

Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative

Executive Summary

Detailed Action Plans

Prepared By:

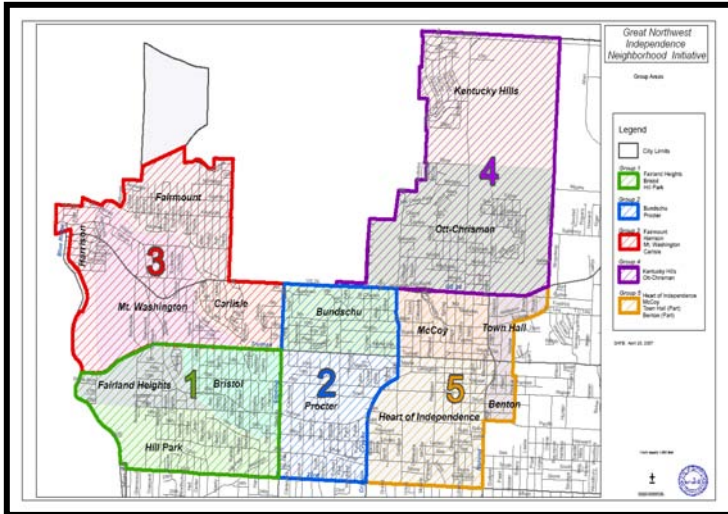
***The Community Development Department
The City of Independence
111 E. Maple
Independence, MO 64050
March 2008***



Purpose of the Executive Summary

The following document is the executive summary of five Action Plans developed for each group through the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative (GNWINI) announced by the City of Independence in November 2006. The Initiative is a process whereby residents of the First Council District can create a vision for their area, and ensure that these neighborhoods are great places to live, work, and raise a family. All five Action Plans have been developed previously, and this document provides an overview of only the action steps and methodology used for each area. For additional information, or the full text of each document, please contact the Neighborhood Services Division of the City of Independence at (816) 325-7410, or

jleipzig@indepmo.org



This map provides the general boundaries for each group as developed through the Initiative. Each group was engaged in a four meeting planning process including neighborhood visioning/attributes, neighborhood concerns/issues, then preparing draft action steps for comment, and the publishing of the actual planning document. In order to develop action steps for each group, the residents selected three positive and three negative neighborhood attributes. On the following pages, these positive and negative neighborhood attributes are listed with condensed action steps for each.

Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative Advisory Team

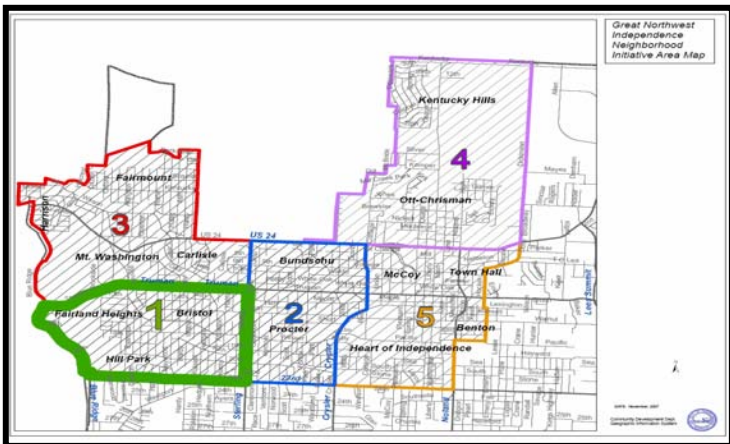
To ensure implementation of the action steps in this document, it is recommended that three residents from each group will be selected to be members of the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative Advisory Team to identify, prioritize, and refine the action steps for implementation described in this document. Other members will include department directors and other City staff, and civic and business leaders from within the area. This team will be the overall coordination body to ensure the long term implementation of the plan, and has already begun initial meetings for the implementation of the Group Action Plans.

For additional updates on the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative, please visit the City of Independence web site at www.indepmo.org. In addition, a specific web page address has been established to update residents on progress and facilitate the planning process. This web site address and blog can be located by following the links on the City of Independence web page or at www.indepmo.org/comdev/GNWINIblog.com. In addition, updates on the implementation of the Action Plan will be included in the City Scene.

Each subsequent page will list the three positive attributes and three negative attributes for each group and the action steps designed to either maintain the positive attribute or address the areas of concern.

Group One - Bristol, Hill Park, Fairland Heights

Positive Neighborhood Attributes - Friendly, Historic and Walkable



Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Friendliness: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Identify leadership and assistance in creating a neighborhood association.
- Create a Neighborhood Development Program.
- Expand informational resources for neighborhoods.
- Assist and develop a Welcome Wagon Program.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Historic Character: (Support Department – Historic Preservation)

- Establish a training program for local realtors to learn to “sell” the attributes of historic properties.
- Sponsor “How To” seminars targeted to local property owners and investors.
- Review area for potential historic or conservation districts.
- Assist neighborhood leaders and property owners to highlight historic homes in local publications.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Walk-ability: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Sponsor various social events, such as walking parties of historic homes and businesses.
- Sponsor commercial block parties, unique sales and shopping parties.
- Investigate the feasibility of installing signs identifying historic sites and locations, and/or directional signs for historic locations.

Areas of Concern - High Number of Rental Properties, Unsafe, Cluttered

Proposed Action Steps to Address High Number of Rental Properties, and Encourage Renovation of Structure (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Review existing City planning documents for potential in creating/expanding 353 tax abatement, and other improvement programs.
- Continue to expand the availability of the First Time Homebuyers Program and other unique programs to encourage renovation of rental properties.
- Meet with representatives of the Independence Landlords Association.
- Expand marketing efforts of the Repeat Offender Program for rental property, and ensure compliance.

Proposed Action Steps to Improve Perception of Public Safety: (Support Department – Police)

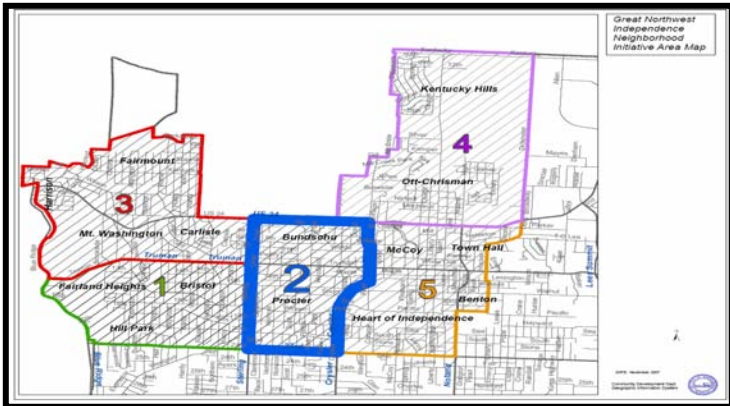
- Sponsor monthly neighborhood walks w/ police officers, local churches and agencies.
- Utilize “Life on the Beat”, articles to promote the Neighborhood Watch Program.
- Utilize the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) participants in the Englewood Station.

Proposed Action Steps to Improve Perception of Neighborhood Clutter: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

- Maintain and expand the Neighborhood Code Compliance Program.
- Expand current programs such as the Deficient Rental Property and the Top Offender Program.
- Expand the marketing of the Adopt A Block program through the Public Works Department.

Group Two - Proctor, Bundschu

Positive Neighborhood Attributes - Friendly, Unique, Historic, and Connected



Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Friendliness: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Identify leadership and assistance in creating a neighborhood association.
- Create a Neighborhood Development Program.
- Expand informational resources for neighborhoods.
- Assist and develop a Welcome Wagon Program.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Uniqueness-Historic Character: (Support Department – Historic Preservation)

- Sponsor “How To” seminars targeted to local property owners and investors.
- Review area for potential historic or conservation districts.
- Create and maintain an organization dedicated to preserving historic homes and history.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain and Encourage Neighborhood Connection: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services)

- Sponsor various social, recreational and business events for the neighborhood.
- Develop additional self guided walking tours of historic homes and architecture within the neighborhood.

Areas of Concern - Less Child Friendly, High Number of Rental Properties, Shrinking

Proposed Action Steps to Encourage Additional Child Friendly Amenities: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

- Review existing programs in conjunction with area churches to recommend additional programs for children, and older teens.

Proposed Action Steps to Address High Number of Rental Properties, and Encourage Renovation of Structures.

(Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

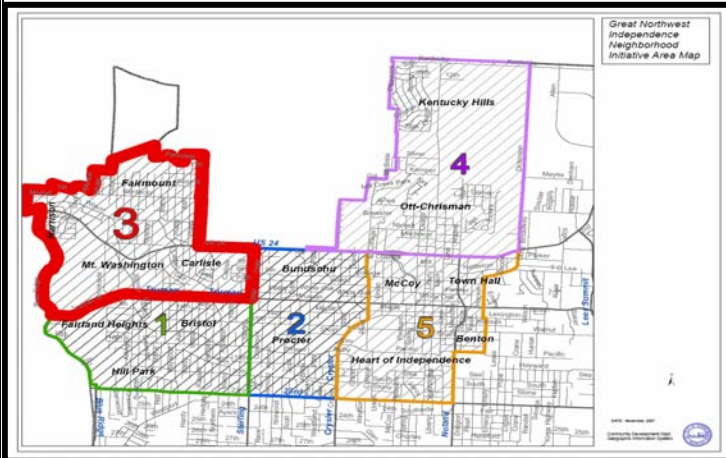
- Review existing City planning documents, for potential in creating/expanding 353 tax abatement, and other improvement programs.
- Continue to refine and expand the availability of the First Time Homebuyers Program and other unique programs to encourage renovation of rental properties.
- Meet with representatives of the Independence Landlords Association to determine what programs would best target unmet need in the community.
- Expand marketing efforts of the Repeat Offender Program for rental property, and ensure compliance.

Proposed Action Steps to Improve Perception That the Area is Shrinking: Support Department –Neighborhood Services Department)

- Recruit additional residents for the Volunteers in Police Service, and the Police Citizen’s Academy.
- Expand the marketing of the Adopt A Block program through the Public Works Department.

Group Three – Fairmount, Mount Washington, Carlisle

Positive Neighborhood Attributes - Friendly, Unique- Historic, and Affordable



Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Friendliness/Connection: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

- Identify leadership and assistance in creating a neighborhood association.
- Create a Neighborhood Development Program.
- Expand informational resources for neighborhoods.
- Assist and develop a Welcome Wagon Program.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain

Neighborhood Uniqueness-Historic Character:

(Support Department – Historic Preservation)

- Adoption of a Conservation District to preserve significant house styles and maintain property values.
- Adopt Commercial Tax Abatement and Design Guidelines.
- Create and maintain an organization dedicated to preserving historic homes and history.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain and Encourage Neighborhood Affordability: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

- Target and refine existing programs to certain populations in the community- police officers and teachers.
- Refine/revise guidelines to encourage unique and diverse housing styles.

Areas of Concern - High Number of Rental Properties, Less Child Friendly, Disrepair

Proposed Action Steps to Address High Number of Rental Properties.

(Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

- Review existing City planning documents, for potential in creating/expanding 353 tax abatement, and other improvement programs.
- Continue to refine and expand the availability of the First Time Homebuyers Program and other unique programs to encourage renovation of rental properties.
- Meet with representatives of the Independence Landlords Association to determine what programs would best target unmet need in the community.
- Expand marketing efforts of the Repeat Offender Program for rental property, and ensure compliance.

Proposed Action Steps to Encourage Additional Child Friendly Amenities:

(Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

- Review existing programs in conjunction with area churches to recommend additional programs.

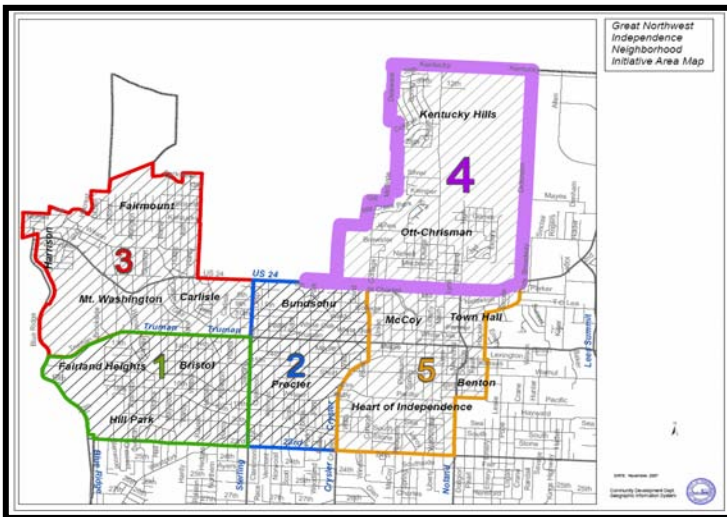
Proposed Action Steps to Improve Housing Repair:

(Support Department – Neighborhood Services Department)

- Maintain and expand the Neighborhood Code Compliance Program.
- Maintain/expand the Deficient Rental Property and the Top Offender Program.
- Expand the marketing of the Adopt A Block program through the Public Works Department.

Group Four – Ott-Chrisman, Kentucky Hills

Positive Neighborhood Attributes - Friendly, Connected, Quiet, and Affordable



Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Friendliness: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Identify leadership and assistance in creating a neighborhood association.
- Create a Neighborhood Development Program.
- Expand informational resources for neighborhoods.
- Assist and develop a Welcome Wagon Program.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Walk-ability: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Sponsor various social and recreational events, such as walking parties of historic homes and businesses.
- Sponsor with the 24 Highway Merchants Associations to sponsor commercial block parties.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain and Encourage Neighborhood Affordability: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Target and refine existing programs to certain populations in the community- Police Officers and Teachers.

Areas of Concern - Deteriorating, Unsafe, Lack of Retail

Proposed Action Steps to Address Deteriorating Housing Stock: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Review existing City planning documents, and review potential for expanding other housing improvement programs.
- Create renovation programs that expand amenities of existing homes thereby attracting families.
- Meet with representatives of the Independence Landlords Association to determine what programs would best target unmet need in the community.

Proposed Action Steps to Reduce Crime and Increase Perception of Neighborhood Safety:

(Support Department – Police Department)

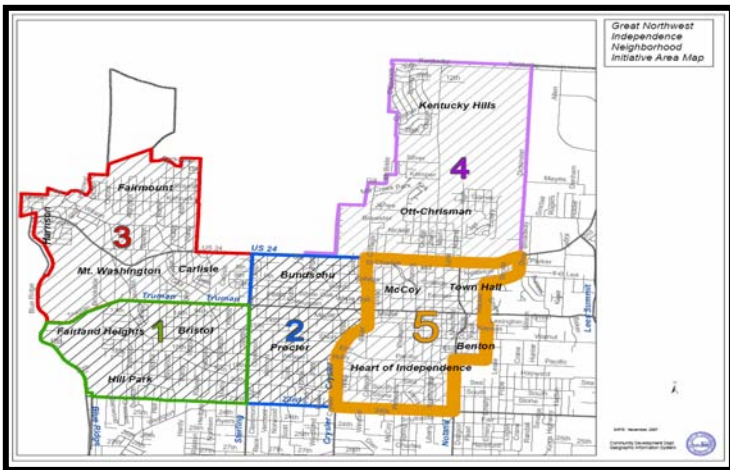
- Sponsor monthly neighborhood walks involving police officers, local churches and social service agencies.
- Utilize “Life on the Beat”, articles to promote the Neighborhood Watch Program on the Police Department web page.
- Recruit additional residents for the Volunteers in Police Service, and the Police Citizen’s Academy.
- Utilize the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) for activities of the Neighborhood Association or Block Party events.

Proposed Action Steps to Create/Maintain Viable Retail (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Create merchants associations, and sponsor local shopping events.
- Continue to maintain property maintenance code programs.
- Expand the marketing of the Adopt A Block program along 24 Highway

Group Five – Heart of Independence, McCoy, Town Hall, Benton

Positive Neighborhood Attributes - Friendly, Unique, Historic, and Safe



Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Friendliness: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Identify leadership and assistance in creating a neighborhood association.
- Create a Neighborhood Development Program.
- Expand informational resources for neighborhoods.
- Assist and develop a Welcome Wagon Program.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain

Neighborhood Uniqueness/Historic Character: (Support Department – Historic Preservation)

- Sponsor “How To” seminars targeted to local property owners and investors.
- Review area for potential historic or conservation districts.
- Create and maintain an organization dedicated to preserving historic homes and history.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Perception of Neighborhood Safety: (Support Department – Police Department)

- Sponsor monthly neighborhood walks involving police officers, local churches and social service agencies.
- Utilize “Life on the Beat”, articles to promote the Neighborhood Watch Program.
- Recruit additional residents for the Volunteers in Police Service, and the Police Citizen’s Academy.

Areas of Concern - Less Child Friendly, Disrepair, and Lack of Retail

Proposed Action Steps to Encourage Additional Child Friendly Amenities: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Review existing programs in conjunction with area churches to recommend additional programs for children, and older teens.

Proposed Action Steps to Address Disrepair of Structures, especially in areas south of Truman Road.

(Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Review existing City planning documents, and review potential for creating/expanding 353 tax abatement, and other improvement programs.
- Expand the marketing of the Adopt A Block program through the Public Works Department.
- Meet with representatives of the Independence Landlords Association to determine what programs would best target unmet need.
- Expand marketing efforts of the Repeat Offender Program and the Voluntary Clean-up Program.

Proposed Action Steps to Improve Local Shopping Opportunities: (Support Department – Neighborhood Services Division)

- Create merchants associations, and sponsor local shopping events, such as “Shop Here First”, and develop programs to market to specific businesses.