

RUSSELL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY AREA

**Approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development on June 16, 2016**



Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government

**Prepared by Develop Louisville,
Office of Housing and Community Development**

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I. Introduction and Neighborhood History

Since 1995, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has allowed local governments to designate target areas for revitalization through the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) Program. NRSA bring together neighborhood and community stakeholders to find solutions that will spur revitalization in the most distressed neighborhoods.

Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government has seen success through the Portland and Shawnee NRSA, and is now proposing to designate the Russell neighborhood as an NRSA as previously addressed in the 2015 – 2019 Consolidated Plan, which was approved by HUD on July 22, 2015. This proposal is submitted with Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government's Program Year 2016 Action Plan. Develop Louisville is the lead agency for preparing, administering, monitoring, and reporting on Louisville Metro's Consolidated Plan, annual Action Plan, and NRSA designations.

Louisville's Russell neighborhood lies directly west of the central business district and the city's infamous "9th Street Divide." The neighborhood is adjacent to both the Portland and Shawnee NRSA designated in 2011 and 2013, respectively. A number of recent and planned investments, both public and private, in Russell and the surrounding neighborhoods have provided momentum and potential for lasting improvements. The NRSA activities outlined in this plan will comprise a small but important portion of anticipated future investment in the neighborhood, and will leverage other planning and development efforts to further the ultimate goal of revitalization.

The Russell neighborhood was named for Harvey C. Russell, Sr., a prominent African American educator who served as Dean of Kentucky State College (now Kentucky State University) and President of West Kentucky Industrial College (now West Kentucky Community and Technical College).

Russell was one of Louisville's earliest, most desirable neighborhoods, and in its early years was both economically and racially diverse. Streets were lined with a range of home types ranging from Victorian mansions to shotguns. As the city grew, and after extensive flooding in 1937, white residents began to move out of the neighborhood and away from the Ohio River, and by the 1940s Russell was known as "Louisville's Harlem" due to the thriving African American business district along present-day Muhammad Ali Boulevard (formerly Walnut Street).

The neighborhood's decline began after World War II, and was exacerbated by many factors including Urban Renewal efforts in the 1960s, which razed much of the Walnut Street commercial district; the construction of large subsidized housing complexes; and the construction of I-64 and the 9th Street ramps.

The Russell neighborhood is home to the Louisville Free Public Library's Western Branch, the first library in the country providing services exclusively to the African American community, and Central High School, once Louisville's only public high school for African American students. The neighborhood is also home to the Louisville Defender, Louisville's African American newspaper first published in 1933.

II. Benefits of NRSA Designation

NRSA benefits are described in amendments to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) regulations at 24 CFR 570, which were published in the Federal Register on January 5, 1995 and updated in the final rule changes published in the November 9, 1995, Federal Register. They include:

Job Creation and Retention as Low/Moderate Income (LMI) Area Benefit: Job creation and/or retention efforts focused on the selected neighborhood may be classified as meeting the LMI area benefit requirements, thus eliminating the need for a business receiving assistance to track the incomes of persons that fill such jobs. This reduces the administrative burden for businesses participating in job creation/retention in the neighborhood. [24 CFR 570.208(a)(1)(vii) and (d)(5)(i)]

Aggregation of Housing Units: Housing units assisted as part of the strategy may be aggregated and considered part of a single structure for purposes of applying the low/moderate income national objective criteria, thus providing greater flexibility to carry out housing programs in the neighborhood. 51% of the total number of units must be occupied by LMI households. [24 CFR 570.208(a)(3) and (d)(5)(ii)]

Aggregate Public Benefit Standard Exemption: Economic Development activities carried out in the NRSA may be exempt from the aggregate public benefit standards, thus providing greater flexibility for program design and reducing record-keeping requirements. [24 CFR 570.209(b)(2)(v)(L) and (M)]

Public Service Cap Exemption: Public Services carried out pursuant to the NRSA strategy by a Community-Based Development Organization (CBDO) will be exempt from the public service cap, allowing grantees to offer a more intensive level of services in the neighborhood. [24 CFR 570.204(b)(2)(ii)]

III. Neighborhood and Demographic Criteria

HUD requires that NRSAs meet the following criteria:

- Areas must have defined, contiguous boundaries
- Areas must be primarily residential
- Areas must contain a high percentage of low- and moderate-income households

Neighborhood Boundaries

The Russell neighborhood is located directly to the west of Louisville's central business district. The neighborhood spans four zip codes: 40212, 40211, 40203, and a small area of 40202. As of April 2016 Councilman David Tandy, Councilwoman Cheri Bryant Hamilton, and Councilman David James each represent parts of Russell, which is divided between Metro Council Districts 4, 5, and 6.

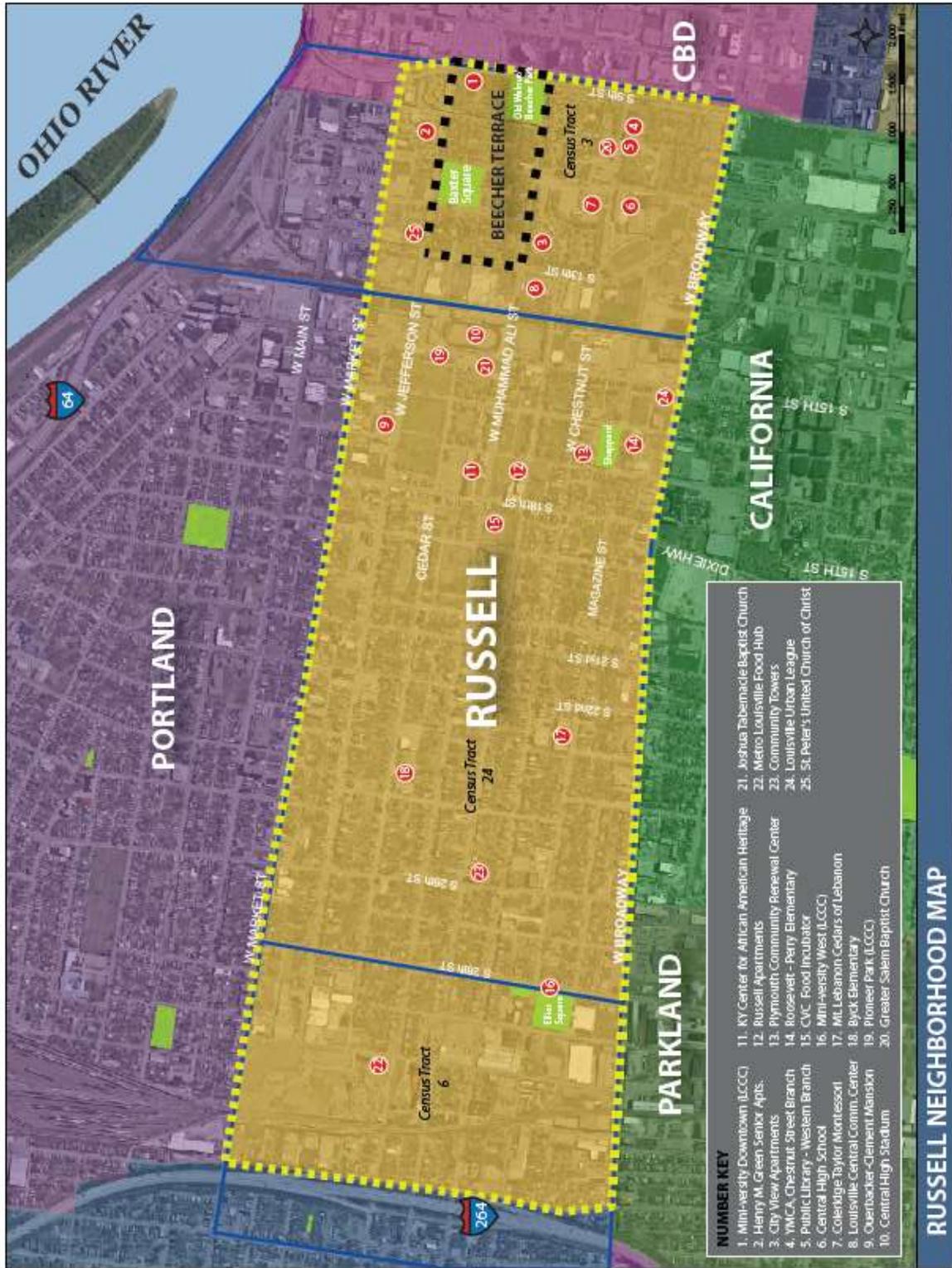
The street boundaries of the Russell NRSA are as follows:

- North Boundary
 - West Market Street from I-264 at the west to South 9th Street at the east
- South Boundary
 - West Broadway from I-264 at the west to South 9th Street at the east
- West Boundary
 - I-264 from West Market Street at the north to West Broadway at the south
- East Boundary
 - South 9th Street from West Market Street at the north to West Broadway at the south

This boundary includes the following 2010 U.S. Census geography:

- Census Tract 6: Census Block Group 1
- Census Tract 24: All Census Block Groups
- Census Tract 30: Census Block Groups 2 and 3; Census Block Group 1, Blocks 1010, 1011, 1012, 1018, 1019, 1020, 1021, 1022, 1023, 1024, 1025, 1026, 1027, 1028, 1029, 1030, 1031

The map on the following page shows the boundaries of the Russell neighborhood.



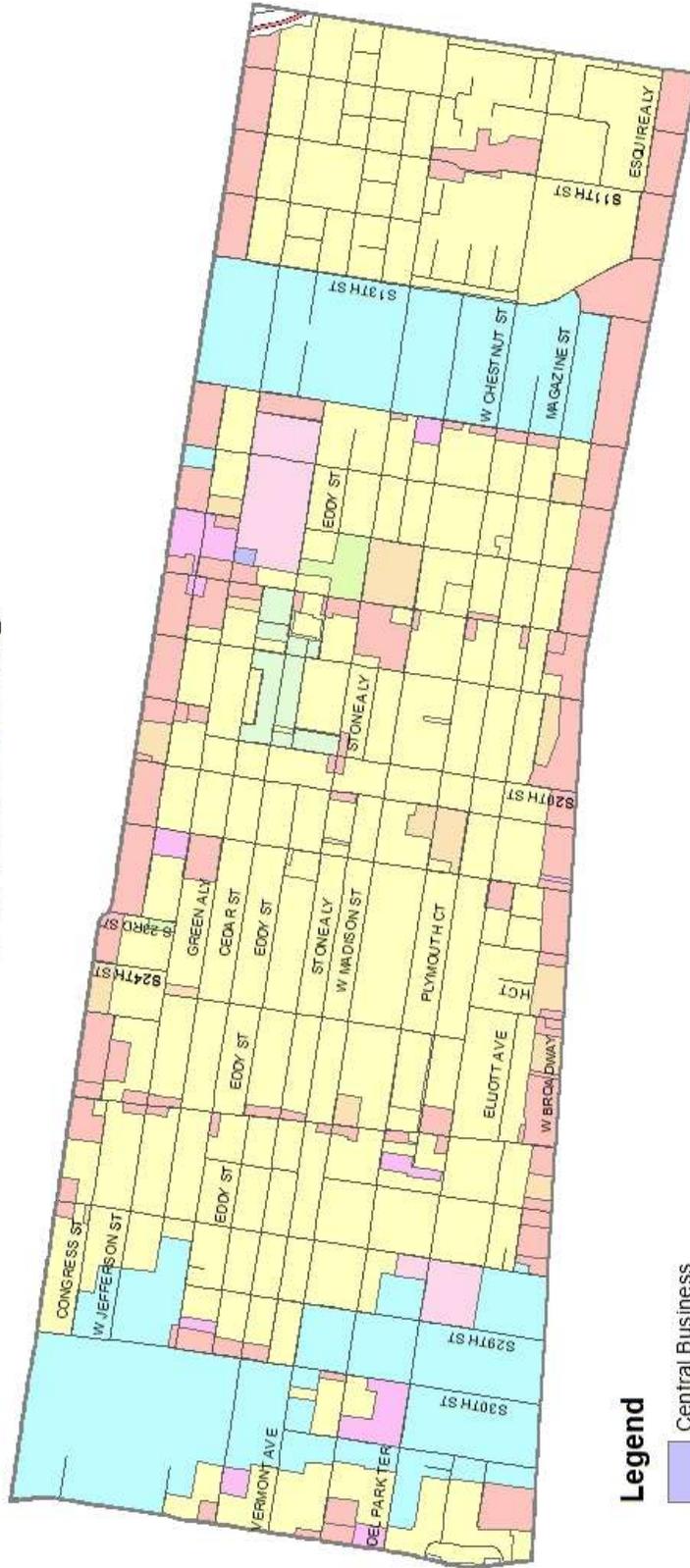
Demographic Indicators

NRSA designation is reserved for neighborhoods which are primarily residential. Data from the Jefferson County Property Valuation Administration (PVA) shows that 69% of parcels in Russell are categorized as residential, comprising 35% of acreage in the neighborhood. Many additional residential properties in Russell are categorized as exempt by the PVA and are not included in the residential calculation. An additional 29% of acreage in the neighborhood is categorized as exempt, which includes properties owned by Louisville Metro Housing Authority, New Directions Housing Corporation, Housing Partnership Inc., and other housing organizations.

Land use data shows that the majority of the neighborhood is zoned for residential use, specifically multifamily residential, as shown on the zoning map on the following page. There are a number of densely populated multifamily residential parcels including Beecher Terrace, a 768-unit public housing complex, and City View Park Apartments at the eastern end of the neighborhood. The central portion of the neighborhood is predominately single-family housing, with small multifamily structures scattered throughout the area. Commercial corridors are located along Market Street and Broadway, and industrial uses are clustered along two railroad tracks running through the neighborhood. Russell's population is 9,651 or approximately 14.6 people per acre.

Additionally, HUD regulations require that the NRSA designation should be utilized for distressed neighborhoods that contain a high percentage of low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents. The percentage of LMI residents must be greater than the jurisdiction's upper quartile percentage as calculated using HUD Low and Moderate Income Summary Data (LMISD). Based on HUD's FY 2015 LMISD, the upper quartile percentage for Jefferson County, KY is 59.2%. The LMI percentage for the Russell NRSA exceeds this threshold at 87.0%.

Russell NRSA Current Zoning



Legend

- Central Business
- Commercial Manufacturing
- Commercial
- Enterprise Zone
- Industrial
- Office/Residential
- Residential Multifamily
- Residential Single Family
- Urban Neighborhood

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Additional Demographic Information

The table below provides selected demographic information for the Russell NRSA population, compared to Jefferson County, KY’s total population. As shown in the table below, Russell is a predominantly African American neighborhood with a relatively young population (50.3% of Russell residents are under age 25, compared to 31.9% of Jefferson County residents). Additionally the Russell neighborhood has higher percentages of households with children (38.6% compared to 26.2% in Jefferson County), single-parent households (37% compared to 10.9% in Jefferson County), and residents with a disability (20.7% compared to 14.7% in Jefferson County).

Selected Population Data for Jefferson County and Russell *				
Population	Russell	Russell (%)	Jefferson County	Jefferson County (%)
Total Population	9,651		751,485	
Low/Moderate Income Population	8,040	87.0%	281,220	39.3%
Households				
Total Households	3,714		306,511	
Households with own Children **	1,526	38.6%	80,332	26.2%
Single-Parent Households **	1,461	37.0%	33,303	10.9%
Race and Ethnicity				
Black/African American	8,621	89.3%	155,105	20.6%
White	455	4.7%	549,890	73.2%
Hispanic (any race)	11	0.1%	34,389	4.6%
Age				
Under 18 Years	3,422	35.5%	172,134	22.9%
18 - 24 Years	1,427	14.8%	67,973	9.0%
25 - 64 Years	4,160	43.1%	407,298	54.2%
65+ Years	642	6.6%	104,080	13.8%
Disability **				
Percentage of Population with a Disability		20.7%		14.7%
Percentage of Population with an Ambulatory Disability		11.5%		7.9%
Data Source: 2014 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)				
* Data for Russell is calculated using an approximation of NRSA boundaries as follows: Unless otherwise noted, data is calculated using the following Block Groups: Census Tract 6, Block Group 1; Census Tract 24, Block Groups 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Census Tract 30, Block Groups 1, 2, 3				
** Data is calculated using Census Tracts 6, 24, and 30				

Additional demographic information related to economic conditions and housing conditions is included in the Assessment section of this plan.

IV. Community Consultation

The community consultation efforts influencing the development of this NRSA plan were largely conducted as part of the Choice Neighborhoods planning process directed by Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA). Since LMHA was awarded a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant for the Russell neighborhood in January 2015, LMHA and its partners have undertaken an intensive community consultation and planning effort branded as “Vision Russell” to guide the development of a Transformation Plan for the neighborhood. The final Transformation Plan will be submitted in the summer of 2016. LMHA also plans to submit an application for additional Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant funding at that time.

The ultimate goal of the Vision Russell process is to ensure that the Transformation Plan for the future of the Russell neighborhood is inclusive, informed, and intentional. Vision Russell includes planning for multiple implementation strategies and understands that one entity cannot create a vision for Russell’s future on its own. LMHA and Louisville Metro Government, along with neighborhood residents and stakeholders, have collaborated heavily since March 2015 when the Vision Russell planning process began with a community-wide kickoff event. Several plans that weave together are being developed through this planning process, including Choice Neighborhoods, NRSA, and the Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) recommendations.

The Vision Russell community and stakeholder engagement process has been focused around four themes: Neighborhood, Housing, People, and Education. A coordinating committee and four themed task forces meet monthly in an open setting available to all interested parties. All groups include residents of the Russell community along with neighborhood stakeholders such as non-profits, businesses, Louisville Metro, LMHA, and JCPS. New Directions Housing Corporation is coordinating specific resident engagement using inclusive methods such as holding “kitchen conversations” around specific topics, conducting a windshield survey of neighborhood conditions, and coordinating a survey of the current and desired conditions of Russell residents and Russell stakeholders. The data collected and analyzed through this process are guiding the creation of priorities and goals for the proposed NRSA and Choice Neighborhoods Transformation plans.

Many community gatherings have been organized around specific topics. Residents and stakeholders met to indicate preferences of housing designs, retail types, entertainment options, and open spaces. Additionally, a photo-voice exhibit occurred which included a bus tour of Russell where attendees were provided cameras to take pictures of positives and negative aspects of the Russell neighborhood. These pictures were then showcased at various community meetings regarding the Vision Russell planning effort. A community meeting held in April 2016 presented various design concepts for Russell. The draft NRSA plan was available for review and comment at this meeting.

The draft NRSA plan was made available both online and in hard copy at several locations throughout Louisville Metro for a 30-day public comment period beginning April 11, 2016 and ending May 11, 2016. Additionally, comments on the draft were accepted at a public hearing on May 3, 2016 at 6:00 PM at Western Library, 604 South 10th Street.

V. Assessment

Economic Conditions and Opportunities

The table below displays economic data for Russell compared to Jefferson County, KY as a whole.

Selected Economic Data for Jefferson County and Russell *				
	Russell	Russell (%)	Jefferson County	Jefferson County (%)
Total Population	9,651		751,485	
Low/Moderate Income Population	8,040	87.0%	281,220	39.3%
Income and Poverty				
Total Population Below Poverty Level **	5,809	58.1%	123,145	16.7%
Children (under age 18) in Poverty **	2,480	71.4%	41,337	24.6%
Elderly (age 65 and older) in Poverty **	249	36.8%	9,171	9.1%
Median Household Income **	Census Tract 6: \$22,535		\$47,692	
	Census Tract 24: \$18,613			
	Census Tract 30: \$9,003			
Annual Household Income				
<i>Total Households</i>	3,714		306,511	
Less than \$10,000	1,325	35.7%	26,190	8.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	508	13.7%	18,852	6.2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	907	24.4%	35,351	11.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	404	10.9%	34,192	11.2%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	183	4.9%	44,774	14.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	269	7.2%	54,060	17.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	100	2.7%	34,272	11.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15	0.4%	34,244	11.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3	0.1%	11,786	3.8%
\$200,000 or more	0		12,790	4.2%
Households on Food Stamps in Past 12 Mo.	2,218	59.7%	44,670	14.6%
Employment				
Total Population Age 16 or Older in Labor Force	3,785		393,140	
Unemployed	1,198	31.7%	36,608	9.3%
Educational Attainment (age 25 and older)				
Less than High School Diploma	1,351	28.1%	60,297	11.8%
High School Diploma or Equivalency	1,618	33.7%	140,877	27.5%
Some College (No Degree)	1,390	28.9%	115,678	22.6%
Associate's Degree	195	4.1%	36,914	7.2%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	248	5.2%	157,612	30.8%
Data Source: 2014 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)				
* Data for Russell is calculated using an approximation of NRSA boundaries as follows: Unless otherwise noted, data is calculated using the following Block Groups: Census Tract 6, Block Group 1; Census Tract 24, Block Groups 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Census Tract 30, Block Groups 1, 2, 3				
** Data is calculated using Census Tracts 6, 24, and 30				

As demonstrated in the table, Russell is a neighborhood with concentrated poverty, low annual and median incomes, high unemployment, and low educational attainment. Median incomes in the three

Russell Census Tracts are less than half that of the county as a whole, and 58.1% of residents live below the poverty level, compared to only 16.7% of Jefferson County residents. 73.8% of Russell households earn less than \$25,000, compared to 26.2% of households in the county as a whole. Only 9.3% of Russell residents have an Associate's degree or higher, compared to 38% of Jefferson County residents, and the neighborhood's unemployment rate is 31.7%, compared to 9.3% in the county.

There are approximately 2,500 jobs in Russell, however only about 100 of those jobs are held by neighborhood residents. The top three industries in the neighborhood are health care/social assistance, manufacturing, and wholesale trade. With the exception of the central business district, Russell residents without personal vehicles have poor access to job centers in the county. The neighborhood is fairly well served by transit, however long travel times and multiple transfers serve as barriers to distant job centers. Surveys conducted in 2015 as part of the Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell planning process indicated that 43% of Russell residents and 64% of Beecher Terrace residents primarily use public transportation to get around the city, and 16% of Russell residents and 13% of Beecher Terrace residents considered transportation issues a barrier to finding or maintaining full-time work. Other common barriers identified in the surveys were disability/health restrictions, criminal history, and lack of affordable childcare.

Commercial corridors in the neighborhood are located along Market Street and Broadway, the north and south edges of the neighborhood, with some corner store locations scattered throughout the residential areas of the neighborhood. Many of the businesses located along Broadway in particular are fast food restaurants or retail. Several industrial facilities are located along the railroad tracks running through the eastern part of the neighborhood. The neighborhood has approximately 40 faith-based institutions, as well as four Jefferson County Public Schools (three elementary schools and one high school), institutions and service providers such as the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage, Louisville Urban League, and Louisville Central Community Center, and a Louisville Free Public Library branch (Western Library).

The 2015 Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell surveys of both neighborhood and Beecher Terrace residents revealed a variety of additional information related to economic conditions and economic development opportunities, including the following:

Employment:

- 47% of Russell residents indicated that increased job opportunities would make the neighborhood a better place to live.
- Beecher Terrace residents indicated a demand for computer training (25%), job training (16%), and small business training (8%) services.

Finances:

- 35% of Russell residents and 45% of Beecher Terrace residents primarily use a form of banking other than a checking or savings account at a bank or credit union.
- 60% of Beecher Terrace residents indicated an interest in future homeownership.
- 16% of Beecher Terrace residents expressed a need for budgeting, financial literacy, and credit repair services

Economic Development:

- There is a high level of demand for additional businesses in the neighborhood, particularly grocery stores (69% of Russell residents indicated a demand), restaurants (60%), clothing stores (58%), and fitness centers (48%).
- 44% of residents stated that increased restaurants, entertainment, and shopping options would make the neighborhood a better place to live.

Housing Conditions and Opportunities

The Russell neighborhood includes a diverse mix of housing types, including single family homes and multifamily structures, as well as the 768-unit public housing complex Beecher Terrace. Single family homes range in size and architectural style from shotguns and camelbacks to bungalows to large Victorian mansions. The majority of multifamily housing is concentrated in the eastern portion of the neighborhood, although small multifamily buildings are scattered among single-family homes in the central and western parts of the neighborhood as well.

The table below displays housing data for Russell compared to Jefferson County, KY as a whole.

Selected Housing Data for Jefferson County and Russell *				
	Russell	Russell (%)	Jefferson County	Jefferson County (%)
Total Housing Units	4,735		339,119	
Vacant Housing Units	1,021	21.6%	32,608	9.6%
Year Structure Built				
1939 or earlier	2,322	49.0%	52,883	15.6%
1940 - 1959	641	13.5%	76,870	22.7%
1960 - 1979	531	11.2%	101,946	30.0%
1980 - 1999	890	18.8%	66,422	19.6%
2000 or later	351	7.4%	40,998	12.1%
Housing Tenure				
Total Occupied Housing Units	3,714		306,511	
Owner-Occupied	638	17.2%	190,583	62.2%
Renter-Occupied	3,076	82.8%	115,928	37.8%
Housing Cost Burden				
Owners				
<30% Income Spent on Housing Costs	336	52.7%	147,357	77.3%
30-49.9% Income Spent on Housing Costs	183	28.7%	25,831	13.6%
>50% Income Spent on Housing Costs	114	17.9%	16,429	8.6%
Renters				
<30% Income Spent on Housing Costs	1,211	39.4%	56,181	48.5%
30-49.9% Income Spent on Housing Costs	546	17.8%	24,730	21.3%
>50% Income Spent on Housing Costs	1,033	33.6%	27,207	23.5%
Data Source: 2014 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)				
* Data for Russell is calculated using an approximation of NRSA boundaries and includes the following Block Groups: Census Tract 6, Block Group 1; Census Tract 24, Block Groups 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Census Tract 30, Block Groups 1, 2, 3				

There are 4,735 housing units in the Russell neighborhood. More than 1,000 units, or 21.6% of units in Russell, are vacant; while approximately 38% of units are either public housing or project-based Section

8 units. The Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell survey of Russell residents found that 47% of Russell residents considered housing affordability to be a neighborhood strength. According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey, median gross rent in Russell's three Census Tracts ranges from \$203 in Census Tract 30 (housing choices in this tract consist almost entirely of subsidized rental units) to \$701 in Census Tract 6, which is only slightly below the county median of \$734.

As indicated in the table above, 49% of Russell's housing stock was built before 1940, and 73.7% was built before 1980. The neighborhood's old housing stock presents many challenges. Older homes often do not have adequate insulation, and are likely to have original single-pane windows and energy-inefficient appliances and systems. These factors lead to greatly increased utility costs for occupants of older homes. 46.6% of Russell homeowners and 51.4% of Russell renters spend more than 30% of their incomes on housing and utility costs, and one third of Russell renters spend more than 50% of their incomes on housing and utility costs. An additional challenge presented by Russell's old housing stock is the presence of lead-based paint, which is especially prevalent in housing built before 1978 and particularly dangerous for pregnant women and young children. Finally, older homes often require costly repairs as they age. In a largely low- and moderate-income neighborhood like Russell, these repairs are often left undone.

Homeownership in the Russell neighborhood is very low, at 17.2% compared to 62.2% in Jefferson County as a whole. The large percentage of rental properties in the neighborhood is an additional factor leading to the deterioration and disrepair of housing stock.

According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey, the median value of owner-occupied housing in Russell is much lower than Jefferson County's median home value of \$149,900. The average median value for homes in the Russell Census Tracts is \$55,950. Low home values serve as a barrier for existing homeowners in completing needed repairs, since homes are often not worth enough to justify costly repairs. Additionally, this also limits prospective buyers' ability to obtain financing to purchase homes in Russell, especially if the home is in need of improvements or repairs.

Neighborhood Strengths and Assets

Despite its challenges, Russell has a number of assets that make it an ideal target area for investment and revitalization. The neighborhood is located directly adjacent to Louisville's central business district, which is a tremendous opportunity in a time when interest and investment in urban neighborhoods is growing in Louisville and around the country. The mixed-use character of the neighborhood presents opportunities for walkability, and the area is reasonably well connected to transit. Russell is served by 16 Transit Authority of River City (TARC) bus routes, five of which provide more than 60 trips per day. The Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell survey revealed that 62% of neighborhood residents believe that public transportation is convenient to access, and 95% were "very satisfied" or "somewhat" satisfied with public transportation services in the neighborhood.

Russell also has a historic character that is difficult to find outside of Louisville's urban core, with three historic districts and approximately 1,500 historic structures. The largest of Russell's historic districts covers most of the single-family portion of the neighborhood and its rich architectural heritage and role in the history of Louisville's African American community are cited as reasons for its historic significance.

The neighborhood has an abundance of affordable housing, which was cited as one of the top strengths of the neighborhood by Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell survey respondents. In addition to Beecher Terrace's 768 units, six locations provide more than 1,000 units of subsidized housing in the neighborhood. Housing affordability, however, has some negative consequences since areas with high concentrations of subsidized housing are often associated with high crime and poverty. Russell and surrounding neighborhoods would likely benefit from programs intended to de-concentrate poverty and introduce additional market-rate housing.

Russell has a number of existing institutions and service providers, including Louisville Urban League, Louisville Central Community Center, Park DuValle Community Health Center, many faith-based institutions, Louisville Free Public Library's Western branch, the Chestnut Street YMCA branch, Baxter Community Center, and the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage. The neighborhood has four public schools, including three elementary schools and one high school. Additionally, Russell has five parks totaling 13 acres, or about 1.3 acres per 1,000 residents. While this is much less acreage per resident than Jefferson County as a whole, most homes in Russell are within a ten minute walk of a park.

The Samuel Plato Academy of Historic Preservation Trades is a new program based at the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage. The one-year program provides training in historic preservation trades and related skills that can be directly applied to historic structures in Russell. The Plato Academy enrolled its first class of 12 students in September 2015. Upon completion of the program, students will earn a Certificate in Historic Preservation Technology from Jefferson Community and Technical College.

Other existing and planned assets which are adjacent to the neighborhood include the Nia Center, planned Walmart and YMCA developments on the south side of Broadway, and planned expansion of Waterfront Park into the Portland neighborhood a few blocks to the north of Russell.

The Russell neighborhood is benefitting from various ongoing planning efforts. The Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell initiative began in 2015 when Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA) was awarded a \$425,000 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant from HUD. The planning process has involved an extensive community consultation effort and will result in a Transformation Plan for the Russell neighborhood, including Beecher Terrace. LMHA expects to apply for additional Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant funds upon completion of the Transformation Plan. The final Transformation Plan will be submitted for adoption by Louisville Metro Council as Russell's official neighborhood plan. Additionally, due in part to the Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell planning process, Louisville Metro Government has designated Russell a Priority Project Area for future investment and intends to strategically target resources to the neighborhood.

Louisville Central Community Center (LCCC) was successful in submitting an application for design assistance from the American Institute of Architects Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT). The SDAT produced recommendations for the Muhammad Ali corridor through Russell from 6th Street to 21st Street, including strategies to create an environment for reinvestment in Russell, reprogram the African American Heritage Center to anchor a new arts and cultural district, and employ creative placemaking techniques along the corridor to define the district.

Louisville Metro Government's Office of Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods designated "Zones of Hope" in five neighborhoods, including Russell, in 2014. The Zones of Hope initiative brings together more than 60 community organizations across the five neighborhoods with a focus on reducing violence, increasing educational and employment opportunities, and improving the narrative surrounding young African American men and boys.

Finally, the Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell survey revealed fairly high levels of community engagement and an overall positive view of the neighborhood's social network. Among Russell residents, 64% reported participating in political activities (such as voting or attending a candidate rally), 55% reported participating in a neighborhood social event (such as a festival or block party), 51% reported participating in a business event (such as a sidewalk sale or farmers market), and 41% reported participating in a neighborhood improvement event (such as a cleanup or other beautification effort). Most residents also stated that they would be at least somewhat willing to participate in neighborhood planning and improvement efforts, such as joining a neighborhood association or group (78%), joining a task force to address neighborhood issues (65%), or running or hosting neighborhood planning meetings (56%). Survey respondents also expressed positive feelings about the neighborhood's social supportiveness, indicating that it was at least somewhat likely that their neighbors would help out if they needed assistance with a ride (72%), needed a small favor such as picking up mail or borrowing a tool (71%), needed someone to watch their home while they were away (75%), or needed someone to care for their child in an emergency (79%).

Potential Challenges to Redevelopment

The previous sections include a discussion of economic and housing barriers facing the Russell neighborhood, including concentrated poverty, high unemployment and limited access to jobs, low educational attainment, old housing stock, low homeownership, and high rates of housing cost burden. The disparities between Russell and the rest of the county in these categories and others certainly serve as challenges to redevelopment in Russell. Additional issues include crime and perceptions of safety, vacant and abandoned properties, long term disinvestment and reluctance toward future investment in the neighborhood, and resident hesitancy about redevelopment efforts.

The Russell neighborhood suffers from a violent crime that is 2.8 times higher than in Louisville Metro as a whole. From 2012 to 2014, Russell experienced 16 violent crimes per 1,000 residents, with the most common Part I crimes (as defined by the Uniform Crime Reporting Program) being aggravated assault, burglary, and robbery. 48% of the crimes reported during the three year period were drug-related. Louisville Metro Police Department indicates that crime hotspots in Russell include 12th Street in Beecher Terrace, interior courtyards in Beecher Terrace, and Madison and Jefferson Streets between 18th and 26th Streets.

A related issue is the perception of neighborhood safety among both residents and nonresidents. The Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell surveys revealed while a majority of residents (59% of Beecher Terrace residents and 88% of Russell residents) felt "somewhat" or "very" safe in their neighborhood during the day, resident perceptions of safety plunged at night. Only 31% of Beecher Terrace residents and 57% of Russell residents reported feeling "somewhat" or "very" safe in their neighborhood at night. Among Beecher Terrace residents, 71% reported that crime occurs frequently (1-2 times per week) in their neighborhood and many residents report having experienced or known someone who experienced the following crimes: gun shots (71%), murder (41%), or sale/use of drugs (38%). Only 36% of Russell residents surveyed rated policing and law enforcement services in the neighborhood as "good" or "very good." Additionally, 69% of Russell residents believed that addressing crime, drug, and public safety issues would make the neighborhood a better place to live. Among the larger Louisville Metro population, the perception that "West Louisville" as a whole is unsafe is pervasive, exacerbated in part by the media's persistent use of the term when reporting criminal activity. Raising awareness of distinct neighborhoods in West Louisville among the general population would be beneficial to supporting redevelopment in Russell and adjacent neighborhoods.

An additional challenge to redevelopment in Russell is the prevalence of vacant and abandoned properties. Approximately 460 vacant parcels are scattered around the neighborhood (comprising about 14% of parcels in the neighborhood). These vacant parcels are primarily small residential lots; however the presence of so many vacant parcels detracts from the quality and character of neighborhood and drives down surrounding property values. The Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell survey found that 48% of Russell residents believed that addressing vacant properties would make the neighborhood a better place to live. The northwestern portion of Russell was recommended as a potential revitalization area in the 2013 Vacant and Abandoned Property Neighborhood Revitalization Study, indicating a high concentration of parcels with slightly negative marketability scores based on the

area's social, economic, and housing needs. Louisville Metro Government has designated Russell a Priority Project Area for future investment based on the study and intends to strategically target resources to the neighborhood.

Long term disinvestment in Russell has resulted in limited availability of resources and services, as well as overall diminished quality of life in the area. Many residents indicated in the Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell survey that they would like to see additional businesses in the neighborhood, such as grocery stores (69%), restaurants (60%), fitness centers (48%), medical offices (35%), hardware stores (33%), and coffee shops (31%). This long term reluctance from the private sector to invest in Russell certainly presents a challenge to spurring future investment in the area; however this is beginning to change as a number of public and private investments are ongoing or planned in or adjacent to the neighborhood, such as FoodPort, Chef Space, the Cedar Street market-rate housing project, and the planned Walmart at 18th Street and Broadway. These projects are discussed in more detail in the following section.

A final challenge to redevelopment in Russell and surrounding neighborhoods is resident concern about the potential gentrifying effects of revitalization. There is an understandable fear of displacement and of being priced out of the revitalized neighborhood. Any future revitalization efforts in Russell must take these concerns into account and aim to preserve the existing character and overall affordability of the neighborhood, allowing those residents who want to remain in Russell to stay. Despite these concerns, a majority of Russell residents surveyed were optimistic about neighborhood change, with 60% of survey respondents believing that the neighborhood will get "somewhat better" or "a lot better" over the next five years.

VI. Leveraging Other Investments and Development Activities

Russell will benefit from several ongoing and planned projects which are creating momentum and precedent for future investment in the neighborhood. These activities complement the proposed NRSA activities by improving economic conditions and quality of life for Russell's low- and moderate-income residents.

The West Louisville FoodPort, a \$56 million project scheduled to break ground in the fall of 2016 with completion expected by May 2018, will turn a large, long-vacant parcel on West Market Street into an active, food-focused commercial center. The project is expected to create 200 new permanent jobs and 150 temporary construction jobs, as well as relocate 60 existing permanent jobs to the site. Seed Capital is working with Louisville Urban League to develop a strategy to maximize the hiring of residents from the surrounding neighborhoods, including Russell, Shawnee, and Portland, for jobs created by the FoodPort project.

Community Ventures Corporation (CVC) began renovations on the historic Jay's Cafeteria building on Muhammad Ali Boulevard in June 2015. The recently completed project, Chef Space, houses a food business incubator which will accommodate up to 50 local entrepreneurs. Another CVC project in Russell, the Cedar Street Development, will create 29 market-rate homes available for purchase in partnership with the Community Housing Development Organization REBOUND.

Louisville Metro Government designated \$200,000 in CDBG funds during Program Year 2015 for a pilot program in Russell which will replace roofs on owner-occupied homes. Roofs were selected as the focus of this pilot program due to the impact that replacing a faulty roof can have on preventing further home deterioration and protecting a homeowner's investment. As a result of planning for the Russell Roofs pilot program, Metro has partnered with New Directions Housing Corporation to coordinate outreach efforts and share referrals with its Repair Affair program. Repair Affair is an annual event which uses volunteers to make repairs to homes owned by low-income individuals who are elderly or disabled.

Several additional activities are taking place in the neighborhoods immediately surrounding Russell. The intersection of 18th Street and Broadway, at Russell's southern edge, is the site of multiple planned activities. Louisville Metro Government plans to realign 18th Street at this location in order to form a better connection across Broadway and create better conditions for a future retail node. A planned YMCA facility at the southeast corner of the intersection will provide a fitness center and swimming pool as well as childcare, healthcare, and other amenities. A planned Walmart store at the southwest corner of the intersection will provide retail and employment opportunities to area residents.

A few blocks north of Russell, in the Portland neighborhood, the planned expansion of Waterfront Park and extension of River Road west of 9th Street will provide Russell residents with improved access to the park and riverfront, as well as increase connectivity between West Louisville and the central business district. Louisville's Waterfront Development Corporation released a master plan for the expansion in 2015; however no timeline has yet been set for the \$40 million project.

VII. Russell NRSA Economic Empowerment Activities

Develop Louisville proposes to allocate \$1,000,000 to Russell NRSA activities in Program Year 2016 to support housing initiatives, vacant and abandoned property response, and economic development. HUD does not require a commitment of future Program Year funds at the time an NRSA plan is submitted; therefore Develop Louisville will describe additional funds committed to NRSA activities, as well as outcomes anticipated as a result of future funding commitments, in its annual Action Plan submissions.

When considering activities for inclusion in the Russell NRSA plan, Develop Louisville sought to select activities which can be implemented in the short term, reflect resident feedback from the Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell planning process, fall in line with CDBG funding priorities, and have the potential to make a positive, lasting impact on the Russell neighborhood. In addition to NRSA-specific programs, Develop Louisville and the Department of Community Services plan to target existing programs to the Russell neighborhood in order to truly leverage the impact of the NRSA investment.

Expanded outreach to the NRSA will ensure that current Russell residents are aware of the variety of programs available to them. Marketing efforts could include but are not limited to an increased presence at neighborhood meetings, expanded reach of existing and new written materials, and inclusion of program information in Metro Council member newsletters. Develop Louisville will coordinate with Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA) to conduct outreach through established Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell venues, including community meetings, neighborhood newsletters, and social media. Develop Louisville will also work with LMHA, New Directions Housing Corporation, and other partners to ensure that Neighborhood Outreach Workers, as well as any successive Russell neighborhood outreach staff, are well-informed about the various programs available to Russell residents.

Housing Strategies

Strategy: Support Current Homeowners

Activity: NRSA-Specific Rehabilitation Programs

Louisville Metro Government anticipates a great deal of investment, both public and private, in the Russell neighborhood in the coming years. As anticipated investment in a neighborhood is often met with speculative investors buying residential properties with the hope of making a profit, it is imperative to take steps to support current Russell homeowners, help them protect their investment, and ensure that they benefit from the value being created by investment in the neighborhood.

Rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes will improve the quality of the housing stock in Russell and the overall livability of the Russell neighborhood. The NRSA home repair program may also be layered with Metro's other home repair programs where eligible for maximum homeowner benefit. Rehab activities will be focused on decreasing energy use and maintenance costs, as well as improving exteriors. Develop Louisville will track the number of homes assisted through the NRSA home rehab program and

will use data from the first year of the program to guide planning and set anticipated outcomes for future years. In Program Year 2016, \$300,000 will be allocated to Russell NRSA home rehab yielding an anticipated 12 clients served.

Develop Louisville recognizes that taking a targeted geographic approach to exterior home rehab would yield maximum visible impact; however limited owner occupancy and the scattered nature of owner-occupied properties in Russell make targeting particular blocks or corridors difficult. In selecting applicants for participation in the program, Develop Louisville will prioritize homes located in proximity to other rehabilitated properties and other investments, such as FoodPort and the Cedar Street Development, where possible.

In Program Year 2016, Develop Louisville will continue to offer the Russell Roofs pilot program in addition to the program described above. Russell Roofs received \$200,000 in CDBG funding during Program Year 2015 to replace roofs on owner-occupied homes. Roofs were selected as the focus of this pilot program due to the impact that replacing a faulty roof can have on preventing further home deterioration and protecting a homeowner's investment. Develop Louisville has committed to using "cool shingle" material on replacement roofs in order to reduce home cooling costs and lessen the contribution of individual homes to Louisville's urban heat island effect.

Activity: Target Existing Home Rehabilitation Programs

In addition to the NRSA-specific home rehab program, Develop Louisville intends to target its existing home rehabilitation programs to Russell, including emergency repair, weatherization, lead, exterior code alleviation, and roof repair. Targeting of existing programs may take the form of expanded outreach in the Russell neighborhood or prioritization of Russell applicants where other eligibility factors are equal. Additionally, Metro will create a resource guide for the Russell NRSA, which will include information about available housing programs as well as other services and distribute within the NRSA.

The Emergency Repair program assists owner-occupants of single family homes to make eligible emergency, health, and safety repairs to their home. The homeowner must be income eligible and have lived in the home for at least one year. Specific repair types eligible for this program are:

- Electrical – conversion of fuse boxes to breaker systems; repair or replacement of electrical components considered hazardous by the fire department or Louisville Metro electrical inspectors
- Heating and Air Conditioning Systems – replacement or repair of non-functioning heating systems including duct work when necessary; installation, replacement, or repair of air conditioning systems (requires written documentation of medical necessity from a physician)
- Plumbing – replacement or repair of non-functioning hot water heaters; replacement or repair of gas or water supply lines from utility connection to the house; replacement or repair of sewer lines from MSD connection to the house

The weatherization program uses funding from the U.S. Department of Energy/LIHEAP, supplemented by CDBG funding, to provide assistance to homeowners in need of insulation, weather-stripping, and

repair or replacement of energy systems. Eligible repairs or replacements include, but are not limited to furnaces, water heaters, duct work, and carbon dioxide and smoke detectors.

The Exterior Code Alleviation Program, developed during Program Year 2015, provides assistance to income-eligible households to eliminate exterior code violations, as well as perform minor exterior repairs to ensure that homes are safe, warm, and dry. This program is targeted to Louisville's designated Priority Project Areas resulting from the 2013 Vacant and Abandoned Property Neighborhood Revitalization Study, which include Russell, Shawnee, and Schnitzelburg.

Louisville Metro Government provides funds for a ramp construction program operated by Center for Accessible Living (CAL). The program constructs access ramps and removes accessibility barriers for disabled residents in order to increase both mobility and self-sufficiency. This program is available for renter-occupied homes in addition to owner-occupied homes. CAL has committed to prioritizing Russell residents where possible for this metrowide program.

Develop Louisville also operates the Lead Safe Louisville program which is intended to identify and address lead-based paint hazards in homes built before 1978, particularly those occupied by young children and/or pregnant women. This program is available to income-eligible households living in both renter- and owner-occupied units.

As previously described, Develop Louisville intends to greatly expand outreach efforts related to its home repair programs. Metro and New Directions Housing Corporation have partnered to coordinate outreach and share referrals with its annual Repair Affair program. The types of repairs offered through this annual volunteer event are generally low-cost projects with a short turnaround time, such as painting, yard cleanup, accessibility improvements, or repairing locks, doors, or windows. These types of repairs complement the larger-scale and higher-budget projects undertaken through Develop Louisville's home rehab programs.

Strategy: Incentivize and Expand Homeownership

Activity: NRSA Homebuyer Incentive Program

Develop Louisville began operating the NRSA Homebuyer Incentive Program during Program Year 2015. The program is targeted to all active NRSAs. The homebuyer incentive program offers up to \$24,999 in home repair funding for households purchasing homes in eligible NRSA areas. Recipients must commit to using the home as their primary residence for a minimum of five years and be willing to complete homeownership counseling if they are a first-time homebuyer. Funds can be used for home improvement projects, including kitchen updates, bathroom renovations, and roof replacement. Unlike other housing programs, this program is not income-restricted as it is intended to facilitate the development of mixed-income neighborhoods as well as support the overall improvement of housing stock in the NRSA areas.

In Program Year 2016, \$100,000 in CDBG funding has been allocated to the homebuyer incentive program (this allocation is not included in the \$1 million planned for Russell NRSA activities). The

homebuyer incentive program did not begin operating fully until mid-Program Year 2015, therefore program funds remain from Program Years 2014 and 2015 and will be available in addition to the PY16 funds.

Activity: Targeted Down Payment Assistance

Develop Louisville operates a HOME-funded Down Payment Assistance (DPA) program on a metrowide basis. The program provides income-eligible homebuyers with loans to assist with purchasing homes which will be used as the homebuyer's primary residence. An eligible homebuyer may purchase a home in any area of Jefferson County and must commit to remaining in the home for five to 15 years, depending on the amount of assistance received. Homeownership counseling is required for persons receiving down payment assistance through this program. Encouraging homeownership in NRSAs is one of the goals of the DPA program, which is available to both current and new NRSA residents.

Additionally, Develop Louisville will strengthen its collaboration with Louisville Metro Housing Authority with increased outreach about the DPA program to potential Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Homeownership program homebuyers in Russell. The HCV Homeownership program allows qualified LMHA families to make the transition from renting to homeownership by allowing them to utilize their voucher to pay a portion of their mortgage for up to 15 years. LMHA has one of the strongest HCV Homeownership programs in the country and has helped more than 230 families purchase homes since 1997, including 7 in the Russell neighborhood. The program is available to eligible families in both the Section 8 renter and public housing programs. Outreach efforts will be targeted to current Russell HCV holders planning to purchase a home in any Metro neighborhood as well as Metro-wide HCV holders who wish to purchase a home in Russell.

Strategy: Improve Rental Housing Stock

Activity: Encourage Landlord Investment in Rental Housing

Develop Louisville intends to explore options for improving privately-owned rental stock in the Russell neighborhood through outreach to landlords, assessment of property maintenance issues, and development of programs that encourage reinvestment in rental units. Potential programs could include low-interest loans for improvement of rental which will be made available to income-eligible renters. All applicants will be subject to underwriting criteria to determine project eligibility. In Program Year 2016, \$200,000 in CDBG funds will be allocated for rental rehabilitation in Russell.

Economic Development Strategies

Strategy: Enhance Resident Wealth and Create Jobs

Activity: Microbusiness Assistance and Loans

Louisville Metro's Department of Community Services (LMCS) operates a CDBG-funded microbusiness program which provides technical assistance, training, and loans to income-eligible individuals interested in starting or expanding a small business that employs no more than 5 people. The

microbusiness loan program provides two types of loans. The Spark loan program is available for start-up businesses or businesses that have been in operation for less than one year and offers loans ranging from \$500 to \$4,999 at 0% interest. The Ignite loan program is available for businesses that have been open for at least one year and offers loans ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000 at 4% interest.

During Program Year 2016, \$100,000 in CDBG funds will be allocated specifically for loans to microbusinesses which are either owned by Russell residents or located in Russell. Additional preference will be given to businesses that have a physical “store front” presence, rather than home-based or mobile businesses, and to businesses that address resident demand as determined by the Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell survey, such as restaurants, coffee shops, and clothing stores. Businesses owned by Russell residents which will have a physical storefront presence in the Russell neighborhood will receive first priority. LMCS anticipates providing loans to 12 Russell microbusinesses during Program Year 2016.

While the microbusiness program does not provide forgivable loans, the Russell loans will offer innovative non-cash repayment options, such as allowing loan recipients to mentor other microbusiness owners or take additional classes to “work off” a portion of their loan balance.

In addition to the funds set aside for Russell microbusiness loans, the microbusiness program will provide targeted training and technical assistance programs in Russell. Past microbusiness training topics have included writing a business plan, marketing, tax planning and reporting, and social media for small businesses. Specific trainings to be held in Russell will be determined by assessing resident and business needs as well as available opportunities.

Finally, LMCS staff will explore opportunities for targeting outreach related to the microbusiness program in coordination with other entrepreneurship-based programs and investments in the neighborhood, such as Chef Space, Louisville Central Community Center’s Old Walnut Campus office space, Coding at the Beech, and the Samuel Plato Academy of Historic Preservation Trades.

Activity: Attract and Incentivize Business Investment

The Louisville Metro Department of Economic Development will provide low-interest loans or other incentives to businesses locating in Russell. Targeted recruitment efforts will pursue business types that meet resident demand as determined through the Choice Neighborhoods/Vision Russell process, such as restaurants, fitness centers, and entertainment options, and seek to match them with appropriate commercial properties in the neighborhood. Facilitating the development of desirable businesses in Russell will benefit the neighborhood by creating jobs and by improving the overall quality of life of its residents through the introduction of new amenities to the neighborhood. During Program Year 2016, \$200,000 in CDBG funds will be allocated for business loans or incentives for the Russell neighborhood. Metro anticipates that these loans will support at 2 businesses and bring at least 8 jobs to the neighborhood.

The Department of Economic Development will work with community partners and organizations such as the West Louisville Chamber of Commerce and the West Louisville Dream Team to identify potential

businesses for these activities where appropriate, and has committed to including Russell neighborhood representatives on any loan committee or other advisory group formed in support of NRSA business recruitment activities.

Additionally, the Department of Economic Development will continue to support and promote the Louisville Independent Business Alliance's (LIBA) "Pay It Forward" program, which pairs new or existing small businesses in West Louisville with (successful/established?) businesses in a mentoring relationship. Mentor businesses commit to meeting at least twice with their mentee business, as well as sponsoring the mentee business' initial LIBA membership fee.

Activity: Connect Residents to Financial Empowerment Services

The Department of Community Services (LMCS) offers several financial empowerment services which are available on a metrowide basis; however LMCS will expand outreach and offer events in Russell in order to target the NRSA.

Bank On Louisville is a collaboration between LMCS, financial institutions, service providers, and other partners intended to strengthen the economic well-being on the community by expanding access to mainstream financial education and services, particularly among low- and moderate-income residents. The program offers "Bank On Days," where bank and credit partners gather to answer questions, run credit reports, and open bank accounts for clients on site. These events provide opportunities for attendees to "shop around" for banking services that best meet their individual needs. Financial education workshops are also incorporated into the event. Currently, financial institution partners include PNC, Fifth Third, BB&T, Republic, First Capital Bank of Kentucky, Class Act, AutoTruck, Your Community Bank, Community Bank and Trust, Woodforest, Eclipse, Central Bank, Park Community, Federal Savings and Trust, Chase, and US Bank. LMCS intends to hold at least one Bank On Day in the Russell neighborhood during the NRSA term.

The Bank On Louisville collaborative also holds an annual Financial Fitness Day, which celebrates Financial Literacy Month (April) by bringing financial empowerment related resources together in one place so that attendees can gather information, attend educational sessions, and meet bank and credit union representatives. Community service providers, such as Apprisen, Louisville Urban League, Legal Aid Society, and others are represented in addition to financial institutions. LMCS intends to hold at least one annual Financial Fitness Day in the Russell neighborhood during the NRSA term.

Additionally, the LMCS Financial Empowerment team recently relocated to the Nia Center, located at 2900 West Broadway just across the street from the Russell neighborhood. The Nia Center will serve as LMCS' Financial Empowerment Services Center, where appointments can be made to meet with Apprisen, Legal Aid, and KyNect to address issues including debt management, bankruptcy, and health coverage, among others. During tax season, the Louisville Asset Building Coalition also has a presence at the center. Going forward, LMCS plans to expand its list of partners and the Center's hours of operation.

Community Development Strategies

Strategy: Invest in Visible Neighborhood Improvements

Activity: Vacant and Abandoned Property Response

Develop Louisville will continue to explore options for addressing vacant and abandoned properties, which are prevalent in the Russell neighborhood and present a threat to public safety, detract from the quality and character of neighborhood, and drive down surrounding property values. Potential strategies include strategic acquisition for future redevelopment, targeted demolition of properties which are cost-prohibitive to rehabilitate, and finding innovative ways to reuse vacant lots. Develop Louisville has allocated \$200,000 in Program Year 2016 CDBG funding for targeted demolition and anticipates that 18 dilapidated structures will be cleared.

Develop Louisville will pursue options for generating innovative solutions to the vacant property problem, including a targeted reiteration of Metro's 2014 Lots of Possibility competition, which allowed citizens to submit proposals for creative reuse of a vacant lot. Proposals were welcomed for both permanent and interim uses, and winning proposals were awarded ownership or use of a vacant lot as well as implementation funds. A new Lots of Possibility competition in the Russell neighborhood would provide opportunities for neighborhood residents to submit applications, as well as to serve on the judge panel and in technical advisor roles to ensure that the winning submissions align with neighborhood priorities.

Additional opportunities for targeting include the Office of Vacant and Public Property Administration's (VPPA) side yard pilot program, which allows homeowners to purchase an adjoining vacant lot for \$1 provided the owner consolidates the lots. Through implementing this program, VPPA has learned that the attorney and legal fees associated with this program are often too high for homeowners to afford despite the low property cost, and therefore is considering strategies for assisting homeowners with these fees to reduce the cost barrier to acquiring an adjoining lot.

Develop Louisville is currently involved with partner agencies in developing an application for the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant, which if awarded to Metro will be used to address crime density related to vacant properties in Russell.

Activity: Neighborhood Cleanups and Beautification

Develop Louisville's Brightside office works to unite people in clean and green activities to beautify the city and foster community pride. Brightside programs operate on a metrowide basis; however Develop Louisville will work with community partners to encourage and support Russell neighborhood involvement in its annual citywide spring and fall cleanup events, as well as explore partnerships with businesses in the neighborhood to support future beautification and tree planting projects. Brightside also offers environmental education programs for K-12 students, and will explore options for targeting educational efforts to schools in Russell in order to promote sustainability among younger residents in preparation for a brighter future.

Activity: Invest in Public Facilities and Improvements

Develop Louisville allocates funding for public facilities and improvements projects on an annual basis. Projects typically include construction or improvements to public facilities, parks, or infrastructure. Develop Louisville plans to support 3 projects involving construction or improvements to public facilities, parks, or infrastructure during the five-year NRSA period.

Public Service Strategies

Strategy: Expand Awareness of Available Public Services

Activity: Targeted Outreach for Existing Job Training and Education Programs

LMCS offers a variety of services intended to address the core issues surrounding poverty, including education and job training. Many of these services are funded using Community Services Block Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. While these services are provided on a metrowide basis to income-eligible individuals, LMCS intends to target outreach for its job training and education programs to the Russell neighborhood in coordination with NRSA efforts.

Helping people obtain specialized, in-demand job skills supports LMCS' mission of helping people become self-sufficient and preparing them for long-term success. LMCS offers short-term job training to help people of low-income obtain specialized skills needed for employment. Training must be less than one year in length, and the participant must have high school diploma or GED to qualify. The ultimate goal of job training assistance is assisting clients with obtaining and maintaining living-wage employment with benefits.

LMCS also seeks to support income-eligible individuals by addressing education needs, including assistance to families seeking to enroll children in early childhood education and to adult individuals seeking degree completion. LMCS recognizes that poverty prevention and reduction must include services that address the needs of children growing up in poverty. Low-income neighborhoods often tend to have low Kindergarten readiness scores, thus low-income children are often starting their school careers off at a disadvantage. Since many low-income families cannot afford to send their children to preschools that will ultimately prepare them for school success, LMCS provides scholarships to families with three and four year olds to enroll in a qualified preschool.

LMCS also provides college scholarships of up to \$5,000 to students who are nearing degree completion and have a minimum 2.30 cumulative GPA. Scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Students receiving scholarships are required to have monthly contact with their case manager to assure continued progress to their goal, and must submit proof of semester or program completion as necessary.

Activity: Targeted Legal Assistance

Legal Aid Society of Louisville offers services to meet the needs of low-income individuals by providing them with the legal resources needed to prevent the loss of housing, provide economic stability, and

address legal matters before they become a legal crisis. Activities include foreclosure clinics, legal education clinics, community presentations on the importance of life-planning documents and free assistance with preparation of such documents, outreach to low-income communities about the risks associated with leaving property taxes unpaid, debt-relief clinics, and financial literacy education targeted to seniors.

Additionally, Legal Aid operates a Tenant Assistance Program, which takes a holistic approach to helping low-income clients facing eviction. Services offered include providing workshops and clinics about tenants' rights and responsibilities, as well as eviction crisis counseling, landlord negotiation, referrals, and assistance with finding housing in order to prevent homelessness.

Louisville Metro Government typically provides financial support to Legal Aid Society for the operation of these programs, and will collaborate with Legal Aid to conduct targeted outreach in Russell. Potential targeted programming could include expanded outreach for and assistance with life-planning documents, which could reduce the future incidence of vacant and abandoned properties in the neighborhood.

VIII. Anticipated Outcomes and Performance Measurements

The following outcomes are anticipated as a result of the five year Russell NRSA designation; however at this time NRSA funds have only been allocated for Program Year 2016, or year 1. Metro will evaluate and report on the progress and success of NRSA programs annually. Anticipated outcomes may be modified based on annual evaluation of the NRSA programs.

Housing Outcomes

Support Current Homeowners

- Provide home rehabilitation services for 50 owner-occupied units over 5 years
- Reduce energy usage in homes participating in rehabilitation programs by 5% through energy efficiency improvements
- Reduce code violations by 75% for homes participating in rehabilitation programs

Incentivize and Expand Homeownership

- Increase owner-occupied units by 25 units over 5 years

Improve Rental Housing Stock

- Improve 65 renter-occupied units over 5 years

Economic Development Outcomes

Enhance Resident Wealth and Create Jobs

- Assist 12 Russell residents with creation or expansion of businesses through microenterprise loans, training, and technical assistance
- Add amenities for neighborhood residents and create jobs through loans to 2 small businesses
- Hold one Bank On Day event in Russell
- Hold one Financial Fitness Day event in Russell

Community Development Outcomes

Invest in Visible Neighborhood Improvements

- Reduce slum and blight through strategic demolition of 30 vacant or abandoned structures over 5 years
- Conduct 5 cleanups in the Russell neighborhood
- Invest in 3 projects involving construction or improvement of public facilities, parks, or infrastructure

Public Services Outcomes

Expand Awareness of Existing Public Services

- Create a resource guide for Russell to include available housing programs and public services
- Make resource guide available at 10 locations and 20 events over 5 years

IX. Russell NRSA Approval Letter



U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Louisville Field Office, Region IV
601 West Broadway, Room 110
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

June 16, 2016

Ms. Deborah Bilitski, Director
Develop Louisville
Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government
444 South 5th St.
Louisville, KY 40202

Subject: Russell Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area
Approval

Dear Ms. Bilitski:

This letter is in response to Louisville Jefferson County Metro Government's (Louisville) request for approval of the Russell Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA). The Russell NRSA plan was part of Louisville's 2016 Action Plan submitted via IDIS. You recently requested that HUD issues a separate approval of the NRSA in order for the approval letter to be documented in Louisville Metro Housing Authority's request for a competitive grant program.

We have completed our review of the proposed Russell NRSA. The plan met the NRSA guidelines by designating a contiguous primarily residential area; the demographic establish that the area is 87% low- and moderate-income; the plan was developed in consultation with the community; provided an assessment of economic conditions; provided a realistic economic development strategy and implementation plan; and provided measureable benchmarks. We are pleased to advise you that the Russell NRSA designation is approved as requested. Please ensure that the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report documents the progress of meeting the performance benchmarks.

If you have any questions regarding the NRSA designation or need assistance on other matters, please contact Richard Knight, Senior Community Planning and Development Representative at (502) 618-8106, or call me at (502) 618-8143.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger A. Leonard".

Roger A. Leonard
Director, Community Planning
and Development

HUD's mission is to increase homeownership, support community development and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination.

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