

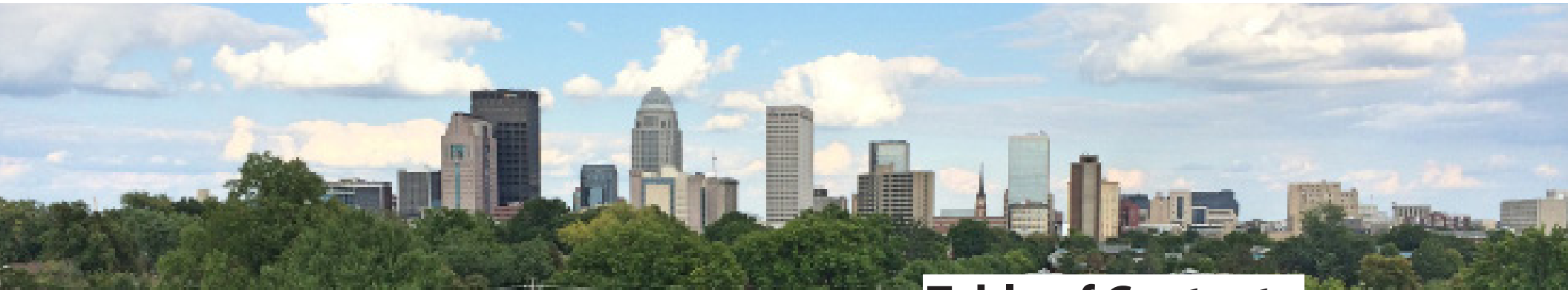
# LOUISVILLE SDAT: WEST OF NINTH



Louisville, KY | August 2015

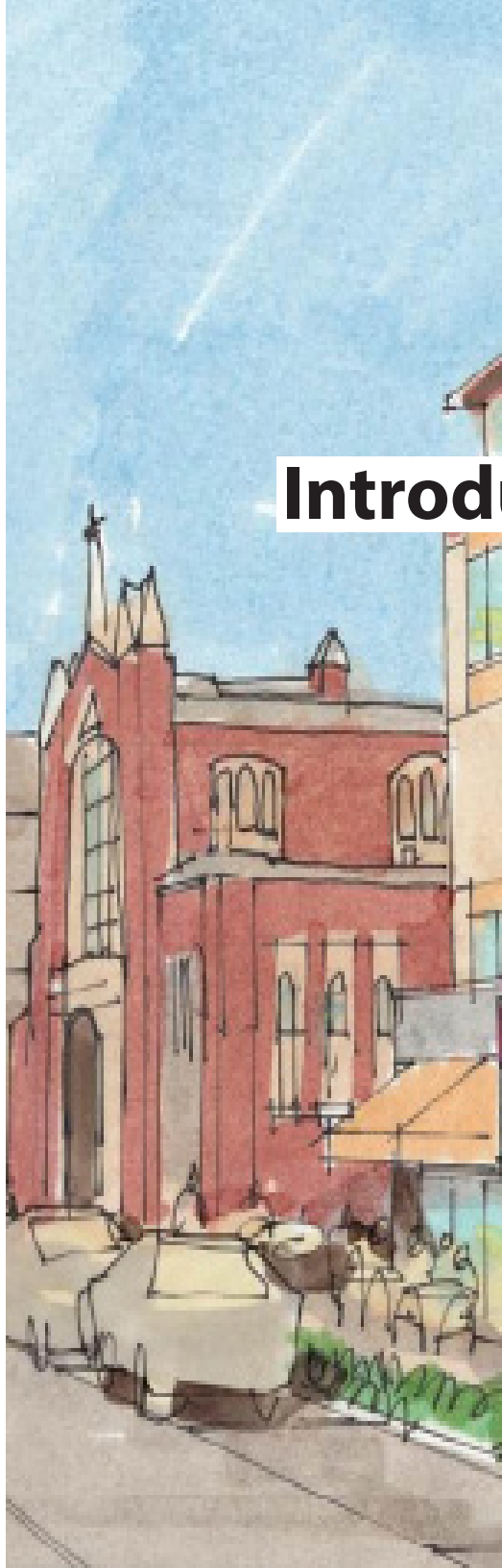
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# Introduction

## PROJECT OBJECTIVE

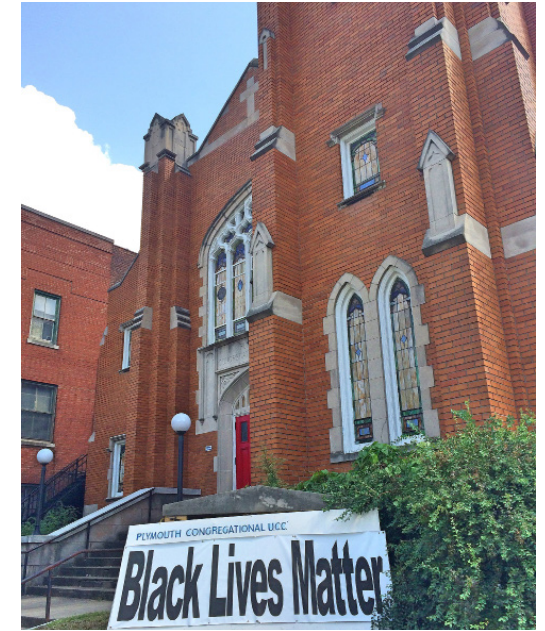
As the Louisville Central Community Center, Inc., defined it, “The objective of the West of Ninth SDAT process is to use a community engaged process to uncover alternatives for using urban design, mobility, and green infrastructure to leverage the rich history of the area for sustainable community development. In particular, the process asks designers, planners, and community partners to consider how two near term investments can catalyze broader community revitalization in the context of the West of Ninth Vision Plan. The outcomes of the SDAT process could include tools for community decision making for these two near term investments, as well as strategies for future community investment and growth.”

The West of Ninth SDAT proposal went on to define several key areas of inquiry, including developing strategies for:

- Reviewing the West of Ninth Vision in the context of frameworks for equitable development.
- Responding to the area’s rich cultural heritage and historic building stock.
- Conceptualizing alternatives for the city’s new housing proposal that strengthen West of Ninth and catalyze further community growth.
- Developing land use and mobility strategies that strengthen connections to downtown Louisville.
- Forming sustainable approaches to establish green infrastructure in the area.
- Creating educational, skills development, and entrepreneurial opportunities for the current residents of West of Ninth.

## Existing Conditions: Unequal Urban Realities

In its heyday, the Russell Neighborhood and adjacent area was known as “Louisville’s Harlem” but urban renewal efforts wiped out 12 blocks of the core business district in a few short years during the late 50s and early 60s. As a resident described it, “It was Louisville’s Bourbon Street. The block had a personality. It was alive and warm. It could be hypnotic and yet robust and boisterous.” One local news retrospective called it, “the lost city within Louisville.” Today, 58% of residents live below the poverty line (including 3,000 kids), have less than a third of the median citywide income (in some cases much lower), and face 30% unemployment rates.



About 15% of the housing stock in Russell is vacant. Over 60% of the housing in Russell was built before 1950, and property values in the area have dropped precipitously in the last 15 years - resulting in an estimated loss of over \$9 million in asset value. The violent crime rate in Russell is five times the citywide rate for Louisville. These challenges all contribute to a starkly different reality for residents trying to succeed in Russell, despite the fact that it is adjacent to the downtown and should have geographic advantages that make it a robust area of the city. The Beecher Terrace public housing projects were built in 1941, originally to house WWII plant workers. The design team was told that average family income in the 764 unit complex is below \$3,000. Beecher was featured on Frontline's special project regarding the impacts of incarceration on communities - 1 in 6 residents spend some portion of the year in prison, costing over \$15 million that could be invested in human capital and the future of the place rather than incarceration. The Russell neighborhood and surrounding area are referred to by locals as "West of 9th," a demarcation and perceptible isolation from the city at large. Even though the neighborhood is adjacent to Louisville's downtown, most local residents refer to the 9th Street corridor as "The Wall" - a place that is not crossed by residents on either side of the perceived divide, creating dramatically different urban realities for citizens.

At a kick-off to the design team's public workshop, Mayor Greg Fischer bemoaned the past city experience with what he called "urban removal" and the failed urban renewal policy that led to wiping out the original Walnut Street corridor. "In many ways, I wish we could have that back," he told the audience. "We took away areas of vibrancy and turned them into areas of desolation." Thankfully, the city is beginning to turn the page on this disappointing history with a renewed effort to engage residents in a collective vision for the area's future, as well as a number of new initiatives. The city is participating in HUD's Choice Neighborhood program, created to help design locally driven strategies that revitalize struggling neighborhoods with distressed public or HUD-assisted housing. The area, which is currently a food desert, is slated for a major food port development as well. And, under the leadership of the Louisville Central Community Center, the neighborhood is beginning to come together around a vision for its future.



The goal of the SDAT process was to bring some of these efforts together in a coordinated revitalization strategy focused around Muhammad Ali Boulevard, leveraging current and future investments for transformational change. As one local news segment opened, "Volunteers with the American Institute of Architects have the daunting task of taking Russell residents' dreams for the neighborhood and creating a plan for how the built environment can help foster that vision — and all in three days' time." The following narrative report captures the outcomes of those three days.

### The Assignment In Context

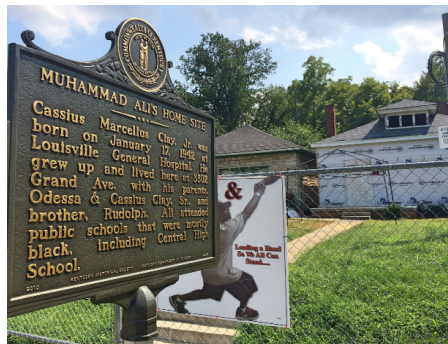
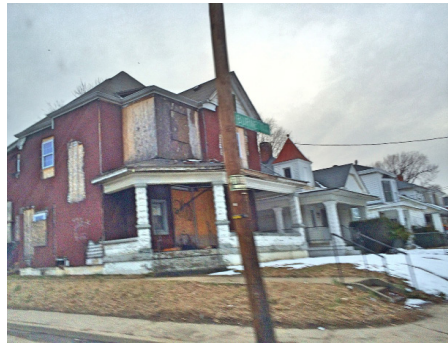
The applicant to the AIA for this 2015 Sustainable Design Assessment Team grant of services, The Louisville Central Community Centers, Inc., framed the assignment well. While significant economic reinvestment and growth have recently occurred in the residential neighborhoods east of downtown Louisville, the historically African American neighborhoods collectively known as West Louisville continue to work through the challenges of socio-economic decline. Their title for this project, the West of Ninth SDAT, made reference to the commonly-held misconception that 9th Street was a boundary beyond which only crime and poverty existed.

The SDAT assignment was to focus on Muhammad Ali Boulevard: the major east-west street that runs westwardly through the center of West Louisville's Russell neighborhood past 9th Street well into and beyond downtown Louisville. Once known as Walnut Street, this boulevard's history as a center for African-American-owned businesses and home to several well-known entertainment venues between 6th and 14th Streets from the 1920's to the 1950s earned it the name "Louisville's Harlem." And, just as well-known, this district was decimated by urban renewal in the late 1950's and rendered devoid of any buildings or commercial activity by the mid-1960's. Our assignment, therefore, was to imagine ways in which to socially and economically "break through the 9th Street wall" and re-connect West Louisville to the growth that was occurring elsewhere in the city.

A heightened appreciation of West Louisville's economic isolation precipitated this SDAT application. Louisville Magazine, a local publication, dedicated its March 2013 issue (entitled "Stop Ignoring the West End") to the plight of West Louisville<sup>1</sup>. Among many seminal articles on the subject, the issue included "The Great Changeover", a scholarly essay by Senior Editor Jack Welsh describing how over the 20th century, racism

<sup>1</sup> <http://loumag.epubxp.com/i/111400-mar-2013>

and mistrust had eroded the growth and prosperity that West Louisville neighborhoods had experienced since their annexations by the city between 1868 and 1922. And on July 14, 2015, a local web-based news aggregator, Insider Louisville, published an essay<sup>2</sup> linking to two studies<sup>3</sup> showing that economic inequality in Louisville was among the highest in the nation.<sup>4</sup>



2 <http://insiderlouisville.com/metro/two-studies-show-economic-inequality-louisville-metro-area-among-nations-highest/>

3 [http://www.urban.org/research/publication/worlds-apart-inequality-between-americas-most-and-least-affluent-neighborhoods/view/full\\_report](http://www.urban.org/research/publication/worlds-apart-inequality-between-americas-most-and-least-affluent-neighborhoods/view/full_report)

4 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/07/13/the-most-distressed-cities-are-in-blue-states-but-the-most-unequal-are-in-red-states/>

## Summary Findings

The design work that our interdisciplinary team produced in three days depicts one of the innumerable forms that Muhammad Ali Boulevard west of 9th Street could take. It depicts a new Art and Culture District extending eastward across 9th Street to 6th Street with the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage at its heart. It seeks to connect the Russell neighborhood to its adjacent residential districts forming a unified West Louisville. It provides specific land use and development recommendations on how to bridge the physical and planning barriers that were created by urban renewal in the 1960's and '70's that isolate Russell and separate West Louisville from downtown. It also describes the need to overcome the social and perceptual barriers to the neighborhood's growth and provides both short-term and long-term strategies to change those perceptions. The report speaks directly of financial models to secure and leverage the type of funding to make both small adaptive-reuse and larger new construction projects happen, as well as describing a universe of creative place-making opportunities to jump-start an arts and culture district.

Physical, economic, and programmatic transformations aside, perhaps the most important part of this report is its last: An overview of a civic infrastructure – an organizational and engagement strategy – that is necessary before anything else can happen. We are aware that these recommendations are not being given to a municipal agency or governmental body that is already committed to implementing them. We are encouraged by the convening role that the LCCC has already played in facilitating this project and hope that they can continue to lead in this process of organizing.

This report, ultimately, is not a master plan. It is – at its most valuable – a template for what West Louisville must do. We hope the neighborhood will use this report as a starting point. The design principles we developed to guide our thinking are incontrovertible. The process of engaging the community in the work of master planning is essential.

But the greatest challenge for West Louisville will be the creation of a shared enthusiasm for a new direction that can replace the underlying public doubt, criticism and fear that sites cleared by urban renewal will remain vacant and the residents of the West End will remain isolated from Louisville's growth. It is within the capacity of the people of West Louisville to create such a vision and generate the requisite public support. We look forward to your transformation.



# Physical Context



## ILLUSTRATING THE CHALLENGE

The first diagram simply restates the assignment: It shows the trendy, desirable, and newly-prospering Louisville commercial districts of Nulu, Baxter Avenue, and Bardstown Road extending eastward along major streets from Downtown.

The second diagram, “Impediments”, brings another level of understanding to the design challenge. Surely, 9th Street forms a psychological barrier. But it is also designed and built as a barrier. On January 8, 2015, the Louisville Courier-Journal posted an essay on their website titled “From the air, 60 years of massive change in Louisville”.<sup>1</sup> Comparing two aerial photographs – one from 1952 and one from 2014 – it is plain to see the multi-purpose intent of a redesigned 9th Street. A typical city street seen on historical maps from 1873 and clearly visible as such in the 1952 photograph, 9th Street today is a multi-lane high-speed state highway connecting Interstate 64 at the city’s northern riverfront to industrial zones to the south and – eventually – outside the city. It is now the primary route from Downtown to Fort Knox.

In addition, this diagram also carves out a wide swath of Downtown between 6th Street and 9th Street that is almost entirely occupied now by governmental buildings and parking structures designed and built largely in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s (see “The City of the Seventies: Louisville’s ‘West’, Urban Renewal, Part 1”)<sup>2</sup>. Again, the side-by-side comparison of aerial photographs in the Courier-Journal post is telling.

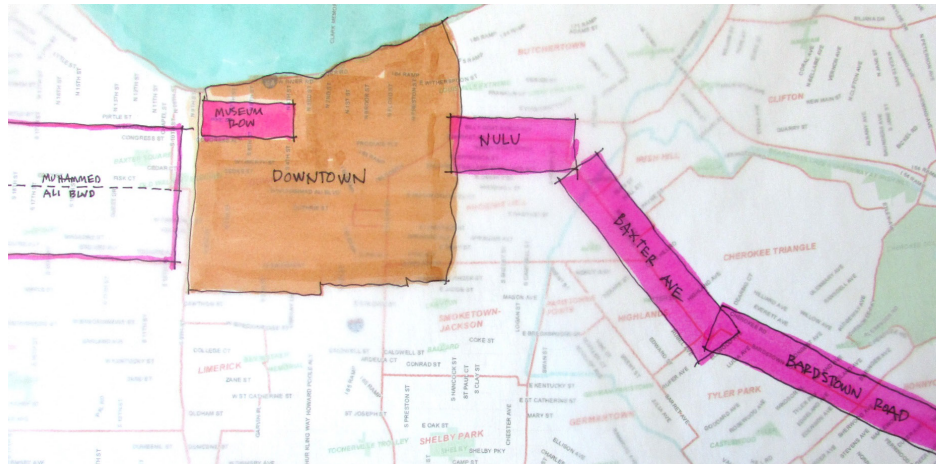


Diagram 1: Physical Context

<sup>1</sup><http://www.courier-journal.com/story/watchdog-earth/2015/01/07/the-transformation-of-downtown-louisville/21396505/>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.urbanohio.com/forum2/index.php/topic,18720.msg378702.html#msg378702>



Diagram 2: Impediments

Blocks and blocks of contiguous urban fabric as well as many historic buildings were removed between the 1940’s (see “Louisville After the Bombings”)<sup>3</sup> and the start of urban renewal in the late 1950’s.

Although we did not definitively establish a chronology of events around the creation of these two impediments – the new 9th Street highway and this zone of governmental uses with its foreboding, disengaged buildings – it points to what may have been purposeful segregation. As Welsh points out, in the early decades of the 20th century, the City of Louisville attempted to regulate its housing according to race as a matter of public policy through zoning ordinance. When Louisville’s first public housing projects – Clarksdale and Beecher Terrace – were completed in the 1940’s on either side of downtown Louisville along Walnut Street, the architecture of segregation<sup>4</sup> was already underway. The huge regulatory and infrastructural impediments the SDAT have been asked to address were undoubtedly part of this purpose.

## Opportunities & Goals

The next diagram, “Opportunities”, highlight a few of the elements that can be catalysts for change in Russell and along Muhammad Ali Boulevard. Certainly the programs and services of the Louisville Central Community Center and their newly-opened facilities with incubator spaces for new business formation and the capacity

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.oldlouisville.com/ruins/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://apps.tcf.org/architecture-of-segregation>



to host a wide variety of civic and cultural events are opportunities in themselves. In our diagram, we identified two ends and a center: Beecher Terrace, the site of the HUD-Funded Russell Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant, the proposed West Louisville FoodPort, and, at the center, the Kentucky Center for African-American Heritage.

The SDAT's redefined planning objectives are then summarized in the last diagram for this section, "Goals":

1. To make Muhammad Ali Boulevard into a new Arts and Culture District
2. To make the Kentucky Center for African-American Heritage the center of this new district
3. To make Muhammad Ali Boulevard and 6th Street the gateway to this new district, and
4. To use this new district and this center to unite all of West Louisville as one community

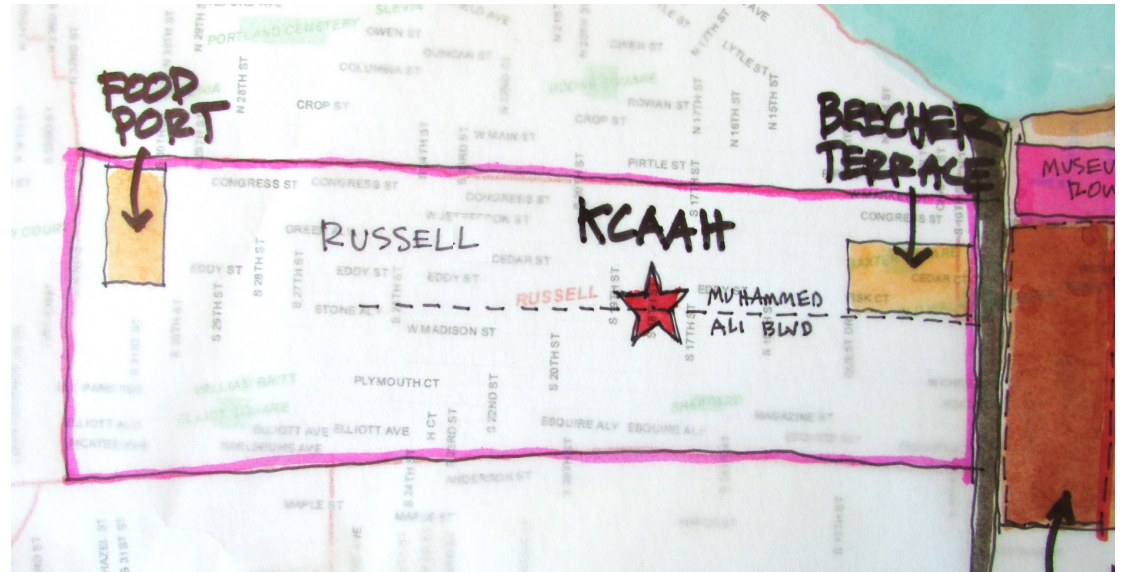


Diagram 3: Opportunities



Diagram 4: Goals



# Implementing Redevelopment

## THE REVITALIZATION PROCESS IS LONG-TERM

Neighborhood revitalization is a process that takes time. Some interventions will take long periods of time to structure financially, and the process will take long periods to have demonstrable and visible impacts. However, all long-term interventions begin with short-term actions. The team recommends the following actions in the short-term.

### Comprehensive Neighborhood Pre-development

In order to attract the private investment needed to begin to transform the corridor, the team recommends a short-term strategy to focus on the most critical sites that could begin to anchor a broader private investment along the Ali corridor, including the following:

Engage the National Trust for Historic Preservation in preserving African American Heritage sites, as well as engaged in the Mammoth Life Building (Brent Leggs) (6th and Ali). The Trust has been active in Louisville preservation and has a Preservation Green Lab program in the city as well.

Use a Historic Tax Credit finance structure to convert the upper floors to Green Market Rate Residential & renovate the bank space.

### Visible Street Improvements

Provide Portland (community-like) street signs relating the direction and distance to Shawnee Park; the African American Heritage Center; the Ohio River; and Historic churches on Ali (starting at 6th Street and Ali). Partner with the University of Louisville to develop a geo-located self-guided cultural tour along Ali for mobile devices.

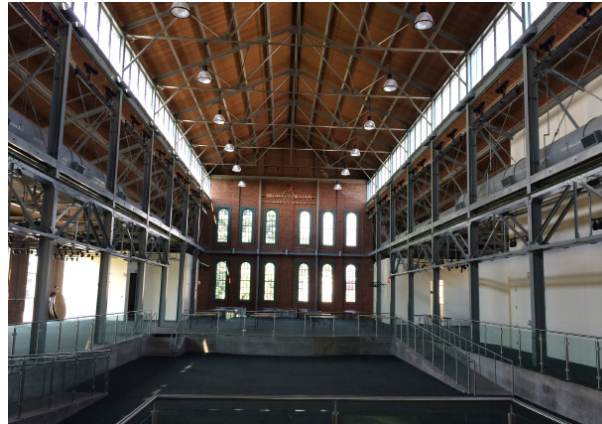
Provide street improvements from 6th Street along Ali to 18th Street, to include the following elements:

- Historic period street lighting
- Street furniture
- Trees

Partner with the Kentucky School of Art and University of Louisville to display student public art along Ali from 6th to African American Heritage Center.

### Reprogram the African American Heritage Center

The Heritage Center is a key neighborhood asset and should become a focal point for events and activity. In the short term, the team recommends developing broader and deeper community partnerships and uses for the Heritage Center by engaging a range of additional institutions (University of Louisville, Simmons College of Kentucky; Kentucky School of the Arts). The team suggests a rotating shared exhibit space for university-affiliated, high school-affiliated and independent visual artists. Create an on-site teaching location for academic institutions with African American History, Music and Theater programs, to include both teaching and performances. Develop both weekday and weekend activity and programming at the Heritage Center to inject a vibrant experience into the neighborhood all week long. Activities could include hosting a farmers market one weekday and on Saturdays, hosting a local craft and flea market Saturday, and other events. The Center should bring in a reputable professional event management company to scale up its offerings. For instance, Live Nation executes 145,000 events per year worldwide and owns/manages more than 150 venues across the US with capacities ranging from 300 seats to 30,000 seats.



## COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT: LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

In many cities around the country where downtowns have or are rebounding, close-in neighborhoods that had declined for decades are now experiencing physical, economic and community healing - and a return to vitality. The community challenges and pace of this neighborhood revitalization vary from city to city. West Louisville's neighborhoods have taken a number of positive steps and are building capacities to go much further.

While Russell and other West Louisville neighborhoods have overcome several barriers to redevelopment and shown they have many of the elements in place to take greater advantage of the current national economic recovery, they could benefit further by adapting more comprehensive approaches used by several successful neighborhoods in other cities such as Minneapolis, Austin, and Portland.

## Comprehensive Neighborhood Pre-development

Numerous redevelopment projects have been undertaken in West Louisville, and as in many communities, some have preformed well, others are works in progress and still others have for various reasons fallen short of expectations.

The SDAT team recommends a more holistic approach to redevelopment and economic development. Even though individual projects are continuing to move forward, West Louisville has the potential to secure a broader range of public and private neighborhood improvements that would benefit the well being of its residents and businesses. The SDAT team offered multiple steps that should be considered to set community based goals and strategies; align and commit key public, private and community interests; and shape an effective redevelopment tool kit. While multiple steps are bulleted in the power point, we'd like to elaborate on a few of these below:

1) Craft a neighborhood wide vision that engages the community to address public space/infrastructure goals as well as desired private improvements, in addition to enhanced connections to downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. This is critical to aligning the public and private partners, keeping them focused on the longer term goals, and realizing that adjustments may be necessary as circumstances change over time.

2) Develop strategies to achieve these goals that factor in current physical assets, human talent and economic realities but that also take into consideration what's achievable by creative and effective leveraging of public and private resources.

3) Secure commitments from public and private leaders within the neighborhood and the city, assuring that dedicated staff will be provided to follow through.

4) Set sustainability (economic, environmental and social) targets and measures making sure to factor in life cycle costs for ongoing capital maintenance and operations. Measures should include the micro level impacts (the individual project) as well as macro (the neighborhood, city and beyond). Commitments to measuring results help in maintaining momentum.

## Redevelopment and Economic Development Tool Kit Options

The types and capacities of redevelopment and economic development tools vary by states (enabling legislation to allow and/or constitutional restrictions that prohibit), and local jurisdictions (e.g., electing to implement what's allowable and/or choosing to remove restrictions on what might be prohibited). For example, most states allow some types of tax abatements for

some economic development projects as well as tax increment financing for redevelopment, but cities and counties in those states may elect not to use these tools.

These funding tools are both publicly and privately sourced at local and national levels. The following is an elaboration on a few of the tools identified in the power point presentation that the SDAT team believes have strong potential to make a significant impact on redevelopment and economic development efforts in Russell and other areas of West Louisville.

### 1) *Development Driven: funding that stems mostly from new development.*

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** This is one of the most potent redevelopment tools used by cities around the country. Most states allow cities to capture newly generated property taxes (though some states such as Texas and Louisiana also allow adding sales tax) from new construction and to reinvest those funds (often by issuing revenue bonds) to make eligible public improvement in the area that the new development occurred. Cities that allow TIF to be generated within a larger geographic area (e.g., hundreds of acres) have been more effective at making comprehensive neighborhood improvements. Eligible TIF investments in many cities include: public infrastructure, parks and open spaces, securing land for private or public redevelopment, providing loans and/or grants to leverage new private and non-profit development projects. A number of cities have expanded downtown TIF districts to incorporate close in neighborhoods so the latter can benefit from the more significant dollars usually generated by larger downtown developments.
- **Impact Fees:** Many cities have opted to create or expand impact fees that are charged to new development to help offset various impacts of that development. Impact fees are very often charged to new (and sometimes rehabbed) commercial and residential developments for transportation and open space improvements. There's also a growing number of cities using impact fees to support affordable housing. While impact fees are usually collected from a specific project and then put into a fund that invests those dollars anywhere in the city, some communities allow "sole source impact fees" where the fees collected from a designated area stay in that area to provide needed improvements.



**2) Fees/Assessments/Taxes: these sources can include voluntarily agreed to assessments, or locally voted (by councils or the general public) increases to existing taxes or fees (or imposing new ones).**

- Special/Local Improvement Districts (SID/LID): these districts are usually voluntarily established in neighborhoods to help pay for various infrastructure improvements. LIDS have ranged from street construction to sidewalks and streetscape furnishings to building streetcar lines. LIDs place an assessment on property owners over a period of time. The assessments pay back tax exempt bonds used to pick up the costs of desired improvements. In some cities where area property owners can't cover the total costs of proposed LID improvements, tax increment funds have been added to the mix to assure that projects are completed.
- Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT): Some states allow cities to collect a tax from all real estate transactions in that city (residential and commercial). The tax rates are often low (less than 1%) but the volume of transactions can generate a significant funding source. In many cases the RETT is used for public improvement projects designated by city councils whereas in others it's focused on helping provide affordable housing units.

**3) Leveraging Federal Funds: an array of grants, loans and guarantees made available by various federal agencies that are used for local redevelopment and economic development.**

- HUD Section 108 Loans: Louisville, like other cities with 50,000 or more people, receives federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars annually. These funds go into eligible lower income neighborhoods to provide capital improvement projects, low interest loans/grants for eligible business improvements or housing projects. Louisville received about \$10 million/year (CDBG funding has been going down over the past decade). The federal department of Housing and Urban Development allows cities to borrow up to five times their annual allocation for low interest loans to eligible economic development projects. These loans have sometimes been under 1% interest for 20 years, and usually make up an important, but smaller portion of a project's total costs. Projects need to be carefully underwritten to assure that they will repay these loans to avoid putting city general fund dollars at risk. Many cities have used HUD 108 extensively for catalytic projects in revitalizing neighborhoods.

**4) Other People's Money: a category that includes bringing money into your community from outside investors, often but not exclusively through tax credits.**

- New Market Tax Credits (NMTC): these are tax credits designed by the federal government to be used to stimulate economic development and redevelopment projects in eligible lower income census tracts. A project must be within the boundaries of these nationally designed tracts. Tax credit buyers (usually lending institutions, insurance companies and wealthy individuals in various parts of the country) invest their funds through a Community Development Entity (CDE) within a city. The CDE funnels funds into a redevelopment or economic development

project that meet NMTC criteria which include "being ready to go". NMTCs can fund up to 25 % (sometimes more) of a project's cost (depending on its size). NMTCs are very competitive in part because in some circumstances the funds don't need to be repaid.

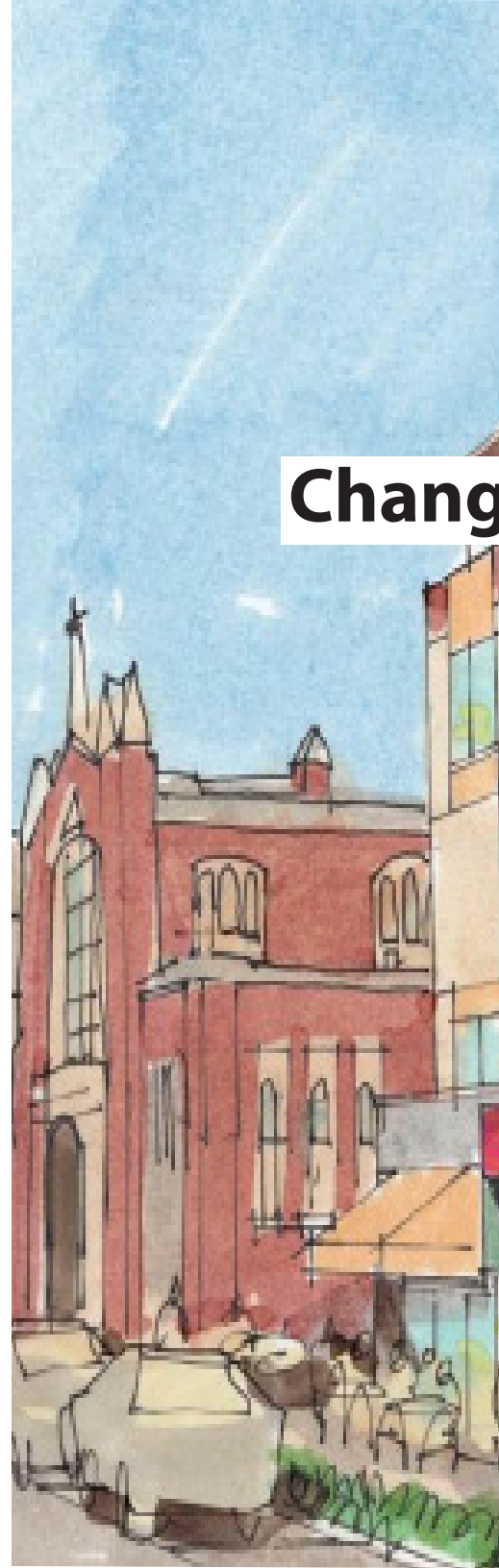
- Employment Base Visa Program (EB-5): the EB-5 program allows foreign nationals wishing to become US citizens to do so by investing \$500,000 in an eligible economic development project that creates at least 10 jobs for US citizens. Eligible projects must be located in Targeted Employment Areas (TEAs) which are geographic areas within a city that have unemployment rates that exceed 150% of the national unemployment rate. EB-5 regional centers identify foreign nationals seeking US citizenship and have their credentials carefully vetted by the USCIS (an arm of Homeland Security). Regional centers look for private development and economic development projects in TEAs that would benefit from low cost equity to make those projects happen. The regional centers use federally sanctioned criteria to determine the number of jobs (direct as well as indirect jobs) that would be created by each project, and subsequently work to find a pool of investors that could benefit from that job creation. EB-5 funds have been used to raise low cost equity (which is repaid to the investors at the end of five years) for a broad range of projects including: mixed-use developments, hotels, industrial and commercial facilities, and apartment projects.





**5) Important Options That Didn't Fit Into the Above: there are many other resources, particularly from the private and non-profit sectors, that can be brought into play.**

- Foundations: many cities have corporations, institutions or well healed individuals that have established foundations that allocate resources to various causes. While we mostly hear about foundations granting funds to the arts, to education and research or other very worthy causes, some also opt to make investments in community redevelopment/revitalization. The Kaiser Family Foundation in Tulsa, OK and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation in Baton Rouge, LA are two examples of foundations that have made grants and loans available to projects ranging from new parks and museums to rehabilitation of historic buildings and the provision of affordable housing. Mercy Corp, a Portland, OR entity, has opted to set up a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) that enables lower income people in inner city neighborhoods to invest small sums (as low as \$20 - \$30/month) in income producing commercial projects in their neighborhoods. Mercy Corp purchases the commercial enterprise and has it privately managed, and the REIT allows lower income households to own shares in that property to encourage wealth creation. Louisville has a number of foundations that have the capacity to provide similar programs. These programs can often be bundled with other resources identifies above. Kentucky and the City of Louisville currently have available a range of these tools. Some of these may not be deployed as much as they are elsewhere (e.g., redevelopment and economic development investments by foundations and trusts) while others may not be as flexible as they are in other states (e.g., tax increment financing). This does not mean these, and others, can't be refined to become more beneficial for improving neighborhoods and business opportunities. Redevelopment and economic development tools are one key bundle of assets needed to revitalize neighborhoods. They need to be part of a portfolio that incorporates an agreed upon vision for the future of a neighborhood; capable, dedicated leadership; and effective, agreed to strategies to make productive investments in the community benefiting public and private projects.



**Change**

## THE RUSSELL ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT

Imagine a destination within the Russell neighborhood where everyone comes together to celebrate its past, present, and future. The new Russell Arts and Culture District (“the District”) would be a well-recognized area of Louisville where arts and cultural facilities and activities/programs would be concentrated. The District is intended to create a sense of place, widen social and cultural capacity, and strengthen the local economy within the Russell neighborhood. The District forms its boundaries around its central spine, the former Walnut Street renamed as the Muhammed Ali Boulevard in 1978. The rough boundaries are 18th Street on the west, Sixth Street on the east, Cedar Street on the north, and Madison Street on the south. Anchored by existing neighborhood institutions such as the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage and the River City Bank, this new district will celebrate the historic social and cultural contributions of the Russell neighborhood, foster pride in the community, and cultivate opportunities for all members of Louisville to come together. The District will also foster community involvement and revitalization through tax-related incentives which attract artists, arts organizations, and other creative enterprises. Such a district would require public-private partnerships to promote development.

### Partnerships

Potential partners in this endeavor would include the Louisville Central Community Center (LCCC), the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage, the River City Bank, the Kentucky Arts Council, the University of Louisville, and the Simmons College of Kentucky. These partners would support a myriad of activities and training such as Artist in Residence Programs, Arts Education Programs and other similar initiatives to foster the expansion of the arts and cultural heritage of the neighborhood.

The University of Louisville offers several programs that could support the new District. It’s Department of Fine Arts through their studio arts and arts education programs could work collaboratively to provide education and outreach, art activities, festivals, and other such events. Similarly, the Department of History could assist in the research and documentation of the local history of the neighborhood, specifically, and Louisville, in general. The Department of Pan-African Studies could support efforts to drill down into the African American experience in Russell, Louisville, and Kentucky.

The Department of Music, working collaboratively with these and other units, could capture the musical traditions that made this area a hub for African Americans prior to 1960. Finally, the Theater Arts Department could assist in developing interpretative historical performances based on key figures or aspects of the neighborhood’s history. The involvement by these University of Louisville academic units could be formalized through the establishment of permanent teaching and events spaces within the Kentucky Center of African American Heritage similar to what has been done at the LCCC with the University of Louisville Department of Public Health. The

LCCC has already begun programming social, cultural, and health-related activities within its facilities. With the location of the University of Louisville Public Health department’s activities and other similar satellite functions at LCCC, a precedent has been set within Russell for the university’s engagement there.

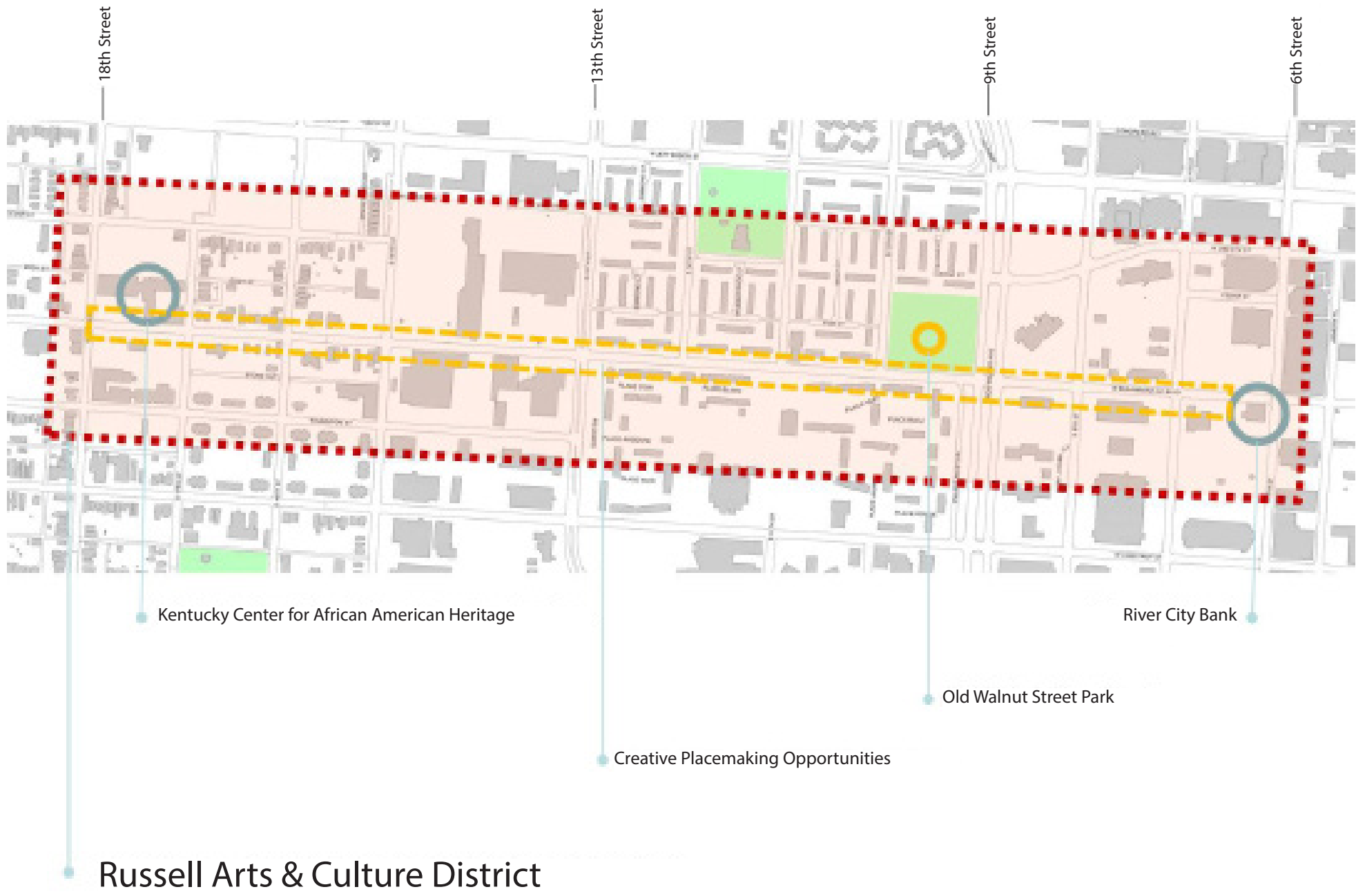
Simmons College of Kentucky, a historically black college in Louisville, could undertake additional research through coursework in Black Church History, Urban Church Growth, and African American History. These courses could examine the rich presence of the nearly 40 black churches within the Russell neighborhood and shed light on the important role these faith-based institutions have played in the life of the community. Students at Simmons could also be involved in an Oral History Project which focuses on capturing the voices of residents, particularly those who have lived in Russell for a long time.

While these institutions of higher education would be important partners in the establishment of the new district, other entities such as the Jefferson County public school system as well as governmental agencies are also necessary. The participation of a myriad of governmental and non-governmental organizations that cater to a wide range of residents is important. Certainly, non-profit organizations and community resources such as the Baxter Community Center, Junior Achievement, the Louisville Urban League, the Plymouth Community Renewal Center, and the YMCA-Chestnut Street Branch, among others, in addition to local businesses and private entities such as Humana and Brown and Forman, would round out the collaborators needed to make this effort a success. Another potential partner is Churchill Downs, which has maintained an important presence in Louisville since 1875.

Less than five miles from the Heritage Center, blacks who were involved with horse racing and the Kentucky Derby, specifically, likely lived in the Russell neighborhood. This social and cultural aspect of the community could be further explored at the Heritage Center. While the Heritage Center and the River City Bank would be anchors on the west and east ends of the District, respectively, it is important to note that the LCCC and the Old Walnut Street Park are other prominent elements which could serve broader programming needs within the District.

LCCC is well-established within the community and has been a champion for change. Their involvement in promoting the District is vital to the evolution of the area. The success of the Russell Arts and Culture District will depend on multiple partners who are committed to the expression of the arts and the upward movement of the community as a whole. The entities identified in this section are well-established and could elevate the profile of the District.





## Arts Focus

One way to increase the focus of the arts within the new District is to build on the existing framework presented in the 2009 Louisville Public Arts Master Plan and the Kentucky Arts Council 2015-2021 Strategic Plan: A Vision for the Future of the Arts in Kentucky. The Master Plan defines public art as that which “includes any visual or multidisciplinary art project that is presented in a space accessible to the public” (page 9). A key aspect of the Strategic Plan is its strategy on Vibrant Communities which states that the mission is to “foster environments and provide resources for the arts to thrive, improve quality of life through the arts and promote cultural expression in communities” (page 5). Collectively, these documents support the creation of the Russell Arts and Culture District as a mechanism to foster community interaction, nurture a budding arts industry, and build on the unique geographic identity of the neighborhood.

To this end, it is necessary to create a Russell Arts Commission (RAC) which would advise and counsel the City on policy and program development, oversee the grants and public art programs, advocate for the arts in Russell, and act as a liaison between the arts community, the Russell neighborhood, and the City of Louisville. The group would also suggest appropriate and accessible locations within the District for the display of art. The RAC would work with the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) and other established arts-related organizations to seek funding to support the commission of artwork as well as its relocation to Russell, and its subsequent maintenance. As the KAC website states, their mission is to “foster environments for the people of Kentucky to value, participate in and benefit from the arts” (<http://artscouncil.ky.gov/>). The KAC website also provides Advocacy Resources which include reports and other documentation to support this creative industry. Of note is a 2012 publication by the National Governors Association, *New Engines of Growth: Five Roles for Arts, Culture, and Design*. Their website also lists several Arts Districts within the state which could serve as examples for the proposed District.

Some jurisdictions such as Philadelphia, PA have established cultural funds to support locally-based arts and cultural institutions and organizations. The Philadelphia Cultural Fund website indicates that, it “is a non-profit corporation established by Philadelphia’s Mayor and City Council in 1991 to support and enhance the cultural life and vitality of the City of Philadelphia and its residents.

The Fund promotes arts and culture as engines of social, educational and economic development in the Philadelphia region. Grants are made from the City budget allocation to the Cultural Fund for operating support of Philadelphia-based arts and cultural organizations” (<http://www.philaculturalfund.org/>), retrieved 9/10/15). Further exploration is needed to determine whether such an entity, perhaps called the “Russell Cultural Fund,” is possible within the legislative structure of Louisville.

An important role of the Russell Arts Commission is to create a vision and unified

agenda that can guide strategic decision-making for public art that not only addresses the boundaries of the Russell neighborhood and the Russell Arts and Culture District but also that of connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and the broader context of arts within Louisville.

### *Examples:*

*San Francisco Arts Commission*, <http://www.sfartscommission.org/>

*Seattle Arts Commission*, <http://www.seattle.gov/arts/seattle-arts-commission>

*Philadelphia Cultural Fund*, <http://www.philaculturalfund.org/>

*Philadelphia Public Art: Full Spectrum*, [http://issuu.com/pennpraxis/docs/report\\_publicart](http://issuu.com/pennpraxis/docs/report_publicart)

*Fund for the Arts*, <http://fundforthearts.com/>

## Land Use and Open Space

Review of historic photographs and observation of buildings along Muhammed Ali Boulevard indicate the strong presence of ground floor retail with upper floors of residential and office uses of the once vibrant Russell neighborhood. Today, there is scant existence of these mixed use structures along Muhammed Ali Boulevard. In order to make the Russell Arts and Culture District a success, supporting land uses are necessary that would provide space for artist studios and living spaces, art galleries, and the like. The District requires a variety of land uses to support the residential areas of the neighborhood, accommodate job creation, and stimulate economic development. Overall, mixed-use zoning would allow a myriad of programming in the District.

Old Walnut Street Park is already well used for athletic events; it could be programmed further to support the arts and cultural activities within the District to engage different people—young and old—from within and beyond the Russell neighborhood. Potential activities include music festivals, movie screenings, and flea markets but the list could be expanded depending on the desires of the residents. The point is to include opportunities where open space can be transformed into public gathering spaces where large events are possible. To this end, the wrought iron fence surrounding the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage should be removed to make this property more accessible to the neighborhood and as a way to foster outdoor activities.

To achieve the goal of making the Russell Arts and Culture District a popular destination, a vibrant mix of land uses and open spaces is necessary. Similarly, infill development that creates a consistent street edge and stitches the building fabric

together thereby placing people in structures would provide more “eyes on the street” and improve the perception and sense of safety in the area.

**Examples:**

**Cultural Districts: The Arts as a Strategy for Revitalizing Our Cities**, [http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/Cultural%20Districts\\_0.pdf](http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/Cultural%20Districts_0.pdf), retrieved 9/10/15

**National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, State Policy Briefs on Tools for Arts Decision Making**, <http://www.nasaa-arts.org/Research/Key-Topics/Creative-Economic-Development/StateCulturalDistrictsPolicyBrief.pdf>

**Kentucky Arts Council, Kentucky Cultural District Certification**, <http://artscouncil.ky.gov/Opportunities/CulturalDistrictCertification.htm>

**Douglas S. Noonan, “How U.S. Cultural Districts Reshape Neighborhoods”**, <http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/Research-Art-Works-GeorgiaTech.pdf>



## Russell Historic District

A large portion of the land contained in the proposed Russell Arts and Culture District was designated as the Russell Historic District in 1980, by the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service (#80001617). The nomination application states that “the significance of the Russell District lies in its rich architectural heritage and its role in the history of the black community in Louisville, Russell has, since its birth in the late nineteenth century, been known for its large, beautiful residences. In the first quarter of this century, Russell became the center of Mack social and commercial activity, as well as the earliest local residential enclave for middle-class blocks, and continues to serve many of the same purposes for the black community” (page 3, <http://focus.nps.gov/pdfhost/docs/nrhp/text/80001617.pdf>, retrieved 9/9/2015).

At the time of the nomination, the Historic District included 3,200 acres and 1,700 buildings in the area roughly bounded by S. 15th, S. 26th, Congress and W. Broadway streets. In 2000, another 9 acres and 4 buildings were added at the junction of Muhammad Ali Blvd. and S. 17th Street (#00000273). The period of significance ranges from 1875 to 1899 and 1900 to 1949.

Several structures have been demolished or otherwise destroyed since the historic district was designated. While the National Park Service website does not list a State Historic Preservation Office for Kentucky (<http://www.nps.gov/nr/shpoinventories.htm>, retrieved 9/09/2015), the Louisville Government, Office of Planning and Design website lists a Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission as a function of the Planning and Design Services Urban Design team (<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/historic-preservation-landmarks-and-overlay-districts>, retrieved 9/09/2015). The Russell Historic District, however, is not listed among the eight Local Preservation Districts/Architectural Review Committees. This would suggest that there is no oversight for the Russell Historic District which has experienced significant loss of properties in recent years. Oversight for the remaining properties is imperative not only to reverse the pace and pattern of decay and demolition but also to preserve the social and architectural heritage of the community.

**Examples:**

**Washington, D.C. Historic Preservation Office**, <http://planning.dc.gov/historicpreservation>

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**, <http://www.preservationnation.org/what-we-do/#.VfD3YtJVhBc>

**Austin, TX Historic Preservation Office**, <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/historic-preservation>

These initiatives for the Russell Arts and Culture District are envisioned to celebrate the great things that are happening in the Russell neighborhood to deflate the negative media attention it currently has. Some examples of short term activities that can foster discovery of the Russell Arts and Culture District and lead to longstanding traditions would be supported by a “Zone of Creative Placemaking Opportunities”. This zone would accommodate a variety of activities that would reinforce human capital and contribute to the vibrancy of the neighborhood.



## Zone for Creative Placemaking Opportunities

The use of Creative Placemaking techniques as catalysts for broader engagement of Louisville residents is important. According to Artscape, “Creative Placemaking is an evolving field of practice that intentionally leverages the power of the arts, culture and creativity to serve a community’s interest while driving a broader agenda for change, growth and transformation in a way that also builds character and quality of place. In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired.” (<http://www.artscapediy.org/Creative-Placemaking/Approaches-to-Creative-Placemaking.aspx>, retrieved 9/10/15). This is the spirit of establishing such a zone within the Russell Arts and Culture District.

According to a 2010 report by the National Endowment for the Arts, “Creative Placemaking fosters economic development” (<http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf>). Such strategies include re-using vacant and underutilized physical resources (i.e., buildings, land, and infrastructure) and providing attractive venues for residents to support the local economy. Among the more important objectives of Creative Placemaking is the ability of such techniques to train the next generation in culturally-oriented businesses which could be an important mechanism to connect younger people in Russell to broader life outcomes. This objective could be implemented through the collaboration and partnerships identified earlier.

Along Muhammed Ali Boulevard special precincts could be established to support a myriad of activities. Through distinct markers such as varied paving patterns, banners, and lighting, these precincts could be delineated to support the following activities.

## Signage and Wayfinding

- Banners that mark the Russell Arts and Culture District
- Signage that demarcates a heritage trail
- Wayfinding signs that improve the navigability with the neighborhood.
- Special signs at intersections
- Crosswalks street markings and intersection art to define specific areas



Heritage Performances

Ali Boulevard Festivals



## Festivals

- Heritage Performances outside of the Heritage Center
- Taste of Russell where local residents and restaurateurs could sell their food at an annual event
- Summer Performance Series in the Old Walnut Street Park
- Explore ways to augment programming for the Kentucky Center of African American Heritage including activities which would generate revenue for the center such as painting workshops and “Sip and Paint” events, among others.
- Support of the creative economy by the development of makers spaces that could be leased to artists and other light industrial manufacturers.
- Provide hands-on art workshops that are displayed or sold at festivals

## Examples:

**FEST300**, <https://www.fest300.com/festivals/what/cultural-event>

**Summer Festivals in Washington, D.C.**, <http://washington.org/article/summer-festivals-dc>

**Chad Kaydo**, “Cities Create Music, Cultural Festivals to Make Money”

<http://www.governing.com/topics/finance/gov-cities-create-music-festivals.html>

**Cultural Events in New Orleans**, <http://www.neworleanscvb.com/calendar-events/cultural-events/>

**Artscape, D.I.Y. Creative Placemaking**, <http://www.artscapediy.org/Home.aspx>

**Americans for the Arts**: <http://www.americansforthearts.org/>



Outdoor art classes



Student Achievement



Youth discovery and support



Gateway art



### Street and Sidewalk Markings

- Outdoor art classes which utilize the sidewalks to showcase the work of the students
- Street markings of Student achievement similar to the Tidy Street project in London (<http://collabcubed.com/2011/11/01/the-tidy-street-project/>). These markings would celebrate the achievements of the students at schools within the Russell neighborhood.

- Youth discovery and support of the neighborhood through a large map of Louisville
- Gateway art at Sixth Street to announce the arrival into the Russell Arts and Culture District. Similar projects have been supported by ArtPlace.



### Art And Music

- Heritage discovery conducted through the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage
- Sidewalk art galleries and flea markets
- Movies and Music in the Park
- Oral History Project to enable stories of the community members to be recorded



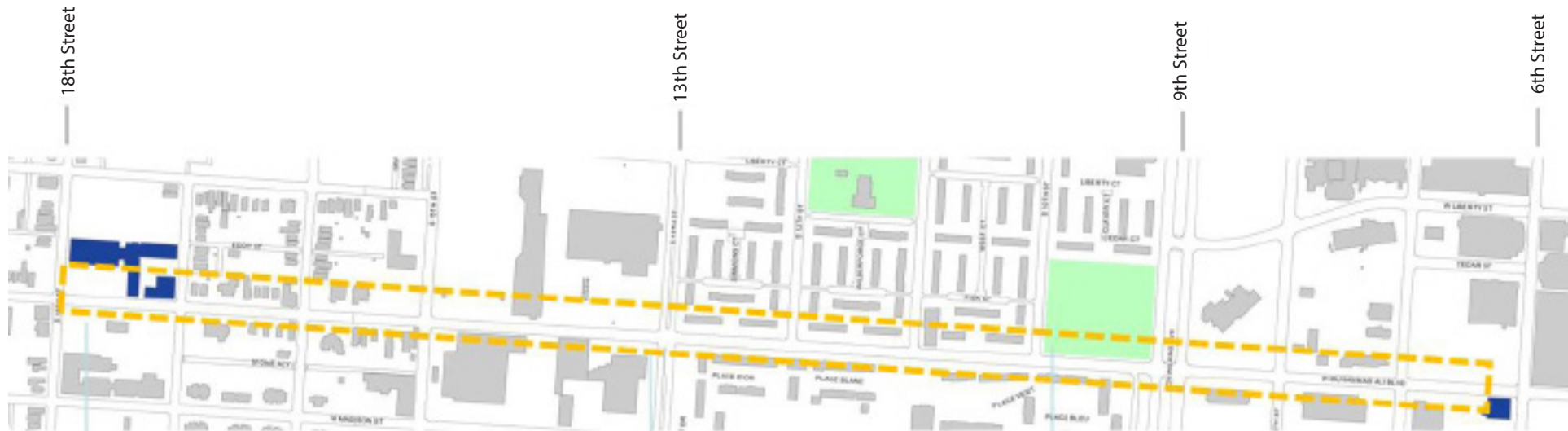
# LOUISVILLE PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN



## Public Art

- Utilize the Louisville Public Art Master Plan (2009) as a framework
- Designate a Russell Public Art Commission to identify appropriate art and accessible locations
- Incorporate artwork that reflects distinctive neighborhoods and encourages visitation to the District
- Install decorative art at railroad overhead crossings to celebrate characteristics of the city such as the Ohio River. A similar treatment is David Teeple's "Water Music" in Northampton, MA.





Heritage discovery



Community gardens



Flea markets



## Food

- Celebrate the culinary traditions within Russell and Louisville at festivals and markets
- Designate areas for Community Gardens which would provide fresh produce, cooking classes and other activities
- Establish areas for Edible Landscapes
- Promote Farmers Markets so that residents can sell the excess food they grow.

## Examples:

*American Community Gardening Association, <https://communitygarden.org/>*

*University of Missouri Extension Community Garden Toolkit,*

*<http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/miscpubs/mp0906.pdf>*

*GrowNYC, <http://www.grownyc.org/>*



Heritage discovery



Community history



## Russell History

- Celebrate and showcase the history of the Russell neighborhood throughout the district
- Heritage discovery—a heritage trail that highlights key sites and people who lived in the neighborhood done in collaboration with the Louisville Convention and Visitors Bureau or other culture and tourism organizations in Louisville
- Establish a Historic Preservation advisory group to protect remaining properties within the Russell Historic District
- Research, document, and share the community history
- Build on existing initiatives
- Tell your own story
- Oral History project to capture the memories of older residents
- Cultivate the next generation by involving younger residents in cultural exploratory projects



Heritage discovery



I wish this was...



Youth aspirations



Gateway art



## Envision Russell Campaign

- Initiate a process to capture the community's vision for Russell and develop a community driven/generated master plan.
- Heritage discovery
- Implement an "I wish this was..." project (conducted by artist Candy Chang in New Orleans, <http://candychang.com/i-wish-this-was/>) to capture the interests of the community for vacant properties
- Promote the expression of youth aspirations as a way to develop programs that support their dreams
- Engage the entire community in gateway/intersection art installations

## Zoning

Further examination of the zoning district designations in the area is required to ensure that the intended viability of the Russell Arts and Culture District can be supported. Most of the Russell neighborhood is designated as R6 or R7, Residential Multi Family with some CN- Neighborhood Commercial in the eastern portion of the study area. This singular land use designation is not sufficient to achieve the goals of the District. While the proposed boundaries of the Russell Arts and Culture District are currently comprised of residential uses, districts that support arts businesses, tourism and the like, that would allow for mixed use development, commercial and tourist activities, for instance the OTF, Tourist Facility District or the UN-Urban Neighborhood District, or C-N, Neighborhood Commercial, might provide more flexibility. The feasibility of seeking zoning variances to support the arts and creative economy including but not limited to artist studios and galleries as well as community-oriented activities or services must be explored.

In some jurisdictions such as Baltimore, Maryland, Overlays Districts are established to support arts activities. According to the Louisville Government, Office of Planning and Design website, "Overlay Districts are intended to promote compatibility of development with existing land use and design features. Within designated areas, proposed developments and physical changes to the exterior of a building are reviewed in accordance with established principles and guidelines addressing urban design elements" (<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/historic-preservation-landmarks-and-overlay-districts>, retrieved 9/10/15). Further, it must be determined whether an Overlay District designation within the Louisville Land Development Code is appropriate for the proposed Russell Arts and Culture District.

### Examples:

*Maryland Arts Council*, <http://www.msac.org/programs/arts-entertainment-districts>

*Seattle Cultural Overlay Districts*, <http://www.seattle.gov/council/licata/codac/>

### First Steps

Among the first steps to establishing the Russell Arts and Culture District is to form a planning or steering committee focused solely on the objectives of the District indicated in this document. One resource to assist in this process is provided by Americans for the Arts ([http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2014/by\\_program/reports\\_and\\_data/toolkits/cultural\\_districts/one-pagers/Planning\\_for\\_Your\\_Cultural\\_District.pdf](http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2014/by_program/reports_and_data/toolkits/cultural_districts/one-pagers/Planning_for_Your_Cultural_District.pdf) and <http://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/toolkits/national-cultural-districts-exchange/developing-and-advancing-a-cultural-district>, retrieved 9/10/15).

Ultimately, the Russell Arts and Culture District will redefine the Russell neighborhood

from an auto-oriented, pass-through area to a pedestrian friendly and family oriented destination within Louisville.



### Illustrating a Change Strategy

Image #1, a plan diagram titled "Connecting to 6th Street", describes the land use and economic development challenges that must be overcome for the Russell Arts and Culture District to be connected to Downtown Louisville as successfully as Nulu, Baxter Avenue, and Bardstown Road are now.

The clearest and most convincing signals that this new connection is happening would be to see new development on the southwest and northwest corners of Muhammad Ali and 6th Street. The only remaining building from "Louisville's Harlem", the Mammoth Life Insurance Building (River City Bank), is on the southwest corner. A large, underutilized parking lot owned by the State of Kentucky is on the northwest corner. This building and site must be acquired and redeveloped.

Going west on Muhammad Ali, the blocks between 8th and 7th are owned by private parties unknown but similarly underutilized. The absence of large, State or Federal buildings on these sites suggests that they may be available for development. Further west, the two high-rise residential towers present more of an obstacle than empty parcels, but there is sufficient open site area around the base of these towers that one could imagine the ground floors being built-out to meet the lot lines with single-story commercial space to activate these blocks.

The intersection of 9th Street and Muhammad Ali Boulevard must be considerably redesigned to allow the east/west movement of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to become the dominant circulation pattern. And finally, it is imperative that Beecher

Terrace be redesigned to put higher-density mid-rise residential buildings above continuous restaurant, retail, cultural and/or entertainment uses on Muhammad Ali Boulevard between 9th and 13th Streets.

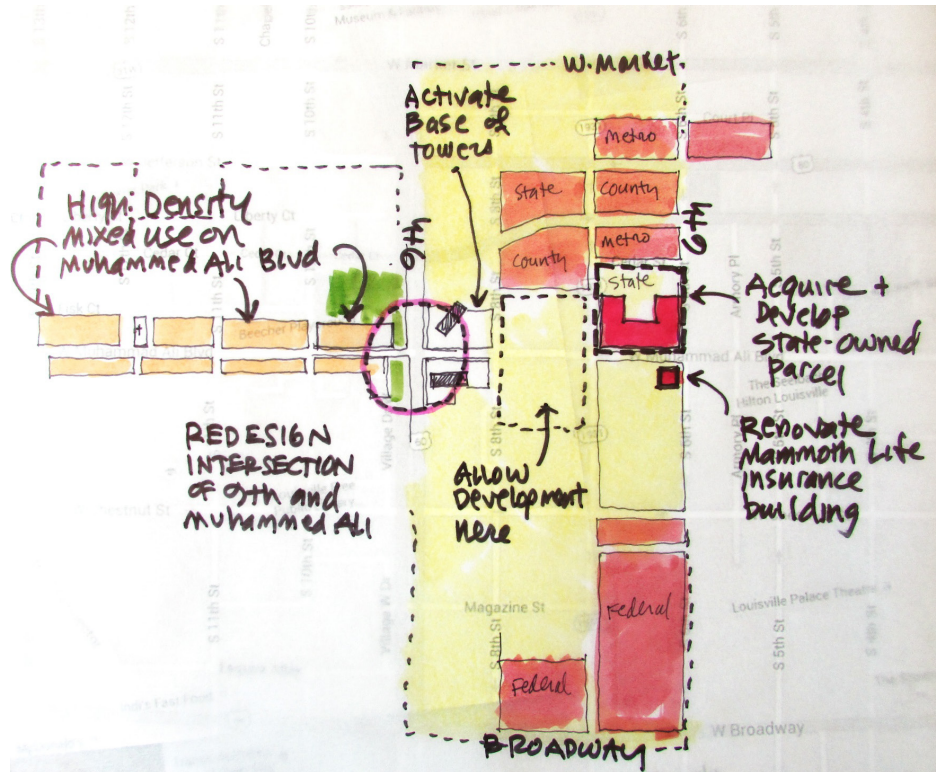


Image 1: Connecting to 6th Street

### 6th & Muhammad Ali - West

Image #2 is a photograph taken from the corner of 6th and Muhammad Ali looking west. The Mammoth Life Insurance Building is in its current condition at left, the empty parking lot at right.

Image #3 is approximately the same view, but with the Mammoth Life Insurance Building historically restored and adaptively-reused as a residential building. Restaurants or shops are shown at its base. Across the street, a new mid-rise residential development is shown. Note the sidewalks have been expanded on both sides and landscaped. This is now a "complete street", with vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic moving in both directions along sidewalks wide enough to support a small amount of outdoor seating.



Image 2: 6th Street

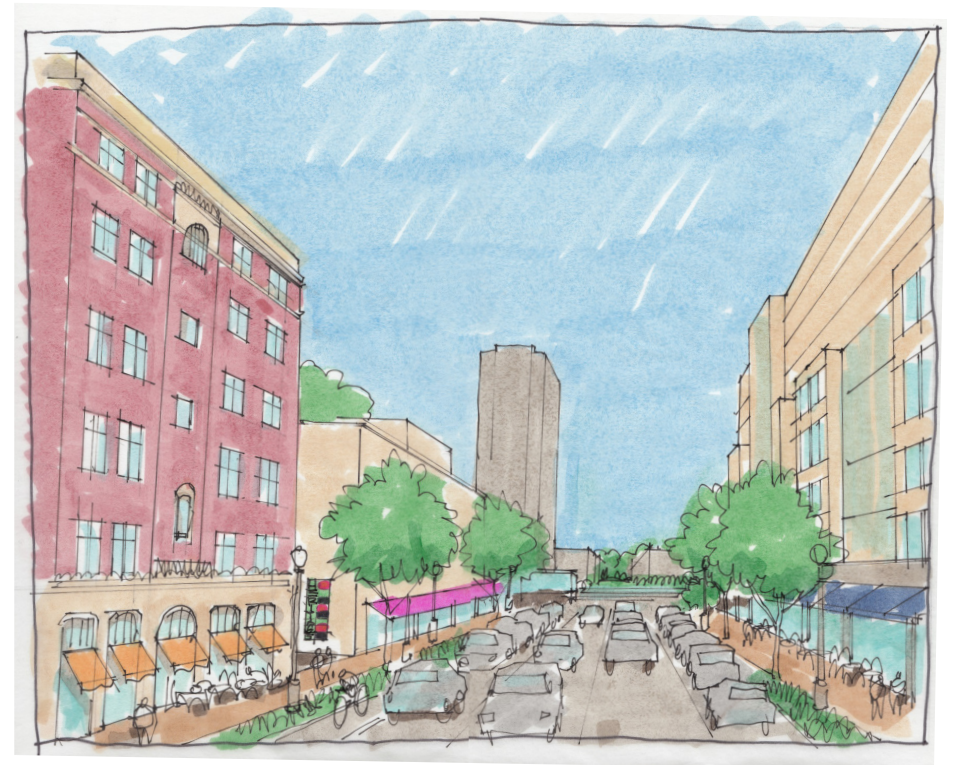


Image 3: 6th Street

Image #4 is a photograph looking west on Muhammad Ali Boulevard across 9th Street. Note the great width of this street, six lanes of traffic plus turning lanes divided by a median even wider than the traffic lanes. Also note the landscaped berm separating the other side of 9th from the residential lots beyond. Other highway-like elements such as the cobra-head street lights and the absence of active storefronts make this intersection unfit for pedestrians.

Image #5 is approximately the same view as the photo, but how this intersection would appear after the design changes described in image (#6) had been implemented. Because of the reduction in width of the travel lanes and the median, the other side of 9th Street appears much closer than it was. Note also the increased landscaping, the prominence of crosswalks and pedestrian-scaled historic lampposts, and the repeated use of banners and graphic pylon or gateway signs that signal the presence of this new Arts & Culture District. Also note the presence of new mid-rise residential buildings on both sides of Muhammad Ali Boulevard across 9th Street. To the right of the sketch, the existing useable open space can still be seen. It has been reduced somewhat in size but not eliminated.



Image 4: 9th Street

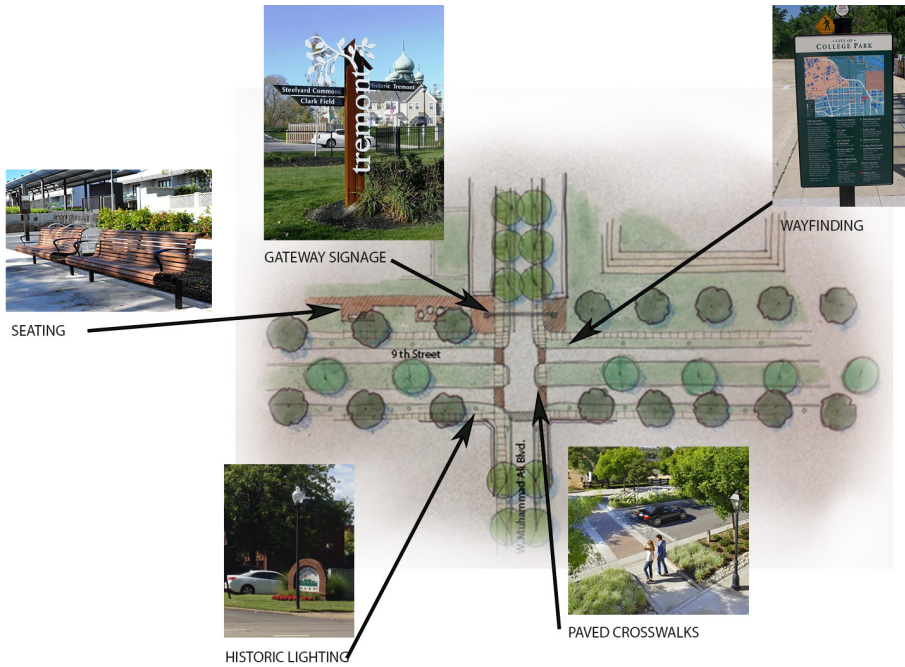
### Connecting Across 9th: Recommendations

Changing the perception and physical divide created by the amount of traffic and existing design of Ninth Street will be a major step in connecting the Russell Neighborhood to the downtown and the rest of Louisville. Currently, traffic follows at highway speeds, and the distance that pedestrians have to cross from one side to the other is a challenge, creating a barrier for pedestrians crossing back and forth into Russell and the downtown area. The following steps will help to create a connection from the proposed improvements starting at 6th Street across 9th Street, creating an easy-to-travel, pedestrian-friendly, and unified urban environment:

**Make the street easier and safer to cross for pedestrians-** Traffic can be slowed by decreasing the travel lanes starting at the exit ramps. This will contribute to making the street safer for pedestrians, and lessening the current 'wall effect' of the street. Narrowing the street by decreasing the median will make the distance from sidewalk to sidewalk across 9th Street shorter. The space created by decreasing the size of



Image 5: 9th Street



**Image 6: 9th Street**

REDESIGNED INTERSECTION

the median and travel lanes can be added to the sidewalks to create better pedestrian space. In addition, paving the crosswalks will not only make the street visually pleasing but will assist in making the street safer to cross by visually directing pedestrians and increasing the visibility of the crosswalks to drivers.

**Eliminate the berms/mounds on the west side of 9th Street-** The mounds should be eliminated to expand the view across 9th Street and also provide more usable pedestrian space. This space could contain a variety of seating, planting, and other amenities to create usable public space and attract people across 9th Street into Russell.

**Create a street identity-** A coordinated pattern of signage and wayfinding devices, lighting, and site furniture, which extends from 6th street across 9th Street, will help to unify the neighborhood and direct people across the street. A gateway or entry signage on the west side of 9th street will also direct people into the neighborhood.

Image #7 is a photograph looking west on Muhammad Ali Boulevard at about 11th Street. The Church of Our Merciful Savior is prominent in this view. The right and left sides of the Boulevard are lawn in front of 2 to 2-1/2 story residential buildings. Beecher Terrace is at right. This does not feel like a vital, lively mixed-use commercial corridor like East Main Street in Nulu, Baxter Avenue or Bardstown Road.

Image #8 shows the same block of Muhammad Ali Boulevard transformed by the presence of 4 stories of residential building above a ground floor of continual restaurant, retail, entertainment or cultural uses. Muhammad Ali Boulevard is shown as two-ways here. We strongly recommend this traffic pattern be restored as a traffic-calming measure and to contribute to the growth of commercial uses. Note the new buildings are set back somewhat around the historic church to allow its iconic façade to remain highly visible. A structure of this scale and prominence can co-exist very comfortably amongst these taller buildings.



**Image 7: Ali Boulevard**



**Image 8: Ali Boulevard**

## Creating a Mixed-Use Street: Recommendations

Creating a streetscape that enhances the mixed-use development that is proposed from 9th Street to 13th street is important to the retail use that is suggested for this area. The design of the streetscape should coincide with the 24-hour use and activity that could occur on the street. The street will become an active people space that is a safe, thriving, creative, and welcoming environment, and contributes to an exciting sense of place in the Russell neighborhood. The following should be implemented:

- **Make the Street a Two-Way Street** - This will slow thru traffic and create easy visual and physical access to both sides of the street. Creating travel in both directions will lessen the desire to speed through the neighborhood.
- **Install Dedicated Bike Lanes**- Increase bicycle safety by having dedicated bike lanes protected by a curb to separate cars from those riding bikes.
- **Create Active Sidewalks**- Increase sidewalk widths to allow sidewalk amenities such as tables and chairs, benches, and retail displays to occur without blocking pedestrian movement.
- **Create a Sense of Identify and Comfort**- Install awnings that not only provide shade, but add visual interest along buildings. Install signage, and other wayfinding devices, to provide direction and information to pedestrians. Uniquely-designed, pedestrian-scaled lighting should also be located along this area so that sidewalks can be used safely in the evening. Use planting design to create visually interesting and comfortable environmental conditions. Street tree planting can be used to shape the street space and provide shade, creating a place that users will want to stay in and enjoy for a period of time.

- **Provide Bus Shelters**- Bus shelters should be built to encourage transit use and provide shelter in inclement weather. The shelters should be designed to provide visual interest and have a place for information and community news within them.



Image 9: Ali Boulevard

Image #9 is a photograph looking west on Muhammad Ali Boulevard at approximately 18th Street. On the right is the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage. On the left is an empty lot. Note the forbidding fence around the KCAAH lawn and the lack of signage.

Image #10 re-imagines the KCAAH as the center of artistic and cultural activity in this new district. The graphic identity signage and color palette becomes a pylon sign at this point, announcing to the community that this is the epicenter of their neighborhood. The fence has been removed, the lawn has been redesigned to host outdoor activities, and mixed-use development has taken place across both the Boulevard and 18th Street. Without changing the buildings at all, this facility now feels like it is the heart of West Louisville.

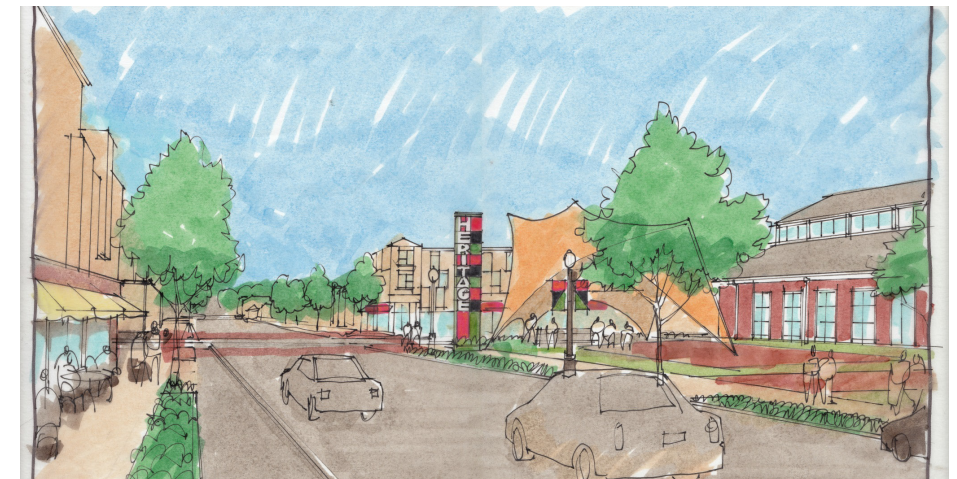
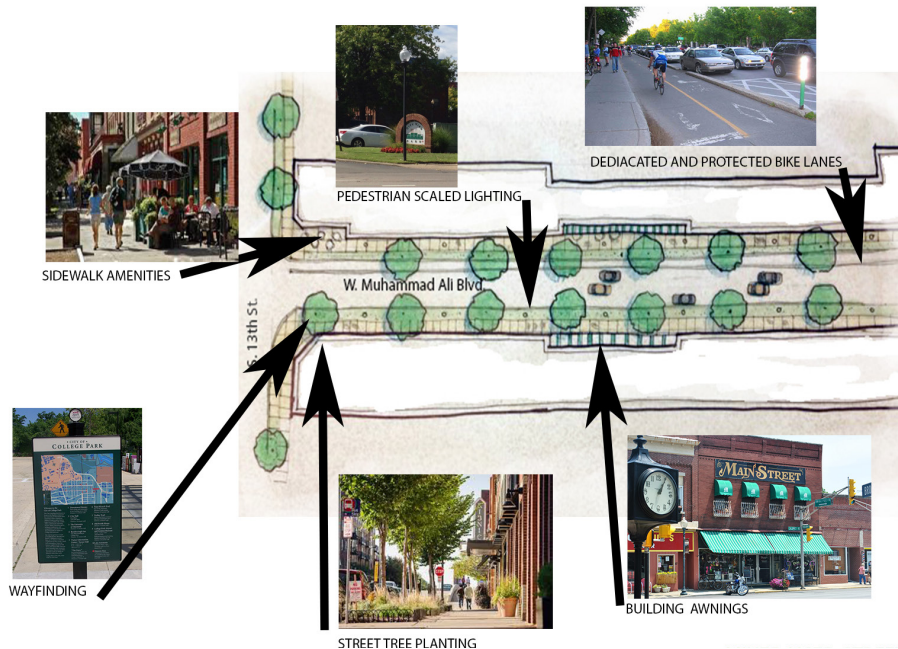


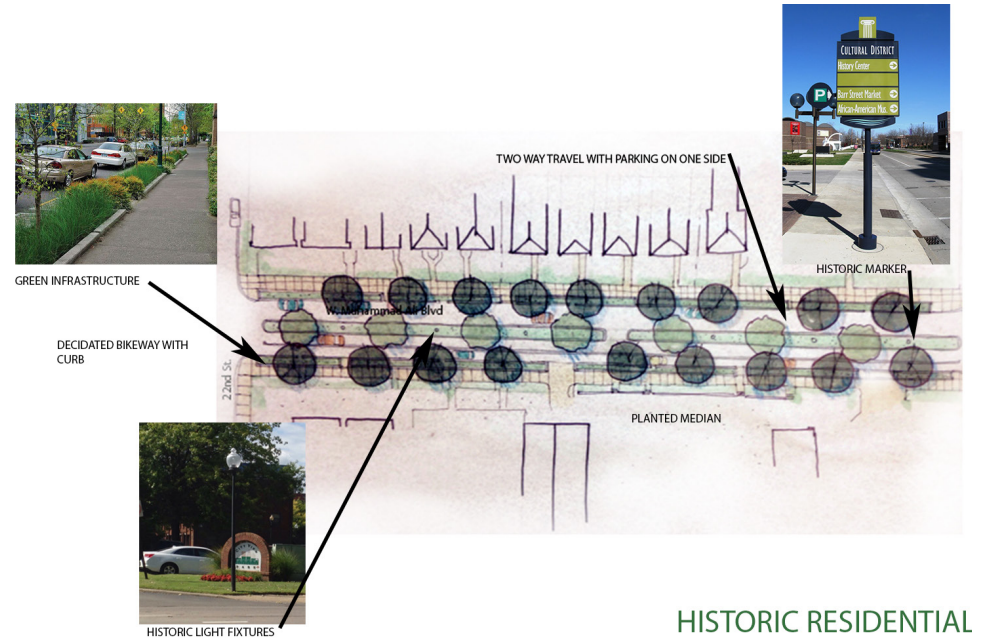
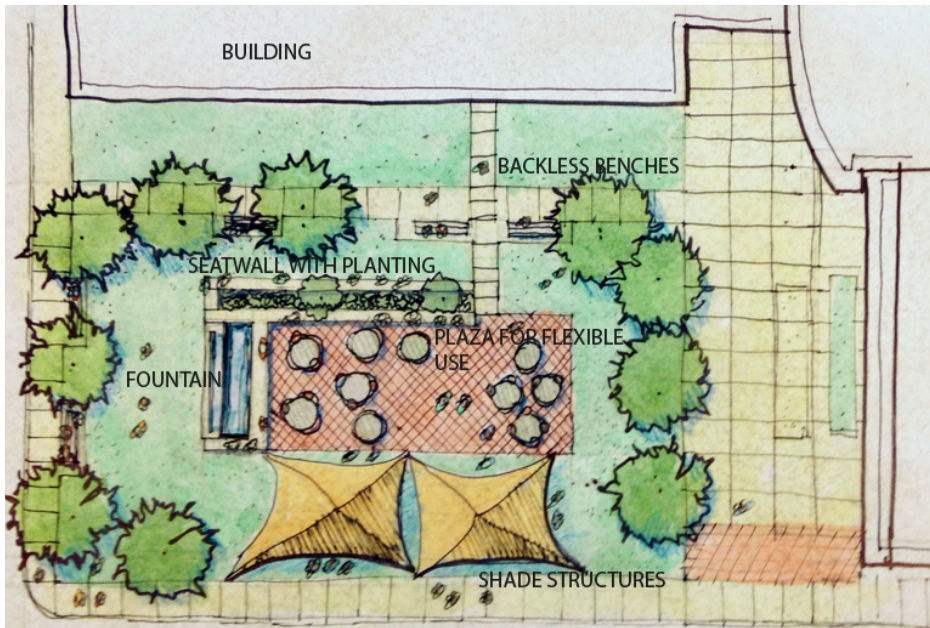
Image 10: Ali Boulevard



## Plaza At KCAAH: Recommendations

The open space adjacent to the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage (KCAAH) on Muhammad Ali Boulevard can become an exciting place that can not only be used as spill out space for activities within the KCAAH, but also as a place to activate the entire Russell Neighborhood. The Plaza can hold programmed activities such as festivals, flea markets, small concerts, etc., but can also be a community space for neighbors to gather and partake in passive activities such as conversation, reading, sitting, relaxing, and just enjoying the beauty of the architecture, green space, and overall surroundings. Some of the ideas that would help in creating a successful plaza are as follows:

- **Removal of the Existing Fence**- Removal of the fence will create safety by allowing easy access and exit. It will open up the space, so that it physically connects to the adjacent sidewalk and is visually expansive.
- **Create a Space for Programmed and Passive Activities**- A paved area that is large enough for movable tables and chairs, and flexible seating and amenities, should be located in the green space. This would allow planned functions to occur with ease. The area could be bordered with planters, for shaping the space, and seat walls, for gathering. A water feature could also be added to the plaza for visual and audio interest.
- **Retain Green Space**-Enough green space should be retained for activity and for the placement of tents or shade structures, if needed for planned programs. Tree planting along the space would provide shade and visual structure, and benches for seating would provide an added benefit for users.



HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL

## Historic Residential: Recommendations

Streets located in the residential historic district should have a unique character, befitting the stately, historic, and striking architecture of the Russell Neighborhood. The streetscape should signal that one is in a residential neighborhood, belonging to a community with a healthy civic culture. The following improvements can be a start to achieving these goals:

- **Add a Median to the Historic Residential Area**- This would distinguish this area from the Mixed Used District, and signal to drivers and pedestrians that they have entered a different environment. The median would also provide an additional area for tree planting, providing shade and structure to the street. The installation of the median will also make two-way traffic that would continue from the mixed use area easy to introduce and safe.
- **Dedicated Bike Way**- Extending the dedicated bikeway through this district would provide continued access to the Russell neighborhood for those traveling by bicycle.
- **Create a Unique Identity**- By installing distinct site furniture and amenities, including historic signage and lighting, a sense of place and identity will be created that enhances the historic and unique residential architecture of this area. Historic markers that provide information regarding the history and heritage of Russell can also be placed at strategic locations thorough out the community.
- **Green Infrastructure**- By adding not only trees but planted areas along the curb to collect, clean and slow water, bio-retention facilities can be installed to improve the health and beauty of the neighborhood environment.

# Civic Infrastructure



## BUILDING CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE FUTURE RUSSELL NEIGHBORHOOD

The Russell neighborhood cannot begin to revitalize physically until it begins to talk about the social design and architecture of your efforts. To begin, the team recommends that you drop the 'community outreach' concept in your language about working together. Outreach suggests that some who are 'inside' are going to step towards those who are 'outside'. That is not a very inclusive approach to designing and building a neighborhood that welcomes everyone.

Instead, we advise you to approach the task as one of "civic engagement". One way of explaining the difference between 'community outreach' and 'civic engagement' is to recall an engagement experience! You or your soon-to-be-spouse made a pledge to care for you by helping you pursue your interests as diligently as they pursued their own. And that pledge was not temporary. It was for a lifetime. They asked you to trust them and to believe that their pledge was wide and deep. They asked you to put your eggs in their basket and promised to do the same in return. To a great extent, that is the spirit we believe will encourage others to enlist with your project at a level of depth and for the time span it will take for results to manifest on the ground.

In the same way we've described how you might envision a new physical infrastructure, we suggest that you pay equal attention to developing a civic infrastructure. A civic infrastructure existed for the Russell neighborhood previously. We urge you to build a civic infrastructure for the present and the future 'civic culture' you will want this new neighborhood to reflect and promote. By building a civic infrastructure with intention, you will create a neighborhood of choice - one where residents and visitors note how it looks and how it feels. And that is how the "buzz" will be generated that helps make the new Russell a successfully revitalized neighborhood.

In the same way that architects and engineers design physical infrastructure to meet physical and material needs, our advice is to spend some time thinking about the architecture of your civic culture. We have heard you reminisce about what made Russell so vibrant in its heyday. You described buildings, places and events. But you also have described processes and organizations that people imagined and created. There were social bodies that assembled resources in order to serve neighborhood missions and visions. There were people who saw to it that things were understood, anticipated and monitored.





- Housing/Lifestyle
- Health and Education
- Training and Capacity Building
- Science and Technology
- Planning, Zoning and Development



Louisville  
Neighborhood  
Congress

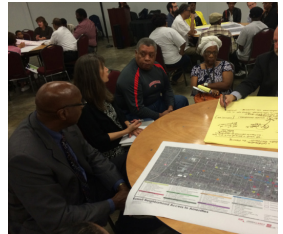
West  
Louisville  
Coordinating  
Committee

Portland  
Neighborhood  
Assn

Russell St  
"West of  
Ninth"

Shawnee  
Neighborhood  
Assn

- Workforce Development & Entrepreneurship
- Engagement & Communications
- Environment/Materials
- Transportation/Parking
- Metrics/Data/Evaluation
- Human/Social Capital
- External Relations



### A Collaborative Governance Framework

We believe that similar degree of civic organization will be essential again. We offer this list of working groups and task forces as requirements of a well-organized 21st century neighborhood. You should have permanent and ad hoc committees that build cohesion around neighborhood objectives and goals. These social vehicles are necessary to institutionalize progress and increase the level of self-determination. Further, we suggest that you consider how these building blocks might be replicated in every neighborhood throughout the west side. Then envision how the westside might initiate a city-wide neighborhood "Congress" to form the governance partnerships necessary to make all of Louisville a city of choice that retains its current residents and competitively attracts new residents. This is what has been done in Washington DC, for instance, which for a time a few years ago was attracting over a thousand new residents per month.

As you organize, we recommend you be clear-eyed about the behaviors that will nurture and sustain your new civic infrastructure. Focus on results defined by metrics. Reach decision by consensus so everyone wins something. Evaluate performance objectively. These are a few examples of how neighborhoods develop systems that will help Russell become a just and sustainable neighborhood. Finally, when we recommend that you be clear-eyed, we mean recognize that there will be resistance from within and without the project. Foster as much cooperation and collaboration as you can, for you will likely provoke competition and conflict as you grow. Be prepared and be committed. We have seen neighborhoods like Russell and entire cities like Louisville transform themselves. When they achieve that, then a new iconic image based on the future arc of the place can replace what you have now. This new iconic image will speak for itself.

Link: <https://www.forumforthefuture.org/sites/default/files/project/downloads/five-capitals-model.pdf>

# Building Momentum



## NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION AS A COMMUNITY PROCESS

Successful neighborhood revitalization in Russell will require many investments, both small and large, and they must all link effectively to one another to create an environment that is attractive for more of the same, creating a virtuous cycle that builds continued momentum. It is a complete myth to think that there is a single transformational investment that will serve as a catalyst for area-wide revitalization. It will require a process whereby both small and large investments carry importance, and feed the overall vision. Some communities have a tendency to be dismissive of perceived “smaller ideas” such as events and public spaces. Some residents might consider these kinds of actions too insignificant to matter, and so unrelated to revitalization as to be unworthy of consideration. However, the experience in other cities provides evidence that each community must follow a process by which sequential actions leverage the following ones, scaling upward and outward to eventually create the desired environment. The immediate goal must be focused around creating an environment that is an attractive place for investment, thereby leveraging current modest public investments for exponentially larger private investment. In this effort, the development of civic infrastructure cannot be underestimated.

### Example – Building a “Snowball Effect” of Momentum in San Angelo, TX

“A lot can change in 20 years.” That was the conclusion reached in 2012 by the San Angelo Standard-Times in looking back at twenty years of accomplishments that have followed San Angelo, Texas’ design assistance project. The paper described a “Snowball Effect” of civic work that was spurred by the process. Lee Pfluger, who served as the chair of the local Steering Committee, described the conditions twenty years ago: “Back in 1991 you could have shot a cannon in downtown San Angelo on a Saturday night and not hit a soul — it was that dead — not a car in sight. The effort

started with Celebration Bridge (with funds raised from the community) and the revitalization of the Paseo de Santa Angela as public space, and each success stimulated new interest in downtown. All the vacant buildings that were underutilized in 1991 have all enhanced their utilization to a higher use.” These early successes each built more momentum for larger investments, growing from less than \$1 million to more than \$55 million in combined public and private investment through a year. In 2002, the San Angelo Area Foundation was created.

The Foundation exemplifies the partnership and civic engagement that have blossomed across the community. In the past decade, it has received more than \$92 million in donations from more than 3,500 different donors, and has distributed over \$38 million in grants. One of its recent grants, to the Performing Arts Coalition, is part of a larger effort to raise \$13.5 million to convert an old Coca-Cola warehouse into the San Angelo Performing Arts Center. Rick Smith, a columnist with the San Angelo Times Standard, captured the community’s pride and accomplishments over a two decade period: “We have followed many of your suggestions. Of the four “architectural icons” you designated, three — Fort Concho, the Cactus Hotel and the railroad depot and warehouse — have received extensive restoration and are in regular use. The fourth, the Texas Theatre, is the exception, though it’s in good hands and well-preserved. The new San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, Celebration Bridge, downtown residences, state office buildings in the rebuilt Monarch Tile building, El Paseo de Santa Angela, Old Town, expanded convention center, a new Tom Green County library and improvements along the Concho River all were either suggested or championed by your study. You didn’t reshape downtown by yourself, of course. Many San Angeloans worked many years to transform the Historic City Center. But you affirmed our ideas, planted seeds and sketched a possible map for our future. And you gave us hope. Back in 1992, your ideas seemed like dreams. Now we are living those dreams.”

For further information:

1)<http://www.gosanangelo.com/news/progress-2012-snowball-effect-began-with-teams-goals-in-92-ep-439391891-356387021.html>

2)<http://www.gosanangelo.com/news/progress-2012-a-stronger-heartbeat-ep-439391962-356387251.html>

3)<http://www.gosanangelo.com/news/rick-smith-dream-team-set-san-angelo-on-right-path-ep-439186243-356160111.html>

**What will the Russell Neighborhood’s story be 20 years from now? It’s up to you.**

The screenshot shows the homepage of the San Angelo Standard-Times website. At the top, there is a weather widget showing 41 degrees, a search bar, and a 'Subscribe' button. Below the navigation menu, the main headline reads 'PROGRESS 2012: Snowball effect began with team's goals in '92' by Becca Nelson Sankey Special To The Standard-Times, dated Feb. 26, 2012. A sidebar on the right lists 'NEWS TOPICS' including Local, Politics, Jail Log, Death Notices, Watching Our Water, State, World, Scene, Education, Crime, Columnists, Strange, and National. At the bottom, there is a 'SHARE' section with Facebook and Twitter icons, and a 'SUBSCRIBE TO "THE MORNING STANDARD"' button.

## Example –East Nashville

In 1999, East Nashville hosted an AIA team following a devastating tornado disaster. Prior to the storm, East Nashville faced many of the same perception challenges that West Louisville faces today. As local developer Dan Heller reflected, “Before the tornado, I had crossed the river only a handful of times. Like so many others living in other parts of town, I didn’t exactly see the East Side as a desirable destination, let alone a place to start a business or call home. Ignored for decades by many new homebuyers and most investors other than slumlords, the east bank of the Cumberland suffered from an abundance of ramshackle properties, drugs and crime.” Former Mayor Bill Purcell, writing on the 15th anniversary of the storm, captured what occurred afterward: “We discovered all over again what our neighborhood meant to us. And the city understood, many for the first time, how special the people and the place were. Every report reinforced the basic importance of community.” As has been recommended in this report, local leaders developed an effective civic infrastructure for success in East Nashville. As the former Mayor wrote, “Ultimately, the tornado sparked the creation of new neighborhood organizations, strengthened our sense of community, and finally opened eyes throughout Nashville to the fullest potential of what our city and citizens could be.” Dan Heller agreed: “Financial and market-driven factors aside, the tornado galvanized citywide attention and community action that led to deeper, more organized collaboration between Metro and neighborhood leaders — a crucial ingredient of the overall recovery. Then-mayor Phil Bredesen’s Tornado Recovery Board, the Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team led by architect Hunter Gee, and the formation of Rediscover East! all provided vital mechanisms for assessing community needs and developing long term plans for future growth.” Terry Dorsey, a local community leader, writes, “Now, 15 years later, some of their work has materialized in the thriving, energetic and hip hamlet of East Nashville. Their ideas have encouraged more business districts; connected neighborhood groups; strengthened the campaign for better schools; and improved the looks and traffic flow on Shelby Avenue and Main Street. At least as important has been the long-term follow-up of the East Nashville community. Rediscover East! was organized to continue the work R/UDAT began. These disparate elements came together with focus and purpose.” The resulting momentum from this collaboration is captured clearly in the narrative of what happened: “An abandoned TV repair shop became Bongo Java. A 1930s gas station became Margot Cafe. An old clapboard home eventually became The Red Door. A vacant storefront shop became Marché. A ramshackle metal garage became Chop Shop. An old office building became PizzeReal.

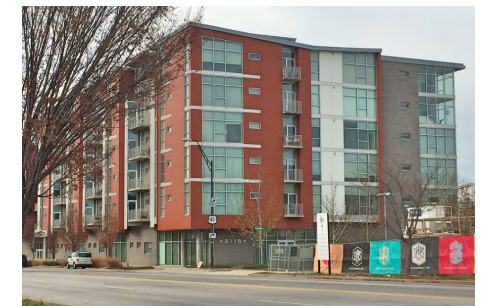
Simultaneously, or in response to the strengthening market, other investors snapped up property in the area, adding still more optimism, capital and momentum to the process. In the ensuing few years, Rosepepper, The Family Wash, Sasso (now Lipstick lounge) The Turnip Truck, Slow Bar (now 3 Crow), Beyond The Edge, Chapel Bistro (now Eastland Cafe), Batter’d & Fried and Alley Cat (now Drifters) sprung to life. These new neighborhood gathering spots, as well as the wildly popular Tomato Festival founded by Art & Invention owners Meg and Bret MacFadyen, began attracting large numbers

of people from across the river, helping to reshape East Nashville’s image as a not-so-scary, hip, artsy, food-and drink destination.” This is the same type of energy and momentum the team hopes to see develop West of 9th once the civic infrastructure can be organized for success.

*For further information:*

1) [http://www.architectmagazine.com/aia-architect/aiafeature/civics-lessons\\_o](http://www.architectmagazine.com/aia-architect/aiafeature/civics-lessons_o)

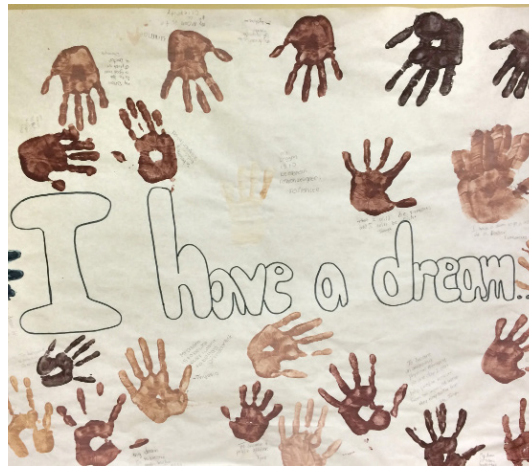
2) <http://theeastnashvillian.com/article/15-years-later>



## CONCLUSION: THE COMMUNITY GOAL

“Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they’ve been given than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a fact. It’s an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration. It’s a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing.” - Mohammad Ali

At its most fundamental level, the revitalization of the Russell neighborhood is not only about repositioning the area for success; it is about redefining and reaffirming the meaning of community for the entire city of Louisville. The entire community has participated in what Russell has become today, and it will take the contributions of the entire community to move the neighborhood toward its vision for tomorrow. It will require a critical transformation in how the city views itself, from the bottom up. On an individual level, it will require changes in how neighbors relate to each other, and on a broader level, it will require changes in how the collective citizenry mobilizes itself to work together for common purpose. This is a generational challenge. It will require time and contributions from across the city. It is not fundamentally a neighborhood revitalization initiative – it is a communitywide effort. However, it has the potential to serve as a dynamic vehicle for the city to achieve success, and remake its identity while preserving its heritage. The team believes that all of the elements are present for Russell, and therefore Louisville at large, to realize success. Its civic capacity is evidenced in multiple areas. The challenge will be to harness this collective energy in an integrated effort that realizes exponential returns. The team believes that the city is positioned for success if it can accomplish this goal.





# Appendix 1: Design Assistance



## THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

With nearly 300 state and local chapters and over 80,000 members, the American Institute of Architects serves as the voice of the architecture profession and the resource for its members in service to society. The AIA has a 45-year history of public service work. Through the Center for Communities by Design, the AIA has engaged over 1,000 professionals from more than 30 disciplines, ultimately providing millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country, and engaging thousands of participants in community-driven planning processes. Its projects have led to some of the most recognizable places in America, such as the Embarcadero in San Francisco, the Pearl District in Portland, and the Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment. This work has been the recipient of numerous national and international awards. As a result, the design assistance process has been adapted for use all over the world during the past 25 years.

**Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT):** Created in 1967, the AIA's R/UDAT program pioneered the modern charrette process by combining multi-disciplinary teams in dynamic, multi-day grassroots processes to produce community visions, action plans and recommendations.

**Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT):** In 2005, in response to growing interest and concern about local sustainability planning, the AIA launched a companion program to the R/UDAT that allowed it to make a major institutional investment in public service work to assist communities in developing policy frameworks and long term sustainability plans. During the first 7 years of the SDAT program, the Center for Communities by Design has worked with over 50 towns, cities and regions.

**Design and Resilience Teams (DART).** In 2014, AIA launched the DART pilot program with a narrower focus on resiliency in cooperation with the New England Municipal Sustainability Network (NEMSN), a network of municipal sustainability directors and professionals. DARTS expand the strong focus R/UDATS and SDATs already have on resiliency. Two communities participated in the pilot program.

The Center's Design Assistance Team programs operate with three guiding principles:

**Multi-disciplinary Expertise.** Each project is designed as a customized

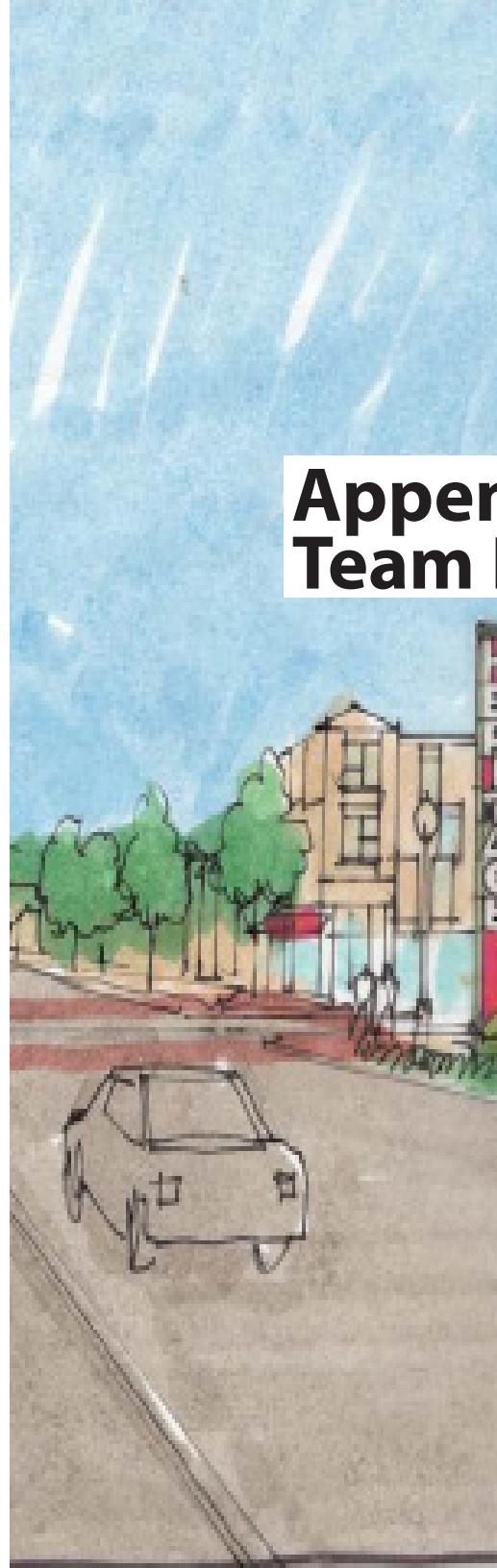
approach to community assistance that incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community. As a result, each design assistance team includes a multi-disciplinary focus and a systems approach to assessment and recommendations, incorporating and examining cross-cutting topics and relationships between issues. In order to accomplish this task, the Center forms multi-disciplinary teams that combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.

**Enhanced Objectivity.** The goal of the design assistance team program is to provide communities with a framework for action. Consequently, each project team is constructed with the goal of bringing an objective perspective to the community that is outside of the normal politics of public discussion. Team members are deliberately selected from geographic regions outside of the host community, and national AIA teams are typically representative of a wide range of community settings. Team members all agree to serve pro bono, and do not engage in business development activity in association with their service. They do not serve a particular client. The team's role is to provide an independent analysis and unencumbered technical advice that serves the public interest.

**Public Participation.** The AIA has a four-decade tradition of designing community-driven processes that incorporate substantial public input through a multi-faceted format that includes public workshops, small group sessions, stakeholder interviews, formal meetings and presentations. This approach allows the national team to build on the substantial local expertise already present and available within the community and leverage the best existing knowledge available in formulating its recommendations.



## Appendix 2: Team Roster

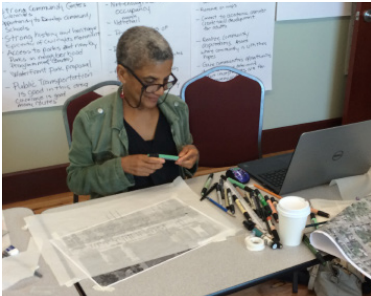




### Mike Davis, FAIA- Team Leader

Michael R. Davis, FAIA, LEED AP, a Principal and Vice President at Bergmeyer Associates, Inc., is a practicing architect, an educator, and an advocate for sustainable public policy. Mr. Davis advises the Boston Redevelopment Authority as Chair of the Boston Civic Design Commission and served on Boston Mayor Thomas Menino’s Green Building Task Force and Massachusetts Governor Deval

Patrick’s Net Zero Energy Building Task Force. He was 2013 President of the Boston Society of Architects and is a former Co-Chair of the AIA Massachusetts Government Affairs Committee. For the American Institute of Architects, Mike has led AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) charrettes in Ithaca, NY, DeKalb County, GA, Augusta, GA, Tremont, UT, and St. Helens, OR, and currently serves on a national AIA Material Transparency working group. Mike’s recent projects include a new LEED-Registered facility for Hostelling International Boston in an adaptively-reused historic building and a deep-energy retrofit of public housing units for the Boston Housing Authority at the Cathedral Family Development, which achieved LEED Platinum certification. He blogs about his firm’s work as signatory to the AIA 2030 Commitment at <http://mikedavisfaia.wordpress.com>. Mike is a Trustee of the Boston Foundation for Architecture and an Overseer of the Boston Architectural College. He holds a Bachelor Degree in Architecture from the Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Architecture from Yale University.



### Diane Jones Allen, ASLA, PLA

Diane Jones Allen, D. Eng., ASLA, PLA examines the relationship between community design, urban planning, and environmental justice through her design consulting, research, and current teaching as an Instructor at the Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture at Louisiana State University, and pass teaching as a Tenured Associate Professor at Morgan State in Baltimore,

Maryland. Prior to teaching, Jones Allen practiced for over a decade as Principal Landscape Architect with TerraDesigns Inc. in New Orleans, LA. She is currently Principal Landscape Architect with DesignJones in New Orleans, Louisiana. Jones Allen holds Doctorate in Civil Engineering from Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland, a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Washington University in St. Louis, Mo, and a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of California, Berkeley. The framework of emphasis that guides aspects of Ms. Jones Allen’s research and practice is environmental justice, especially as it affects minority and urban communities, from a physical planning perspective. Recent scholarship examines the intersection of cultural identity and environmental sustainability in African- American cultural

landscapes, as well as Nomadic Responses to the problem of “Transit Desert” which are places of increasing transportation demand and limited access.



### Carlton Brown

Carlton A. Brown is a founding partner and Chief Operating Officer of Full Spectrum. He is a 1973 graduate of Princeton University - School of Architecture and Urban Planning. He has also studied real estate finance at New York University. After college he worked for architecture and planning firms until 1976, when he joined AT&T as a manager in the real estate division. During his 10-year tenure at AT&T,

he directed the development and construction of over \$2.0 billion of real estate for the company. His experience included: corporate planning, site acquisition, facilities development, project design and leasing for high performance laboratories, data centers and office facilities. Mr. Brown’s vision has led Full Spectrum to be recognized as a national leader in the development of affordable green/smart buildings in emerging urban markets. Mr. Brown is currently leading Full Spectrum’s pioneering development of a 14 square block green mixed use development in downtown Jackson, MS which will feature community scaled green infrastructure, 4,000 units of mixed income housing and nearly one millions SF of office and retail space. Mr. Brown believes that all communities regardless of race, ethnicity or income are entitled to a sustainable future and is committed to assuring that all Full Spectrum’s development projects meet these high performance standards. Since assuming leadership for development, Mr. Brown has led Full Spectrum in the development of more than \$300 million in green development, and boosting Full Spectrum to the Black Enterprise top 100 Companies in 2008 and Inc Magazine’s list of Green Companies to Watch in 2008. Mr. Brown serves on several boards including AIA New York, 651 Arts, Global Green and the national board of the USGBC. He has been designated as a “thought leader” by the Clinton Global Initiative for his “leadership on climate change and sustainable equitable development.” Mr. Brown is member of Mayor Bloomberg’s Sustainability Advisory Board which is tasked with establishing and meeting 2030 goals for sustainability for NYC.



### Don Edwards

Don Edwards is considered one of the most deft mediators and civic engagement designers working today in the field of land use and development by international, federal, regional, state and local planning, transportation, parks and economic development agencies, corporations, universities, foundations and community-based

organizations. A 25 year resident of DC, Don designed and facilitated most of its most complex development projects, including the Strategic Neighborhood Planning Initiative, the Anacostia Waterfront Transportation studies, DC's Transit Alternatives Analysis, the city-wide site evaluation and eventual master planning of the National's Baseball Park site and neighborhood, the four-year long assessment and revision of the District of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan and the assessment of the DC Zoning Code's technical and legal infrastructure as well as its revision. In 2012, Don mediated Georgetown University's 2012 Campus Plan agreement ending three decades of town-gown conflict. Civic engagement projects of national significance that Don Edwards has designed and managed include the District's Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, the African Burial Ground National Monument in Lower Manhattan, the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall, and the Detroit Works Project. Edwards currently manages the civic engagement programs of the DC's \$360 million replacement of the 11th Street Bridges and the H St/Benning Rd line of DC StreetCar. That year, he also cofounded the U.S. Citizens Network for the UN Conference on Environment and Development. He subsequently represented the "CitNet" as a member of the U.S. delegation to the "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro. Don lead U.S. civil society organizing for the UN International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the 2nd UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat 2). At the same time, Don served as chair of the Environmental Justice Working Group of the Sustainable Communities Task Force of the President's Council on Sustainable Development. Don served as a member of the Sustainability External Advisory Council (SEAC) of The Dow Chemical Company for 10 years. He helped grow the practice of deliberative democracy as a senior associate of AmericaSpeaks. He also serves on the boards of Casey Trees, Casey Trees Farm and EcoDistricts. He is a member of the African Atlantic Research Team (AART) at Michigan State University.



### **Hazel Edwards, PhD, AICP**

Dr. Edwards has had a unique 27-year career that combines place-related research with planning and urban design practice. Her research interests in quality of life are framed within urban design contexts while focused primarily on residential and campus environments. Her design background has served as a foundation for her talent for translating and representing ideas and concepts as well as

creating alternatives. This orientation has a strong influence in all of her work—from campus planning (in which she led a number of comprehensive university planning and development activities); to master planning activities (for a community college in South Africa and residential environments); to urban transportation studies (which looked at design guidelines and planning outcomes for transit oriented developments); to qualitative and quantitative research (where she performed a comprehensive quality of life analysis that focused on 20 urban areas in the State of Indiana);

to pre-development services (such as feasibility analyses, site access and circulation review); to building-related projects (such as establishing programming and urban design and site selection criteria); to community engagement (through focus groups, charrettes, and work sessions to build better relationships as a part of the planning process); and to proposal writing (that resulted in a total of \$1.6 million funding for four rural economic development projects). Of note is a planning study that culminated in a book that she co-authored entitled, *The Long Walk: The Placemaking Legacy of Howard University*. This book traced the 127-year history of the physical development of the campus and has led to further research on placemaking at other historically black colleges and universities in the United States. Dr. Edwards is active in the American Planning Association and is a member of Lambda Alpha International, an honorary land economics society. She is a certified planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners. Through the local chapters of the American Planning Association, she has organized and facilitated several conferences, workshops, and charrettes. She has been a member of several Urban Design Assistance Teams (UDATs) as well as Planning Assistance Teams (PATs). She recently began working with 5th graders at a local elementary school to increase their understanding of city planning and architecture, and has developed and implemented exercises for the students to explore the built environment.



### **Abe Farkas**

Abe has nearly three decades experience in structuring successful public-private partnerships that have improved urban neighborhoods, business districts, and university environments. Abe has helped structure several mixed-use, public-private partnerships projects that have achieved LEED certification for sustainability and received regional and national awards. He has served on the

Inter-City Council, the Public-Private Partnership Council, and on the board of directors for the International Economic Development Council. Abe has taught graduate and undergraduate courses in housing and urban policy, neighborhood revitalization, research methods, and environmental issues. Before joining ECONorthwest, Abe was President of the Farkas Group, a development services company in Portland, OR.

### **AIA STAFF :**

#### **Joel Mills- Director, Center for Communities by Design**

Joel Mills is Director of the American Institute for Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community sustainability. Its processes have been modeled successfully in the United States and across Europe. The Center has been the recipient of a numerous awards recognizing its impact. In 2010, the Center was named Organi-

zation of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field. In 2013, the Center received a Power of A Award from the Center for Association Leadership, and a Facilitation Impact Award, given by the International Association of Facilitators.

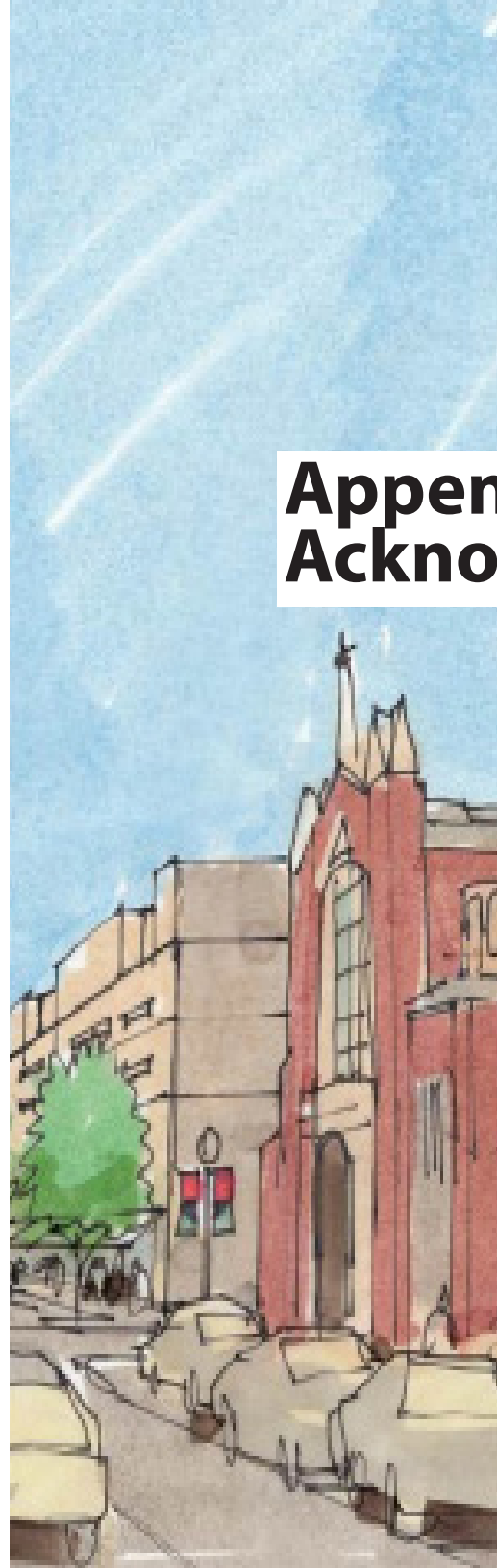
Joel's 22-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity and civic institutions around the world. This work has helped millions of people participate in democratic processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives. In the United States, Joel has worked with over 100 communities, leading participatory initiatives and collaborative processes that have facilitated community-generated strategies on a host of issues.

### **Erin Simmons - Director, Design Assistance**

Erin Simmons is the Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. Her primary role at the AIA is to provide process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT ) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT ) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community members to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in over 250 communities across 47 states. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field. In 2013, the Center received a Power of A Award from the Center for Association Leadership, and a Facilitation Impact Award, given by the International Association of Facilitators. In 2015, the Center received the Outstanding Program Award from the Community Development Society.

Erin is a leading practitioner of the design assistance process. Her portfolio includes work in over 100 communities across the United States. A frequent lecturer on the subject of creating livable communities and sustainability, Erin contributed to the recent publication "Assessing Sustainability: A guide for Local Governments". Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm in Georgia, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, conducted historic resource surveys, and wrote property nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from UGA.

## **Appendix 2: Acknowledgements**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The AIA Sustainable Design Assessment team would like to thank the Louisville community for its generous hospitality and all of the contributions citizens made to the process. In particular, the team would like to thank the following individuals for their support of the process.

The team's visit to Louisville, Kentucky, was a rewarding, productive, and memorable experience. We greatly appreciated the preparatory work led by Mr. Sam Watkins, President and CEO of the Louisville Central Community Center, Inc., Kevin Fields, Senior Vice-President and COO of LCCC, Jared Kaelin, MLA candidate at the NC State University Department of Landscape Architecture, Rev. David Snardon, Pastor, Joshua Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, Mayor Greg Fischer, City Staff from multiple departments, Louisville Metro Council President David Tandy, state Senator Gerald Neal, and an extraordinarily capable and hospitable staff of the LCCC. We believe that the proponents were more than sufficiently aware of the critically important juncture at which the City of Louisville finds itself and the enormous potential that West of Ninth has to shape the future of the City.

