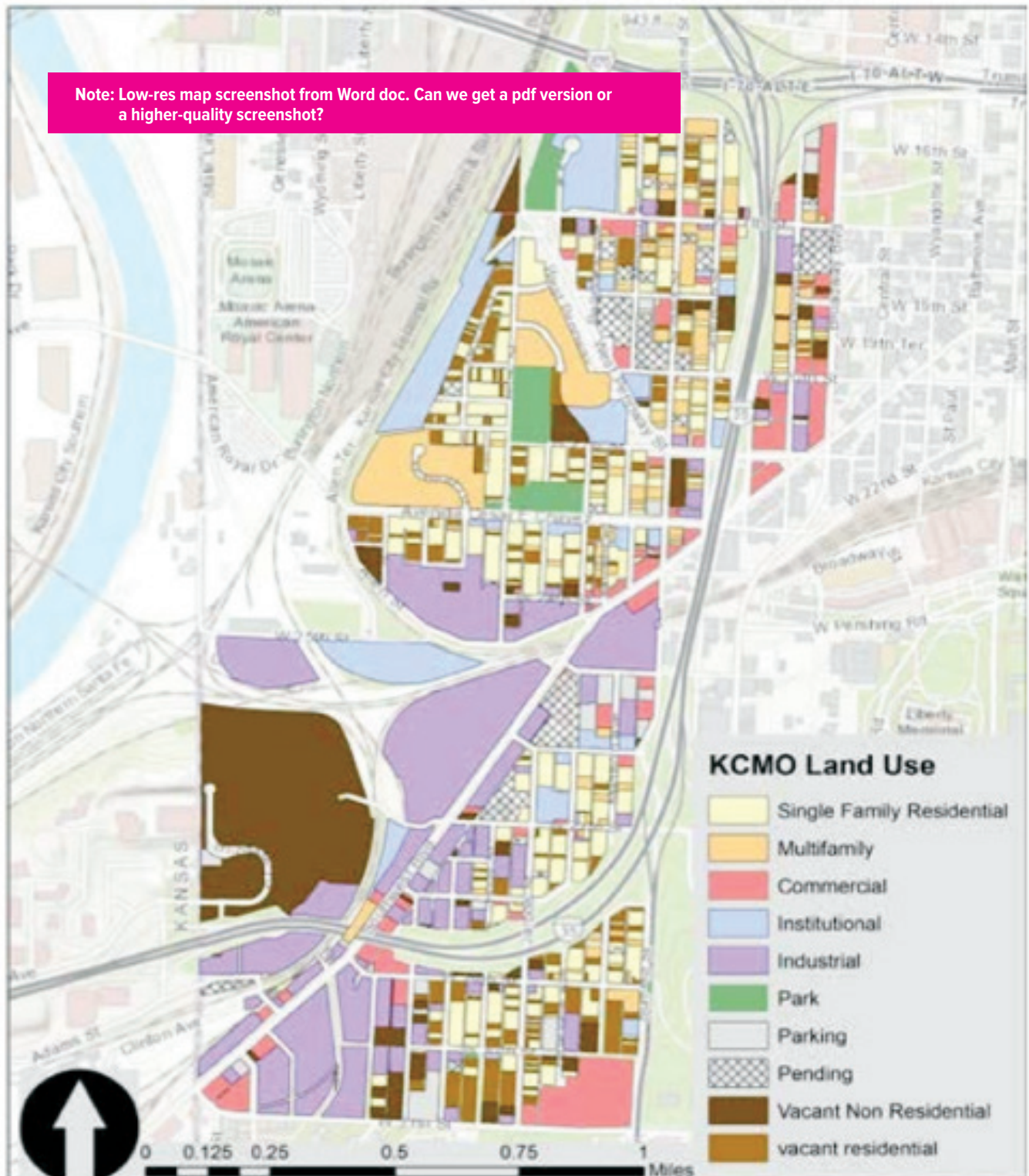
Now, as Kansas City experiences rapid development, Westside residents are facing the potentially negative impacts of that growth. As is shown in the map titled "Rapidly Changing Census Tracts 2011-2016", the Westside is bordered to the north, west, and east by areas that are experiencing faster-than-average increases in rents/home values, incomes, educational attainment, and non-Hispanic White residents.

Neighborhood Snapshot

	Westside Neighborhood (Census Tract 153)	Kansas City, MO
Population	2,546	476,974
Hispanic	59.3%	10.1%
Population with Bachelor's Degree or Higher, Age 25+	22.4%	33.5%
Foreign-born	19.5%	7.3%
Median Age	38.7	35.2
Median Household Income	\$30,384	\$50,136
Median Owner-Occupied Home Value	\$94,300	\$139,900
Renter occupied housing units	47.2%	46%

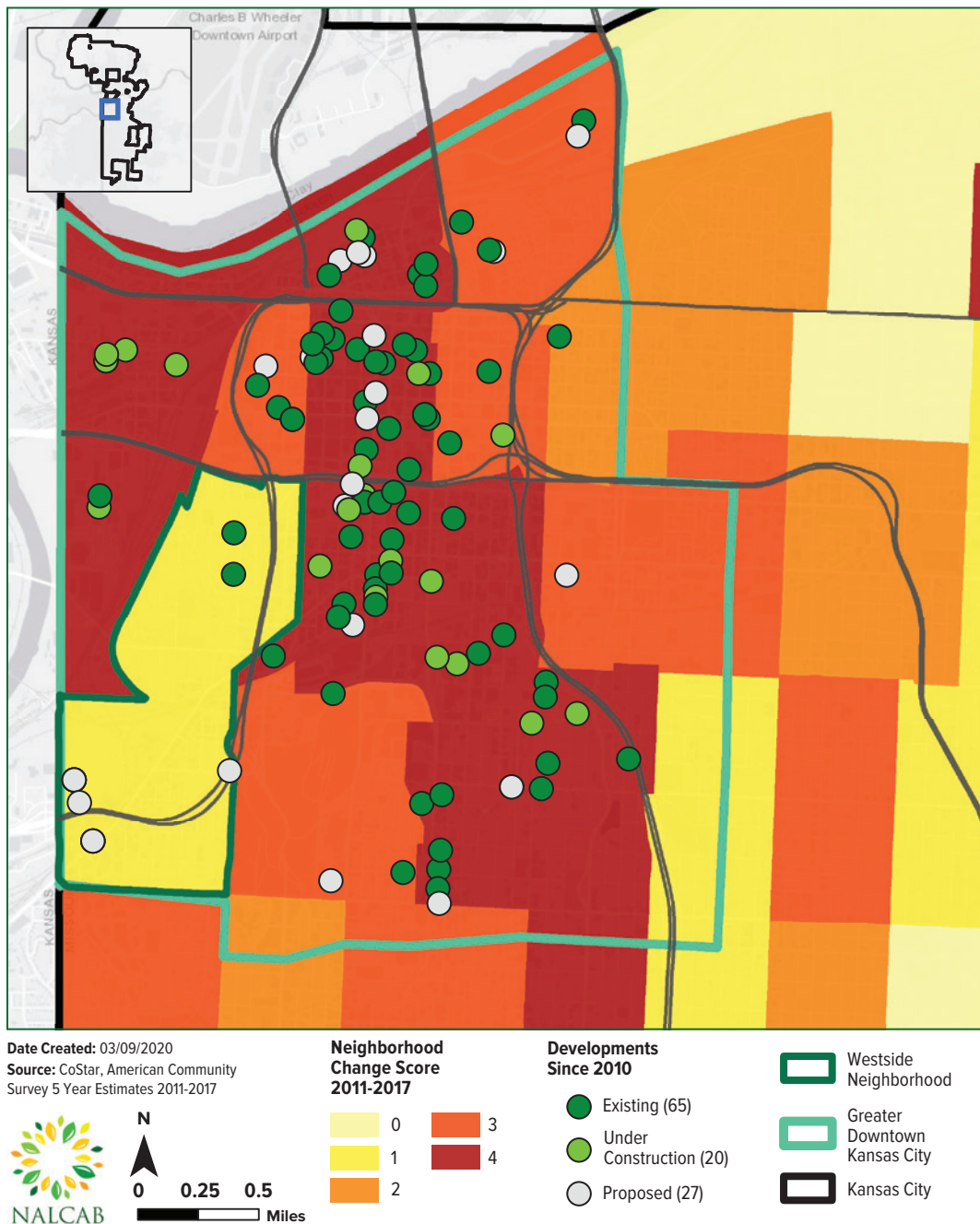
Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

2018 Land Use in the Westside



Source: UMKC Urban Planning +Design Senior Studio 2018. Capstone project prepared for HEDC to drive Planning and Policy Review profiles for the studied area.

Property Development and Neighborhood Change in Greater Downtown Kansas City



NALCAB's Neighborhood Change methodology identifies census tracts vulnerable to neighborhood change. Tracts that score higher (up to a 4, indicated with the darker red) are changing faster than the urban area as a whole. Those higher scoring tracts are typically already experiencing or are at significant risk for neighborhood change/gentrification. This map demonstrates that change has occurred at very fast rates in the tracts directly surrounding the Westside neighborhood. By including development that has occurred in the Kansas City Greater Downtown area over approximately the same time period, a pattern of development and demographic shifts can be seen and the potential risk to the Westside neighborhood better understood.

Local Planning Efforts

Over time, many plans aimed at improving downtown Kansas City and the surrounding areas have been developed and implemented. Though individual neighborhood plans have been created in the past, large area plans have been a more recent trend. The Sasaki Plan for downtown Kansas City, developed in 2005, sought to target development in defined activity centers, where jobs, housing, entertainment, culture, and hospitality could be concentrated within a five- to ten-minute walk. Commercial and residential development activity in the downtown has picked up during this time. A streetcar line was established on Main Street connecting four of these activity centers. This has had the effect of driving up real estate prices in the area. Jackson County has been embattled in controversy regarding sudden and dramatic increases in assessed property value with some homes seeing year-over-year increase of 70 percent according to reporting by KCUR, the local public radio station. This kind of project is the catalyst for the current economic growth creating displacement, opportunities for investment, and development in the Westside.

Developed in 2010 and updated in 2018, the Greater Downtown Area Plan (GDAP), which includes the Westside, similarly relies on zoning changes and catalytic investments to spur development. The main goals of the GDAP include improving walkability

and doubling the population of the downtown area. By removing zoning and other barriers to new housing in Downtown neighborhoods, including the Westside, the GDAP seeks to encourage new mixed-use development in order to meet the population-growth goal.

Residents from near-Downtown neighborhoods have not always been engaged in broader planning efforts and, though successful at generating large-scale economic development projects, these plans have not served all in the broader near-Downtown community. Nevertheless, forming the Umbrella Westside Neighborhood association has encouraged resident participation in the city planning meeting, and city planners had attendance to evening meetings with the neighbors. The sessions had focused the conversations on how to make the neighborhood an area that promotes aspects of business and cultural community-relevant characteristics.

The City of Kansas City, Missouri is at a tipping point. How development in the city proceeds will impact the future of its people—a process that can either benefit few or serve all by means of being equitable and seeking sustainability for all living here. A mayoral race in the second half of 2019 focused on issues of affordability and community-driven economic development. The prominence of these topics in city-wide conversations helps to position this action plan as an important asset to the City.

Sasaki Plan II



Source: <https://kcciviccouncil.org/media/1032/sasaki-plan-ii.pdf>

03 | Vision for the Neighborhood

Neighborhoods face a set of challenges that make it difficult to propose solutions that meet all the needs of neighbors. How do we best create walkable neighborhoods? Utilize tax incentives? Practice responsible land development? Grow a local economy to provide much-needed local amenities? These questions can be bundled into one all-encompassing question: ***How does the Westside neighborhood create a community that serves the needs of all people living, working, and doing business here?*** This question drives the goals, strategies, and actions laid out within this document.

For the Westside neighborhood there is strength in numbers. As residents and businesses move forward with the often-difficult act of setting aside personal differences — and individual grievances — there is the possibility of working in greater unity as a neighborhood to develop a vision and tackle the most fundamental challenges being faced today.

Neighborhood residents and businesses must find common ground as stakeholders and caretakers of the area and its history, as we ultimately possess the power to advocate for the change we want to see in the neighborhood.

With this document, HEDC hopes to provide a plan that raises the voices of Westside residents and ensures that their aspirations for their community and future are not lost in broader city-wide planning efforts. HEDC has identified strategies and actions to expand the benefits of increased development and growth to all in the community and ensure that Westside residents can contribute to and benefit from the increased economic activity. Through increased community engagement, and strengthened partnerships — both internally (Westside organizations, businesses, residents) and externally — the Westside neighborhood will be one that supports economic opportunities to all people.



To achieve the vision of a Westside community that serves the needs of all people living, working, and doing business here, HEDC plans to:

- Advocate for policies that support equity and sustainability in The Westside neighborhood.
- Increase access to economic opportunity and mobility.
- Empower communities to engage in policy, planning, and development processes that affect The Westside.
- Defend against possible displacement of current residents and businesses.

04 | Action Plan: Goals, Strategies, and Actions

Goal #1

Advocate for policies that support equity and economic and community development sustainability in The Westside neighborhood.

Strategy: Prioritize the areas of focus for HEDC's policy advocacy.

Strategy Timeline: Within 12 months HEDC will have contacted 5 department directors within city government.

- **Action:** Evaluate HEDC's policy-related activities since 2016 to determine recent trends.
- **Action:** Develop policy priorities for HEDC's engagement through discussion with HEDC staff and its Board of Directors.
- **Action:** Identify and analyze existing city policies and proposals to determine their pros and cons for the Westside and to inform new policy proposals.

- **Action:** Recommend changes to existing or new policy proposals to better support equity and sustainability in The Westside.
- **Action:** Monitor the city processes of decision-making and approval of the policies that have been defined as HEDC priorities.
- **Action:** Identify and reach out to potential allies within the city government, local leaders, non-profit organizations and private companies.

Strategy: Build collaborative relationships with community partners and stakeholders who have similar interests in meeting the needs of The Westside's businesses and residents.

Strategy Timeline: Within 12 months, HEDC will consolidate relationships with traditional allies and will have established an alliance of two new organizations.

- **Action:** Reach out to potential collaborators, individuals and/or organizations, who work on related topics such as business education issues and granting mini-credits and define areas of mutual interest.

- **Action:** Design a short and medium-term plan of activities to be carried out by organizations that participate as partners and stakeholders.
- **Action:** Establish a process for using meetings effectively with clear agendas to be discussed in each session in order to avoid fatigue and frustration of the members of the alliance.

Strategy: Facilitate the promotion, discussion, and participation in policy decision-making of all Westside residents.

Strategy Timeline: Within 6 months HEDC will offer its webpage and social media app as a portal open to the participation of community members.

- **Action:** Create a bilingual (English-Spanish) communication plan that combines different media and format strategies, traditional and online-based, to facilitate the participation of all members and community organizations interested in supporting policy decision-making.
- **Action:** Develop a platform for collecting and sharing community input.

Goal #2

Increase access to economic opportunity and mobility.

Strategy: Increase access to entrepreneurship support for neighborhood residents.

Strategy Timeline: Within 6 months HEDC will offer a new building, the Center for Urban Enterprise.

- **Action:** Develop a guide to online and other resources that could improve economic opportunities for neighborhood residents.
- **Action:** Launch the Center for Urban Enterprise, a facility that will offer resources including financial, entrepreneurship, and digital literacy education in addition to coworking, training, commercial kitchen, and event space available for community use.

Strategy: Increase access to financial capital for neighborhood residents.

Strategy Timeline: Within 6 months.

- **Action:** Partner with the existing companies in the Southwest Boulevard to implement a Community Improvement District (CID) to enhance the Southwest Boulevard commercial corridor, specifically through the Design Façade Improvement Program.
- **Action:** Use an advertising campaign to inform of opportunities for access to available capital for small Latino businesses both in the private sector and at HEDC.
- **Action:** Reach out to HEDC clients who have applied for a loan but did not qualify to learn about the obstacles they are facing in obtaining financial assistance and offer advice to overcome them.
- **Action:** Offer an online portal where business owners and neighbors can complete and submit the application requirements for financial assistance.
- **Action:** Use the CUE educational catalog to provide personalized access to high-quality education and training opportunities.
- **Action:** Develop an online portal that contains financial education tools including videos, podcasts, and toolkits in a bilingual format.

- **Action:** Offer short-term career credential pathway-focused employment training programs.
- **Action:** Encourage local banks to offer programs that match dollar incentives for saving tax refunds.

Goal #3

Empower communities to engage in policy, planning, and development processes that affect the Westside.

Strategy: Use CUE as a laboratory for participation and design of the ideas of neighbors, businesses, and other stakeholders in the Westside.

Strategy Timeline: Within 12 months HEDC will offer 6 workshops on topics related to participation in urban planning processes.

- **Action:** Use “Visions for The Westside” plan proposed by UMKC students as a launching point to encourage the participation of Westside residents.

- **Action:** Use the CUE educational-training catalog to allow access to information related to the Opportunity Zone designation for The Westside and other urban economic development programs.
- **Action:** Use CUE's educational-training catalog to teach issues related to development, planning, and policy making, and to facilitate residents' access to community economic development and leadership training.
- **Action:** Use CUE's webpage and social media platform to improve community feedback.

Strategy: Support the Westside North, Central, Sacred Heart, and The Hill neighborhood associations and the larger Westside Neighborhood Association.

Strategy Timeline: Within 12 months HEDC will offer six informative meetings.

- **Action:** Assign an HEDC staff person to regularly attend neighborhood meetings.
- **Action:** Provide technical support to strengthen neighborhood associations.
- **Action:** Encourage neighborhood leaders to participate in and complete Center for Neighborhoods training courses.
- **Action:** Identify the available data needed for decision making processes regarding proposals that will affect the Westside.
- **Action:** Use the CUE educational-training catalog to support Westside neighborhood residents interested in learning to analyze and visualize data.
- **Action:** Market events related to the urban economic development projects of the Westside Neighborhood Association.

- **Action:** Organize volunteer efforts to support events related to the urban economic development projects of the Westside Neighborhood Association.

Strategy: Engage community members in opportunities to learn about Kansas City's development, planning, and policy issues.

Strategy Timeline: Within 12 months HEDC will offer six informative meetings.

- **Action:** Develop a presentation for the community on the history of planning and development in the Westside neighborhood and the greater Kansas City area.
- **Action:** Organize a series of community meetings to identify community stakeholders, their interests and particular needs as well as what barriers may have previously prevented engagement in the public process.

Strategy: Engage young adults in training opportunities that will develop future community leaders.

Strategy Timeline: Within 12 months HEDC will engage 10 young adults in ongoing programming.

- **Action:** Design a youth leadership program based on personal mentoring.
- **Action:** Offer educational materials that help young people identify and develop the skills that will help them achieve their goals.
- **Action:** Add to CUE's educational-training catalog curriculum for students to learn to use a series of applications and apps (Skype, MS Word 365, TopHot, and others) to motivate and increase community participation of young people in urban planning and design processes.

Goal #4

Defend against possible displacement of current residents and businesses.

Strategy: Utilize vacant parcels in ways that minimize displacement risk for current neighborhood residents and businesses.

Strategy Timeline: Publish “Planning Sustainable Places Master Plan” and apply for an implementation grant in April 2020 funded by the regional planning organization, The MidAmerica Regional Council.

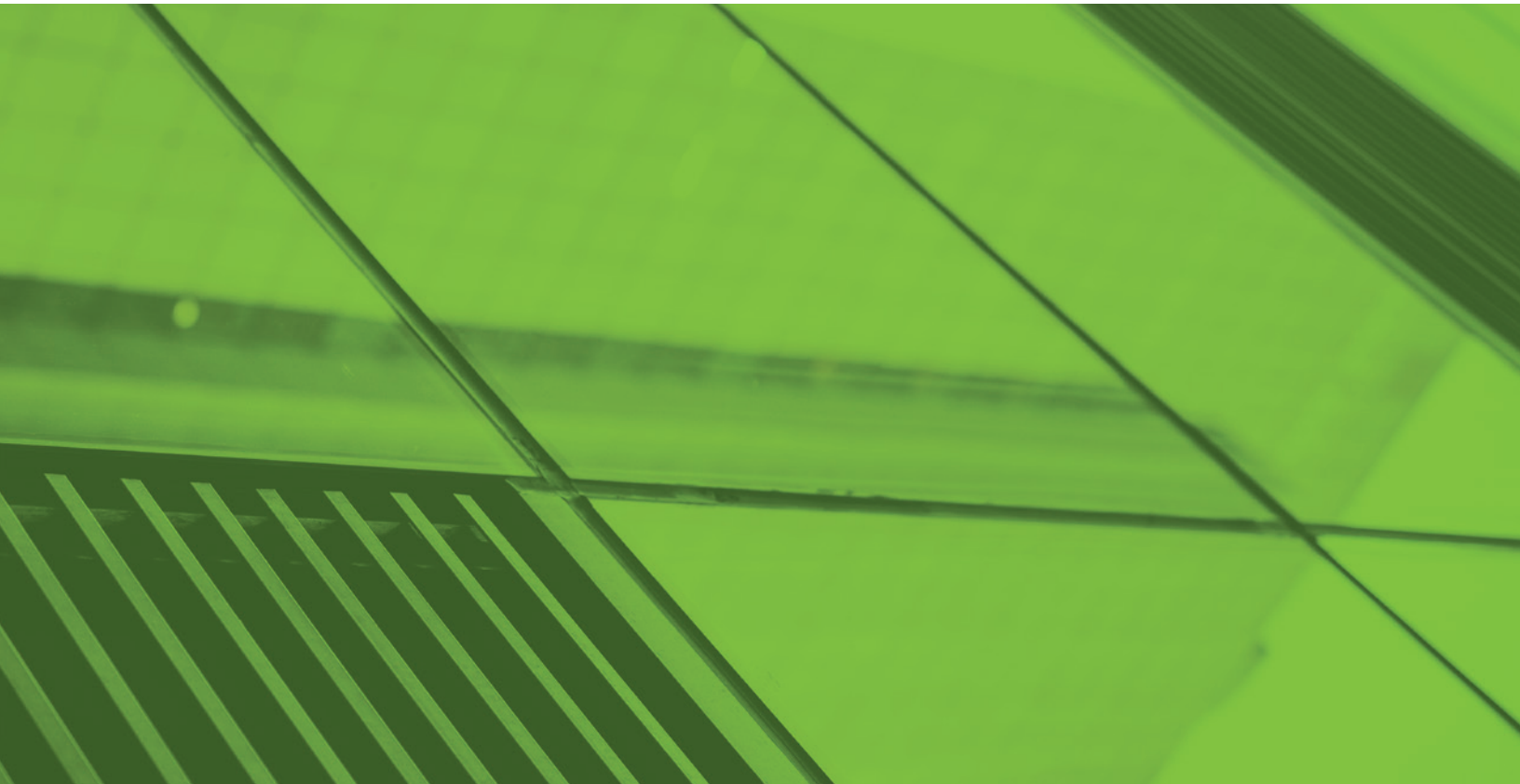
- **Action:** Produce an inventory of vacant parcels in the neighborhood.

- **Action:** Partner with community organizations to purchase vacant properties.
- **Action:** Promote activities that allow neighbors to identify the properties that are available and propose what use to give them.

Strategy: Advocate for equitable property tax assessments.

Strategy Timeline: Ongoing through 2021.

- **Action:** Build a coalition that works to contest unfair property tax appraisals.
- **Action:** Provide tax appraisal contesting assistance to residents of The Westside and other neighborhoods.
- **Action:** Work with County to develop alternative framework for tax appraisal evaluations to cap % per year increase in appraisal value, modeled after current agreement with the state of Missouri around the Center for Urban Enterprise location.



Strategy: Provide assistance to older adults to help them age in place.

Strategy Timeline: Design completion date 3Q 2020, fundraising financing 2021 with 3Q construction.

- **Action:** Build a senior assistance center on the HEDC property located at 1722 Holly Street.
- **Action:** Leverage Department of Labor Health Care Career training to bilingual care givers creating 120 new bilingual healthcare professionals.

Strategy: Advocate for policies and programs that protect and support renters.

Strategy Timeline: Work with the city council to approve housing policies 2020.

- **Action:** Promote programs to support renters of commercial properties, like resolution no. 190934, which establishes tenants bill of rights in Kansas City.
- **Action:** Support small entrepreneurs in the process of identifying and renting a commercial space along well-traveled commercial corridors.
- **Action:** Design a voucher model, for new companies along the Southwest corridor, which reimbursed expense to property owner for tenant improvements are being managed within CIDs.

This Equitable Development Plan is supported by:



NALCAB

National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders

5404 Wurzbach Rd., San Antonio, TX 78238

910 17th St, NW, Suite 500-C, Washington DC 20006

www.nalcab.org • programs@nalcab.org