



 green impact zone[®]
of MISSOURI

year two

Annual Report
September 2011



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The Green Impact Zone vision: To develop a sustainable community — one that is environmentally, economically and socially stronger tomorrow than it is today — using a comprehensive green strategy, coordinated programs with innovative delivery mechanisms, and intense resident engagement to more rapidly push community change, build community capacity, and make the Green Impact Zone a place where people want to live, work and play.



“Where you live shapes your access to opportunity. To create a fully inclusive nation, we must ensure that all people live in ‘communities of opportunity’ — places with quality schools, access to good jobs with livable wages, quality housing choices, public transportation, safe and walkable streets, services, parks, access to healthy food, and strong social networks.”

— Policy Link



The Green Impact Zone is a 150-square block area in the urban core of Kansas City, Mo., that serves as a national model of place-based investment, demonstrating how a distressed community can be transformed through intense, focused coordination of programs and resources.

In 2009, U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II conceived of the Green Impact Zone as a way to put federal stimulus funds to work to strengthen neighborhoods, create jobs and improve energy efficiency. The city of Kansas City allocated \$1.5 million to the Mid-America Regional Council in 2009 to launch the Green Impact Zone initiative, and later authorized an additional \$1 million for the zone’s second year.

This seed money — along with the intense efforts of neighborhood associations, civic leaders and many other partners — has helped bring millions of stimulus dollars to the zone. As more projects get underway in the zone, private investment is now following federal funds.

September 2011 marks the end of the second full year of the Green Impact Zone initiative. This report summarizes the progress to date in each of the strategy areas identified by neighborhood organizations in the zone as important steps toward community transformation.

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HOUSING: REHABILITATION, REDEVELOPMENT AND NEW INVESTMENT



While many homes in the zone are well maintained, code violations by absentee landlords continue to be a problem. Litter, trash and vacant buildings are major concerns for zone residents.

A drive through the neighborhoods of the Green Impact Zone illustrates the area's serious challenges with abandonment. Approximately 25 percent of the properties in the zone are vacant lots, and another one-sixth have vacant structures. Fewer than half the homes are owner-occupied.

Strategies for addressing housing issues in the zone include rehabilitating existing homes, developing new housing on vacant lots, removing dangerous buildings, working with real estate agents to increase home sales in the zone, and working with landlords and absentee owners to improve property maintenance.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ Strategic planning

Following a competitive bid process, the Green Impact Zone selected APD Urban Planning and Management, a minority-owned firm based in Jacksonville, Fla., that has experience working in the zone, to offer technical assistance and expertise on housing issues. APD is working with neighborhood leaders and other stakeholders to develop plans for and implement demonstration projects in the zone.

■ Involving the neighborhoods

From the earliest discussions about housing in the Green Impact Zone, neighborhood leaders have identified specific projects that are important to them. APD created a decision-making matrix to help neighborhood leaders make objective decisions about housing priorities and desired outcomes, and the Green Impact Zone is working with the city to encourage potential property developers to include residents in planning and review processes.

■ The model block approach

The city has adopted strategies for using Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds in the zone, and work is underway with the Kansas City Economic Development Council to use a model block approach, which strategically targets efforts in defined areas, rather than the traditional, scattered approach to redevelopment.

Model blocks help build stronger neighborhoods and can serve as a catalyst for additional development. Discussions are currently underway with a nationally recognized nonprofit organization about a model block program in the Ivanhoe neighborhood.

■ Public/private partnerships

The Dalmark Company, a local developer, recently secured an option for the vacant Bancroft School building and grounds. Dalmark is working on pre-development concepts to convert the property into affordable housing units, and plans to submit an application for low-income housing tax credits. Dalmark's partners include BNIM Architects and the Make It Right Foundation. Dalmark recently hosted three charrettes, including one at the Green Impact Zone office, to get input on design plans from neighborhood residents. The Bancroft project, which was initially proposed by the Historic Manheim Park Neighborhood Association, is a strong example of public and private cooperation and investment that is spurring developer interest in nearby areas.

■ Deconstructing, not demolishing

Last year, Wells Fargo donated 23 foreclosed properties to the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council on behalf of the Green Impact Zone. Several of the properties were found to be beyond rehabilitation, but rather than bringing in bulldozers, the city's EnergyWorks KC staff worked with the Green Impact Zone, Habitat Restore and other partners to deconstruct the homes. Building components were carefully dismantled for reuse and recycling. The project also included a job training component, as 15 residents received OSHA training and hands-on experience.

■ Promoting home ownership

In August, the Green Impact Zone hosted its second annual Urban Homes Tour to showcase available properties and introduce residents to the homebuying process. Realtors, mortgage lenders and rehabilitation experts provided advice to potential homebuyers, followed by a bus tour.

transforming the community PROFILE: Latoya Rivers



Kansas City resident Latoya Rivers came to the Green Impact Zone's Urban Homes Tour expecting she might get to look at a few houses for sale. "The program was way more than I was expecting," she said. "It was so informative. I wasn't expecting people to be there to explain mortgage loan options and other things about buying a home. There are so many programs I didn't even know existed. I'm ready to buy a home, and this motivated me even more."

After learning about the work going on in the Green Impact Zone, Latoya is excited about the idea of moving back into the urban core. "I liked what I heard about rebuilding the community. You can restore old houses to be just as good as new, but much more energy efficient."

Latoya also likes the idea of gardening and growing food on her own plot of land. "It's the American dream to own a home. I'm looking for stability for me and my family, and owning a home will give us that."

Realtor Helen Bryant says what she likes most about the Urban Homes Tour is the opportunity to educate potential buyers about home ownership. "It's more than just buying the home. They need to know exactly what to expect as a homeowner — you have to know how to keep up your property."

EMPLOYMENT: TRAINING AND PLACEMENT THROUGH A JOBS PIPELINE



Fifteen residents received hands-on training in deconstruction of a home at 4429 Garfield, along with two days of OSHA-10 classroom training. Before the project was complete, one of the 15 had secured a union job.

Unemployment rates are estimated to be as high as 50 percent in some parts of the Green Impact Zone. To combat this, zone partners are working to identify residents who need help entering the job market or need to upgrade their skills; connect these individuals with training programs and opportunities; and help them find jobs that pay a living wage and offer a career path to long-term employment.

The Green Impact Zone — working with partners that include the Full Employment Council, the Metropolitan Community Colleges and local businesses — has created a Jobs Pipeline to put more residents on the path to employment. The pipeline connects unemployed and underemployed residents with training opportunities, and connects potential employers with trained workers.

An important part of this program is enhancing long-term job retention through a mentoring program — not only helping residents find jobs, but helping them manage their paychecks and household budgets for continued success.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ Employment readiness

The Green Impact Zone recently began its second Jobs Pipeline readiness training session. Participants receive 20 hours of training on personal accountability, time management, crisis management and long-term job retention. The zone also partners with local employers to help participants who successfully complete the program find jobs.

■ Building “green” job skills

Workforce development is an important component of every zone initiative, especially those that focus on energy efficiency and the environment. Dozens of Green Impact Zone residents have received training for “green” jobs, including deconstructing buildings to preserve materials for recycling and reuse; weatherizing homes to reduce energy consumption; and installing new electric meters and other equipment to help residents better manage their energy use.

■ Community crews

Through a partnership with the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council, young adults receive classroom and hands-on training in concrete-finishing skills, forming community crews that have completed 143 repair projects at 87 homes in the Green Impact Zone at no charge to residents. Projects include repairs to sidewalks, steps, retaining walls and foundations. In addition to helping residents eliminate stormwater drainage problems, the training and experience has led to permanent job offers for six crew members.

■ Overcoming challenges

In today's economy, it can be especially difficult for some Green Impact Zone residents to find employment. People living in poverty are more likely to lack job skills and have limited transportation options. Those with long gaps between jobs may be at a disadvantage with potential employers. People with criminal histories are sometimes barred from training programs and job opportunities. The zone's Jobs Pipeline is working to address these barriers.

In many cases, zone staff are able to connect residents to existing services that can provide the help they need to find a job. The Green Impact Zone has helped several residents bring their computer skills up to date by referring them to free computer courses available through the Metropolitan Community Colleges.

Another zone resident, trained as a certified nurse's assistant, had been told by a previous employer that her license had been suspended. Zone staff put her in touch with Legal Aid, and the resident learned the license had merely lapsed. She is now working toward reinstatement and a permanent job.

Advice on how to update his resume and sell his skills to a prospective employer helped zone resident Harold Edwards find a job as a training manager with International House of Pancakes after just one Jobs Pipeline training session.



For Green Impact Zone resident Laurence Williams II, a summer internship opened the door to full-time employment. Last summer, he was selected by the Full Employment Council to participate in the "Green Ways to Green Careers" summer internship program for young people ages 16–24.

As an intern, Laurence had a chance to work with Jason Lofton of QTI, Inc., the company hired by KCP&L to install new electric meters in the SmartGrid demonstration area. When the internship ended, Jason hired Laurence to work on QTI's meter-installation team.

In June 2011, Laurence was hired by KCP&L as a SmartGrid education and outreach support representative. He attends neighborhood meetings and encourages residents to use new in-home displays and other tools to manage their energy usage.

"I'm really excited to be part of something like this," said Laurence. "It's fascinating to see how everything comes together. The meters I helped install play a big role in the entire SmartGrid project. It's good to look back and say I was able to contribute."

Laurence says his work at KCP&L has opened up new ideas and interests. "I'm a lot more interested in computers and technology than I ever thought I would be," he said. "I'm learning a lot about the SmartGrid, but I'm also learning a lot about myself."

INFRASTRUCTURE: IMPROVING STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND TRANSIT



TIGER projects in the Green Impact Zone include the rehabilitation of 10 miles of sidewalks and curbs, along with street repaving, traffic-signal improvements and upgrades to transit facilities.

After years of disinvestment, much of the transportation infrastructure in the Green Impact Zone is in poor condition. Crumbling sidewalks, broken curbs and streets full of potholes make it difficult for residents — many of whom don't own cars — to walk or bike to bus stops and other destinations.

A deteriorating infrastructure harms the entire community. When streets and sidewalks are dilapidated, residents are less eager to maintain their properties and property values fall. Businesses find it harder to attract customers and deliver goods. Even first responders may have a more difficult time getting to people in need of help.

The Green Impact Zone initiative has spurred federal, state and local investments to fund a variety of infrastructure improvements that will help restore neighborhood vitality.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ Troost bridge opening

In August, the Green Impact Zone and its partners celebrated the opening of a new bridge at Troost Avenue and Volker Boulevard — one of several improvements in and around the zone funded by federal stimulus funds. The bridge project also includes improvements to the Brush Creek channel, upgrades to storm water and sanitary sewers, improvements to Volker Boulevard and a pedestrian bridge.

■ Other TIGER investments

In September, zone residents will begin to see the first sidewalk and curb improvements funded by the TIGER (Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery) grant. The Kansas City region received \$50 million in federal funds through the TIGER program, and \$26.2 million was specifically allocated for transportation infrastructure improvements in the Green Impact Zone.

TIGER will also fund street rehabilitation, traffic-signal upgrades and improvements to transit facilities in the zone. The remaining TIGER funds will provide transit facility improvements on key corridors across the region, helping connect zone residents to more employment opportunities.

■ Transit improvements

In January, the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) brought bus rapid transit service to the Green Impact Zone with the launch of its new Troost MAX service. The route serves the city's highest ridership corridor, and features green technologies such as hybrid electric buses, rain gardens and a pervious concrete park-and-ride lot.

In August, KCATA announced a new partnership that allows University of Missouri–Kansas City student IDs to double as bus passes, allowing students to ride the Troost MAX line from the university's main campus at the southern edge of the Green Impact Zone to the Hospital Hill campus north of the zone at no charge.

Johnson County Transit, known as The JO, recently added connecting routes to the Troost MAX line that give zone residents easy access to employment centers in Johnson County, Kan.

■ Better access to jobs

In July, the Green Impact Zone hosted a transportation fair called "Opportunity Road" to help residents explore travel options for access to jobs in other parts of the metropolitan area. Representatives from MARC's RideShare program, KCATA and The JO shared information with 59 residents, many of whom also participated in a bus tour. Participants got first-hand experience in commuting by bus, learning where to catch the bus and make transfers while they experienced the ride.

Follow progress on TIGER projects in the Green Impact Zone online with the TIGER Tracker: www.marc.org/TIGER/tracker.asp



transforming the community

PROFILE: Eric Duncan



Eric Duncan, president of the Troostwood neighborhood association, is looking forward to the planned transportation infrastructure improvements in the Green Impact Zone. "This is a very walkable neighborhood to begin with, but our sidewalks are definitely in need of repair," Eric said. "We're really excited about the TIGER projects."

Eric commutes to work in downtown Kansas City every day by bus and bicycle — generally riding the bus in the morning, using the onboard bike rack, and biking home. "Ridership has really increased since the Troost MAX line opened last winter," he said. "Just about every bus is full."

Eric has lived in Troostwood for five years and says it's a great neighborhood. "I love living there. It's a close-knit community. Neighbors know each other. My closest friends are my neighbors."

He believes the increased mobility that will come with infrastructure improvements will help neighbors connect even more. "Getting to know each other, getting out and walking and talking with each other, is an important factor in neighborhood leadership."

Eric also thinks the improvements will add curb appeal. "It's an intangible effect, but it will give the neighborhood a nicer look."

ENERGY EFFICIENCY: CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION



Zone resident Bernetta Taylor and her husband Robert had their home weatherized — including a new furnace — through a program funded with federal stimulus dollars allocated by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Working with neighborhood leaders, local utilities and other partners, the Green Impact Zone’s energy-efficiency strategies include reducing overall energy and water use, helping to protect the environment and reduce utility bills. Energy initiatives in the zone help residents understand how they can conserve energy and access weatherization and energy-retrofit opportunities. At a broader level, strategies include the expansion of renewable-energy alternatives and green solutions to water and wastewater issues.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ SmartGrid Demonstration Project

KCP&L is investing \$48 million — including a \$24 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy — to create the SmartGrid Demonstration Project in and around the Green Impact Zone, introducing the latest in innovative technologies in energy efficiency. The utility has installed more than 14,000 Smart Meters in the demonstration area, along with associated communications and back-office infrastructure. The meters are the backbone of SmartGrid communications, providing wireless communications connections between the utility and its customers. Six zone residents were hired by a local contractor to help install the meters.

Earlier this year, KCP&L began upgrading relay equipment in its Midtown Substation. Relays monitor the power system, controlling breakers and system voltage, and protecting or isolating system components when problems are sensed. Approximately 50 percent of the protective relays have been replaced with state-of-the-art equipment.

Increased use of solar power is another element of the SmartGrid demonstration project, and KCP&L recently awarded a contract for the installation of a 100-kilowatt rooftop solar-generation array at Paseo High School.

KCP&L also hired six zone residents to serve as SmartGrid Ambassadors, providing each resident in the demonstration area with information about the project. To date, more than 600 in-home

displays have been distributed in the zone, and several hundred zone residents have signed into the accompanying Web-based portal that provides detailed information about energy use.

■ Project Living Proof

In April, the Green Impact Zone joined the surrounding community in celebrating the grand opening of the Project Living Proof house at 917 Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd. The Metropolitan Energy Center, KCP&L and other local partners updated this century-old home to showcase the very latest in energy-efficiency technology, indoors and out. The home is open for public tours, and zone staff have participated in several events at the site.

■ Weatherization

In September, at the request of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, MARC transitioned its Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program to the city of Kansas City, Mo. While under MARC's management, the program completed weatherization work on 115 homes. Another 44 had work in progress and 176 were at some stage of the intake and audit process. Green Impact Zone staff coordinated a massive outreach effort over the past year to encourage residents to apply for weatherization assistance, including 17,166 door-to-door visits, outreach at community events and electronic media. The LIWAP program introduced an innovative discount for landlords wanting to weatherize rental properties that will be replicated in the city's program.

■ EnergyWorks KC

The Green Impact Zone is one of seven neighborhoods served by EnergyWorks KC, a program that provides support for energy-efficiency upgrades in homes and businesses. EWKC is managed by the city of Kansas City, Mo., in partnership with the Metropolitan Energy Center and the Mid-America Regional Council. With just one phone call, the program offers easy access to a variety of rebates, loans and other financial incentives for those wanting to improve comfort and energy efficiency in their properties.

transforming the community PROFILE: Michael Rentie



Ivanhoe resident Michael Rentie first learned about the SmartGrid when he volunteered to stuff door-hanger bags and help at an energy fair. Now he's a full-time inventory manager for KCP&L, helping residents get in-home displays and other new technology to help manage their energy use.

"I've got the display at home myself, and I love it," Michael said. "I can see from day to day how much electricity I'm using." It's become something of a game for Michael to see how little electricity he can use by turning off things he's not actively using. His record low is 51¢ for one day, and he's cut his overall bill in half.

Michael is a graduate of the Green Impact Zone's Community Leadership Program. He has also completed computer support specialist training through the Metropolitan Community Colleges.

"I love having the opportunity to use some of the skills I've learned. I like working with computers and technology and building networks."

Michael also likes knowing that by helping his neighbors use energy more efficiently, he's helping to protect the environment.

"I am green," he said. "I've always been an advocate for energy efficiency."

PUBLIC SAFETY: REDUCING CRIME AND CLEANING UP NEIGHBORHOODS



Area police officers have been actively involved in community events in the Green Impact Zone, from children's bike rodeos to neighborhood cleanups and crime prevention.

In a survey conducted by students from the University of Kansas Political Science and Sociology departments, Green Impact Zone residents rated violent crime as the most important problem in the zone, followed closely by vacant buildings and litter or trash.

Studies show a direct connection between high levels of trash and litter and high levels of crime. The Green Impact Zone's strategy plan calls for strong community policing and code-enforcement efforts, operated in close coordination with the neighborhood leaders and residents. The zone's community ombudsmen serve as liaisons to connect residents and neighborhood associations with public safety programs and community services.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ Neighborhood Clean-Up Events

Neighborhood associations in the zone have taken the lead in organizing efforts to clean up litter and trash. Several have used capacity grants from the Green Impact Zone to fund "Dumpster Days" or other clean-up events. In July, the Green Impact Zone helped promote a household hazardous waste collection sponsored by the city of Kansas City. In addition to serving 267 cars at the event, the city also collected 971 tires, 2,500 pounds of paper and nine tons of brush and leaves.

■ Code-Enforcement Efforts

When residents complain about code violations in their neighborhoods, the Green Impact Zone community ombudsmen refer them to their neighborhood associations, the city's 3-1-1 Action Center or Legal Aid for help. More than half of the homes in the Green Impact Zone are rental properties, many with absentee landlords, which makes it difficult to enforce property maintenance codes without a coordinated effort.

■ National Night Out Against Crime

In August, the Green Impact Zone participated in the National Night Out Against Crime. Cokethea Hill, the zone's lead field ombudsman, served as

co-chair for the city of Kansas City's night out event at Swope Park. Zone Ombudsmen Kourtney Woodbury chaired a Community Services subcommittee that organized booths for local agencies — including the Green Impact Zone — to connect residents to needed services.

■ Community Policing

The Kansas City Police Department has taken an active approach to community policing by scheduling roll calls at homes in Green Impact Zone neighborhoods. By holding roll calls in the community instead of at the police station, officers have the opportunity to meet with residents, learn about their concerns, share crime-prevention tips and build relationships.



In July, KCPD conducted a roll call in the Blue Hills neighborhood at the home of Green Impact Zone Field Ombudsman Anwar Jones.

■ Emergency Preparedness

In March, the Green Impact Zone staff worked with Brush Creek Community Partners and the Kansas City Chapter of the American Meteorological Society to place all-hazard weather radios in 20 community facilities along Brush Creek. The radios, donated by Midland Radio Corporation, will alert residents using these facilities when severe weather or other emergencies may require them to seek shelter.

transforming the community PROFILE: Sandra Hayes



A personal loss led to a new mission for Manheim Park resident Sandra Hayes. When her sister passed away in 2009, Sandra inherited a home on Tracy Avenue. "One day a neighbor asked me if I knew I was in the Green Impact Zone," Sandra said. She began attending neighborhood meetings and signed up for the Community Leadership Program, and now serves as vice president of the Historic Manheim Park Neighborhood Association.

Sandra helped organize listening sessions for residents and learned, to her surprise, that their number one concern was trash and litter. She developed a community clean-up plan and launched monthly "Dumpster Days" last June. Working with the police department, Sandra and other volunteers have also cleaned up alleys, overgrown lots and sidewalks in the Manheim neighborhood.

Sandra is able to use some of the skills she learned in the corporate world in her new role, but she has found that transforming a community means changing behavior.

"People will never be able to rise above what they believe is possible. We have to empower them to solve their own problems. Every neighbor on every block has to understand the importance of shared values and shared responsibility for the safety and welfare of the entire community."

URBAN GARDENING: IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS



Volunteers with Sowers of Sustainability have installed several rain gardens in the zone. Rain gardens not only beautify neighborhoods but also help manage stormwater runoff.

The urban core is often referred to as a food desert, and the Green Impact Zone is no exception. Zone residents, many of whom rely on public transportation, do not have easy access to fresh, healthy produce. But urban gardening in the Green Impact Zone is about much more than growing fresh fruits and vegetables. Community gardening helps strengthen neighborhoods by putting vacant lots to productive use and protecting natural resources. Residents can supplement their incomes by growing and selling produce, and fight obesity with healthier diets and increased physical activity.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ Sowers of Sustainability

In partnership with Bridging the Gap and Keep Kansas City Beautiful, the Green Impact Zone offers classes on gardening basics and community organizing. Sowers of Sustainability includes both classroom training and hands-on workshops.

In July, participants planted demonstration gardens in raised beds at Beacon Light Seventh Day Adventist Church, 4841 Paseo. Sowers of Sustainability has also installed rain gardens in the Green Impact Zone to help manage stormwater runoff and protect natural resources. The program receives funding from the Sprint Foundation.

■ Community Gardens

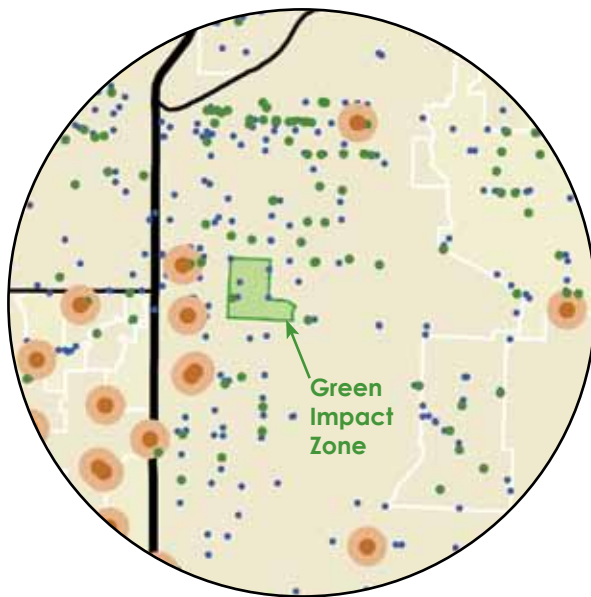
Community gardens are flourishing in Blue Hills at 49th and Olive, in Manheim at 42nd and Forest, in Troostwood at 51st and Paseo, and in Ivanhoe at 37th and Woodland.

In June, the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council received a \$75,000 grant from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City to support Grown in Ivanhoe, a community effort to encourage gardening and entrepreneurship. Through Grown in Ivanhoe, residents can become certified growers, taking classes that cover everything from soil testing and putting seeds in the ground to canning and food preservation.

Last year, the city of Kansas City modified its ordinances to allow residents to sell excess produce from their gardens from their yards. Grown in Ivanhoe helps residents get set up to sell their excess produce — providing a tent canopy, table, baskets, scale, calculator and “Grown in Ivanhoe” stickers for produce — and follows up with training on how to manage their income.

■ Earth Day

On April 30, volunteers from the Mid-America Regional Council, the city of Kansas City’s Neighborhood and Community Services Department, Lincoln University Extension and the Manheim neighborhood held an “Earth Day Work Day” to clean up debris and clear ground for planting at the Manheim Park Community Garden at 42nd and Forest. Volunteers bagged trash, bundled brush and collected illegally dumped tires for collection by the city’s waste hauler.



The food desert in Kansas City’s urban core

- Corner/convenience stores
- Small grocery stores
- Large grocery stores with full produce sections
- Walking distance from large groceries (½ mile)
- Green Impact Zone boundary

For a more detailed map, visit greenimpactzone.org/urban_agriculture

transforming the community PROFILE: Dina Newman



Dina Newman, a project manager at the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council, says the Grown in Ivanhoe project grew from divine inspiration. “This neighborhood really is a food desert — 400 blocks with no grocery store,” she said. “Corner stores don’t have fresh fruits and vegetables.” Turning community gardening into a unique brand is where the inspiration comes in — not just growing food, but building a sense of neighborhood pride.

Dina, pictured above (left) with Ivanhoe resident Mary Taylor, signed up for the Green Impact Zone’s Sowers of Sustainability program and encouraged Ivanhoe residents to attend. “Gardening is a lost art. We needed to partner with people who know about gardening and get everyone interested in growing.”

Ivanhoe also worked with master gardeners to plant a demonstration garden for hands-on training. “We harvest three days a week and put free produce in our office foyer. It’s always gone by the end of the day.”

The neighborhood council started Scout Sprouts, with seven raised beds for local scout troops to learn gardening.

“When the kids first started, some of them had never seen broccoli or cauliflower. They said ‘What’s that green thing, what’s that white thing?’ Now they love it.”

YOUTH: EDUCATING AND INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION



Teens participating in the NEXUS summer program learned about the civil rights movement and desegregation during a visit to the museum at the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in Topeka, Kan.

Building leadership capacity among young people is a crucial element of the overall outreach strategy for the Green Impact Zone. In 2010, the zone launched the NEXUS of Excellence youth initiative, an intensive summer enrichment program designed to encourage entrepreneurship in the fields of energy and the environment.

Participating teens learn leadership skills, complete team-building exercises, and go on field trips designed to reinforce what they learn in the classroom. The teens are also encouraged to get involved in their own neighborhood organizations.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ New partners and funding

In 2011, the NEXUS initiative received financial support from KCP&L and from neighborhood capacity-building funds. The additional support, along with underwriting from the Wildwood Outdoor Education Center, allowed the Green Impact Zone to expand the program to eight weeks and offer new content. Students also received free bus passes for the duration of the program.

■ Understanding history

With instruction from Albert Lowe, an adjunct professor at Metropolitan Community Colleges, the 2011 NEXUS program offered students new insights into African-American history, from before slavery through modern times. By delving into this long, rich cultural history, students gained a better understanding of their ancestry and pride in their heritage. The students toured the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in Topeka, Kan., to learn about desegregation and the civil rights movements of the 1960s. After learning how young people can bring about change in the community, some of the students put their new knowledge into action, introducing a petition to have a confederate flag removed at a local high school.

■ Energy

Working with CORO students at Park University, the NEXUS students explored alternative energy sources, designing plans for energy-efficient houses and experimenting with balloon cars. These exercises emphasized creativity, team building and communications skills. The students also toured the KCP&L Sibley power plant.

■ Agriculture

After studying urban agriculture, the students got first-hand experience by harvesting fruits and vegetables at the Blue Hills Community Garden and Niles Home for Boys no-till garden. They used their fresh produce to make salsa, guacamole and fruit smoothies.

■ Mentoring

This year, the Green Impact Zone was particularly pleased to have 16 boys participate in the program, along with six girls. Young men are often most at risk in urban core neighborhoods, and the program offers mentoring to teens along with educational opportunities. The NEXUS teens also met with a group of young professionals from KCP&L for a round-robin discussion about careers and what it takes to succeed in the workplace.

■ Other learning experiences

The 2011 NEXUS program also included a week at IBM's EXITE camp (Exploring Interests in Technology and Engineering), sponsored by the Kauffman Foundation; a field trip to the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Neb.; participation in the Metropolitan Community Colleges Police Academy; and a tour of the health sciences institute.

■ Next steps

The Green Impact Zone is working on plans to convert elements of the NEXUS summer enrichment program into a year-round initiative with a stronger academic component.



transforming the community

PROFILE: Kendrel West



Kendrel West, a sophomore at Northeast High School, joined the NEXUS program in 2010 because he wanted something to do during the summer. He returned in 2011 because he liked learning about ways to help his community.

"If we want to be leaders, we have to take responsibility," Kendrel said. "We can all help keep our neighborhoods clean."

Kendrel particularly enjoyed the field trips the Green Impact Zone organized for the NEXUS students. "I liked meeting new people and making new friends."

After graduation, Kendrel plans to join the Marines, then go to college. After that, he'd like to come back to his neighborhood and open his own barber shop.

"Without the full participation of young people, the transformation of the Green Impact Zone and our economy will not succeed. You and your peers bring new ideas, new energy, new entrepreneurial spirit and the drive to make the world better...this is an exciting time to be entering your adult years."

— Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II
in a letter to NEXUS participants

OUTREACH: GETTING RESIDENTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS INVOLVED



Members of the Green Impact Zone's door-to-door outreach team shared information about weatherization assistance and other zone programs.

Underlying all of the work of the Green Impact Zone is a strong neighborhood-outreach program that not only engages every resident and business in the activities of the zone, but also helps residents understand and access the wide range of resources that are available. The outreach program is a critical link in community transformation.

The Green Impact Zone staff includes four community ombudsmen who attend neighborhood meetings, facilitate door-to-door with residents about zone programs, and connect residents with city departments and community service agencies that can help with specific issues.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS:

■ Community Leadership Program

Since its inception in fall 2009, a total of 233 people have participated in the Green Impact Zone Community Leadership program. The curriculum includes five separate training series — Personal Strengths, Facilitation Skills, Relationship Building, Problem Solving and Community Building. Each series is made up of five class sessions. Thirteen residents have earned certificates in all five series.

Courses are offered at no charge to Kansas City, Mo., residents, with classes held at the Green Impact Zone office, on the nearby UMKC campus and at Penn Valley Community College.

■ Building neighborhood capacity

In March, the zone hosted an all-day retreat for neighborhood leaders. The event included team-building activities and discussion of ways the zone can help neighborhoods connect residents with resources. Each neighborhood association was asked to nominate two representatives and select one or more key strategies of particular interest to their neighborhood. In June, the zone invited these representatives to a kickoff of the new CAP program — Capacity Building to Accelerate Possibility Achievement. Together, they will help clarify neighborhood goals for each strategy.

The Green Impact Zone also provided small capacity-building grants to each of the five neighborhood organizations. The funds help pay for neighborhood cleanups, association newsletters and a variety of other projects.

■ Community events

In December, the Green Impact Zone held a community-wide event with a sustainability theme at Paseo High School for 391 participants. Other events included “Hallo-weatherization,” a family event held on Oct. 30 to provide information about how to apply for weatherization services. The Green Impact Zone also participated in the second annual Convoy of Hope, held at Swope Park in June, and numerous other community events.

■ Church ambassadors

As part of its weatherization outreach efforts, the Green Impact Zone developed relationships with key staff at churches in the zone. Each of the churches appointed a member to serve as an ambassador for the zone, sharing information about upcoming events and available services with their congregations.

■ Data and mapping

UMKC’s Center for Economic Information added photos of each property in the Green Impact Zone to its comprehensive data website, online at kc-csrv-ceiweb.kc.umkc.edu/greenimpactzone. University students are available to train zone residents on how to access and interpret the data, and use it to address problems in their neighborhoods.

■ Environmental education

With support from UMKC and other partners, the Green Impact Zone is working on plans to launch Roots for Success, an environmental literacy curriculum that helps residents understand what “green” really means. The program is geared to all education levels.

transforming the community PROFILE: Elizabeth Bejan



Elizabeth Bejan is a Green Impact Zone resident who used neighborhood outreach — and her personal passion for bicycling — to create **Revolve**, a nonprofit organization that helps residents with affordable, green transportation.

Revolve allows zone residents and students to earn donated bicycles by completing a free online safety course and passing an on-bike road-skills test. In August, Revolve awarded bicycles to the program’s first participants (pictured above, from left): Ade MenAb and his mother, Jakini MenAb, residents of the Blue Hills neighborhood; and Brandon Procter, a student at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Initially, Bejan relied on community events and social media to reach potential clients, but Revolve now has its own space in a repurposed building on the zone’s western edge at 5100 Troost. Bejan’s mission is to give back to the community by providing an alternative means of transportation that is healthy, affordable, safe — and fun.

“I also want to get out and ride with people,” said Bejan, who is a league cycling instructor for the Smart Cycling Program of the League of American Bicyclists. Her next goal is to organize regular group rides in each neighborhood in the zone.

FROM THE DIRECTOR: WHAT WE'VE LEARNED SO FAR

In the past two years, I've had the privilege of talking to hundreds of people, in the Kansas City area and across the nation, about the transformation now underway in the Green Impact Zone. Most often, people want to know what ideas they can take from what we're doing in Kansas City to implement in their own communities. We're a long way from achieving our goals in the Green Impact Zone, but we've come far enough down the road to reflect on some of the lessons we've learned.



Anita L. Malfbia
Green Impact
Zone Director

communication with partner agencies, staff, neighborhood associations, block clubs, and, most importantly, with residents. People are living their daily lives and it can be hard for them to find time to engage in what we're doing in the zone. We work hard to keep everyone in the loop. There is no such thing as over-communication.

Good intentions aren't enough

Sometimes, organizations that want to help don't have a clear understanding of how best to implement their ideas. Entities that have resources need to rethink and reshape their ideas and identify gaps in services to best meet community needs. Without a clear understanding of the issues, gaps can widen into gulfs, even for those with the best of intentions.

Rekindle hope

We're in the business of creating hope. With hope, people engage and assume leadership. We all see the statistics about unemployment and the economy on the news, but at the neighborhood and individual levels, people are living that reality. We need to continue honest discussions at every level, from national to local, to bring about real change and build the capacity that leads to our vision of a truly sustainable community.

Start with the basics

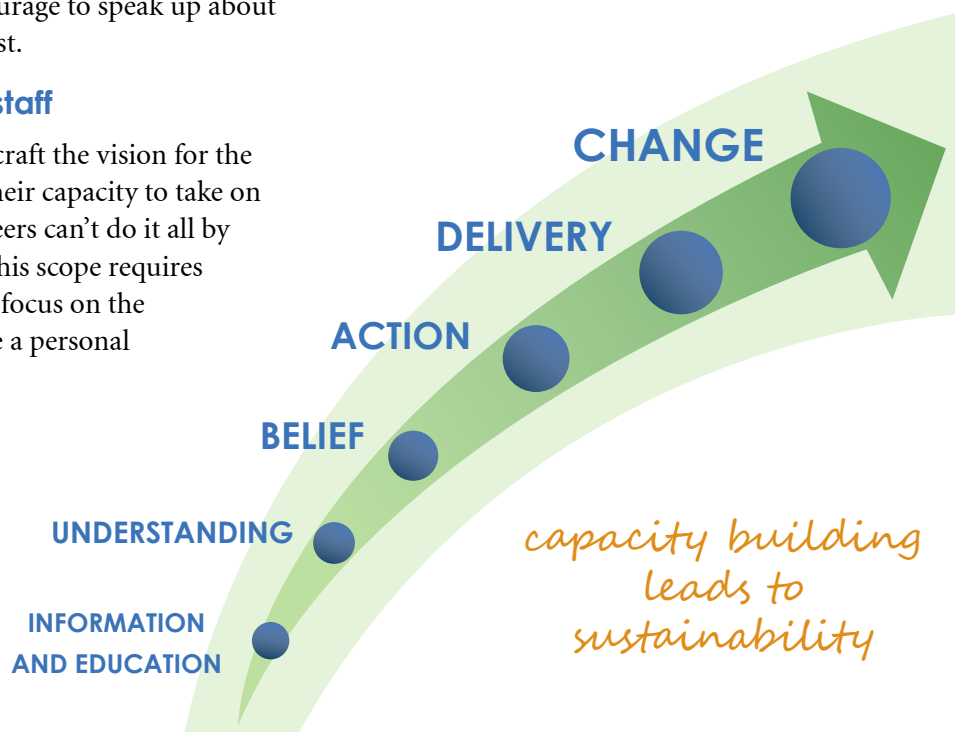
Our neglected neighborhoods didn't get this way overnight, and the issues won't be fixed overnight. While we're all eager to implement the "green" ideas of energy efficiency and environmental solutions, neighborhood leaders have encouraged us to begin with improvements to the overall quality of life for residents and then integrate these new ideas. We're fortunate to work with a strong group of neighborhood leaders who have the courage to speak up about what residents need most.

Hire a dedicated staff

While residents helped craft the vision for the zone and are building their capacity to take on leadership roles, volunteers can't do it all by themselves. Change of this scope requires dedicated staff who can focus on the issues full time and have a personal passion for the work.

Communicate

A lot of people and organizations are involved in this transformation, and that requires a lot of intentional



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The summary of expenditures shown here only includes the grant funds specifically allocated to the Green Impact Zone and administered by MARC. (See the color key below the chart for more information.)

In addition to the funds MARC manages, the Green Impact Zone has been instrumental in attracting other funds, from both public and private sources, to the zone and to the region. These investments include:

■ **SmartGrid — \$48 million**

U.S. Department of Energy and KCP&L funding for a demonstration project in the zone and surrounding area.

■ **TIGER — \$50 million**

U.S. Department of Transportation award to the MARC region for transportation infrastructure.

■ **EnergyWorks KC — \$20 million**

EECBG grant to Kansas City, Mo., and partners for energy retrofits.

■ **Greenways Summer Jobs — \$5 million**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services award to Missouri's Fifth Congressional District for summer jobs for young adults.

■ **Sustainable Communities — \$4.25 million**

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant for regional planning.

■ **Brownfields Grant — \$1 million**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant for brownfields development in Kansas City and Jackson County, with a particular focus on the Green Impact Zone.

■ **Climate Sustainability Center — \$350,000**

Economic Development Administration award to Kansas City, Mo., for a feasibility study of a center at 47th and Troost.

■ **Wells Fargo — 23 properties and \$172,500**

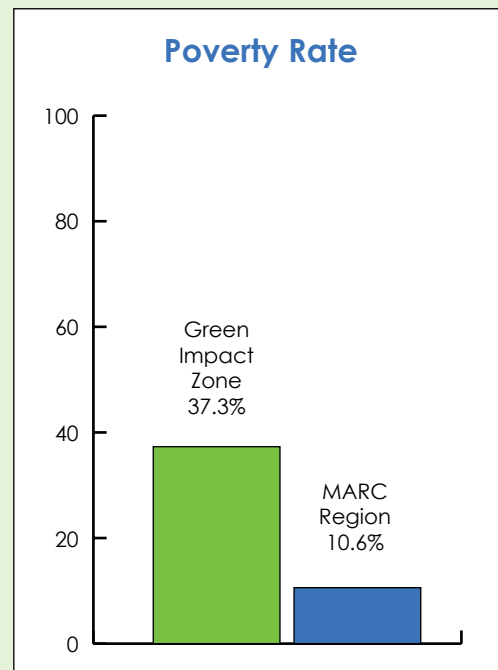
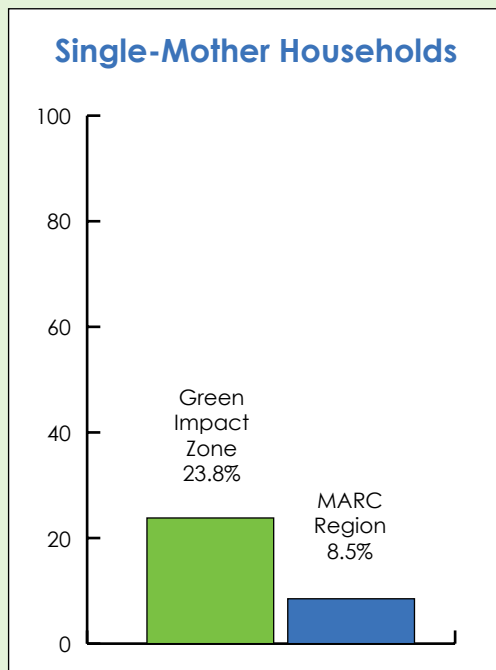
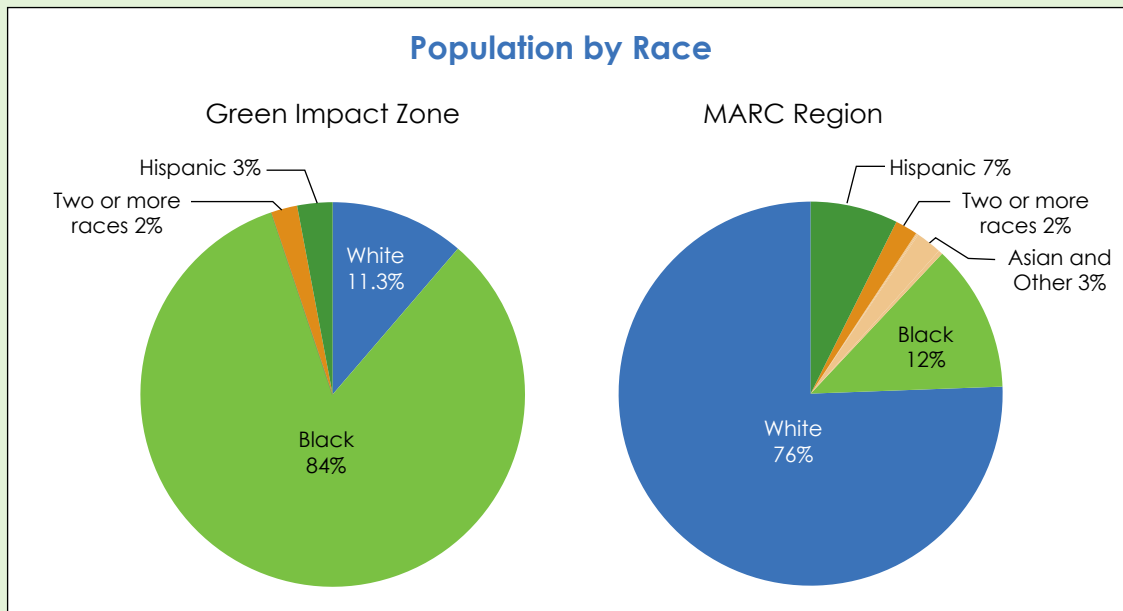
Properties in the Green Impact Zone donated to the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council for rehabilitation and redevelopment.

Summary of MARC's Zone Expenditures			
Category	Budgeted Amount	Current Period (7/1–8/31/11)	Cumulative (since 9/1/09)
Personnel (salaries, fringe benefits, indirect)			
KCMO	1,500,823.92	93,277.40	1,248,154.19
TIGER	150,000.00	6,330.05	31,690.30
EnergyWorks	75,073.00	6,514.63	40,627.80
LIWAP	182,046.00	7,749.90	139,556.99
Consultants/contractual services			
KCMO	679,620.00	20,710.03	540,114.04
LIWAP	2,477,103.00	719,510.98	1,496,707.12
CSP	120,000.00	49,868.00	109,602.00
Office lease, furnishings, equipment			
KCMO	188,674.00	13,420.32	165,986.07
LIWAP	17,985.00	12.19	10,621.67
Other expenses			
KCMO	130,882.08	5,232.14	113,546.16
LIWAP	22,866.00	1,179.03	28,630.15
MARC-Administered Zone Funds			
■ City of Kansas City, Mo. — \$2.5 million The city of Kansas City, Mo., awarded coordination grants to MARC for administration and outreach costs, including \$1.5 million in the zone's first year and \$1 million for the second year.			
■ U.S. Department of Transportation (TIGER) — \$150,000 The region received a total of \$50 million in TIGER funds, with \$26.2 million allocated for the Green Impact Zone. The bulk of these funds are administered by KCATA. MARC administers \$600,000 of the total grant, with \$150,000 specifically allocated to Green Impact Zone for personnel costs.			
■ EnergyWorks KC — \$75,000 The city of Kansas City, Mo., received a \$20 million Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant. Approximately \$3 million was allocated to MARC to support workforce development and public outreach in seven Kansas City neighborhoods, including the Green Impact Zone, and to support replication in the entire metro area. Most of these funds will benefit the overall program, but \$75,000 was specifically allocated for personnel expenses in the zone.			
■ Low-Income Weatherization — \$2.7 million The Missouri Department of Natural Resources initially awarded \$4.5 million to MARC for a Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program, and later reduced the amount to the \$2.7 million shown here. In early September, MARC received notice that this grant would be discontinued. This report includes expenses through August. Final totals will be included in a future report.			
■ Creating Sustainable Places — \$120,000 MARC received a \$4.25 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. \$120,000 is designated for housing and redevelopment planning in the Green Impact Zone.			

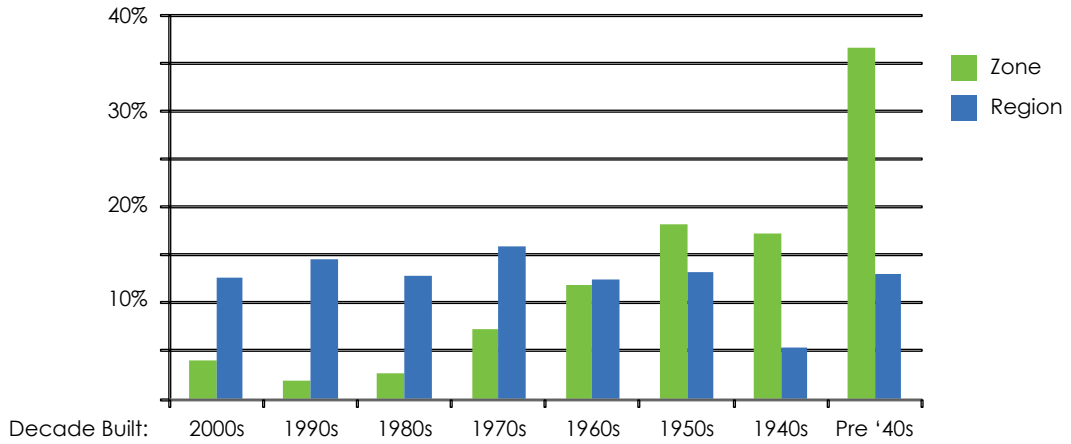
DEMOGRAPHICS: COMPARING THE ZONE TO THE REGION

The following charts and graphs compare selected demographics in the Green Impact Zone to the MARC region as a whole. MARC, the metropolitan planning agency for Greater Kansas City, serves Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri, and Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami and Wyandotte counties in Kansas. (See map inside front cover.) Data is the latest available from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (2005–2009).

Note: The Green Impact Zone data includes census tracts 62, 63, 64, 75, 76 and 77, an area that extends south to 55th Street — four blocks further than the southern boundary of the zone.



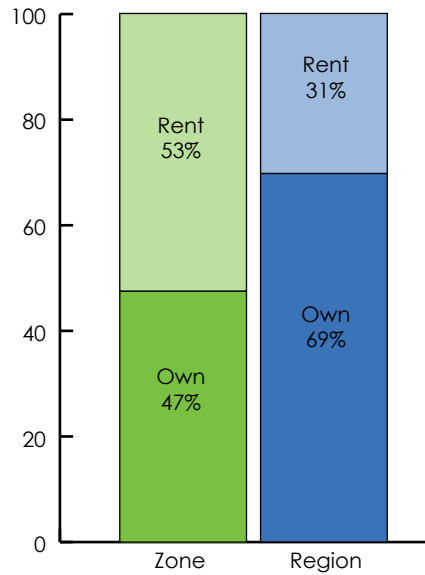
Age of Housing Stock



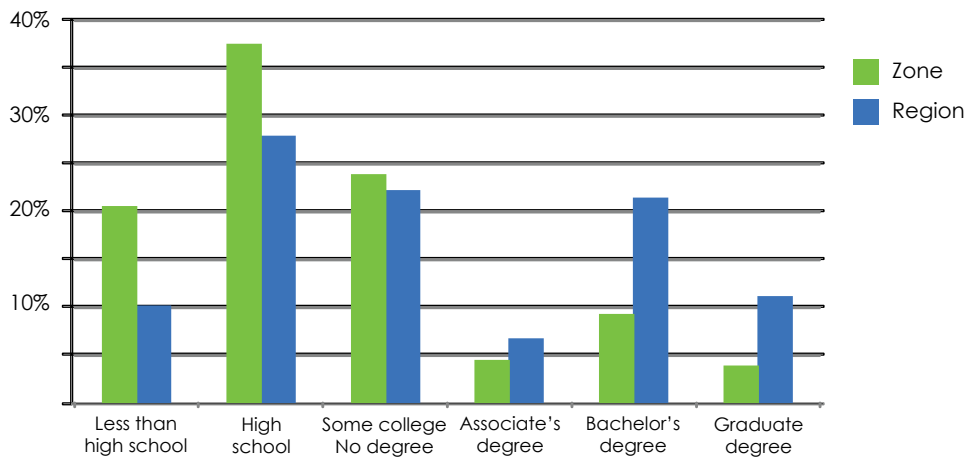
Median Household Income



Home Ownership



Educational Attainment





Green Impact Zone of Missouri | 4600 Paseo | Kansas City, MO 64110
Phone 816.936.8803 | Fax 816.421.7758 | www.greenimpactzone.org

Mid-America Regional Council | 600 Broadway, Suite 200 | Kansas City, MO 64105
Phone 816.474.4240 | Fax 816.421.7758 | www.marc.org