



Kansas City

PROSPECT & LINWOOD

Reinvesting in the Neighborhood | Kansas City, Missouri



Technical Assistance Panel | March 11-12, 2025

About

Urban Land Institute

Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 48,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide. ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific regions, with members in 84 countries.

Cover photo: A view of the Sun Fresh Market and shopping center at the intersection of Prospect Avenue and Linwood Boulevard. (ULI)

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ULI Kansas City

As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among local, national, and international industry leaders and policymakers dedicated to creating better places. The ULI Kansas City District Council brings together real estate professionals, civic leaders, and the Kansas City community for educational programs, initiatives impacting the region, and networking events, all in the pursuit of advancing responsible and equitable land use throughout the region. With 310 members locally, ULI Kansas City provides a unique venue to convene and share best practices in the region. ULI Kansas City believes everyone needs to be at the table when the region's future is at stake, so ULI serves the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines—from architects to developers, CEOs to analysts, builders, property owners, investors, public officials, and everyone in between. Using this interdisciplinary approach, ULI examines land use issues, impartially reports findings, and convenes forums to find solutions.

ULI Kansas City Leadership

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ULI Kansas City Chair
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Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

Urban Land Institute harnesses its members' technical expertise to help communities solve complex land use, development, and redevelopment challenges. Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs) provide expert, multidisciplinary, unbiased advice to local governments, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations facing complex land use and real estate issues in the region. Drawing from its professional membership base, ULI Kansas City offers objective and responsible guidance on various land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The sponsoring organization is responsible for gathering the background information necessary to understand the project and present it to the panel. TAP panelists spend two days interviewing stakeholders, evaluating the challenges, and ultimately arriving at a set of recommendations that the sponsoring organization can use to guide development going forward.

About

Technical Assistance Panel

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ULI Kansas City would like to thank Councilwoman Melissa Patterson Hazley for inviting ULI to study the real estate environment around this important intersection and City investment. ULI would also like to thank the City of Kansas City Missouri Planning and Development Department and the stakeholders who generously shared their time and experience with the panel throughout the course of its study.



The panelists toured the Sun Fresh Market, the broader shopping center, and the surrounding neighborhoods.

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Executive Summary

Recognizing that residents living in the neighborhoods surrounding Prospect Avenue and Linwood Boulevard were living in a food desert, the City of Kansas City invested \$17 million to establish a grocery store at the Linwood Shopping Center. Located at the southeast corner of the intersection, the Sun Fresh Market is an anchor in the shopping center, providing access to fresh produce and groceries to the surrounding neighborhoods.

The shopping center sits close to a Prospect MAX bus stop and sees a large amount of pedestrian traffic. While some of these pedestrians are walking to the store from the surrounding residential neighborhoods, a concerning number of pedestrians are wandering around the bus stop or loitering there, at the store, or at all points in between. Crime has increased in the area and a number of those loitering are challenged by mental health concerns or are impaired by substance abuse.

In recent years, the Sun Fresh Market (the Market) has seen a decline in the number of shoppers and a decrease in sales, falling far below other Sun Fresh Markets in the region.

Knowing that there are real estate related measures that could help support the future success of the shopping center, the Sun Fresh Market specifically, and the surrounding neighborhood, the City of Kansas City (the City) turned to the Urban Land Institute Kansas City District Council (ULI) for

assistance. ULI convened a technical assistance panel (TAP) to study the area, interview stakeholders and deliver recommendations that can help guide the City's approach to the Market going forward.

Store Enhancements

The Sun Fresh Market and the surrounding community would benefit from enhancements to the existing store and its offerings. These efforts will support the health and well-being of residents as well as help reduce instances of unwanted behavior in and around the store.

- Add a dining area
- Offer prepared healthy food and meals
- Check receipts at the door

- Reduce liquor options
- Provide consistent programming and events
- Consider adding other services like a pharmacy

The panel recognized that the City will also need to continue to subsidize the Market while building back the service area. Until the community feels safer patronizing the store, the City's investment in the Market should be supported with additional funding.

Placemaking and Infrastructure

The panel heard that the community does not feel safe moving around the shopping center. The City is struggling to provide additional



The Linwood Shopping Center, home to the Sun Fresh Market, is outlined in red.

security in the area given its stretched resources. There is also a pervasive negative perception of the area around the 31st and Prospect intersection. Placemaking and infrastructure improvements can enhance safety in the area, positively impact community perceptions, and encourage more retail activity and community pride.

Use placemaking to enhance the environment around the intersection and along the Prospect corridor. Placemaking helps communities celebrate their authentic identity while also creating or strengthening a sense of place. Placemaking also helps reduce crime, improves pedestrian safety and public health, attracts economic investment and tourism, provides cultural and volunteer opportunities, and increases use of public transportation.

Use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles to help reduce crime. Similar to placemaking, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) also focuses on strategies to improve public and private spaces with the goal of reducing crime. CPTED-informed improvements for the shopping center include clarified City Ordinance signage, improved site and accent lighting, the installation of more green space and landscaping, and an enhanced perimeter fence.

Leverage site improvements to improve safety. Using placemaking principles and CPTED strategies, the panel recommends

a new combination retaining wall and decorative fencing for the perimeter of the shopping center that provides a barrier to automobile traffic and visibility into the fenced space. Other site improvements include landscaping and irrigation for existing and new grassy areas (including a new park to surround the existing memorial) and lighting upgrades and restriping for the Linwood Shopping Center parking lot.

Create a district identity. Sitting between several neighborhoods, the study area lacks a public identity and would benefit from branding efforts. The City should engage a marketing firm to create district brand, with early input from and ongoing engagement with community members. The intersection at 31st and Prospect should serve as the district anchor and the history of the area should be represented in the brand. Public art, beautification measures, and unifying activities can further support the branding efforts.

Activate the site and broader shopping center. Placemaking and design activities should be supported by activations at the shopping center, which might include a chalk walk, cultural and food festivals, a food truck roundup, pop-up markets, farmers markets, and resource and health fairs. These events will bring positive engagement to the community and can help curb unwanted behaviors through more “eyes on the street.” Increased site activity can also attract additional private investment.

Housing and Population Building

Housing density needs to increase in the neighborhoods surrounding the shopping center to help ensure there are enough consumers to support the stores.

Phase 1 – Initial/Additional Public Investment. The initial public investment in the Sun Fresh Market should be supported by the deployment of powerful property rehabilitation and blight remediation tools. These tools should include access to land bank properties by a community development corporation (CDC), funding to subsidize the renovation of these homes to ensure affordability by area residents, and clear titles and environmentally clean lots (funded by the City). The panel also recommends exploring the potential for a vacancy or neglect tax to address problem properties and a rental-to-homeownership pipeline for City employees.

Phase 2 – Encouraging Private Investment. The following steps, also led by the City, can help facilitate follow-on private investment. These steps include providing an expedited permitting process and streamlined zoning approvals for projects in the study area, prioritizing and incentivizing local developers, continuing tax abatement for building rehabilitation, and reducing fees for ground-up development. The City should also partner to bring more attainable housing units to the neighborhood and encourage infill housing in a range of sizes and price points. Continued attention to the

neighborhood should include programs that support economic development, resident wealth-building, and community stability and growth.

Recommendations for Players and Partners

There is an impressive number of organizations operating in and around the study area, each with its own area of focus. Potential collaborations, leveraging and expanding existing capacity, can help support the improvements envisioned by the panel.

- Dedicate CDC resources to the study area.
- Support Community Resource Team (CRT) operations with dedicated and consistent City funding.
- Pursue CPTED recommendations to help improve public and pedestrian safety in and around the shopping center.
- Build additional staff capacity with the establishment of a ProspectUS Corridor Manager position and one or two urban redevelopment positions.
- Elevate the visibility of the new Eastside Community Action Network (CAN) Center and place a dedicated Neighborhoods Services Center person there as a community resource. Additionally, the City should provide space in the CAN for the new ProspectUS Corridor Manager.

- Strengthen the Kansas City Police Department's presence at the CAN Center and implement the CPTED recommendations.
- Support continued use of and safety at the public library by implementing CPTED principles at and around the library facilities.

Funding Strategies

The following potential funding sources should be explored to help support the panel's recommended actions.

- Coordinate and leverage existing community improvement district (CID) funding from the surrounding three CIDs.
- Leverage Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) funding from area developments for improvements within the study area.
- Identify foundation and grant opportunities.
- Leverage the One Percent for Art Program.

Next Steps and Phasing

Within the next three months, the City should:

- Secure funding for site improvements and district branding and identity work; engage the marketing firm to create the district identity.
- Build a new fence around the shopping center and include additional landscaping and green space.

- Ensure that funding for additional City staff is included in the new budget.
- Clearly define the role of the CAN Center.

Within the next one to three years, the following actions should be addressed:

- Complete all site improvements at the shopping center.
- Install public art around the intersection.
- Establish or identify the distinct CDC that will guide real estate work in the area and establish a housing acquisition and rehab plan.
- Invest in title clearing and environmental remediation of vacant parcels.
- Establish a consistent funding stream for the CRT to continue blight remediation.

The panel's recommendations are designed to encourage and support a vibrant mixed-use, mixed-income Prospect Avenue corridor. The panel also recognized and further refined the City's goal for the grocery store, articulating that this work should help support a self-sustaining store that is supported by an additional 7,000 residents in its footprint.

The commitment that community members and the City have to this area is to be commended. The work must continue and neither the community nor the City can afford to slow their efforts. With continued focus and investment, additional organizational capacity, and attention to safety enhancements, the shopping center can become the community jewel it was meant to be.

Introduction and Background

The Linwood Shopping Center and Sun Fresh Market at the corner of Prospect Avenue and Linwood Boulevard in Kansas City are important resources for a community that has experienced years of underinvestment. The City of Kansas City (the City) invested \$17 million in the shopping center to remove existing blight in the area, help ensure that the community has access to groceries and fresh foods, and potentially spur additional investment in the neighborhood. Today, store sales are falling, crime has picked up in and around the store, and there are serious concerns that the store may close, leaving neighbors once again in a food desert.

Understanding the value the store brings to the community and recognizing the investment already made in the shopping center, the City turned to the Urban Land Institute Kansas City District Council (ULI) for assistance in stabilizing the real estate and economic outlook for the store and shopping center by addressing real estate related matters that are affecting the center's success.

Using its objective technical assistance panel (TAP) program, ULI assembled a panel of real estate professionals with the expertise to analyze the site and the surrounding areas. With experience in development, design, investment, and public-private partnerships, the panelists reviewed briefing material provided by the City, toured the study area, interviewed stakeholders, and ultimately arrived at a series of recommendations the City and property owners can consider to

bolster the continued operation of the store and support the broader revitalization and vitality of the neighborhood.

The Study Area

The study area, as identified by the City, centered around the Linwood Shopping Center on the west side of Prospect Avenue, north of Linwood Boulevard and south of 31st Street. In evaluating the present state and potential future for the shopping center, the panel also considered the surrounding commercial corridors, running north and south on Prospect and east and west on Linwood and 31st Street, as well as the surrounding residential neighborhoods that support the center's retail resources.

Area population. The surrounding area is experiencing a slow and steady population loss and household incomes that typically fall between 20 and 40 percent of area median income (AMI). Many of the residents living in the surrounding neighborhoods do not own personal vehicles and typically walk to the shopping center for their grocery needs.

Sun Fresh Market. The Linwood Sun Fresh Market (the Market) serves the city's largest food desert. Residents in the surrounding neighborhoods are fearful of losing this vital resource, which is also an anchor that helps sustain and support the center's other retail tenants. One stakeholder noted that the Market "is the only proof that greater KC still cares about these historic central city neighbors."

TAP Questions

1. What is the best model for a grocery store to be sustainable in the long term? How do we address crime, create a sense of place, and make it a more attractive option for neighborhood shoppers?
2. Analyze the remaining City-owned block. What is missing? Are retail, experiential activities, restaurants, and/or multifamily residential viable uses?
3. How does the rest of the neighborhood/corridor support the development? How can adjacent parcels be incentivized to enhance the corridor?



The Linwood Shopping Center and Sun Fresh Market are noted by the location icon on the above map. The study area is outlined in black and the neighborhoods with ready access to the shopping center are outlined in red.

Community organizations. While private investment has been moving out of the area, residents and legacy business owners remain committed to their neighborhood. Neighborhood organizations are strong and a coalition of seven such organizations has collaborated to create the Community Resource Team (CRT), which is helping to

address blight and is recognized by the City as a community resource worth supporting with grant funding.

Transit. The study area is well served by public transit, with the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority's (KCATA) Prospect MAX bus line running north and south along Prospect Avenue. This particular bus line

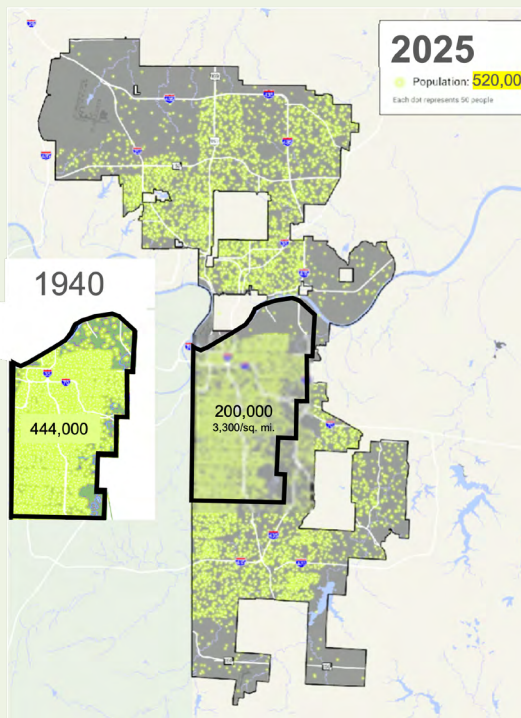
carries the system's highest ridership rates and the bus station at the corner of Prospect and 31st Street is noticeably active. The total population served by this portion of the bus line is also lower than what is considered sustainable for transit, and KCATA would like to encourage more residential and commercial movement to the area.

Kansas City's Urban Context

Cities have been built over decades to create opportunities to build a life through the economies of sharing. Historically, streets, parks, schools, community centers, and civic centers were shared across the population, most of whom lived in close proximity.

In 1940, Kansas City's 444,000 residents lived close to the city center at a density of 7,400 residents per square mile. Downtown was thriving and a 300-mile streetcar network facilitated movement between homes and commercial areas. The city was home to a world-renowned parks and boulevards system and civic treasures like the Municipal Auditorium and Union Station.

By 2025, Kansas City has spread out into a much broader geography, where there are now only 3,300 residents per square mile in the original central city and only 1,630 per square mile in the expanded city limits. This spreading out of households has led to a spreading out of resources. The efficiencies of a dense city—where resources such as buildings, roads, sidewalks, and public services are shared—



become diluted as the population expands outward geographically and density is lost. Streets, parks, and infrastructure become more difficult to fund and maintain as resources are

dispersed further across the geography to reach more neighborhoods.

The result of this shift has left the City to manage miles of deteriorating streets and infrastructure. This dilution of services has also led to increasing property crimes, which causes businesses and residents to question their central city choices.

These current patterns are not sustainable. The City must double down on reinvestments in the urban core to restore central city neighborhoods and lost vitality. Transit and grocery store investments to date have been unable to reverse population losses, and repopulation along the Main Street corridor, stimulated by streetcar, are not adequate enough to turn the tide nor are they equitable in the areas receiving investment attention. The City will need to reinforce the established anchors, rebuild, and repopulate the city center. Repopulating the neighborhoods east of Troost is essential to restoring Kansas City's vitality and financial sustainability.

Crime. Crime is an influential issue in the study area. Panhandling, loitering, drug use, and theft from the nearby stores are frequent challenges and are having notable impacts on sales at the Sun Fresh Market. These very present and unwelcome activities have created an intimidating environment around the shopping center and at the intersection. Those shoppers with means are choosing to drive to a more distant center for groceries rather than face potential intimidation, solicitation, or other negative activity walking to and from the store or while shopping within.

Public Library. The branch of the Kansas City Public Library, at the northwest corner of the intersection of Prospect Avenue and 31st Street, has become an important

community resource. In addition to providing the community with books and access to computer resources, programming helps area children and teens with food access after school, helps residents connect with financial and other literacy resources, and provides wellness programs for anyone interested. The library is also home to the area's only public restrooms.

Insights from Stakeholder Interviews

As a part of the TAP process, the panel conducted a series of stakeholder interviews with elected leadership, City professional staff, business owners, foundations and neighborhood organizations, officers from the Kansas City Police Department (KCPD),

representatives from the Kansas City Public Library, KCATA, property owners, and residents. The following key themes were elevated during those interviews.

Community Assets

- Sun Fresh is an important resource and an important investment in the area. Weekly shoppers have dropped by half since opening, and revenue is 80 percent less than other similar stores.
- The library is an important community hub and resource.
- The Prospect MAX bus route is highly utilized. The free fare creates issues with unhoused people riding all day and others riding to come “hang out” at the 31st & Prospect station.



The inside of the Sun Fresh Market is well-lit, with wide aisles and a good selection of groceries.



The “no trespassing” sign on the shopping center’s perimeter fence is confusing for a public space.



The bus stop at intersection of 31st and Prospect attracts a large number of people who arrive in the morning and loiter throughout the day.

- Commercial and residential property owners are committed to the vitality of the area.
- The Community Resource Team (CRT), Community Action Network (CAN), and Community Land Trust (CLT) are great resources and tools that can play a part in the future success of the area.
- The City's [ProspectUS Plan](#) for equitable transit-oriented development puts forth good recommendations that can have a positive impact on the area, but it needs implementation funding.
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) should guide improvements across the area's public spaces and can help private landowners make similarly helpful improvements.
- The parks, churches, and schools in the surrounding neighborhoods are important community assets.

Challenges

- There are significant housing opportunities across the surrounding neighborhoods, but the processes that shape the development of these sites can be daunting and is likely limiting activity.
- The study area sits in-between known neighborhoods, leaving it in an "in-between state" and lacking a clear and positive identity.
- Public realm repairs are needed along the corridor, including repairs to streets,

sidewalks, and recreational spaces.

- Safety in the area is a key concern. Stakeholders noted that security at the Sun Fresh Market is not strong enough to deter crime, and the police force is stretched too thin to regularly dedicate officers to the area.
- Loitering is thwarting shoppers who might like to patronize their neighborhood store. Many of those loitering and causing trouble around the intersection do not live in the neighborhood and lack a sense of connection to the area or responsibility for their actions.
- Visitors moving through the center are highly transient, which also leads to a feeling of detachment and lack of personal responsibility for one's actions.
- With additional investment and attention to the shopping center, anti-displacement tools will be needed to help support current residents and business owners who wish to remain in place.
- There are a number of gas stations along the corridor, which creates potential environmental issues when the properties are considered for a new use.

The neighborhoods surrounding the shopping center are home to city parks, churches, and schools. There is also a significant number of vacant lots and homes that could be repurposed into new attainable housing for area renters hoping to become homeowners and for new residents wanting to move into the neighborhood.





Store Enhancements

Ongoing Store Enhancements

The panel considered enhancements to the existing store and its offerings that might begin to address some of the City's and community's concerns regarding the safety at and around the store and lead to its improved vitality.

Add a dining area. A space for eating prepared foods within the store might help create a sense of community and shared enjoyment of the space and its resources. It might also allow those who purchase food in the store to consume it there rather than eating in the parking lot, loitering at the bus stop, and leaving trash all along the way.

Offer prepared healthy food. In addition to the healthy offerings in the produce section, a range of healthy lunch specials or prepared dinners could help support shoppers' good choices for easy and fast meals.

Check receipts at the door. Much like Sam's Club, Costco, and even WalMart, checking shoppers' receipts at the exit might help deter some of the shoplifting that is occurring in the store.

Reduce liquor options. Reducing the size of the liquor selection and perhaps moving it away from the entrance might curtail some of shoplifting and associated negative behavior that alcohol consumption may be catalyzing.

Provide consistent programming and events. Bringing community into the store for dollar-donut days, celebrations of particular food-centric holidays, or even cooking classes

can help support a sense of community in the area and give residents more reasons to visit the store and shop. The store could also host formal or informal community meetups for organizations or groups of residents. These opportunities to gather at the store can help build a sense of pride in the space and encourage individuals to feel a sense of ownership over the Market's environment (e.g. which might help keep it clean and safe) and future success by encouraging more shopping there.

Consider adding other services. With the closing of the nearby Walgreen's store, the area could benefit from the addition of a pharmacy at the Market. Other uses found within grocery stores should be explored and considered. Each of these will further support store traffic while also serving the community.

Subsidize the store while building back the service area. The store needs additional financial support while the surrounding service area is bolstered, renewed, and expanded.

The economics of the corridor and the success of the store are closely intertwined, and the store is vital to the community. Until the community feels safer patronizing the store and moving around the shopping center, the City's investment in the Market will need to be supported with additional funding. The City should not abandon its investment but should instead build on its investment and infuse additional support into this community.



Kansas City police officers provide a security presence inside the store near the checkout lanes.



The Market provides important access to fresh, healthy foods for a community that was once a food desert.



Placemaking and Infrastructure

State of the Space

Throughout the stakeholder interviews, the panel heard that the community does not feel safe moving around the shopping area. Residents and business owners see and feel the lack of care and disinvestment in their community and feel “hopeless.” Long-time residents have moved out of the area or are considering a move out of the neighborhood, and the area is not seeing any noticeable influx of new residents.

Residents have recognized that the City is struggling with stretched resources and are supporting their local neighborhood associations’ efforts to clean up, care for, and support the community that is there. Similarly, seven neighborhood associations have collaborated to form the Community Resource Team (CRT) and address serious matters concerning blight in their collective geographies. These organizations are making good use of existing resources and are having a positive impact, yet they remain frustrated and exhausted by the layered bureaucratic processes and the lack of coordination across resource programs. This under-resourced environment and complex processes wear down even the most stalwart advocates and can result in inaction, paralysis, and/or slow or no results.

Separately, the residents and commercial business owners are fighting a public relations problem. There is a pervasive negative perception of the study area, and negative terms are frequently used to describe the area and its residents. This

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The more we love where we live, the more connected we are to our communities and to each other.

—PANELIST

limits further energy that might be spent improving the neighborhood and curtails additional support, particularly funding.

Taken together, these characteristics and stressors have resulted in a community that is disconnected from the surrounding economic and social ecosystem and has left the community in distress.

The Benefits of Placemaking

The study area and challenges faced by the Sun Fresh Market could be improved in part through placemaking initiatives. More than just hanging pretty banners, placemaking helps the community shape an identity that is authentic to the space, creates a sense of place and arrival, and supports community pride and well-being. Placemaking has also been shown to assist communities in the following ways:

- **Improves the feel of the environment.** With care and attention placed on both the private and public realms,

Placemaking

Placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. Placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. From [Project for Public Spaces](#)

placemaking can help improve the look and feel of an area.

- **Reduces crime.** With more attention paid to public spaces and more people interacting with and in those spaces, incidents of crime per capita are lowered.
- **Improves pedestrian safety.** Placemaking works to improve the experience of people moving in and through a space. Emphasis is placed on the pedestrian experience, and the safety of that experience is prioritized.
- **Improves public health.** By encouraging more people moving around, outside of cars, walkability is elevated and, with it, public health more broadly improves.
- **Attracts business investment.** Investments in placemaking, whether by the public or private sectors—or both—signals to the business community that the space is cared for and valued, giving businesses a reason to likewise invest in the area.

- **Attracts tourism.** People are attracted to areas that are lively, interesting, and visibly cared for. Placemaking activities encourage these types of improvements and attract new and returning visitors.
- **Provides cultural opportunities.** Placemaking, and creative placemaking particularly, provides communities with opportunities to tell their story, elevating the cultural identities and unique histories that make the place special.
- **Encourages volunteerism.** Placemaking is often a community endeavor that is supported by the public and private sectors. Volunteerism and the ability for a wide range of participants to contribute helps ensure that the placemaking is authentic to the place.
- **Increases use of public transportation.** The enhanced walkability of spaces that have had placemaking attention naturally tends to encourage further walking and exploration, which is more easily facilitated by public transportation.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

Similar to placemaking, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design also focuses on strategies to improve public and private spaces, yet the unique benefits of CPTED strategies are reductions in instances of crime and unwanted behavior.

CPTED-informed improvements in the study area include the following:

- **Clarified city ordinance signage.** The current signage on the fencing surrounding the Linwood Shopping Center is confusing and unwelcoming. The fence marks the property line for public shopping center, yet the “no trespassing” instructions appear to prohibit access to the area’s stores.
- **Improved site and accent lighting.** Dark or dimly-lit spaces make criminal behavior easier to conceal. Enhancing the lighting across the parking lot and behind the shopping center’s stores will help limit crime and enhance the feelings of safety for patrons. Motion-sensored lighting in less-active areas can also provide needed light for those using the space legally and alert neighbors or police if the space is lit when it is not expected to be in use.
- **Green space and landscaping.** Landscaping along building walls and along fence lines can help discourage loitering. Green spaces can help soften areas where concrete and asphalt predominate and reduce instances of speeding in open parking lots.
- **Fence replacement.** The shopping center fence is bent and broken in multiple places. By replacing the fence with a design that is stone or concrete from the ground up to two or three feet and topping it with an open style metal fencing, visibility within and around the outside is retained while a more substantial barrier prevents vehicles from crossing easily into the parking lot and endangering pedestrian areas.



(top) The current fence around the shopping center perimeter is bent and broken in places. (bottom) The panel recommends a replacement fence employ both masonry, to act as a barrier, and metal slats for visibility.

Site Improvements*

Using placemaking principles and CPTED strategies, the panel outlined the following improvements for the Linwood Shopping Center and provided back-of-the-envelope estimations for potential associated costs.

- Retaining wall and decorative fencing: \$476,000 (retaining wall \$350,000; decorative fencing on top of the wall \$126,000)
- Landscaping and irrigation: \$90,000 (landscaping updates \$45,000; irrigation installation \$45,000)
- Lighting upgrades for the parking lot and Sun Fresh building: \$50,000
- Re-stripping of the Linwood Shopping Center parking lot: \$10,000

In addition to the above site improvements, the panel identified a compelling opportunity to upgrade and expand the memorial that currently graces the eastern edge of the Sun Fresh parking lot, midway between 31st Street and Linwood Boulevard. Upgrades to this memorial-turned-park include:

- Demolition of the existing asphalt to make way for additional park area: \$7,000
- Earthwork to create a grass area surrounding the memorial: \$46,000
- Curb and gutter improvements to protect and drain the park: \$9,000
- Sod for the newly expanded park area: \$9,000

With a ten percent (\$69,000) contingency line item and payment for contractor staff, the total potential cost of upgrading the shopping center environment is estimated at \$766,700.

It is possible that the construction activity associated with these improvements might deter the unwanted activity in the area and reduce the loitering.

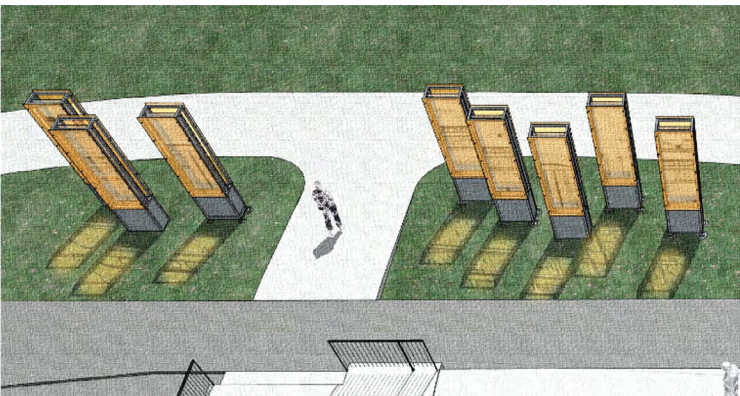


* The value and revenue projections in this section are simply estimates based on current metrics found in the broader Kansas City market. These are intended to be illustrative only and should not be construed as an opinion of or guarantee of future value.



District Identity

The “in between” nature of the commercial corridor through the study area is exacerbating the area’s lack of a sense of place. This feeling that the area does not belong to any one neighborhood leaves residents wondering who is responsible for what and leaves few, if any, feeling a sense of ownership over the area’s success. Every stakeholder interviewed wished for commercial success along the corridor, but no one knew who was really responsible or how it might be achieved.



- **Create an identity and brand.** The City is encouraged to engage a marketing firm to create district “brand.” This effort should be conducted with early input from and ongoing engagement with the surrounding residents and area business owners. The brand should be authentic to the area and yet aspirational, helping to elevate the value of corridor in the minds of residents, visitors, shoppers, and business owners.
- **Designate the intersection as a district anchor.** The intersection of 31st Street and Prospect Avenue is important to the neighborhood, to the businesses, and to

(top) Signage in the area can help inform visitors of their arrival in a special area and assist with wayfinding.

(middle) Public art can create visual interest in an otherwise blank space and can provide residents with a source of pride in an area. Additionally, artists can elevate the culture or history of a community through their art.

(bottom) Banners on street or light poles are another way to highlight a district or special area within a city.

transit riders. Identifying this intersection as the anchor it is in the district can bring more visibility to the surrounding real estate, elevating its importance and helping to create a sense of community presence and weight to an area that experiences a great deal of pass-through traffic.

- **Engage community members.** As noted, the community should guide and influence the creation of a district identity to ensure authenticity and support community buy-in of the resulting effort.
- **Emphasize the historic significance.** This part of the city holds important historic significance, and it is a history of which residents should be proud. Shining a light on historic facts can aid in placemaking, further differentiating this neighborhood from others, and supporting community pride.
- **Embrace beautification and unity measures.** Creating a beautiful environment—one with healthy plants in sturdy planters and public art that is authentic and engaging—can help foster and strengthen community pride and aid in creating a sense of place and district cohesion.
- **Elevate opportunities for growth.** The district identity should also provide a sense of opportunity for growth in the area, be that through new neighbors, business attraction, or expanded community services. Visitors need to feel welcome and see opportunity for themselves in the space.

- **Embrace public art.** In addition to the memorials currently in place, the City is encouraged to seek more public art installations for the corridor. By working with the community or the neighborhood organizations, potential sites for new art installations could be identified and themes sketched out for the community's consideration. A request for qualifications can help find interested artists and the City's one-percent sales tax for public art funding could be put to use along the corridor.

Site Activation

Placemaking and design activities are foundational to transformation or reinvigoration of the study area. At the same time, those actions alone will not be enough. Site activation and regular programming is also required to bring residents out and help visitors feel welcome.

Site activation activities along the corridor and in the shopping center might include a chalk walk, cultural and food festivals, a food truck roundup, pop-up markets, regular farmers markets, and resource and health fairs. The public library is already hosting a few of these programmatic activities and could be an important partner in expanding these activities and resources further into the community. Other organizations, perhaps those located in or having a presence in the new Community Action Network center could also be partners in the types of community activities that can activate the corridor while also serving the community.

The benefits of site activation are numerous.

- Positive interaction is brought to the site and can help limit or even eliminate unwanted activity.
- The additional people—residents, vendors, and business owners—who participate in

the activities provide more “eyes on the street,” which makes criminal behavior less appealing with more people watching and bearing witness.

- Community connections are formed and strengthened when people are invited, welcomed, and celebrated in the neighborhood's public spaces.
- Additional community and commercial investment is stimulated. Investments of time in the hosting of these events and of those attending demonstrates that the community values the space and the activities. Businesses find this type of engagement attractive and additional investments may follow.
- There is also potential to access Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund (NTDF) Program funding to support site activation initiatives. [Eligibility requirements can be found online.](#)



Site activation strategies can include annual events and festivals as well as frequent (monthly or weekly) markets or vendor offerings. The goal is to provide residents with a reason to get out and enjoy their community and an opportunity for visitors to come and explore the area. Area businesses also benefit from the additional activity and foot traffic.



Housing and Population Building

The neighborhoods surrounding the Linwood Shopping Center are experiencing a slow population decline. The 2000 U.S. Census noted an area population of 6,691. That same area was only home to 5,239 people according to the 2024 Census. That 22 percent population decline has had an impact on the shopping center and its tenants. In 2022, store management counted an average of 14,000 shoppers per week. Just two years later, that figure has dropped by half, with only 7,000 shoppers entering the store each week.

In addition to enhancing shoppers' feelings of safety around the shopping center, housing density needs to increase in the surrounding neighborhoods to help ensure there are enough consumers to support these stores and maintain residents' access to fresh and healthy food items.



Residential streets in the study area are marked by a mix of occupied homes, vacant homes, and vacant parcels.

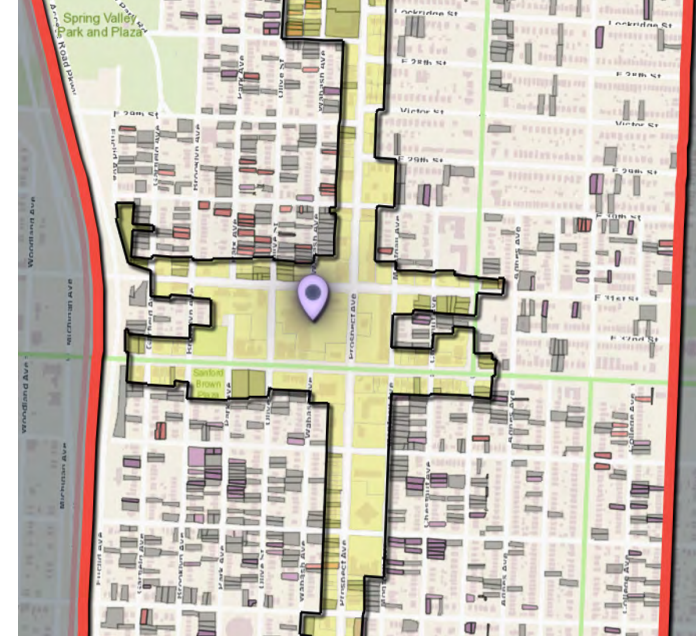
To address the question of housing density, the panel outlined a two-step approach that leverages public investment to attract and catalyze private investment in the study area.

Phase I – Initial/Additional Public Investment

The public investment in the Sun Fresh Market is an excellent and important step toward catalyzing additional investment in and attention to the neighborhood. Additional steps are required, however, to help stimulate residential development and redevelopment in the blocks surrounding the shopping center and boost commerce.

Provide property rehabilitation and blight remediation tools.

- **Use the land bank.** The City is strongly encouraged to donate existing homes



Vacant properties in the study area are shaded in grey.

already owned and controlled by the City's Land Bank & Homesteading Authority to a local organization, perhaps a community development corporation (CDC). The CDC would then use its authorities to redevelop the properties and/or work with local developers to bring the parcels back online for residential use.

- **Provide funding.** The City is also encouraged to allocate funding to subsidize the renovation costs of these land-banked homes with the goal of providing additional residential opportunities in the neighborhood at attainable levels. Based upon the median income of a homeowner along Prospect Avenue (\$43,396), an attainable mortgage for area residents is

approximately \$153,000. This strategy could help residents who may be renting to stay in the neighborhood by providing affordable homeownership opportunities.

- **Clear titles and clean lots.** The City has begun a program to assist with clearing title on difficult or encumbered properties. The panel recommends focusing these efforts on parcels in the study area as well as providing the environmental remediation needed to help ensure shovel-ready, developable land.
- **Use the Abandoned Housing Act (AHA).** The AHA is a tool local development organizations can use in the study area to take over and renovate homes that have been vacant for at least six months, delinquent on taxes, and have open code violations.
- **Consider a vacancy or neglect tax.** The City is also encouraged to explore the potential for a new vacancy tax or neglected property tax, which may provide the incentive some property owners need to repair dangerously deteriorating buildings or limit speculators from holding vacant parcels for an extended period of time.

Establish a rental-to-homeownership pipeline.

There is an interesting opportunity to stimulate residential interest in the study area while also supporting municipal employees' pursuits of homeownership. A new lease-to-own model could focus on properties in the study area and prioritize

City employees' purchases. The benefits to the neighborhood could include:

- This approach could help improve the city's existing housing stock and return area properties back to the City's tax roll.
- The program could become an employment attraction tool for the City and an incentive for City employees.
- The homeownership pipeline would add additional caring neighbors—"boots on the ground" and "eyes on the street"—to the neighborhood.

This model could also be replicated with the city's essential workers, including healthcare workers, teachers, and first responders.

Phase 2 – Encourage Private Investment

The important lead work established by the public sector should encourage follow-on private investment. The panel outlined the following steps that the City could take to help facilitate that private investment.



A rendering from a local developer working in the study area neighborhoods envisions multifamily buildings in a mixed-use, vibrant environment.

Prepare sites for private developers. In addition to the title clearing and environmental remediation work already noted, the City is encouraged to provide an expedited permitting process and streamlined zoning approvals for projects in the study area. These steps will reduce the time required to redevelop parcels, which will improve development pro formas and make projects in the area more attractive to private developers.

Encourage private capital and new construction.

- **Support local developers.** There are existing developers working in the area who have demonstrated a keen interest in and have exciting plans for development in the area that meets many of the City's goals for additional residential, including multifamily development. These local developers appear to have the general support of the community and should be supported and incentivized where possible.
- **Continue tax abatement and reduce fees.** Ten-year tax abatements should continue in the area for redeveloped properties, and fee reductions could assist with ground-up development of new buildings.

- **Support affordable projects.** The area's much-needed workforce housing and affordable housing will likely require public-private partnerships for financing. The City should welcome opportunities to partner with developers to bring more affordable units to the neighborhood.
- **Target infill housing.** There is an impressive number of vacant parcels scattered across the surrounding neighborhoods. The City should consider facilitating the development of these infill lots for all manner of housing, including single-family homes, duplexes, fourplexes, and accessory dwelling units. By bringing a variety of housing types, sizes, and price points to the market, more people will be able to afford to move to or purchase within the study area.

Foster economic development and community growth. Continued attention on the neighborhood should include programs that support economic development, resident wealth-building, and community stability and growth. Additional educational facilities, childcare centers, and other amenities that help retain residents would be welcome additions the neighborhoods surrounding the commercial corridors.

Recommendations for Players and Partners

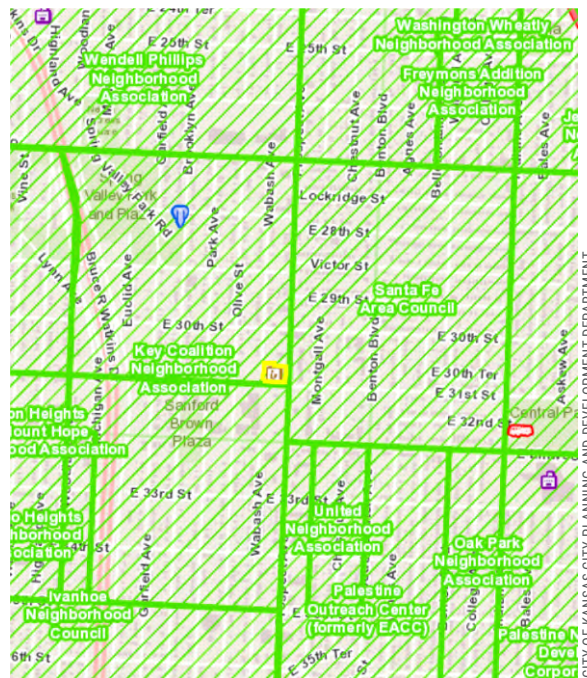
There is an impressive number of organizations operating in and around the study area. Each has its own area of focus, be that geographic or programmatic, and each has potential to play an even greater and more impactful role in the study area going forward.

An initial list of organizations that may be particularly relevant to the implementation of the panel’s recommendations include the following:

- City of Kansas City: Planning and Development Department, Neighborhood Services, KC Police Department, and others
- Linwood Shops Community Improvement District (CID)
- Linwood Square Shopping Center CID
- Palestine CID
- [Prospect Business Association](#)
- [Community Builders of Kansas City](#)
- Eastside CAN Center
- [Kansas City Public Library and the Lucile H. Bluford Branch specifically](#)
- [Community Resource Team](#) and its seven neighborhood association members, including Santa Fe, Ivanhoe, Oak Park, Wendell Phillips, Key Coalition, Boston Heights & Mount Hope, and Washington Wheatley

Recommendations

Dedicate CDC resources. The panel recommends the City identify and dedicate community development corporation resources to the study area. By working with and further empowering an existing CDC with the organizational capacity to lead revitalization efforts, focus can be placed on the implementation of existing plans, place management across the study area, possible CID management as needed, and more. This work should be conducted in partnership with the Community Resource Team and Prospect Business Association, helping to ensure that both residents’ and business owners’ needs are carefully considered and supported.



The study area is home to several strong neighborhood associations.

Support Community Resource Team operations. The work of this important neighborhood coalition should continue to be funded with sufficient City resources. The CRT provides critical neighborhood improvement and blight removal work in partnership with City, and has been able to address local issues quickly, professionally, and resourcefully. The CRT will need an established and consistent funding stream to support seamless operations and neighborhood support. This funding could come through a City contract via the Neighborhoods Services Department, through possible CID funding, or through a dedicated percentage of in-district Public Improvement Advisory Committee funds.

Pursue CPTED recommendations. Through its interviews with the Kansas City Police Department, the panel learned of a recent CPTED evaluation of the shopping center. These recommendations, directed at both public and private property owners in the area, would help improve general public and pedestrian safety in and around the shopping center and improve the experience of shopping at the grocery store. The City will need to request a copy of the CPTED findings directly from the KCPD.

Build additional staff capacity. The work outlined in this study and the known challenges across similar city neighborhoods point to a need for additional City Planning and Development Department capacity. Specifically, the panel recommends the establishment of a ProspectUS Corridor

Manager position, which should be a full-time exempt position at an assistant city manager level. The City is also encouraged to re-establish one or two urban redevelopment positions to assist the manager with the ProspectUS work as well as other urban renewal efforts across the city.

Elevate the new Eastside Community Action Network Center. The addition of a CAN center in the area was viewed by many stakeholders as a tremendous potential resource, yet many did not know that it had opened. The City is encourage to more clearly define the center’s use, roles, hours of operation, and purpose and share that information at an open house event in the new space. By inviting the community in to

see the space and meet those staffing its offices, residents may feel more welcome and willing to use the resources. A dedicated Neighborhoods Services Center person staffed at the CAN center and space for the new ProspectUS Corridor Manager would provide a helpful City presence and ready access to City information and resources. Similarly, the addition of or better utilization and integration of wraparound service organizations within the space could help alleviate some of the pressures experienced by the surrounding businesses and organizations, particularly the library, which seems to have taken on a number of social service provider offerings. More visible offerings at the CAN center might help relieve the library of some of these extra

services that stretch library staff far beyond their core mission.

Enhance the role of KCPD. It is important that the community know that the KCPD is an integral part of the CAN center. KCPD should clearly define its support role and presence at the CAN center and participate in appropriate security meetings with the City. KCPD is also encouraged to provide ongoing CPTED support and evaluation in the surrounding area as needed and share its findings with City and area stakeholders. These are important improvements that can positively affect the safety and security of everyone moving around the shopping center and broader corridor.

Support continued use of and safety at the public library. The CPTED study that focused on the south side of 31st Street should expand to include the north side of the intersection and the library property in particular. The library serves as an informal community hub, and leveraging the CPTED findings for its building and grounds will help ensure that those using the library’s services feel and are kept safe while doing so. Separately, the future ProspectUS corridor manager should coordinate with the library system on its strategic planning process and implementation, ensuring that this location is kept top of mind.

Funding Strategies

The panel provided the following potential funding resources to support the recommendations outlined.



- **Coordinate and leverage existing community improvement districts.** With several CIDs operating in the study area, there might be an opportunity to coordinate CID funding under one umbrella CDC agency for increased leverage and impact. The Linwood Shops CID, Linwood Square CID, and Palestine CID operate around the intersection of 31st and Prospect and



There are three community improvement districts that operate in the area and could be leveraged further.

have a vested interest in the safety and commercial success of the corridor.

- **Value capture with Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs).** There may be an opportunity to use funding from existing or future PILOTs collected from incentivized development projects in the corridor to fund needed improvements in the study area. Unless specified, these PILOT funds would typically go into the City's general budget.
- **Identify foundation and grant opportunities.** Working together, the newly identified CDC responsible for the area and the City would be encouraged to work together to identify potential foundation support and grant opportunities that could fund the development work or other improvements needed in the study area. With a real estate focus designed to improve housing opportunities and a social and racial equity lens, community foundations may have a particular interest in the work. Additionally, the work of the CAN center, the related social services and community programming, and the CPTED and site improvements and implementation may also be ripe for grant funding.
- **Leverage the [One Percent for Art Program](#).** Site improvements that include a public art component could be eligible for funding from this municipal tax fund.



Next Steps and Phasing

Throughout the stakeholder interviews, community members shared their frustrations with “another study” being conducted in their community that would not result in needed actions. With that perspective, the panel approached its recommendations with a clear eye on how and when implementation may take place to produce the best possible results for the community, the residents, and business owners who are or who want to spend their time and treasure in the area’s shopping center.

Immediate Next Steps

Within the next three months, the City should address the following action items while prioritizing local organizations and local developers:

- Secure funding for site improvements at the Linwood Shopping Center and funding for district branding and identity work. Engage a marketing firm to create the district identity.
- Build a new fence around the grocery store, preferably using the combination masonry and metal design. This work should also include landscaping, green space, and public art in the areas noted on the map on page 14.
- Ensure that the new City Planning and Development Department position for the ProspectUS corridor implementation is in the City’s upcoming budget.
- Clearly define the use and roles of the CAN center.

Next Steps for the Medium-Term

Within the next one to three years, the following actions and improvements should be addressed:

- Complete all site improvements at the shopping center.
- Install public art.
- Establish the distinct community development corporation to guide real estate work in the area and establish a housing acquisition and rehab plan.
- Invest in title clearing and environmental remediation of vacant parcels.
- Establish a consistent funding stream for CRT to continue neighborhood improvements.

Long-Term Vision

The recommendations set forth by the panel support the pursuit of vibrant, mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods along the Prospect Avenue corridor. These vibrant neighborhoods would also support the long-term goal of a self-sustaining grocery store that is supported by an additional 7,000 residents in its footprint.

This work will take time, but the early and ongoing steps also cannot wait. The neighborhoods surrounding the Linwood Shopping Center have been under-resourced for too long and deserve continued and concerted attention today, tomorrow, next month, and next year. The City will need to

continue to support the Sun Fresh Market, and thus bolster its initial investment, until the surrounding neighborhood is capable of sustaining the store on its own. Additional organizational and staffing structures will be required to support these endeavors and additional public safety measures are required in order to create a more welcoming and safer shopping environment.

The community is committed to the work as evidenced by its self-organization and determination. The City is committed to the area as evidenced by its initial investments. Neither the community nor the City can afford to ease their efforts. Continued focus and increased investment, capacity, and attention is required to turn the shopping center around. It is the smart and just thing to do.



About the Panel

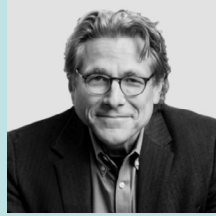


Terrell Jolly

**Panel Co-Chair
Integrity Capital
Management**

Terrell “TJ” Jolly, MBA

is a visionary entrepreneur dedicated to urban revitalization in Kansas City. With a Bachelor’s Degree in Communications & Public Relations and a Master’s Degree in Business, he has built a multifaceted career centered on real estate, community development, and economic empowerment. As the driving force behind Integrity Capital Management, he manages a diverse portfolio of over 600 residential commercial properties, focusing on situational/sustainable housing and pathways to ownership. His entrepreneurial journey began with Integrity Capital Management, where his professionalism and customer service earned the trust of local non-profits and property owners. Specializing in seamless property management, the company provides maintenance, emergency response, and rent collection services, alleviating operational burdens for property owners. Jolly & Associates, the acquisition arm of his business, focuses on restoring distressed properties, ensuring responsible occupancy, and collaborating with local organizations to invest in property refurbishments. Looking ahead, Terrell aims to expand Integrity Capital Management and Jolly & Associates, continuing to acquire and revitalize properties within Kansas City’s urban core. His mission is to create sustainable, quality housing while fostering community growth. More than an entrepreneur, TJ is a community advocate and visionary leader, using his business acumen to uplift neighborhoods and drive meaningful change.



Dennis Strait

Multistudio

Dennis Strait is an architect and landscape architect with over 40 years of experience

and an emeritus principal at Multistudio, a nationally recognized planning and design firm. Since 2018, Dennis and the firm’s City Design studio have been working to raise public awareness of how the way we build our cities impacts their ability to grow and prosper. Through partnerships with local civic and professional organizations, the firm and its associates have developed the ongoing Making a Great City speaker series with the Kansas City Public Library, recently completing its sixth year. Other programs Dennis and the City Design group have supported include the local ULI’s City We Can All Afford webinar series and the Kansas City Chapter of the Incremental Development Alliance, a national non-profit coalition of developers helping local communities understand the importance of small infill development projects and the need to make it easier again for everyone to help build our cities. For the past 15 years Dennis has served on the board of the Westport Regional Business League, working with other local leaders, businesses, and property owners to guide the growth and management of one of Kansas City’s most historic urban centers. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the Urban Land Institute’s local District Council. Dennis was also a founding Board Member of the Plaza District Council, a 501c.3 established in 2023 to advocate for the vitality, inclusivity, and on-going development of Kansas City’s “second downtown” and its surrounding neighborhoods.



Elizabeth Amirahmadi

**International
Architects Atelier
(IAA)**

Elizabeth Amirahmadi,

AIA, is a founding partner of International Architects Atelier, a leading architecture studio at the intersection of innovation, expertise, and quality in design. IAA is a team of technical experts dedicated to clients’ visions and needs while contributing creativity to produce solution-oriented, award-winning, and innovative designs. Elizabeth attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where she received a Master of Architecture degree. She has designed award-winning cultural centers, higher education, and corporate projects. Elizabeth served for 10 years on the board of the Kansas City Municipal Art Commission. Her true passion is creating innovative architecture, but a good mystery novel runs a close second.



Malik Bieberle
Turner Construction

Starting as a Project Superintendent at Turner Construction, Malik gained extensive experience overseeing small projects throughout Kansas City, including remodels for the Kansas City Chiefs, indoor sports facilities, and charter schools. His transition into Project Management allowed him to refine budget management skills, notably overseeing the complete remodel of the Sheraton Hotel in Overland Park. Since then, Malik has focused on managing project budgets, prioritizing not only the financial success of projects for clients but also working on strategies to improve company profitability. Currently, as a Cost Engineer on the University of Kansas Football Stadium & Conference Center, Malik works closely with the owner, owner's representative, and design team, managing the construction budget and ensuring its alignment with project goals.



Carmen Chopp
Nomad Develops

Carmen Chopp leads Nomad Develops as CEO and Chief Broker, blending her expertise as a real estate attorney with her talent for identifying exceptional development opportunities. Her career is defined by a commitment to community-centered projects that transform traditional real estate approaches. Carmen's unique strength lies in balancing sharp business acumen with genuine empathy, ensuring human connection remains at the heart of every venture. Alongside co-founder Bobby Keys, they are actively reshaping the industry through Nomad Develops by creating spaces where communities truly flourish.



Chris Dahlquist
Dahlquist Studio

Since 1998, Kansas City-based visual artist Chris Dahlquist has exhibited extensively throughout the United States. Committed to the accessibility of art, Dahlquist exhibits in a variety of traditional and non-traditional settings and creates large-scale public installations that allow audiences to encounter and interact with her photographic objects in unexpected ways.

Dahlquist also lends her passionate pragmatism to a community practice, helping artists and creative entrepreneurs develop sustainable careers. With the perspective of a practicing artist, stories from the hundreds of artists she has worked with, and a guiding principle that the artist must be at the center of a strong arts ecosystem, Dahlquist works with municipalities, organizations, and businesses to develop strategies, programs, and policy to support individual artists. Most notably, Dahlquist partnered with Kansas City, MO, the Kansas City Economic Development Council, and AltCap to develop and launch ARTcap, the first artist-centered microlending program in the country, and is currently partnering with ArtsKC to develop the groundbreaking program Creative Leaders: Civic Practice Track, to prepare artists to serve in civic leadership roles.



Christina Fenwick

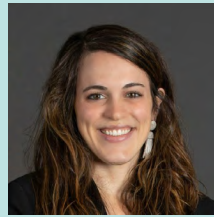
VanTrust Real Estate

Christina joined VanTrust Real Estate in December 2024 to help lead the

launch of a new nonprofit—seed-funded by VanTrust and the Van Tuyl family—dedicated to addressing the critical shortage of safe, stable, and affordable housing across the Kansas City region. As Director of Affordable Housing, she is focused on delivering inclusive housing solutions that meet people where they are in life, whether through rental or homeownership, single-family or multifamily options.

With over 11 years of experience in commercial real estate finance, Christina previously served as Vice President of Community Development Commercial Real Estate at UMB Bank. There, she worked to revitalize underinvested communities through strategic lending and investment in affordable and workforce housing, as well as commercial developments providing essential neighborhood services.

A passionate advocate for equity and community, she has held multiple leadership roles with CREW Kansas City, including serving as President in 2024. She is a Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM) and holds a master’s degree in Entrepreneurial Real Estate from the University of Missouri–Kansas City (UMKC).



Maggie Green

Burns & McDonnell

Maggie is an Assistant Department Manager for the Planning, Communications &

Policy group within Burns & McDonnell’s Transportation Practice. She assists public-sector clients with thoughtful public engagement, strategic communications, policy and grant-writing needs. Prior to joining Burns & McDonnell, she worked for the City of Kansas City, Missouri, where she served as the city’s media relations manager and public information officer. She also served as the director of programs at BikeWalkKC, a regional bicycle/ pedestrian advocacy organization. Maggie currently serves on Kansas City’s Vision Zero Task Force.



Chase Johnson

Port KC

Chase is an accomplished real estate development and urban planning professional

who has spent his career focused on improving the community through collaboration. Chase currently leads the day-to-day management and overall successful execution of real estate development and infrastructure projects at Port KC. Before joining the Port KC team, Chase was a project manager and urban planner for the City of Kansas City, MO, where he managed a wide range of planning, transportation, redevelopment and P3 projects. Prior to that, he worked in the commercial real estate industry, and as a professional athlete. Chase is an active board member and involved in many organizations, including UMKC’s Neighborhood Advisory Council, Kansas City River Trails Inc., Native American Athletic Foundation and the NFLPA Former Players Chapter. He and his wife, Shalaun, currently reside in Kansas City, MO with their three active boys.



Myron McCant

MacPen Enterprises

Myron McCant, a Kansas City resident, is deeply committed to reshaping opportunities

and resources for the city's underserved populations through economic development and early childhood education. Growing up in rural areas north of Kansas City, he cultivated a drive to bridge disparities across urban and community segments. After graduating from Excelsior Springs High School MO (1980), he spent a year at Penn Valley Community College and two years at Florida A&M University before returning to Kansas City in 1984.

Throughout his career, Myron has blended his passion for construction with his expertise as a sales executive, redeveloping and reselling single-family homes. Expanding his ambitions, he ventured into commercial real estate development in 2019. That same year he and his wife founded MacPen Enterprises, LLC which spearheaded their flagship project: KD Academy, an award-winning state-of-the-art childcare center. Operating 24hr per day/6 days per week, the center supports working families and employers, displayed as a cornerstone of the Kansas City's ecosystem. Furthermore, Myron has partnered with other local developers as an equity partner and continues to expand his stakeholder position.

Optimistic about Kansas City's transformation into a hub of economic growth and opportunity, Myron remains dedicated to participating in the city's development and looks forward to continuing his contributions to its success.