

West Louisville Strategies for Success September 2015

(Originally compiled July 2014; updated February 2015)



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HIGHLIGHTS

Education

- *Coding at the Beech* – new program launched for 15-18 year olds, to get coding instruction through the Code Louisville curriculum twice a week at Beecher Terrace. Program kicked off in January 2015, and graduated 7 individuals in June. New class starts October 2015 with 20 expected participants.
- *Cultural Pass* – launched in 2014, the Cultural Pass is a collaborative effort between Metro Government, Gheens Foundation and Louisville Free Public Library that provides children free access to 30 of the region’s greatest cultural organizations. This summer program emphasizes the importance of arts education in Louisville.
- *Little Libraries* – completed construction and installation of 40 Little Libraries. LFPL provided 3,156 books for the Little Free Libraries in the 40210 zip code.
- *Technology* – 100 Chromebooks were deployed at four community centers (California, Beechmont and Southwick Community Centers and Shawnee Arts and Cultural Center)
- *55K/15K* – More people in Louisville have college degrees than ever before – 41.5%. Of the working-age African American population, 25.6 percent hold an associate degree or higher. This effort is studying how to incorporate and count credentials and certifications as an important step from education to workforce.
- *Cradle to Career* – Each pillar has a dedicated working group, with specific mission and goals.

Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

- *One Love Louisville*
 - Launched Youth Implementation Team in August to help Office of Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods attain goals and keep city safe with more youth involved.
 - Preparing Youth Edition Action Plan – 3rd part of comprehensive strategy that will address educational attainment, intervention for youth, economic growth and civic engagement
- *Right Turn Grant* – The city received two federal grants totaling \$2.25 million to match youth in the juvenile justice system with mentors to turn their lives around. Started in early 2014, Right Turn and Right Turn 2.0 will have served a total of 500 youth by 2016. Mayor Fischer included \$200,000 in FY16 budget for a pilot project working with 100 youth ages 18-24 who have minor criminal backgrounds.
- *Zones of Hope* – three (3) community centers serve as Zones of Hope hubs, locations for the Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods’ Community Outreach and Engagement programs.
- *Financial Stability* – Through Bank On, 743 classes have been offered to 9,887 participants on budgeting, building credit, financial goals, predatory lending. 2,863 individuals are now banked through Bank On program.
- *CDBG & HOME funds* – there are more than 20 projects currently ongoing in West Louisville, reflecting \$18.6 million worth of federal, state and local investment.
- *Health in All Policies* – the city passed an ordinance in Spring 2015 banning the sale of e-cigarettes and hookah products to minors.

Economic Development

- *FoodPort* – announced in September 2014 by the city and non-profit developer Seed Capital KY, the FoodPort will be developed at 30th and Muhammad Ali, bringing more than \$30 million in investment and 250 permanent jobs (and 275 construction jobs), retail, community programming and neighborhood space to West Louisville.
- *Beech Technologies* – started in June 2015 by seven youth from the Coding at the Beech program, and as part of KentuckianaWorks’ SummerWorks, this new business offers website development services.
- *Wi-fi* – the city is providing free internet in the Russell and Shawnee neighborhoods, and growing to cover more of West Louisville.
- *Etsy Craft Entrepreneurship Program* – Louisville Metro and Etsy partnered in this pilot program to provide micro-business training to underemployed, low-income adults with creative skills who can sell their products to new markets. The training took place at the Nia Center.
- *We Hire* – a result of the 2014 Bingham Fellows program, the city is a partner in this network initiative for West Louisville residents to connect each other to job readiness training, workforce support agencies and job opportunities. We Hire is in process of developing a mobile app for Connectors to easily connect their population to jobs and other opportunities.
- *ChefSpace* – created by Community Ventures, this new kitchen incubator opened in June 2015 to accommodate up to 50 food entrepreneurs with kitchen equipment and business advisors.
- *Nia Center* – this financial empowerment center is home to KentuckianaWorks’ Career Centers to assist with job training and placement, and Louisville Forward’s business clinic, which connects clients wanting to start or grow a business with resources to build a business or financial plan, receive business mentoring and counseling, or seek financial assistance. The business clinic has served approximately 100 new clients in 2015.
- *18th Street revitalization* – Louisville is experiencing a rebirth at the intersection of 18th Street and Broadway, which will benefit from major roadway improvements and will be home to a new WalMart and YMCA.
- *METCO/Micro Loan programs* – more than 140 West Louisville businesses have received loans from metro government loan programs, leveraging more than \$25 million in private investment and creating nearly 400 jobs.
- *Wilson/Algonquin Blvd property* – the city and Louisville Metro Housing Authority together purchased 3052 Wilson Avenue, in order to expand the retail node around the First Choice
- *Land availability* – Louisville Metro helps businesses find properties that are both privately and publicly held, that will provide the best location for them to do business. This includes marketing critical West Louisville assets, such as the Louisville Central Community Center and the former PPG property, on Muhammad Ali Blvd, and the city-owned former Rhodia Company property at 11th and Hill.
- *Growing/expanding West Louisville businesses* – Companies recently opened or expanded in West Louisville include Kentucky Peerless Distillery, Over the 9, Old 502 Winery, Falls City, Please & Thank You, Against the Grain, FMS Janitorial Services, Louisville Fish Company, Mills Supply, Mesa Foods and Keebler.

Built Environment

- *Bridging the Divide* – To reimagine 9th Street as a welcoming gateway to West Louisville, the city is initiating two projects; enhanced pedestrian connectivity at 9th and Main with new lighting, and a study that will look at the potential to remove or modify the Interstate 64 ramps, which will begin in early 2016.
- *West of 9th Vision* – LCCC was awarded the Sustainable Design Assessment Team planning grant by the American Institute of Architects in January 2015 to support the West of Ninth Visioning Plan for Muhammad Ali Boulevard between 6th and 32nd Streets. The team met with community stakeholders in August 2015, producing short- and long-term recommendations.
- *Waterfront Phase IV* – this next phase of Waterfront Park will encompass 22 acres between 9th and 13th Street, reconnecting Portland and other West Louisville neighborhoods to the waterfront and downtown.
- *River Road West* – to support the Waterfront Park Phase IV project, the city has started planning the extension of River Road westward which will connect West Louisville with downtown. Phase One design is expected to be complete in 2016.
- *OneWest* – another program born out of 2014 Bingham Fellows class, OneWest is a non-profit organization establishing new pathways to private and public capital to generate sustainable economic and development and revitalization in West Louisville. The group has established its inaugural board of directors and has secured more than \$400,000 in start-up funding from UPS, James Graham Brown Foundation, Gheens Foundation, Community Foundation of Louisville and Louisville Metro.
- *Vision Russell/Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant* – Louisville Metro Housing Authority announced in January 2015 that it was awarded this \$425,000 grant for the redevelopment of the East Russell neighborhood and Beecher Terrace public housing development
- *Cedar Street/Quinn Gardens Development* – city broke ground on 29 new market-rate homes in Russell neighborhood in August 2015.
- *Cleanliness* – Brightside’s neighborhood cleanliness engaged 7,535 citizens in its cleanups in West Louisville. Between July 2014 and June 2015, Metro Council Districts 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 all improved in their cleanliness assessment.
- *Connect|Disconnect* – to begin reimagining the future home of Waterfront Park Phase IV, this public art exhibition was created and launched in August 2015, featuring six (6) installations from local and national artists along the Louisville Loop between 9th Street and 11th Street.
- *Green Living* – Recognized by U.S. Conference of Mayors, Brightside’s Green Living program combines health and sustainability in educating individuals and households how to live more sustainably. Shawnee participants have had the greatest, achieving the program’s Green Level at 90 out of a possible 160 points.
- *West Market Streetscape* – This commercial corridor, between 24th to 34th Streets and 38th to 40th Streets, has received major infrastructure improvements to improve the business environment and commercial corridor, including new curbs, cross walks, green infrastructure and benches.
- *Algonquin Pkwy improvements* – Roadway reconfigurations to 3 miles of Algonquin, from Winkler to I-264, which include addition of bicycle lanes and a service road, will begin construction in Summer 2017.
- *VAP statistics* – With 5,867 vacant structures on the books, the Office of Vacant & Public Property Administration has overseen 109 demolitions, 114 initiated foreclosures, 24 properties sold and acquisition of 17 properties.

Introduction

This document illustrates the volume, alignment, coordination and intentionality of the numerous strategies undertaken by the Fischer Administration to invest in and improve West Louisville. Education, safe and healthy neighborhoods, better jobs, and physical improvements, such as improved housing and infrastructure, all must be a part of any sustainable solution. This document details a holistic approach, rather than a piecemeal effort, to drive change.

Based on our experience and national best practices, we focus our resources – human and financial – geographically, approaching revitalization one neighborhood at a time. Our limited resources can be better targeted, with the plans and results more visible, thus encouraging successful partnerships, earlier in the process, with the private sector and community organizations.

We begin with education – our top priority for the entire city and for West Louisville – because we firmly believe it is the key to success for all residents. Louisville has made a commitment to increase the number of college degrees in our community by 55,000 by 2020, with an even more specific commitment to increase by 15,000 the college degrees in the African-American community by that same year. Achieving these goals should attract better economic opportunities and support better outcomes. “55K” is a collective impact model that calls upon every parent, faith leader, business, educational institution and community organization to own this goal.

National statistics and comparative data affirm that Louisville is a relatively safe city, yet this fact is of little comfort to those who have been victims of violence. Any life lost or impacted by violence dims the light of our community and limits our potential. We believe that every neighborhood should be one where citizens feel secure, supported and prepared for lifelong success. In pursuit of this goal, Mayor Fischer created the Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods with the goal of identifying gaps between need and resources and to push collaboration among public, private and non-profit partners to reduce and eliminate those challenges. This work is comprehensive; our response has not been to rely solely on increased police presence but instead to focus on ways to promote an increase in economic, social and educational opportunities. This work has been heavily focused on West Louisville because data informs us that the preponderance of violence can be found there.

Our vision for Louisville is one where there is no “9th Street divide.” It is one where all people feel included and have equal access to opportunity, where parents expect their children to graduate from high school or college, or be involved in career-ready programs, and where our community has companies that are ready to receive them with good paying jobs.

Mayor Fischer’s administration and its predecessors have been working on the set of challenges in West Louisville for decades, and Louisville Magazine’s March 2013 and March 2015 stories highlighted the community need for attention. The issues in West Louisville are so broad and so complex, that Leadership Louisville also got involved, by dedicating its 2014 Bingham Fellows class to West Louisville through its program entitled “Investing in a Path to Prosperity.” Louisville Metro employees, private institutions and community stakeholders came together during the course of a year, studying data, programs and potential outcomes in West Louisville. Three programs were a result of the Bingham Fellows work: the creation of OneWest – a nonprofit community development organization focused on the physical surroundings and infrastructure in West Louisville’s nine unique neighborhoods; We Hire Together – a network of West Louisville community connectors to help connect job seekers to employers; and Early Education 40210 – a program to establish 40 frontyard Little Libraries to increase children’s access to books and kindergarten readiness. These programs

provide a framework for Louisville Metro to work with the community and create momentum on initiatives and programs that would take longer and be more difficult if any one entity worked on them alone.

As a government we are committed to working with stakeholders and across agencies to address the issues in a systemic manner to ensure better outcomes. We also work to build a more cohesive connection between those who work on economic development and those who work to empower those most in need, i.e. community development, because there is no sustainable comprehensive West Louisville strategy or vision that does not include both. We deliberately employ a people strategy **and** a place strategy. In recognition of this commitment, in 2014 Louisville Metro Government reorganized its economic and community development functions to bring them all together under one organization – Louisville Forward. Louisville Forward combines business attraction, expansion and retention activities, and talent and workforce attraction, with all of the city's real estate development, land use and planning and design functions to present a unified solution for job growth and quality of place. This move allows Metro to systemically address historic challenges and accelerate progress.

This comprehensive set of strategies is designed to contribute to the sustainability and viability of work as we move West Louisville toward a shared **vision of prosperity**.

Education

Joint Commitment to Improve Education Outcomes

In November 2013, Mayor Fischer and Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) Superintendent Dr. Donna Hargens entered into an unprecedented **Joint Commitment to Improve Education Outcomes** initiative aimed at significantly increasing the number of children and young people who are:

- **Ready for School** – enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- **Successful in School** – graduate from high school ready for college and careers.
- **Prepared to Succeed** – enter college (postsecondary education) and complete certificates or degrees.

This “mutually accountable partnership” calls for collaborating on grant opportunities, improving and expanding “Learning Places,” which are sites/programs throughout the community that extend learning time for students, exploring more joint use of facilities, developing data sharing agreements that allow for high quality service delivery, and publicly reporting on progress.

Out of School Time

In late 2010, Louisville Metro Government (LMG), along with JCPS and Metro United Way (MUW), approved *YouthPrint*, a comprehensive plan for an out-of-school time (OST) youth development system. *YouthPrint* called for convening an *OST Coordinating Council*, where the founding partners – LMG, JCPS and MUW – could help create a coordinated system for the enhancement of youth services in Louisville. The partners work to bridge in-school and out-of-school time and to demonstrate that OST is a fundamental support in improving education outcomes. Strategies include: coordinating youth services and funding, making sure services are high quality, and increasing involvement of young people, their parents and caregivers, and the community.

To support this work, Mayor Fischer has focused on better utilizing city agencies to provide afterschool and summer programming and services. In Summer 2015, the OST Coordinating Council

implemented minimum youth program standards in 32 youth agencies to improve the quality of service delivery. And the FY16 budget includes \$685,000 to 35 youth agencies for programming, which extends community center hours of operation to accommodate teen-focused programs, as well as all equipment, supplies, staffing, marketing and other items needed to manage and produce enhanced schedules and programs.

Following is a sampling of 2015 programming and results:

- *Coding at the Beech* – New this year, 15-18 year olds get coding instruction through the Code Louisville curriculum twice a week at Beecher Terrace, located in Russell neighborhood. Program kicked off in January 2015, and graduated 7 individuals in June. New class starts October 2015 with 20 expected participants.
- *Kindergarten Countdown*: 742+ children and 1,052+ adults participated in events , 2,280 t-shirts & books distributed by LFPL, 212 children and 300 adults attended KC fair;
- *Little Libraries* – completed construction and installation of 40 Little Libraries. LFPL provided 3,156 books for the Little Free Libraries in the 40210 zip code.
- *LFPL Summer Reading* – preventing summer learning loss: 51,136 (birth-5th grade) participated; 27,239 (53.3%) completed (read at least 10 books); 14,441 participants (6th-12th grade); 3,247 (22.5%) completed (read at least 6 books and completed 2 activities);
- *KentuckianaWorks’ Summer Works*: 2,305 teens participated; 700 low-income youth were prepared for work through work-readiness training, placed in jobs and coached through 7 weeks.
- *Engaging Children Outdoors (ECHO)* – Grant-funded initiative through Metro Parks and Jefferson Memorial Forest served 790 students. This program is adding a 6th school with support from MSD.
- *West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative* – Jefferson Memorial Forest and Metro Parks have initiated a master planning process for a nature-based outdoor recreation and educational program and learning center in Shawnee. Programs will take place in Chickasaw Park, Shawnee Park, Portland Wharf Park and Shippingport Island. Master plan will be complete by end of 2015.
- *Open programming sites* – Baxter, Parkhill, Portland and Shawnee sites served 9,608 individuals during June and July 2015. Additionally, seven sites provided summer camp programming and extended hours (6p.m. to 9 p.m.), serving 8,325 individuals in Summer 2015;
- *Summer Meals*: In partnership with Community Action Partnership, 31 sites offered summer meals – 11,272 snacks, 9,469 breakfasts, and 24,304 lunches. In partnership with Dare to Care, Metro Parks served 34,080 meals to young people 18 and under at eight (8) community centers during the 2015 summer, and 33,160 hot dinners during the 2014-15 school year;
- *Additional connectivity* – Metro Parks added wi-fi to a sixth community center, and added three computer labs, bringing total to six community centers with computer labs, all of which are designated as official JCPS designated “Learning Places” that provide afterschool access to Study Island and Success Maker;
- 100 Chromebooks were deployed at four community centers (California, Beechmont, Southwick Community Centers and Shawnee Arts and Cultural Center)
- *Zones of Hope* – Three (3) community centers serve as Zones of Hope hubs, locations for the Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods’ Community Outreach and Engagement;
- *Nutrition Literacy* – Metro Parks received a \$25,000 grant form NRPA/WalMart for an OST Nutrition Literacy program to complement Dare to Care meal program. 2015 summer participation was 1,768, and will continue through June 2016.

- *Foster grandparents* – Office of Youth Development enlisted 80 foster grandparents to mentor youth in schools and daycares to improve academic achievement, 45 of which are placed in West Louisville.

Cultural Pass

To address the experiential gap that often correlates with low income, Louisville Metro launched the new Cultural Pass for Children in 2014. This program that provides children free access to 30 of the region’s greatest cultural organizations during the summer was continued in 2015. The pass, a collaborative effort between Metro Government, the Gheens Foundation and Louisville Free Public Library, was suggested during the Vision Louisville initiative as a way to address the importance of arts education in Louisville. The punch-card pass admits one child/student (ages 0 through college) to 30 attractions as diverse as the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft (KMAC) to the Kentucky Derby Museum to Yew Dell Gardens. If the child is under 16, one parent or guardian also is admitted for free. The pass was one of the 80,000+ ideas that citizens submitted as part of the Vision Louisville initiative, in which residents envisioned how the city should look, feel and flow over the next 25 years.

Passes were distributed at local Louisville Free Public Library branches and Metro Parks Community Centers. More than 51,000 passes were distributed each of last summer and this summer, 8,200 of which were distributed to children living in West Louisville. The top ZIP code for pass recipients in 2014 was 40211 (Chickasaw and Parkland neighborhoods), at 3,220 passes.

The program was successful in getting children into well-known attractions such as the Kentucky Science Center and the Louisville Zoo as well as lesser-known attractions such as the American Printing House for the Blind Museum, Locust Grove, KMAC and Riverside – The Farnsley-Moremeyn Landing. Most venues experienced an increase in visitors – many of whom were making their first trip. In 2015, seven locations, including the Little Loomhouse (96%), Carnegie Museum for Art & History (86%) and the Louisville Ballet School (85%) realized a first-time visitor rate over 70%.

The program also had an impact on the Library’s summer programming. LFPL recorded its biggest Summer Reading ever in 2015, with 30,486 kids and teens completing the program – a 6.5% increase over last year – plus a jump in the number of children’s books checked out. Nearly one third (10,024) of Summer Reading completers indicated they also participated in the Cultural Pass program.

55,000 Degrees (55K) and 15,000 Degrees (15K)

55K is a community agenda to increase the educational attainment of our community. The simple goal is 55,000 more working-age adults with college degrees (15,000 associates and 40,000 bachelor's degrees) by 2020; **15K** is a specific initiative to make sure 15,000 of those degrees are attained by African Americans. The community, including government leaders, community-based organizations, business leaders, education leaders and philanthropy partners, has collectively agreed to further five objectives to help achieve the goals of 55K and 15K:

- Create and support a culture of college-going and completion: LMG has created College and Career Corners in Metro Parks Community Centers;
- Use the business community’s unique points of leverage to accelerate attainment: Mayor Fischer has encouraged businesses to join Degrees At Work;
- Prepare students for success in college, career, citizenship and life: Louisville Metro offers many activities through partnership with JCPS and the Louisville Free Public Libraries;
- Make postsecondary education accessible and affordable: LMG supports Metropolitan College and Community Action Program provides various scholarships; and

- Increase educational persistence, performance and progress: LMG assists its employees with degree attainment via a tuition reimbursement program.

In 2015, 55K recognized that post-secondary degrees are not the only tool to help individuals achieve career success, and have initiated work to study certifications and credentials that employers look for and that will help potential employees move ahead.

55K updates its figures annually. Report Highlights for 2014:

- *More people in Louisville have college degrees than ever before – 41.5 percent.* Of the working-age African American population, 25.6 percent hold an associate degree or higher.
- *However, Louisville is not on track to hit the 2020 goals of 55,000 more degrees and 50% college attainment.* At the current rate of growth, we'll add 50,000 more degrees and 45% of the population will hold a college degree in 2020.
- *Post-secondary degree completions were level this year.* The number of undergraduate degrees completed almost reached 10,000 in 2014, representing a 13% increase in bachelor's degrees and a 26% increase in associate degrees over the past four years.
- *Data confirm the education system is only a part of the equation for a more educated population.* Louisville-area colleges have produced more than 37,000 degrees since 2010, but only 8,200 more people have degrees in the population. We will need to add 3,700 bachelor's degrees each year until 2020 to hit the 40% bachelor's and higher goal.
- *Great gains have been made in Louisville's public high schools.* More JCPS students are graduating. The JCPS graduation rate in 2014 was 79%, up 2.5 points. And the number of students graduating from all JCPS high schools has climbed to more than 5,800 students.
- *At 61 percent, more JCPS graduates are meeting state benchmarks to be college and/or career ready.* This represents a 30% point gain over 4 years.
- Undergraduate college enrollment has declined 11% since a peak in 2010, losing over 7,400 students, most notably among adults and African Americans.
- *While we're moving in the right direction along key trajectories, it is clear where gaps in the system are still a major cause for concern.* At the current pace, the 50 percent target won't be hit until 2030, and improvements in the education system alone will not make up the difference. In 2015, the 55,000 Degrees leadership and community partners must identify other key drivers that affect the Louisville population education attainment levels and develop strategies, with owners and action plans, to address them.

Cradle to Career Pipeline

Expanding on the real collaboration 55K has nurtured across organizations and institutions, Mayor Fischer has created a Cradle to Career initiative that takes a broad-ranging approach to build a skilled and savvy workforce, and to ensure all of our citizens, in every zip code, can succeed. Cradle to Career builds on the Greater Louisville Education Commitment goal, "to provide a world-class, seamless and coordinated education system that provides ample opportunities for developing creativity and creative thinking, skilled workers, engaged citizens and civic leaders." This philosophy recognizes that whether you are a baby in the cradle or a 50-year-old IT professional getting a new certification, you must be learning constantly if you want to succeed. It consists of four pillars: Kindergarten Readiness, K-12 Success, High School to Postsecondary Transition and Completion, and 21st Century Workforce and Talent.

Goals and strategies for each pillar are as follows:

Early Childhood Education/Kindergarten Readiness Pillar

Convener: Metro United Way

Goal: 77% of Kindergarten students will enter ready for school (per state assessment) by 2020.

- Improve access to quality early care and education programs
- Increase number of children who attend quality preschool, particularly low income children
- Increase community and parents knowledge of and ability to make informed decisions about child development and care
- Increase knowledge and skills of staff in early care settings

K-12 Success Pillar

Convener: Jefferson County Public Schools

Goal: All students graduate college or career ready

- Increase student proficiency in every subject
- Increase percent of students graduating to 90% by 2020
- Increase extended learning opportunities (i.e. OST programming)
- Increase percent of graduates that are college or career ready to 70% by 2020
- Increase percent of graduates going to college to 85% by 2020.

High School to Postsecondary Transition and Completion

Convener: 55 Thousand Degrees (55K)

Goal: Add 40,000 bachelor's and 15,000 associates degrees by 2020.

- Create college-going and completion culture
- Increase college readiness
- Use business leverage, particularly to increase adult enrollment and completion
- Increase access and affordability
- Increase persistence and completion

21st Century Workforce and Talent

Convener: Mayor's Office for Civic Innovation & KentuckianaWorks

Goals:

- Signaling: Improve Labor Market Intelligence to gather and communicate key economic and job trends data
- Market-friendly Majors: Increase pipeline of skilled employees with market-friendly majors to regional employers
- Career Pathway Culture: Create a culture that supports career pathways from high school to postsecondary education to the workplace.
- Improving Job Placement: Improve capacity to connect qualified job seekers to the best jobs.

The second annual convening of Cradle to Career will take place in September 2015.

Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

All of our streets must be free from crime, and our residents and business owners must feel safe in their daily work and lives. This is the case for most of West Louisville, but there are some neighborhoods experiencing violent crime at a higher rate. In 2012, Mayor Greg Fischer created the Violence Prevention Work Group and the Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods. The goal of the violence prevention work is to create a framework to determine specific actions and parties responsible for those actions, which should ultimately lead to the consistent reduction or prevention of violence.

In 2013, the city released the Blueprint for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods, an outcome of the Violence Prevention Work Group’s 42 recommendations, and a guide for future funding and programs. The work is comprehensive and is based on a framework of a public health approach to prevention, taking into consideration intervention, enforcement and reentry.

Right Turn Grant

In early 2014, the city received the first of two federal Right Turn grants, totaling \$2.25 million, to help 500 youth, ages 16-19, who are involved in the juvenile corrections system and who are returning to high-poverty, high-crime communities. KentuckianaWorks, in partnership with the Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods, leads this project for the city, which helps to provide individualized education, exposure to career opportunities, career preparation and work-based learning experiences. To expand the reach of this project, Mayor Fischer included \$200,000 for a pilot project in the Shawnee and Russell neighborhoods, to work with 100 youth, ages 18-24, with minor criminal backgrounds.

Following the Phase I Blueprint’s framework, the Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods created 11 Work Groups which were charged with developing focused action steps to help us reduce violent crime and increase positive outcomes. The action steps developed by the Work Groups guided the development of the One Love Louisville: Be the One to Make a Difference campaign, which was released in January 2015.

One Love Louisville Community Plan

Released in January 2015, One Love Louisville is an “all hands on deck” campaign, consisting of 3 population specific action plans: 1-Community Plan, 2-Louisville My Brother’s Keeper Plan, 3-Youth Edition Action Plan (due to be released by October 2015). The campaign calls on everyone to take an active role to make Louisville a city of safe and healthy neighborhoods, where all citizens feel secure, supported and prepared for lifelong success. The primary objective of One Love Louisville is to reduce the number of violent deaths and decrease the number of youth exposed to violence. The campaign will promote opportunities to help reduce violence and share stories of the great work taking place every day.

Goals of One Love Louisville’s Community Plan:

Community Building

- See high levels of civic participation reflected evenly throughout Louisville Metro
- Map the leadership landscape in Louisville Metro in order to identify community connectors, pinpoint gaps in services and create better marketing of existing leadership development opportunities

- Increase community engagement and awareness of violence prevention efforts throughout Louisville Metro
- Create a faith-based violence reduction system in Louisville Metro

Education

- Assess current community programs to identify effective strategies and gaps in services to increase effective programs
- Provide resources and tools for parents and guardians to help their children succeed academically, socially and emotionally

Employment and Economic Development

- Build an infrastructure to promote business connections
- Develop strategies to connect job seekers to entry level opportunities and entry level opportunities to job seekers

Health and Social Wellness

- Adopt, support and promote a Louisville Metro-wide strategy for suicide prevention
- Decrease the number of overdoses throughout Louisville Metro by 10% by December 2016
- Decrease the number of youth using illegal substances throughout Louisville Metro by 2% by December 2016

Juvenile and Criminal Justice

- Assist in creating a climate in which residents, LMPD and LMPD officers have a more favorable relationship that includes increased trust and positive perceptions of one another through the promotion of legitimate, transparent and just exercising of LMPD officers' (discretionary) power during citizen-officer encounters
- Identify opportunities for three partnerships to implement evidence-based practices to improve identified outcomes for at-risk youth and returning citizens by December 2016.

Goals of One Love Louisville's My Brother's Keeper Plan:

- All children enter school cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally prepared.
- All children read at grade level by 3rd grade
- All young people graduate from high school
- All young people complete post-secondary education or training
- All youth out of school are employed
- All youth remain safe from violent crime and have a second chance

Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Highlights of 2015:

- Released Louisville's My Brother's Keeper Plan in July 2015
- Enhanced Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods governance structure by adding two new teams:
 - Youth Implementation Team - consists of over 30 youth and young adults from all over the city who will serve as advisors to the Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Team and its partners; members meet monthly to provide feedback, suggestions and critiques of goal progress related to One Love Louisville-Youth Edition – established May 2015

- Implementation Team – This committee consists of 13 dedicated community members who are able to hold initiative leads accountable for their progress. Will meet monthly to provide critique and feedback of goal, objective and initiative progress related to the One Love Louisville community action plan – established February 2015

Promoting Financial Stability

Promoting family financial stability is a key contributor to creating safe neighborhoods. Louisville Metro Department of Community Services has worked directly, and through the Bank On Louisville partnership, with six financial institutions and other area non-profits to ensure that West Louisville residents have access to financial education, mainstream banking services and other supportive asset-building resources. Since its launch in 2010, Bank On Louisville’s financial institution partners have reported that more than 2,863 previously unbanked West Louisville residents opened checking accounts.

Between July 2013 and June 2015, financial education providers, through the Bank On initiative, have offered 743 classes to more than 9,887 participants (youth and adults) on topics such as budgeting, building credit, financial goal-setting, home equity, predatory lending and refinancing.

Health in All Policies

In early 2014, Louisville Metro’s Department of Public Health and Wellness unveiled Healthy Louisville 2020 (HL2020), a comprehensive plan to significantly improve the city’s health over the next six years. Improving our city’s health will directly improve our quality of life, prosperity and competitiveness, and HL2020 is a roadmap to get us there. Data indicates that residents of West Louisville fare poorly in many health measures; the HL2020 report contains data on key health indicators such as local rates of cancer mortality, chronic disease, tobacco use, low birth weight babies and obesity. It lays out specific goals to improve health in Louisville by the year 2020.

Using baseline measures in 2010-2011, Louisville has made gains in the following Health in All Policies goals:

- Decreasing the percentage of Louisville residents with no health insurance from 17% to 0% – 17% of Louisville residents did not have health insurance, currently, 7.84% of Louisville residents do not have health insurance;
- Decreasing the lung cancer death rate in Louisville from 63.9 per 100,000 population to 57.1 per 100,000 population – current lung cancer death rate is 58.93 per 100,000 population;
- Decreasing the percentage of Louisville adults who smoke from 32.1% to 29% and decreasing the percentage of Louisville adolescents who smoke from 14.8% to 13.3% – percentage of Louisville adults who smoke is currently 30.69% and the percentage of adolescents who smoke is 7.3% (2013 data);
- Decreasing Louisville’s infant mortality rate from 7.5 to 6.75 per 1,000 live births – Louisville’s infant mortality rate is currently 6.73 per 1,000 live births;
- Decreasing the percentage of Louisville adults who are obese from 29.3% to 26.4%, and decreasing the percentage of children who are obese from 24.2% to 21.8% for 6th graders and from 17.9% to 16.1% for kindergartners – currently 30.63% of Louisville adults are obese, and 18.6% of 6th grade children and 18.2% of kindergartners are obese.
- City passed an ordinance in Spring 2015 banning the sale of e-cigarettes and hookah products to minors.

HL2020 also employs a “health-in-all-policies” approach to improve the city’s health. The approach considers the health ramifications of all government policy, particularly in such areas as community design and land use planning, housing, transportation, education, and fiscal sectors. The main focus of the health-in-all-policies approach is to put health at the heart of the public policy process and to further evidence-based policy making. One such approach was a ban that the city passed by ordinance in Spring 2014 disallowing the sale of e-cigarettes and hookah products to minors.

Achieving a healthy city is easier when the entire community is surrounded by environments where the healthy choice is the easy choice. This means a city where, for example, new housing subdivisions have sidewalks that connect neighbors and invite folks to get out and walk. It’s a city where every resident of every neighborhood has easy access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Economic Development

The city’s economic development efforts are guided by the goals of improving the standard of living and providing access to economic opportunity for all in our community, specifically to increase the number of jobs and wages through the Mayor’s Strategic Plan. The work accelerates results by focusing on competitive advantages. In West Louisville these include strategic location and available workforce, however much of this workforce is unskilled or underprepared for 21st jobs. West Louisville suffers from other disadvantages, including negative perceptions of the area (crime and unfriendly business environment), lack of available land for building and expansion, and actual crime data. These advantages and challenges were first clearly defined in the West Louisville Competitive Assessment and Strategy Project completed by ICIC (Initiative for a Competitive Inner City); specifically, the ICIC report recommended land assembly, business development services, and changing the reputation of West Louisville. While this report was initially published in 2001, its guiding principles remain relevant today. The 2014 Advantage Louisville strategic plan completed by Greater Louisville Inc. affirms the core assertions and action items of the ICIC report.

The city developed marketing materials in 2013 that were created from on-the-ground work with West Louisville business owners, residents and community stakeholders that highlight West Louisville as a great place to live and do business. These materials are online and have been distributed to West Louisville council members and area business association leadership.

The city’s economic development activities include dedicated staff resources for West Louisville small businesses and additional resources benefitting West Louisville business growth under the business cluster strategy and export initiative.

Major Projects

Mayor Fischer included significant investments in three successive budgets toward land acquisition in West Louisville, and the Department of Economic Development has actively pursued high-value users for these properties. Led by the Mayor’s Office, West Louisville scored a major success in March 2014 with the announcement of a retail shopping center, anchored by Wal-Mart, at the corner of 18th and Broadway. The new West Louisville YMCA will be located across 18th Street from this retail node, and 18th Street itself is undergoing major improvements to be better aligned across the intersection of Broadway and 18th Street.

Another major success, the West Louisville FoodPort, was announced in September 2014 by the city and non-profit developer Seed Capital KY, and will be developed in the Russell neighborhood, at 30th

and Muhammad Ali, replacing a former tobacco manufacturing facility with organizations and businesses that grow, aggregate, distribute, process, sell and store food sourced from our region. This facility will bring more than \$30 million in investment and at least 250 permanent jobs (and 275 construction jobs) to West Louisville neighborhoods and will offer substantial community programs, neighborhood gathering space and retail opportunities. The project will be developed in at least two phases, with processing, office, some retail and a portion of the outdoor public spaces opening in 2017, and additional space coming in a second phase after additional tenants have been identified. Additionally, six acres in the southwest corner of the site remains un-programmed and represents an opportunity for community input on the uses to be located there.

West Louisville has had recent business success, with the openings or expansions of FMS Janitorial Services, Louisville Fish Company, Mills Supply, Mesa Foods and Keebler.

Workforce Development

In addition to its SummerWorks program, KentuckianaWorks also provides workforce development solutions for residents in West Louisville who are looking for employment or a career change. KentuckianaWorks' Kentucky Manufacturing Career Center offered an orientation and two free trainings for its Certified Production Technician (CPT) course at the Nia Center. The course results in a certification credential that is preferred by local manufacturing companies. More than 150 interested job seekers attended the orientation, and 36 students attended the CPT courses.

The city also is a partner in We Hire, one of three resultant programs from the 2014 Bingham Fellows program. We Hire is a network initiative for West Louisville residents to connect each other to job readiness training, workforce support agencies and job opportunities, and is in the process of developing a mobile app for Connectors to easily connect their population to jobs and other opportunities.

Through our work helping companies to locate or expand in Louisville, we know that many of them face challenges finding and keeping the workforce they need for the positions they want to fill. This is a critical piece of the puzzle in keeping Louisville competitive, in particular West Louisville. To this end, Louisville Forward hired a workforce solutions manager in Spring 2015 dedicated to this issue.

Long-Term Planning

In order to strengthen West Louisville, the city has undertaken planning activities for neighborhoods, with the vision of spurring wider development and business attraction. The city has pursued neighborhood specific strategies in Park Hill, Parkland, Portland and Rubbertown. The Park Hill Industrial Corridor Implementation Strategy has directed land assembly, transportation planning and brownfield remediation work in that neighborhood. A brownfield is a vacant or underutilized site where the threat of contamination has made redevelopment more complex. Brownfields come in all shapes and sizes; common examples include old manufacturing or warehouse facilities, gas stations and dry cleaners. Some neighborhoods have higher concentrations of brownfields than others because of their industrial history. For example, the Park Hill Industrial Corridor includes approximately 1,400 acres of industrial land, including the city-owned 16-acre site at 11th and Hill, formerly owned by the Rhodia Company, which is being actively marketed. The entire community benefits from returning underutilized properties in Park Hill and other older industrial areas to active use by reducing blight and vacancy, creating jobs and amenities, and reducing hazards to human health and the environment.

The city has applied for a third round of Brownfield Assessment Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in order to continue the popular assessment program that has completed more than 30 assessments for petroleum and hazardous substances. The city was able to create a successful Revolving Loan Fund for brownfield cleanup with more than \$1.8 million available. In total, Louisville Metro Government has received just under \$4 million in grants to evaluate and clean up brownfields, as well as to create planning and economic strategies to support development in areas of older industrial land with high concentrations of vacancy. Providing assistance to companies interested in locating in older industrial areas can remove uncertainty and lead to positive redevelopment outcomes on properties that might otherwise continue to deteriorate.

Another way the city can assist with longer-term planning is through land assembly. The city was instrumental in working with the Housing Authority to purchase a corner piece of commercial property at the intersection of Wilson Avenue and Algonquin Parkway in Summer 2014. Adjacent to the First Choice grocery store and in the larger Park DuValle footprint, this property was being eyed by the previous owner to become a liquor store, and under public ownership, this property will now expand desired neighborhood-serving retail and commercial services.

Louisville Metro helps businesses find properties that are both privately and publicly held, that will provide the best location for them to do business. This includes marketing critical West Louisville assets, such as the Louisville Central Community Center and the former PPG property, on Muhammad Ali Blvd, and the former Rhodia property.

Small Business Development

Small business development is the historic backbone of the work by the Department of Economic Development. Through geographic focus on West Louisville's commercial corridors and outreach to business associations, business owners and Council members, the small business development staff has its fingers on the pulse of West Louisville.

The Nia Center, established in partnership with TARC in late 1990s, was created as a business incubator and resource provider in West Louisville. It has evolved over the years to provide other services, such as Jefferson County Clerk, TARC, JCPS adult education classroom and KentuckianaWorks' Career Center offering job training and placement. Still evolving, the Nia Center is becoming a financial empowerment center, connecting clients wanting to start or grow a business with resources to build a business or financial plan, receive business mentoring and counseling, or seek financial assistance. The business clinic has served approximately 100 new clients in 2015.

As a means of identifying and encouraging more small businesses to start up, Louisville Metro partnered with Etsy for the Etsy Craft Entrepreneurship Program, a pilot program run out of the Nia Center, to provide micro-business training to underemployed, low-income adults with creative skills who can sell their products to new markets. Fourteen individuals participated in this program, with 11 finishing and opening online stores through Etsy. The city will launch the second Etsy Craft Entrepreneurship class in late Fall 2015.

The Department of Economic Development works with other departments of city government like the Office of Housing and Community Development and Department of Public Works on quality of life and quality of place investments that drive economic development. The city was instrumental in attracting the new Kroger in Portland, and the First Choice Market in Park DuValle, as well as the "Over the 9" – the newly burgeoning Shippingport and Portland areas – attracting Kentucky Peerless

Distillery, Please & Thank You coffee shop, Old 502 Winery and Falls City Brewery, Tim Faulkner Gallery and other investments.

Small businesses benefit from the Micro Loan Program, and the popular METCO program, which have together approved more than 140 loans in West Louisville, creating nearly 400 new jobs and leveraging \$25 million in private investment since merger.

Entrepreneurship

Since 2011, Louisville Metro has assisted start-up businesses and entrepreneurs with MicroEnterprise Loans, made to 51 businesses representing an investment of \$372,000. In addition to loans, 175 individuals/business owners have completed training or participated in workshops offered by the MicroEnterprise Loan Program. Businesses assisted range from accredited childcare to janitorial services to a recording studio. In the past year, 49 Shawnee residents graduated from the Power-Up Business class series, sponsored by Community Services. Additional funding for MicroEnterprise development is represented in the FY 16 budget with \$250,000 in the revolving loan fund, \$50,000 for business growth training, as well as continuation of the Power-Up Business classes and Exploring Self-Employment Workshops.

Always encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset, the SummerWorks' Coding at the Beech program helped launch a new start-up business, Beech Technologies, in June 2015 by seven youth interested in programming and coding. They offer website development services, and generated \$20,000 in annual client revenue, now up to 30 business clients. Two of these students went to college, and the remaining five are still in high school with plans to continue to grow the business. They are focusing on the Russell neighborhood, specifically around the FoodPort.

A new entrepreneurship program created by Community Ventures, ChefSpace, was announced this summer as a new kitchen incubator to accommodate up to 50 food entrepreneurs with kitchen equipment and business advisors. Not only will this entrepreneur hub help the Russell neighborhood with a place to hone culinary skills, it also provides a new space that will help businesses learn how to operate and branch out on their own.

The city announced free internet, starting with three areas in Russell, and growing to cover more of West Louisville, allowing businesses and entrepreneurs to access reliable internet service that is critical to Louisville's economy, workforce and students. For Louisville to successfully transition to a high-tech and advanced manufacturing economy, everyone, in every neighborhood, must have access to the internet.

Working Together

With all business attraction, expansion and retention activities now under direct city responsibility with Louisville Forward, the Department of Economic Development is even better poised to assist companies looking for financial assistance to do business. Louisville Forward and the Mayor's Office, in collaboration with state economic development staff, have been engaged with state legislators representing West Louisville to research best practices and begin discussion of possible incentives to support redevelopment activities and encourage private investments in West Louisville. Project managers package currently available incentives to support targeted job creation and investment in West Louisville.

The best economic development activity is still education. In Louisville, if you have a four-year degree, there is functionally no unemployment (1.8% rate versus national average of 3.8%).* But for

those with no high school diploma, the unemployment rate is a whopping 13.3%. Education will drive the local economy.

- Source: 2013 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates

Built Environment

A quality built environment that provides a sense of place and community is critical for cities to attract top talent and investment. To be successful, all great cities should plan ahead. In 2012, Louisville embarked on Vision Louisville, a community process to guide the future look, feel and flow of Louisville in the next 25 years. As one of hundreds of changing American cities, Louisville has an opportunity to learn from its past and present in order to shape its future. Vision Louisville created a strategic framework of major goals and specific projects that will shape the built environment throughout the entire community.

The citizen engagement phase of this project, Phase 2, was led by community leaders who organized their work around seven focus areas: Economy, Living, Health, Connectivity, Creativity, Energy, and Identity. Working together, these engaged citizens generated 80,000 responses as to residents' dreams and desires for the city. Thirty catalytic projects were identified and have been categorized into short-term, mid-term, and long-term. Louisville Metro's Office of Advanced Planning is leading the effort and will continue to work with committed community volunteers to establish implementation plans for these catalytic projects.

Connectivity

Vision Louisville has identified several projects that will benefit West Louisville, and implementation plans are in process.

A master plan for Phase IV of Waterfront Park was finalized and Waterfront Development Corporation is exploring implementation strategies for the park expansion. As part of that project, Louisville Metro will extend River Road from its current western terminus at 7th Street to 10th Street. Funding for the Phase 1 design of the River Road extension is being obtained and planning and design of the project will begin in 2016.

Reimagining 9th Street, a major infrastructure redevelopment project, came out of the visioning process to redesign the wide concrete barrier of 9th Street into a beautiful hub of green space and public activity, new east-west connectivity and investment that would include moving the 9th Street ramp to/from I-64 several blocks to the west where there is more space for such a structure. The move of this structure also would create new space for the westward extension of Waterfront Park Phase IV and River Road, and it would allow two-way traffic on Main and Market Streets, providing greater connectivity between downtown and western neighborhoods.

To begin reimagining the future home of Waterfront Park Phase IV, a public art exhibition was created and launched in August 2015. The experience, called *Connect/Disconnect*, features six (6) installations from local and national artists along the Louisville Loop between 9th and 11th Streets and inspires Louisville's citizens to rethink this under-used space along the Ohio River. In addition to the public art experience, ReSurfaced will be conducted in the parking lot at 10th and Rowan in October 2015 and will bring the popular event to West Louisville for the first time.

To implement the 9th Street vision, Louisville Metro is initiating two projects; one is to enhance pedestrian connectivity at 9th and Main to support recent businesses and investments west of 9th Street, specifically under the I-64 ramps where the city will pay for new lighting; and second, a study that will look at the potential to remove or modify the Interstate 64 ramps, which will begin in early 2016.

Louisville Central Community Centers, Inc. (LCCC) was awarded the Sustainable Design Assessment Team planning grant in January 2015 to support its West of Ninth Visioning Plan for Muhammad Ali Boulevard between 6th and 32nd Streets. The grant is awarded by the American Institute of Architects, and provides a team of multi-disciplinary volunteer experts to engage the community and help LCCC and strategic partners strengthen the built environment of the Muhammad Ali corridor. The team met with Russell neighborhood residents along with key community stakeholders during a 3-day charrette/workshop in August 2015, producing a report out on the final day with short- and long-term recommendations looking at everything from funding strategies to streetscape designs and ways to engagement the community. The document is available online at: <http://www.aia.org/aiaucmp/groups/aia/documents/pdf/aiab107089.pdf>

Vision Louisville teams partnered with the Office of Vacant and Public Property Administration in 2014 on the “Lots of Possibility” contest, to transform vacant lots from blight to beauty, which has resulted in renewed interest in making better use of our vacant lots. The six winning projects are all constructed or installed, and include a new house on Dumesnil Street, a mediation labyrinth on Hale Street, an urban garden dedicated to growing plants that provide dyes and fibers for clothing, and two lots dedicated to growing lavender to demonstrate techniques to reduce maintenance costs.

Housing

The Office of Housing and Community Development addresses housing affordability, availability and neighborhood development primarily through leveraging federal block grants to support renters, homeowners and homebuyers across Louisville Metro. The goal is to create choice housing with mixed price points, market rate and below, so that families can find and sustain affordable housing options in areas where they can thrive. The Office is currently overseeing several capital investments that will directly impact the residents of Shawnee, Russell, Portland and Parkland neighborhoods. Of the 36 housing and capital improvement projects currently in implementation, more than half are within West Louisville; other important projects areas include Smoketown and Cane Run.

Just down the street from the \$20 million rehabilitated African American Heritage Center, the city announced a \$6 million market-rate housing initiative in the historic Russell neighborhood in August 2015, which will complete the Cedar Street/Quinn Gardens Development and Russell Urban Renewal. Partnering with REBOUND and Community Ventures, this project will build 29 new homes in addition to improving streetscape infrastructure. At the time of the announcement, two potential homebuyers already had been approved.

The Shawnee and Portland neighborhoods have been designated by Louisville Metro, with approval of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSA) in an effort to target federal funding. The Portland neighborhood has received \$2 million to rehabilitate single-family houses and spur economic development. In the past four years, 75 houses have been rehabilitated. The Shawnee neighborhood has received \$2 million for housing repair, with the goal of rehabilitating 115 houses. Approximately 40 houses have been completed or are in progress. As part of the Shine-On Shawnee initiative, an additional \$71,000 was spent on Shawnee-specific economic development efforts, including micro-lending and business

development (see Economic Development). As part of the NRSA activity in Shawnee, eight microbusinesses were awarded forgivable loans, four of which were new, start-up businesses, creating eight new jobs and retaining eight jobs.

The Louisville Metro Housing Authority announced in January of this year that it was awarded the \$425,000 Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant for the redevelopment of the East Russell neighborhood and Beecher Terrace public housing development. The grant allows us to reimagine Beecher Terrace, and help break down the 9th Street divide with a new mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood. The community partnership forming around this proposal holds great promise for a significant revitalization effort that, when combined with other efforts along 9th Street and the waterfront, can fundamentally alter the course of West Louisville. Louisville Metro Housing Authority will apply for implementation funds in 2016, looking for awarding of grant in 2017, and implementation to begin thereafter.

An additional \$600,000 has been allocated to a project to incentivize home ownership in Shawnee and Portland, and as a result, Republic Bank has been working with Metro to develop a specific mortgage product that could be used in conjunction with this pilot. Additional infrastructure funding is being leveraged with other funds to improve streetscapes along the W. Market St. corridor and the 22nd and Bank Street intersection that will complement the work being administered by Economic Development.

Other highlights of recent specific investments in West Louisville:

- Partnering with a private developer to create 40 new rental units in Russell and Shawnee, including the historic Ouerbacker Mansion – construction is underway;
- Partnering with the REBOUND Community Housing Development Organization for Homeownership to reclaim six units in the Shawnee Neighborhood;
- Investing in lead abatement and roof repair at Shawnee Gardens;
- Sidewalk and infrastructure improvements in the Shawnee, Portland and Russell Neighborhoods; these important investments stabilize housing and support economic development in the community;
- Partnering with New Directions to rehab two buildings holding seven housing units in Parkland;
- Partnering with the Louisville Central Community Center (LCCC) on renovations at their anchor institution on Muhammad Ali Boulevard;
- Partnering with Family Scholar House to reclaim the historic old Maupin School and provide 48 new housing units in Parkland;

Vacant and Abandoned Properties (VAP)

With 5,867 vacant structures on the books, the Office of Vacant & Public Property Administration has overseen 109 demolitions, 114 initiated foreclosures, 24 properties sold and acquisition of 17 properties in 2015.

This office is spearheading efforts to reduce blight and abandonment, and established an Innovation Delivery Team as part of the city's partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies. Metro has reorganized staff in multiple departments to systemically attack VAP issues from boarding/grass-cutting and demolition to code enforcement and foreclosure. Resources from local government, the federal government and the National Mortgage Settlement are being used to help Metro gain control of and transform vacant properties into marketable assets that support stable housing, entrepreneurship, education, entertainment and, most importantly, economic development.

Over 150 blighted properties are currently pending in court foreclosure cases – all of which will be acquired by private or non-profit interests or the Louisville/Jefferson County Landbank Authority. Site control gives Louisville Metro an opportunity to better guide the rebuilding of neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by abandonment.

The Mayor’s Strategic Plan sets a goal of reducing the rate of abandonment by demolishing, foreclosing or otherwise acquiring blighted properties for redevelopment, metrowide. Louisville Metro started the VAPStat program in 2013 to measure and report progress on several key indicators and engage with the community about this critical issue in regular public forums – seven held to date with the most recent televised on MetroTV. The latest forum also is available on-demand at the city’s website at louisvilleky.gov.

Reducing blight is the immediate priority, but we know that redevelopment is the only route to re-establishing vibrant neighborhoods. While Louisville Metro consistently invests its federal block grant funds in key neighborhoods, we also realize that private investment is essential to achieving the critical mass necessary to expand private capital and amenities to West Louisville. In 2013, Louisville Metro launched an interactive mapping platform with private sector partner Opportunity Space, to allow people from around the world to watch and observe public real estate holdings and follow priority projects from the visioning stage to reality. Highlighting successful projects in West Louisville, including the Habitat for Humanity Headquarters in the Portland neighborhood or the adaptive reuse of the historic Ouerbacher home in the Russell neighborhood demonstrates proof of concept and inspires others to join the movement.

Recognizing the large legal obstacles to reduce vacant and abandoned properties, Louisville Metro has worked with city partners across the state over the last four years to amend three (3) state laws inhibiting the rapid transition of vacant and abandoned properties to productive use. Those changes included giving local governments lien priority for abatement costs, requiring a mortgage holder to file a deed in lieu of foreclosure with the County Clerk within 30 days of the instrument’s execution, and allowing courts greater authority to order sale of property more quickly. In 2014, the General Assembly passed legislation reducing the right of redemption period for properties purchased at commissioner’s auction; successful bidders now have added protection for making property improvements, and responsible purchasers can recoup their investment.

To comprehensively address the rapid increase in vacant and abandoned properties due to the local and national foreclosure crisis, Louisville Metro commissioned and received the “Vacant and Abandoned Property Neighborhood Revitalization Study,” completed by RKG Consultants in 2013. This comprehensive document recommends that the most efficient and productive approach to revitalize neighborhoods is to use data to prioritize where to concentrate Metro resources and concomitantly leverage private investment to supplement limited public dollars. RKG recommended that Louisville Metro identify and focus on up to three targeted geographic areas that are in transition, i.e., at a tipping point between stability and decline. As NRSAs, the Shawnee and Portland neighborhoods were early intervention targets, and Metro already has begun applying the recommendations of the RKG study to these areas.

Following RKG’s 19 early intervention recommendations, Metro is laying the groundwork to improve communications and coordination within Metro Government, assessing vacant properties in relation to their impact on public safety and overall quality of life. The result will be a comprehensive and time-sensitive response to the highest priority VAP cases.

Louisville Forward and IDT have engaged in substantial data collection to understand development patterns and potential opportunities to foreclose on problem properties, as well as to inform potential redevelopment and stabilization strategies. In particular, this team is studying West Market Street near the West Louisville FoodPort. In the focus area, which consists of 612 properties bounded by Main Street, 26th Street, Madison Street and the elevated rail line, there are 115 existing vacant properties. Strategies to address vacant property around the FoodPort include supporting improved property valuation in the area, targeted code enforcement and awareness building among property owners of how properties should be maintained to meet the city’s standards, and improvements to street signs and lane.

Sustainability

The city’s first comprehensive sustainability plan, Sustain Louisville, was released in March 2013 and identified citywide sustainability goals and initiatives under six focus areas: Energy, Environment, Transportation, Economy, Community and Engagement. The Office of Sustainability coordinates the city’s priorities and actions relative to these goals through its mission to promote environmental conservation, the health, wellness and prosperity of our citizens and embed sustainability into the culture of the Louisville community.

Sustain Louisville uses a “triple bottom line approach,” which recognizes the interconnectivity of people, prosperity and the planet. The objectives of Sustain Louisville incorporate this approach by promoting and prioritizing the social, economic and environmental sustainability facets in the Louisville community. Goals within the six focus areas seek to improve the livelihood and economic position of Louisville’s citizens, as well as enhance and protect the natural environment. Two important sustainability projects that will impact future improvements in West Louisville are described below. Once complete, these two projects will provide a set of solutions that will benefit West Louisville, which is currently disproportionately represented in environmental data that directly impacts quality of life and health.

Urban Heat Island Assessment and Heat Management Plan

In 2013, the Office of Sustainability received grant funds from two local private foundations and from the Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities and its partner, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, to perform a comprehensive urban heat island assessment and heat mitigation plan. The heat management plan will identify zones in the city most suitable for implementing heat mitigation strategies such as tree planting, white and green roofs and cool paving materials that will decrease the urban heat island effect. The study also will establish the city’s urban heat baseline and will be used to inform city policy decisions and resource allocation.

Preliminary heat maps show that areas in West Louisville are generally warmer than areas in the rest of the city. The forthcoming heat management plan will be a useful tool in identifying and prioritizing heat mitigation projects in West Louisville. The project consultant has completed five of six data set analyses that are necessary to complete the study, and is on target to complete the heat mitigation plan this fall. Upon completion, the city will develop an implementation plan for release at the end of the year.

Urban Tree Canopy Assessment

To effectively combat Louisville’s serious urban heat island effect, we must fully understand the state of our tree canopy, as well as areas with the highest and lowest tree canopy cover. In early 2015, a comprehensive tree canopy assessment was completed. The assessment shows that the

Louisville 2012 urban tree canopy (UTC) cover is 37% (just over 94,000 acres). Within the neighborhoods of the old city boundaries of Louisville, considered the urban core, tree canopy cover is 26%. The national standard is 45% tree canopy cover.

Highlights from the assessment findings follow:

- The largest and most predominant land use in Louisville is single-family residential (34% of the area), which has a canopy of 42% (down from 46% in 2004). This land use group accounted for over half of all acreage of canopy lost (3,295 acres) between 2004 and 2012.
- Heat-stressed areas within Louisville encompass approximately 31,000 acres (12%) of the study area. These areas have a combined canopy coverage of only 8%, and 66% impervious land cover.
- Canopy has decreased in more than two-thirds of the sewersheds, ranging from 3–35% lost per sewershed.
- Canopy cover tends to be higher in wealthier areas, areas with higher concentration of older residents, predominance of owner-occupied residences, higher value homes, newer homes, and higher-educated residents. It was also shown to decrease as population density increased, as household incomes decreased, and areas where rental properties dominate.

The city is reviewing the draft urban tree canopy assessment data and is developing a comprehensive Forestry Management Plan to help prioritize planting for areas of need and to establish tree planting processes and protocols. This Plan will be released later in the year and also will include a citizens' "call to action" to help protect and grow the city's tree canopy.

The combined information gained from the Urban Heat Island and Urban Tree Canopy Assessment projects will be useful tools in identifying and prioritizing heat mitigation and tree reforestation projects in West Louisville.

Clean and Green

Clean and green neighborhoods are more desirable to live in, increase property values, and are more appealing for business attraction, expansion, and retention. All citizens are responsible for being good stewards of their environment. In spring 2014, Brightside, in partnership with Mayor Greg Fischer and all 26 members of the Louisville Metro Council, launched a new initiative, One Bright City. This nationally-recognized program by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, winning a Livability Award, provides a structured framework to empower citizens to become long-term caretakers of their community.

One Bright City has three components: Community-Wide Cleanliness Index, Tree Planting and Canopy Expansion and Green Living.

Brightside Community-Wide Cleanliness Index

The Brightside Community-Wide Cleanliness Index, which is performed in partnership with the Department of Public Works, includes a quarterly survey and reporting process that provides a baseline measurement of litter on Louisville's streets and sidewalks, in area parks and public spaces. The project tracks changes over time and allows citizens to collect and maintain data to drive decision-making, policy development and resource allocation. The Brightside Index is designed to serve as an awareness and accountability tool, with the goal of encouraging citizens, businesses and institutions to remove litter in their neighborhoods, which will stimulate new leaders, new solutions and new investments.

Between July 2014 and June 2015, Metro Council Districts 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in West Louisville all improved in their cleanliness assessment, from an average score of 2.90 to 2.55, on a scale from 1, being no litter, to 4, being the most littered.

Brightside engaged 21,808 volunteers for its Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 community wide cleanups. Of this number, 7,535 of these volunteers participated in the cleanup efforts in West Louisville.

The data collected by citizens directs the community volunteer groups in a more directed way of where to spend their efforts. Data is published by Brightside on its website at www.louisvilleky.gov/brightside.

Tree Planting and Canopy Expansion

Brightside performs multiple yearly plantings, including spring and fall. The planting events are designed to accommodate approximately hundreds of community volunteers, planting approximately hundreds of trees each time. As part of the Mayor's Strategic Plan, One Bright City contributed toward the 2014 goal of planting 5,000 trees throughout Louisville Metro. Having surpassed the 5,000 goal, Louisville Metro is now working on setting a higher goal, which will be based on the Forestry Management Plan to be released in late Fall 2015. Starting in 2011, through June 2015, 18,658 trees have been planted, 4,074 of which were in West Louisville.

Brightside introduced its first Community-Wide Native Planting Day in November 2014, during which nearly 300 trees were planted. The second annual Native Planting Day will take place in November 2015, including 150 trees to be planted along West Broadway.

Green Living

Brightside and the Office of Sustainability partner on the Green Living portion of One Bright City, launched in December 2014, which educates individuals and households on how to live more sustainably and recognizes neighborhoods that achieve participation levels in green activities with a Silver, Gold, or Platinum certification. By participating in a tiered neighborhood certification program, Louisville's neighborhoods receive recognition for activities such as reducing the amount of waste sent to the landfill, managing storm water on-site, conserving energy and growing produce. The education component helps residents achieve the criteria listed in the certification program. Overall, the program seeks to incentivize residents to conserve energy, increase residential recycling, eat healthier and decrease the amount of rain water entering the combined sewer system.

One Bright City's Green Living program will be supported by an educational component to teach Louisville residents how to live more sustainably. A Green Living Toolkit and training materials are being developed that will include tips on energy conservation and waste reduction, and how-to information on topics such as planting and maintaining a garden, disconnecting downspouts, installing rain barrels, composting and recycling. This is a true grass roots effort to educate the community on core sustainable living practices. Since the launch, 11 neighborhoods have begun the process of certification, including Shawnee.

Thus far, the Shawnee neighborhood participants have had the greatest success, achieving the program's Green Level, helping Louisville gain national recognition from the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Out of a possible 160 points, 51 Shawnee households have worked together to tally 90 points by using alternative transportation, becoming tobacco free, using reusable shopping bags, pledging to be energy efficient as well as other sustainable practices.

Louisville Loop

West Louisville includes approximately 10 miles of the Louisville Loop, a 100-mile multi-use path that encircles the entire community, including the RiverWalk and the Southwestern and Algonquin Parkways connections to the Levee Trail in Southwest Louisville. The RiverWalk, originally dedicated in 1993, is one of the original shared-use paths of the city and is a key connection to many destinations in West Louisville.

Beginning at the Louisville Wharf and western edge of Waterfront Park, approximately 7 miles of the Loop connects Downtown to Shawnee Park providing the community a first-hand glimpse of some of Louisville’s most defining features such as the Ohio River Valley and the Olmsted-designed Shawnee and Chickasaw Parks. Connections to the Loop from the West Louisville neighborhoods provide opportunities for active and passive recreation as well as a safe and comfortable transportation option. Currently, there is a detour on the RiverWalk starting at Portland Wharf Park and ending in the vicinity of Shawnee Golf Course, due to bank erosion repairs and is currently being addressed through a partnership with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. Louisville Metro has secured a local match and applied for the federal match for adding pedestrian and off-road bike path on Northwestern Parkway where it is currently used as a detour.

An approximate 2-mile section of the Loop along Southwestern and Algonquin Parkways is under design with construction expected to begin in 2016. This section will provide a protected and comfortable experience from Shawnee Park to the 41st Street access to the Levee Trail section of the Loop, as well as a future connection east along Algonquin Parkway. Preliminary engineering also has begun on a new 3.5-mile, shared-use path on Campground Road, to be part of the Loop. There also will be roadway reconfigurations to 3 miles of Algonquin, from Winkler to I-264, which will include the addition of bicycle lanes and a service road, and which will begin construction in Summer 2017.

The 56-acre historic Portland Wharf Park site, which dates to the early 1800s, is the location of streets, building foundations and the original wharf, now buried beneath river sediment. Since 2002, Metro Parks and its partner, Portland Museum, have developed a master plan for an interpretive park, performed archaeological excavations and provided historic programming, including the Portland Wharf Ghost Streets project, public-participation archaeology, Every Child Outdoors (ECHO), the West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative and events marking the bicentennial of Portland.

West Louisville – Accelerating Growth

Louisville Forward, the city’s economic, talent and real estate development entity, is always talking with other agencies charged with the same mission to gauge best practices and understand what programs and policies could be developed to position the organization as a national leader, and to better coordinate these functions as outlined in the RKG report. Louisville Forward also is actively supporting the formation and activity of One West, which is primarily focused on the built environment and physical surroundings of where people live, work and play in West Louisville. The city is continuously studying additional tools, programs and policies to accelerate revitalization efforts and support new business and real estate development across the community.

Local Investments for Transformation

One such tool that the city has been heavily lobbying for is Local Investments for Transformation (LIFT), a proposal to amend Kentucky’s Constitution to allow citizens to vote on a temporary local

option sales tax of no more than 1% dedicated for the funding of local capital projects. LIFT is about local control and economic development; it is a tool used by our competitor cities and 37 states to invest in projects that contribute to quality of life and fuel job growth. LIFT revenues could be used to build capital project such as parks, sidewalks, transportation (roads and mass transit), libraries, and health and wellness centers – whatever the people decide! By giving citizens the opportunity to vote on an additional 1% sales tax dedicated to specific projects, Louisville could accelerate transformative projects like the 9th Street and Muhammad Ali Corridors, Waterfront Park Phase IV, new public space and amenities, and enhance public transportation.

Looking Ahead

The future can be bright for West Louisville. Its advantages are clear, but the challenges are great. The long, sad period of disinvestment and neglect that can trace its roots to the 1937 flood and discriminatory policies of the mid-20th century has ended. The tide is turning.

The deleterious activity and effects echoing from generations past will not subside immediately, but together, we will set a new course and achieve lasting prosperity for West Louisville. And together we must. Lasting change will occur only through the sustained and collaborative efforts of citizens, community leaders, non-profits, private investment and government leaders at all levels.