

Demand projections were made for affordable housing over the next 20 years and several factors were considered, as summarized below.

First, a determination of the number of households whose incomes indicate they need affordable housing at or below 60 percent of AMI in order to not be cost burdened. There are 19,850 of such households. Next, the number of dedicated affordable housing units, or those subsidized through LIHTC, HUD, and other programs, as well as housing choice vouchers, was identified—4,860 units.

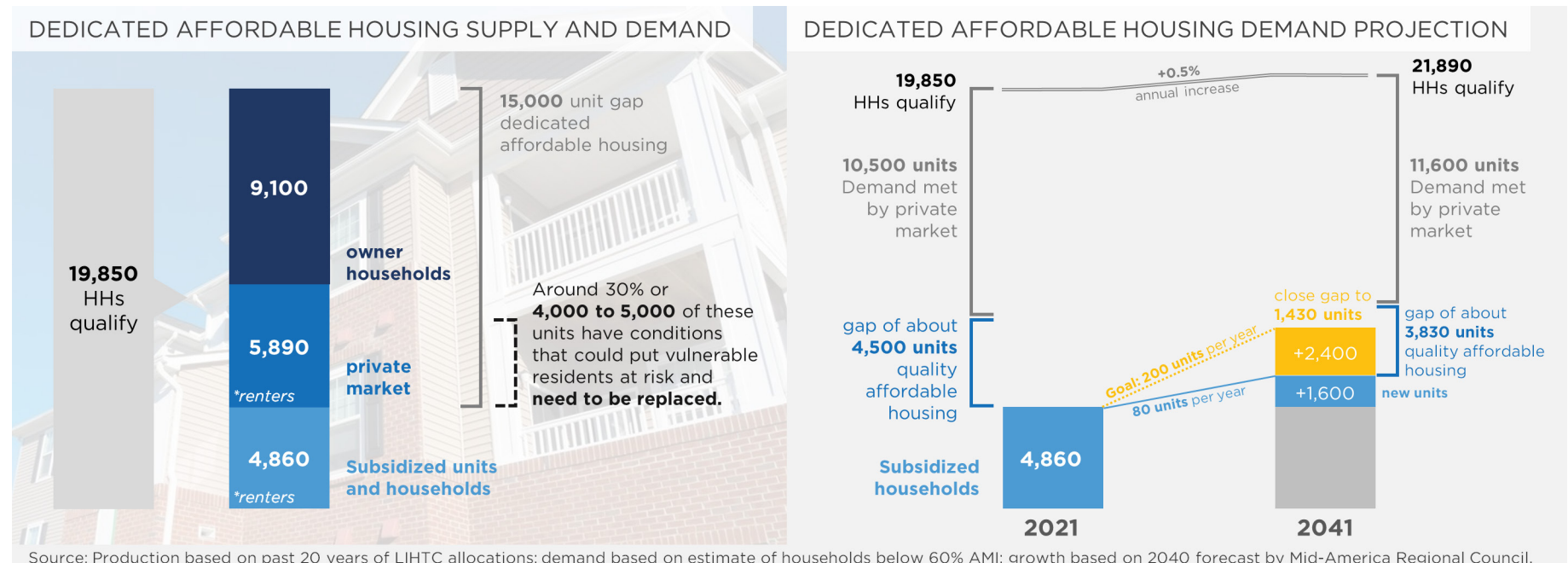
The remaining 14,990 households find their housing in the private market, both as homeowners and renters. Many of these households find suitable and affordable housing on the open market and are not cost burdened,

although there is not significant data defining what proportion of households fit that category. At minimum, ACS data indicates that approximately 400 households do not have adequate plumbing or kitchen facilities. At the high end, we know that nearly 30 percent of households (14,000) are cost burdened or have another housing problem, as defined by HUD. Most households that face cost burden or housing problems earn less than 50 percent of AMI. Assuming a conservative estimate range above and below 30% of the units in the affordable segment to be substandard, we get around 4,000 to 5,000 units that need to be replaced. Then, the remaining households live in decent affordable housing provided by the private market.

The final step is to project demand over the next 20 years. Forecasts by Mid-America Regional

Council for 2040 suggests an annual increase of 0.5 percent. Based on affordable housing production, primarily through the LIHTC program, approximately 80 units were added each year over the past two decades. If these trends persist, about 1,600 new units would be added to the market, bringing the total gap of dedicated affordable housing down to 3,830 units (3,250 rental and 580 for-sale).

However, if new tools were created and funding sources aligned to support an average of 120 additional units per year—200 units in total—2,400 additional new dedicated affordable housing units would be constructed over the next 20 years, moving Independence much closer to meeting its affordable housing demand, and closing the gap down to 1,430 units by 2041.

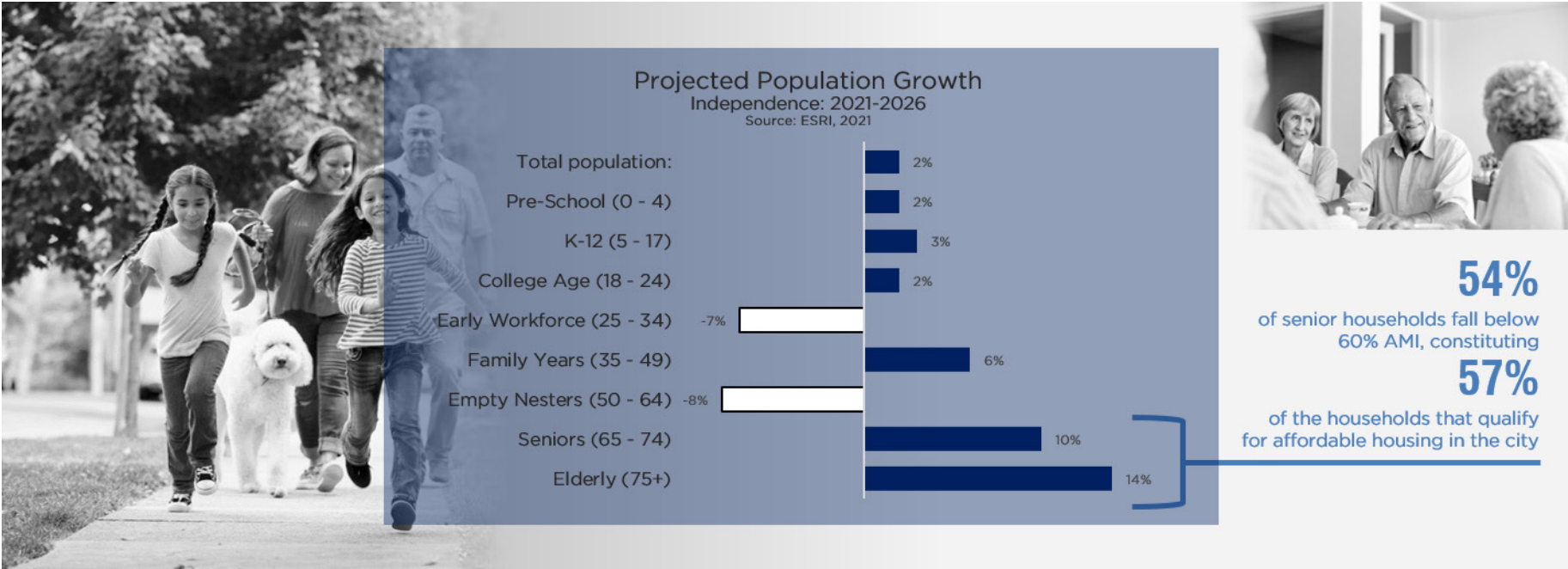


Senior Housing Demand

Seniors continue to live longer, yet many prefer to no longer care for a single-family home. New housing typologies will be necessary to allow seniors to remain in current neighborhoods.

Like many cities in the Midwest—and across the country—the senior population in Independence is expected to grow at a much faster rate than the population overall over the next several years. While many seniors will choose to stay in their homes as long as possible, alternative housing arrangements may be necessary as care needs change. This often presents a challenge in low-income areas due to the high costs of senior care.

Demand Conclusion Pending

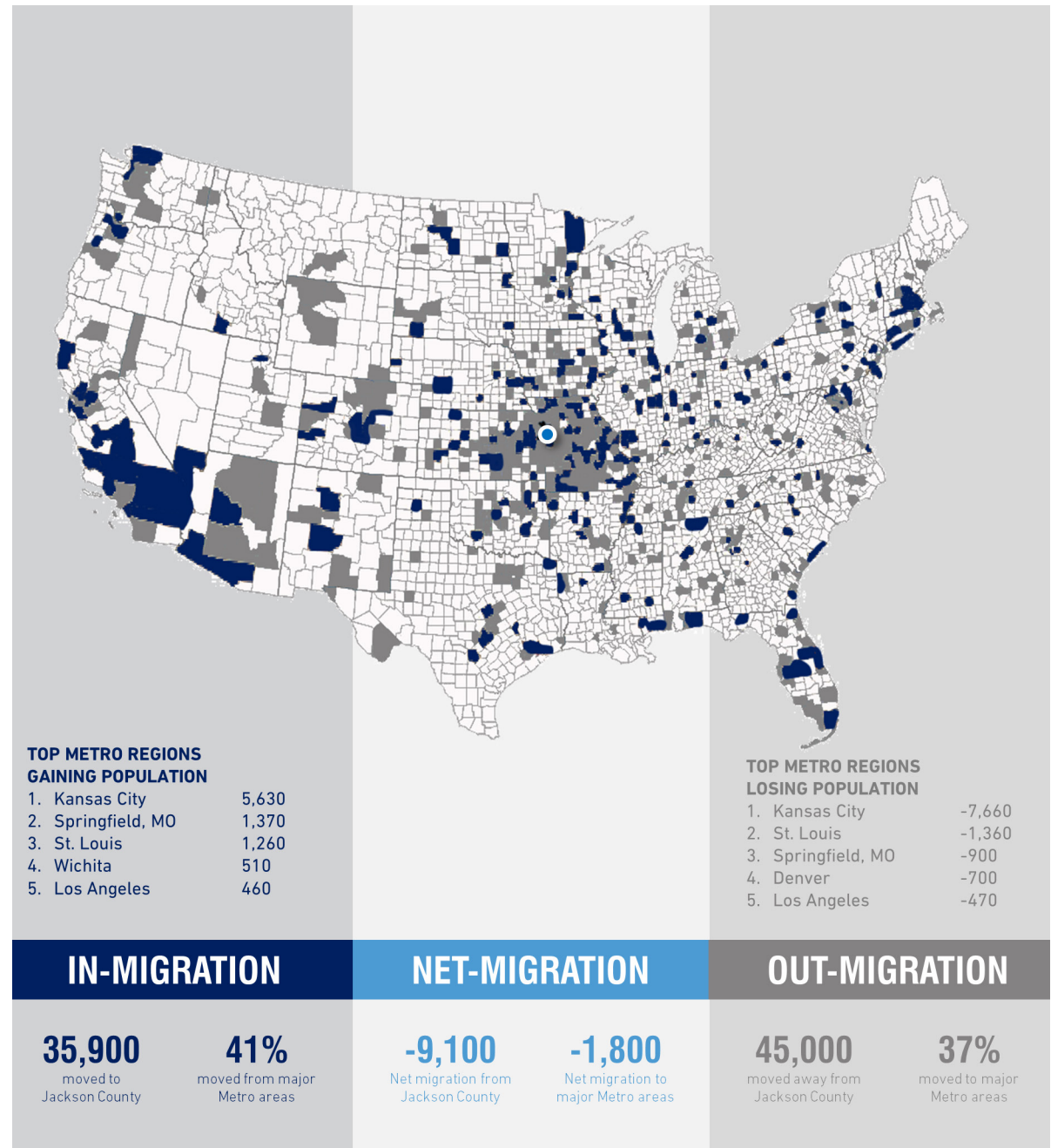


Migration

Migration will not be a significant contributor to future housing demand in Independence.

Data from the County-to-County Migration Flows dataset from the 2015-2019 American Community Survey indicates that Jackson County has a net average negative migration of around 9,100 people per year (1.3 percent of the county's population), with around 1,800 people moving to other major metro areas in the county. Even the inter-county flows within the Kansas City metro region is a net average negative for Jackson County (constituting 16 percent of the inflow and 17 percent of the outflow), with roughly 2,000 people moving out to another county in the region. The graphic on the right illustrates the five-year average inflows and outflows of people, with gains and losses to the top five major metro regions ranked.

Migration-induced growth in housing in largely a factor of regional competitiveness in attracting new residents, and thus, is closely linked to the future economic prospects of the Kansas City metro region. Given the net negative migration from the county, its low share of the county's population, and slow growth of Independence's population in the last decade, the net share of people and households contributing to Independence's growth is nominal, and does not constitute a major factor in future housing growth.



Source: 2015 - 2019 American Community Survey, County-to-County Migration Flows, Development Strategies 2021

20-Year Demand Projections

New housing demand will be driven primarily by the replacement of aging housing stock, continued modest growth in the city, and the capture of a larger proportion of regional growth.

Demand for new housing generally consists of a combination of household growth and the replacement of obsolete residential units. Demographic indicators over the next five years estimate continued modest population growth in Independence. The current demand estimates assume that at least one percent of the existing housing stock is inadequate (i.e., it lacks complete plumbing facilities or kitchen facilities, based on ACS data), plus an additional one percent is in such poor condition that it needs to be demolished and replaced.

While replacement housing provides a baseline for new housing demand, it can result in increased vacancy in the urban core, particularly in cities where vehicular access to regional amenities and employment centers remains very good from more suburban areas. Creating new demand—by attracting people from outside Independence—requires the addition of new housing options currently absent from the market.

A mix of smaller, more affordable for-sale typologies such as condos or townhomes can attract urban-minded residents into denser neighborhoods by offering walkable access to various amenities and services. These typologies are limited in Independence and could serve to leverage ongoing renovation and district creation.

Demand estimates in the short-term reflect the existing condition and quality of the housing stock, and the need for replacement housing. The projection are for net new demand, which includes demand for new construction units, as well as demand that could be met by the existing housing stock if renovations and general modernization were to occur. In other words, growth is projected over the next 20 years, and to accommodate some of that growth, the housing vacancy rate is decreased.

20-Year Projections: Demand by Income Level and Housing Tenure

INPUTS						NET DEMAND									
AMI	Income	Households	% Owner	For Sale	For Rent	Current		5 Year		10 Year		15 Year		20 Year	
						Sale	Rent	Sale	Rent	Sale	Rent	Sale	Rent	Sale	Rent
30%	\$21,700	9,404	37%	3,438	5,965	50	290	25	140	25	140	25	150	25	150
60%	\$43,500	11,001	51%	5,591	5,411	155	150	95	95	100	95	105	100	105	100
120%	\$86,900	16,611	66%	10,978	5,632	115	60	190	100	195	100	205	105	210	105
150%	\$108,600	5,037	75%	3,753	1,284	85	30	65	20	65	25	70	25	70	25
200%	\$145,000	5,294	84%	4,439	854	100	20	75	15	80	15	80	15	85	15
>200%	>\$145,000	3,969	87%	3,469	501	75	10	60	10	60	10	65	10	65	10
Units per Period						580	560	515	375	525	385	550	405	560	410
Total Units by Type						580	560	1,095	935	1,620	1,320	2,170	1,725	2,735	2,135

Demand by Housing Type

The dominant housing type in Independence is the single-family home and the ratio of single-family to multi-family is similar as in the county overall. Recent multifamily development has shifted the balance slightly, and there will be a need for different housing types as trends shift over the next 20 years.

As detailed in this study, single-family homes were the primary type of housing built in Independence over the past decade, although the city had a relatively healthy balance of single-family and multifamily construction. The most significant change from prior years was that the pace of new construction never recovered to pre-Recession levels and Independence's share of new home development dropped relative to other cities in Jackson County.

The market analysis clearly concludes that there is a need for a diversity of housing types to retain and/or attract residents, particularly for young families and seniors. While single-family homes will continue to be the dominant housing type, there will be more demand for attached and/or maintenance-free homes, as well as for quality multifamily options over the long term. Therefore, it is important to assess how demand for different housing types will change over the 20-year demand projection period.

The table below summarizes demand projections for different housing types, with adjustments to the ratios to allow for a more diverse housing stock.

Understanding the projected shift in housing type over the next 20 years will allow the city to identify ideal sites, work with land and housing developers, review its zoning code, and assess its comprehensive plan to ensure that these types are adequately supported.

Demand Summary

There is a need for the following housing to support demand and provide equitable housing choices over the next 20 years:

- 3,830 units of affordable housing (3,250 rental and 580 for-sale). Rents of less than \$750 per month and for-sale prices of less than \$120,000
- 1,240 units of workforce-affordable housing (450 rental and 800 for-sale). Rents of \$750 to \$1,400 per month and for-sale prices of \$120,000 to \$270,000
- 2,050 units of market-rate housing (300 rental and 1,750 for-sale). Rents of more than \$1,400 per month and for-sale prices of \$270,000 and up.

Senior Housing Demand
Conclusion Pending

20-Year Projections: Demand by Housing Type

DESCRIPTION		NET DEMAND									
Units in Structure	Current Distribution	Current		5 Year		10 Year		15 Year		20 Year	
		% Share by Unit Type	# Units	% Share by Unit Type	# Units	% Share by Unit Type	# Units	% Share by Unit Type	# Units	% Share by Unit Type	# Units
Single-Family*	77%	60%	685	60%	535	60%	545	60%	570	60%	580
Duplex	2%	5%	55	10%	90	10%	90	10%	95	10%	95
Fourplex	4%	5%	55	5%	45	5%	45	5%	50	5%	50
Small Multifamily (5-9 units)	10%	15%	170	15%	135	15%	135	15%	145	15%	145
Large Multifamily (20+ units)	5%	15%	170	10%	90	10%	90	10%	95	10%	95
Total Unit Demand		1,135		895		905		955		965	

*A small percentage (2.2%) of the existing housing stock is mobile homes, which are anticipated to make up an even smaller proportion in the future and are distributed in the multifamily housing categories.

Source: ESRI 2021, ACS 2019 5 Yr Estimate, Development Strategies 2021





4

Neighborhood Context

Introduction

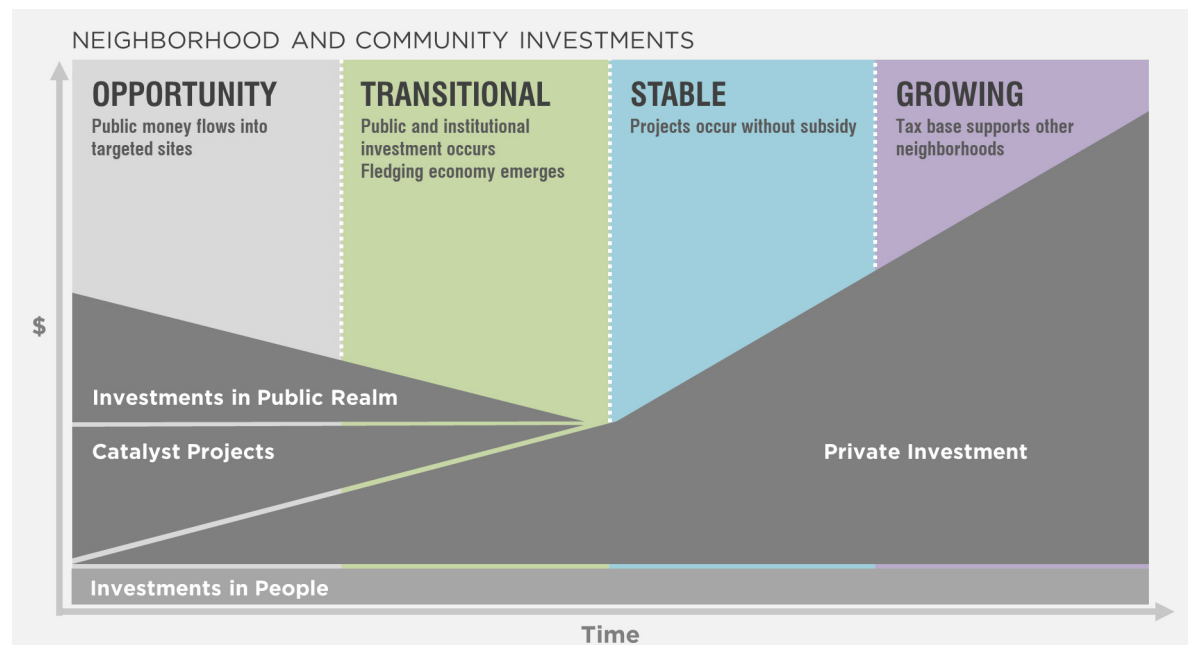
Understanding the demographic, economic, and market trends in Independence is important. However, given the diversity of the city, it is equally critical to establish a framework that will enable the city and its partners to focus housing investments, programs, and interventions in a strategic and impactful way.

Neighborhood Cycles

Neighborhood Cycle Analysis is a tool to further our understanding of different geographical areas in a city and where they are in the development/ redevelopment cycle. This tool uses available demographic and market data to classify geographical areas into four different neighborhood cycles; opportunity, transitional, stable, and growing, each representing its own unique opportunities and challenges. Cycles are designated by clustering similar characteristics, with the help of indicators like household income, home value, tenure, poverty level, vacancy, and permitting activity.

Neighborhood and Housing Interventions

The neighborhood cycle classifications can be used to detail what level of intervention is needed to promote long-term sustainability. The graphic to the right details what level of interventions are needed and the impact of continued investment over time. Investments are broadly categorized as **people-based**, such as financial counseling and homebuyer education, social services, and other services provided directly to residents that



promote stable lifestyles; **public realm**, which includes streets, sidewalks, parks, schools, and other public infrastructure; and, **privately-held**, or in this case, the housing stock,

As indicated, **opportunity** neighborhoods require extensive investments in all three components. These neighborhoods have experienced decades of disinvestment, and multi-faceted stabilization efforts are needed to stabilize them and attract private investment. This involves aligning partners providing people-based interventions, coordinating public investments, and aligning resources to support catalyst projects. An example of a catalyst project at a neighborhood scale would be to leverage a Habitat for Humanity infill project with rehabs of salvageable housing units and supporting a LIHTC development on a nearby block. This would serve to stabilize a core

area of a neighborhood in a manner, that would stabilize adjacent blocks over time.

Transitional neighborhoods have started to experience market-driven reinvestment, but still require people-based, public realm, and catalytic investments to fully stabilize. The focus in **stable** neighborhoods is to support the market with strategic investments and to prevent decline by maintaining public assets. Investment is primarily market-driven. **Growing** neighborhoods are market-driven and are contributors to the rest of the city—the tax base in these neighborhoods supports other neighborhoods

In each of these cases, the long-term goal is to create an environment where public investments stimulate private investments.

DEFINITION OF NEIGHBORHOOD CYCLES

OPPORTUNITY	TRANSITIONAL	STABLE	GROWING
<p>Opportunity neighborhoods are the areas of the city that have experienced the most disinvestment and abandonment, or have a significant amount of obsolete housing stock.</p> <p>While these areas face complex challenges, there are multiple opportunities for reinvestment. City efforts should include consistent code enforcement, site assemblage, partnerships with community groups and nonprofits for community clean up and infill development opportunities, coordinated public improvements, and connecting residents to the broader housing ecosystem—partners focused on people-based interventions.</p>	<p>Transitional neighborhoods are those with more stability and investment than opportunity neighborhoods yet still face multiple challenges. Transitional neighborhoods could also be those where there is concern that conditions will deteriorate.</p> <p>City efforts should include consistent code enforcement, partnerships with community groups and nonprofits for community clean-up and infill development opportunities, coordinated public improvements, and connecting residents to the broader housing ecosystem—to help residents who may need immediate repairs or assistance to stay in their homes.</p>	<p>Stable neighborhoods are established neighborhoods that do not show signs of widespread disinvestment.</p> <p>City efforts in this area should include maintaining property standards by encouraging the continued investment in the homes—a more structure-based focus for interventions.</p>	<p>Growing neighborhoods are new subdivisions where new construction is underway, or existing neighborhoods where new development is replacing existing homes or densifying the area (i.e, redevelopment with new multi-family). Growing areas also include those with above average home price appreciation.</p>

Analysis Methodology




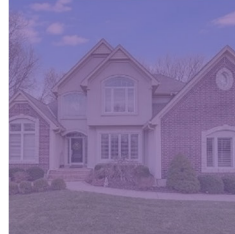
The Neighborhood Cycle Analysis for Independence was broken out into three different sets of indicators - People & Households, Quality of Life, and Economic Prospects - before being rolled up into a single composit analysis. Conducting the analysis in this way will help inform the City's future housing strategy, in identifying where investments in people, projects, and the public realm might be most beneficial.

People & Households

Poverty level, cost burdened households, level of college graduates, and homeownership are the four indicators for People & Households analysis. Higher levels of poverty will suggest a need for deeply affordable units. Poverty and cost burden together point to programs such as rental supports and utility payment assistance to help low-income households remain

PEOPLE & HOUSEHOLDS INDICATORS

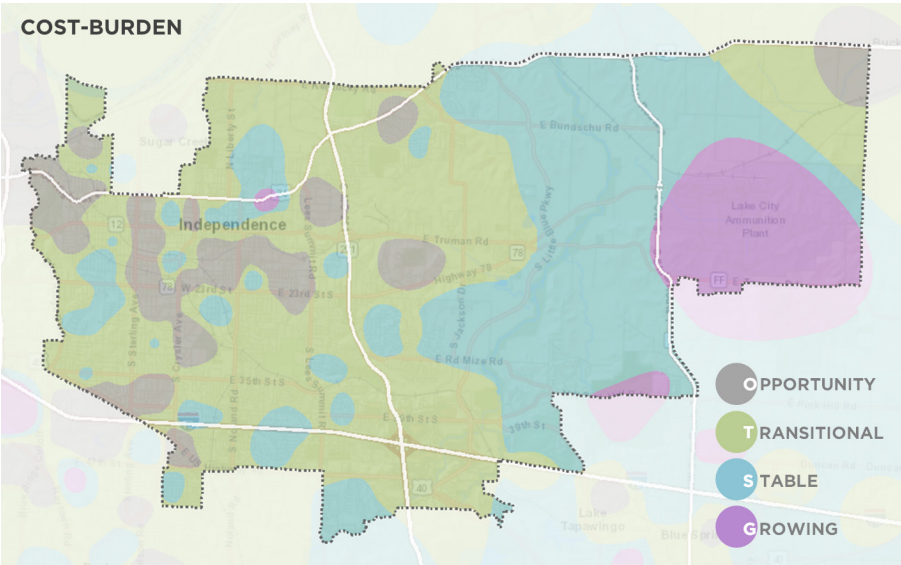
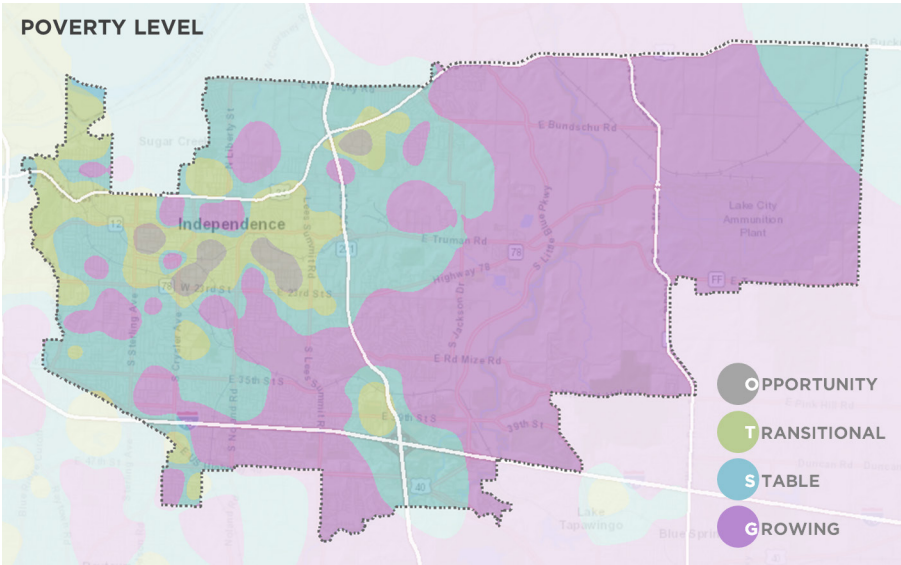
Poverty Level
Cost Burden
College Graduates
Homeownership

	OPPORTUNITY	TRANSITIONAL	STABLE	GROWING
				
Poverty Level	>35%	20% to 35%	10% to 20%	<10%
Cost Burden	>35%	20% to 35%	10% to 20%	<10%
College Graduates	<20%	20% to 35%	35% to 50%	>50%
Homeownership	<50%	50% to 65%	65% to 80%	>80%

in sustainable, affordable units. It is interesting to note that concentrations of poverty are very limited in Independence, and the greater areas of cost burden in the city suggests that households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing have incomes above the poverty level, but

not enough to be housing-cost secure.

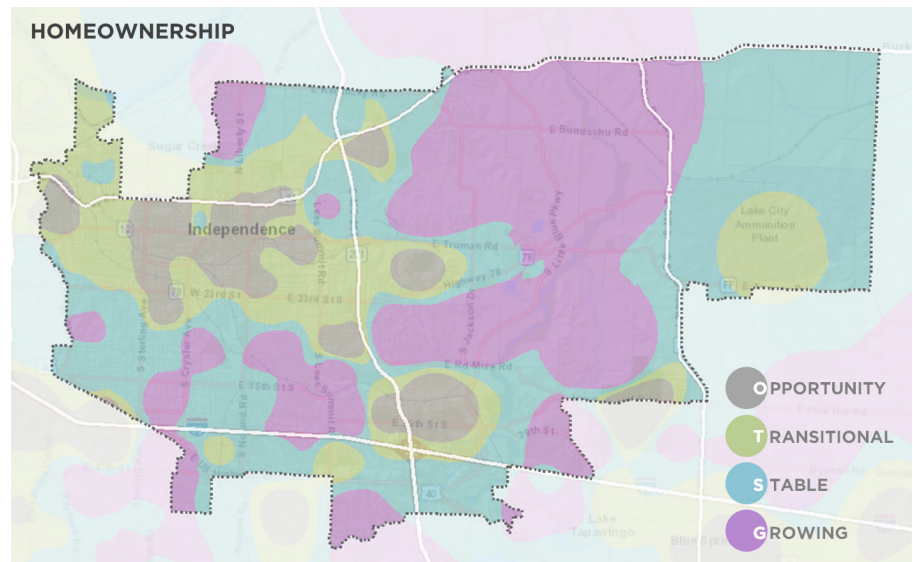
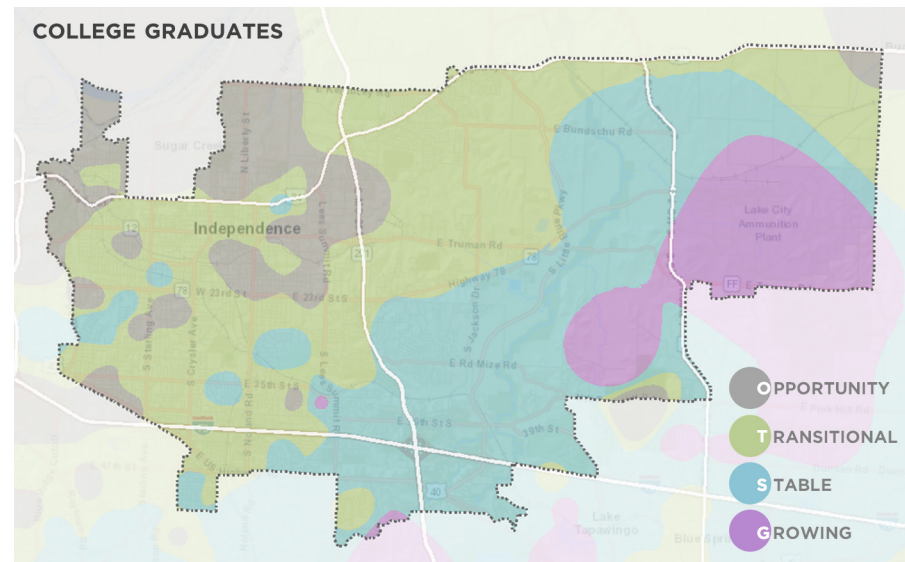
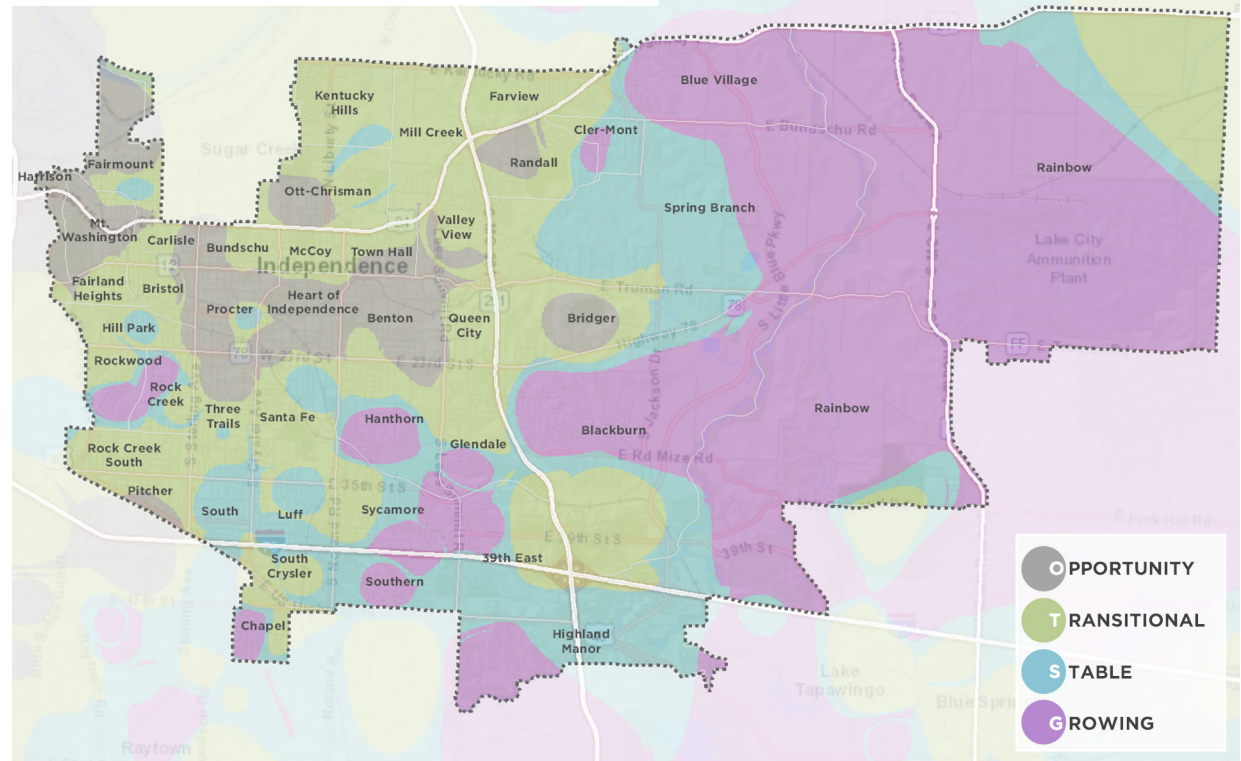
Percent of college graduates is an indicator of income earning potential, and may point to a demand for different housing types and housing costs across the city.



Homeownership is a criteria that requires some understanding of neighborhood context. Lower homeownership rates in predominantly single-family neighborhoods can point to a predominance of single-family rental units and areas where rental support programs and programs targeted to landlords may be ideal. In some areas of the city, lower homeownership rates can reflect a concentration of existing multi-family units. Where these lower homeownership rates intersect concentrations of multi-family and higher college graduate rates (and likely higher incomes), could point to a demand for amenitized rental units that cater to working professionals commuting to other parts of the metro area.

As the composite maps shows, Opportunity areas are concentrated west of Hwy. 291 and north of 23rd Street S. The Stable and Growing areas to the east are mostly a reflection of the higher incomes and single-family nature of the neighborhoods, though it is important to note that even some of these areas show indications of being cost burdened.

COMPOSITE MAP - PEOPLE & HOUSEHOLDS



Analysis Methodology

Quality of Life

Home value, the preponderance of vacant units and code violations, along with crime rates, make up the Quality of Life indicator analysis. They reflect elements of neighborhood stability, and factors that people can “feel” as they experience a neighborhood.

Much like Homeownership rates in the previous section, Median Home Value is something that needs to be looked at within the context of the neighborhood. Median Home Value can be an indicator of the quality of housing stock, where lower values, particularly in Opportunity areas, can reflect poor conditions and need for maintenance, renovation, and rehabilitation. Lower values are also seen in older parts of the city, and can be a reflection of age, marketability, and amenities (such as number of bedrooms). Lower home

QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

- Median Home Value
- Vacant Units
- Code Violations
- Indexed Crime Rate

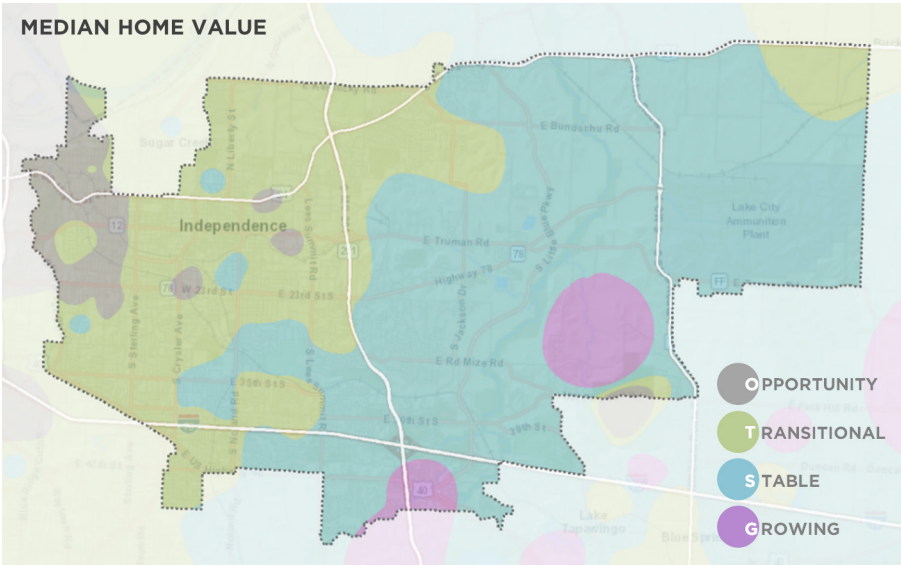
	OPPORTUNITY	TRANSITIONAL	STABLE	GROWING
				
Median Home Value	<\$80K	\$80K to \$150K	\$150K to \$250K	>\$250K
Vacant Units	>20%	10% to 20%	5% to 10%	<5%
Code Violations	>20%	10% to 20%	5% to 10%	<5%
Indexed Crime Rate	>250	150 to 250	80 to 150	<80

values in Transitional areas is often a reflection of naturally occurring affordable housing, and can point to programs for preserving the existing stock.

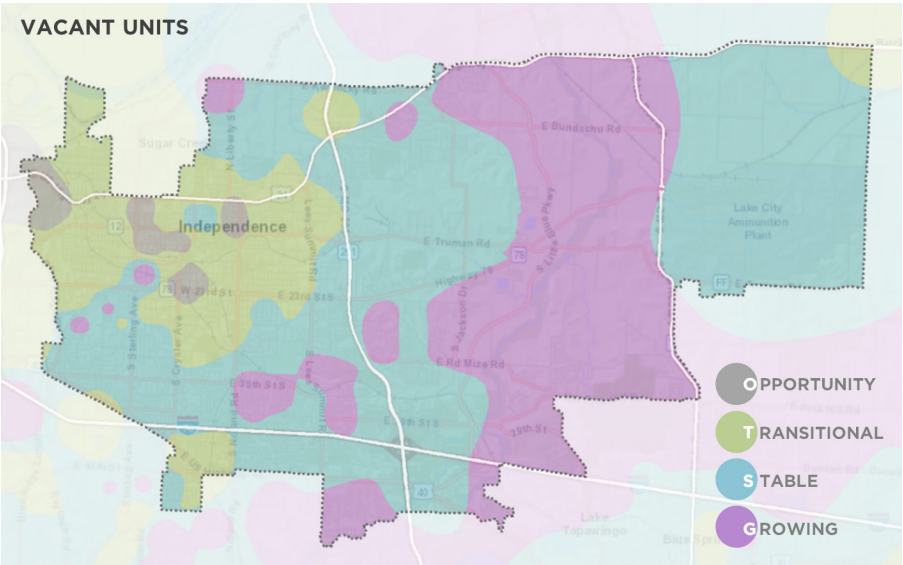
Vacant Units and Code Violations are more visible indicators of neighborhood stability and impact

residents' experience of quality, safety, and investment in their neighborhoods. High vacancies can reflect abandonment, transience, and a need for substantial repair and rehabilitation programs to make units habitable. Code violations can be a reflection of older housing stock in need of repair

MEDIAN HOME VALUE



VACANT UNITS

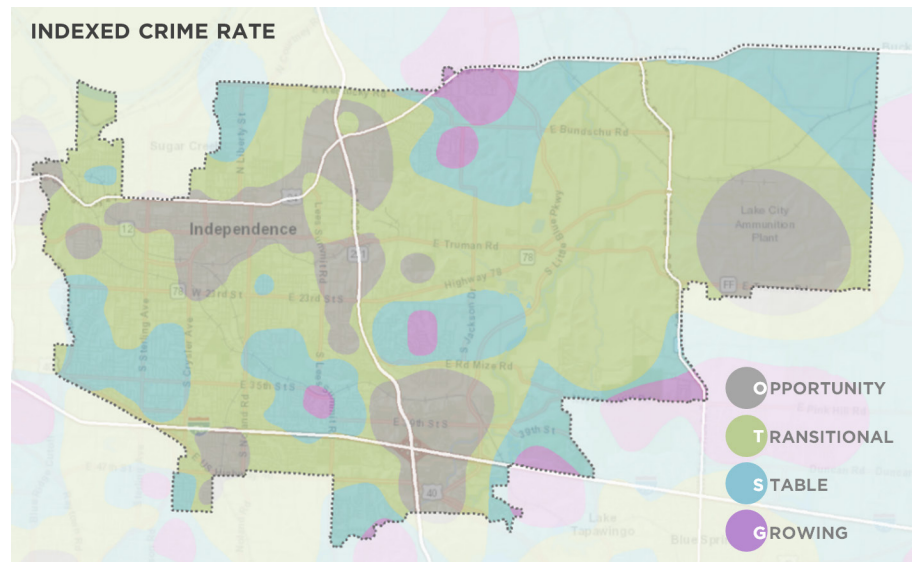
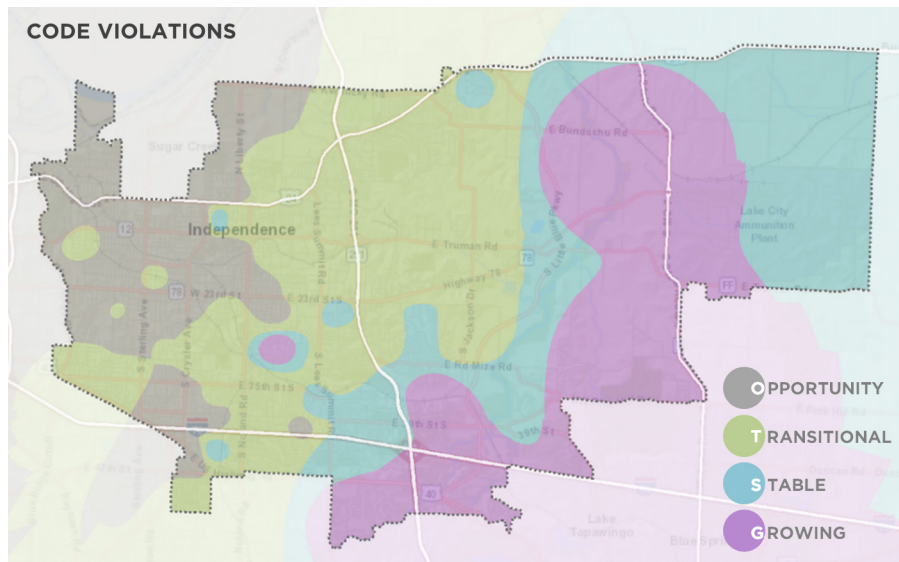
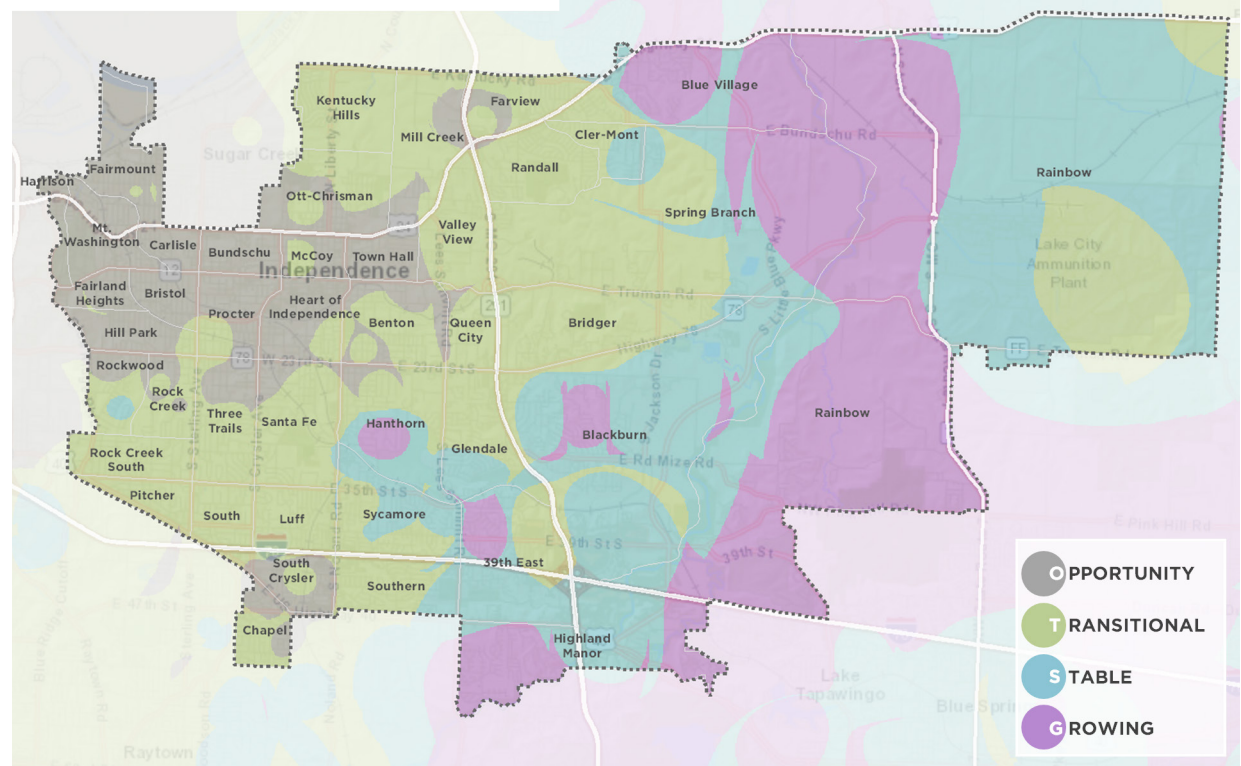


and limited household income to make needed repairs. This can point to repair and neighborhood preservation programs that are aimed at more visible home improvements, such as peeling paint and broken windows, rather than the higher-cost system improvements (e.g. new HVAC) needed in rehabilitation programs.

The Indexed Crime Rate provides the relative risk of crime in an area compared to the U.S. (as opposed to actual crimes). The data is an attempt to quantify what is often felt or experienced by residents. Crime is often a symptom of other conditions, but is frequently raised as an issue that impacts the desirability of certain areas, and can point to a need for investment in safety.

The composite map shows more variability across the city for Quality of Life indicators. The individual indicator maps may be more beneficial for targeting strategies, especially vacancies and code violations.

COMPOSITE MAP - QUALITY OF LIFE



Analysis Methodology

Economic Prospects

The indicators for Economic Prospects are designed to reflect community resources, stability and growth, potential demand, and areas currently experiencing investment.

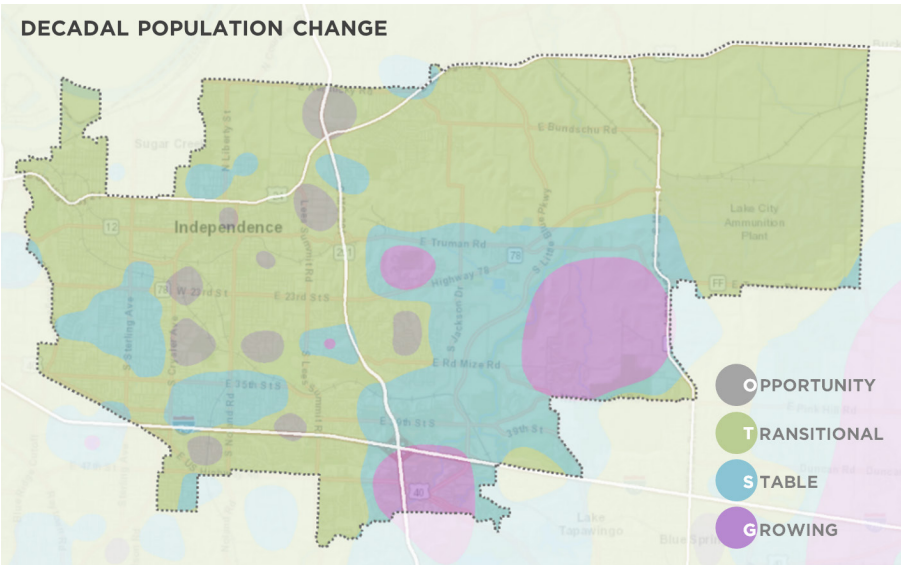
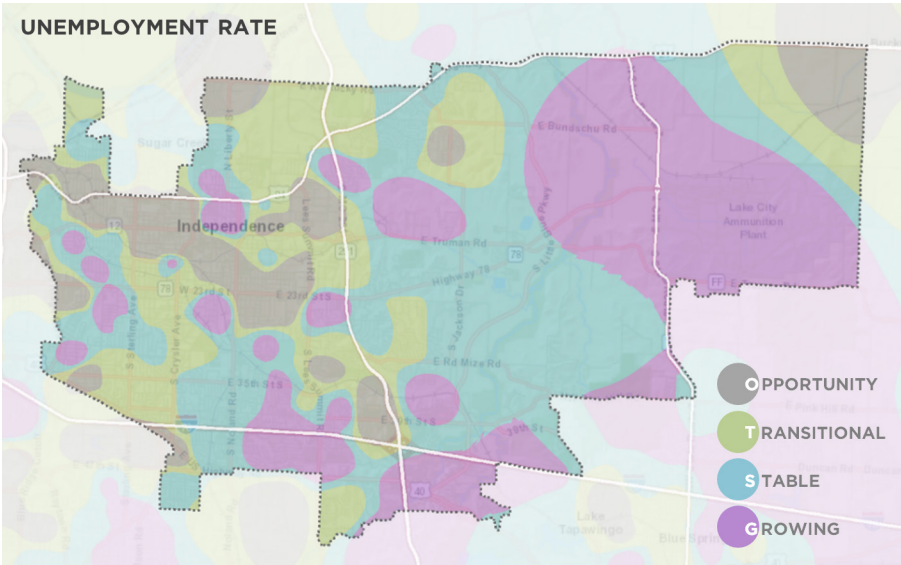
The Unemployment Rate is designed to reflect the economic stability of households in the area, and thus the ability to earn income to pay for housing costs, including maintenance and repair. This indicator is a direct link between housing and economic and workforce development, and can point to the need for education and employment opportunity programs that in turn support the ability for households to pay for housing costs.

Decadal Population Change is a reflection of the growth (or loss) of population in an area. While the overall change in population is not necessarily

	OPPORTUNITY	TRANSITIONAL	STABLE	GROWING
				
ECONOMIC PROSPECTS INDICATORS				
Unemployment Rate	>10%	6% to 10%	3% to 6%	<3%
Decadal Population Change	Loss of >50	Loss of <50, & Gain of <50	Gain between 50 & 200	200+
Projected Home Value Growth	<5%	5% to 15%	15% to 25%	>25%
Permit Activity Score	<3,000	3,000 to 8,000	8,000 to 15,000	>15,000

large in number, it does point to the relative stability and desirability of an area. It is important to recognize neighborhood context when looking at population change. Some high growth areas are due to the availability of land and new development, while the slower growth or declining

areas may not be undesirable as much as there is limited ability for new housing units and thus for actual growth to occur. Thus, the Opportunity areas for population change could reflect the need for more units to accommodate growth, or the need for investments to attract new homeowners.

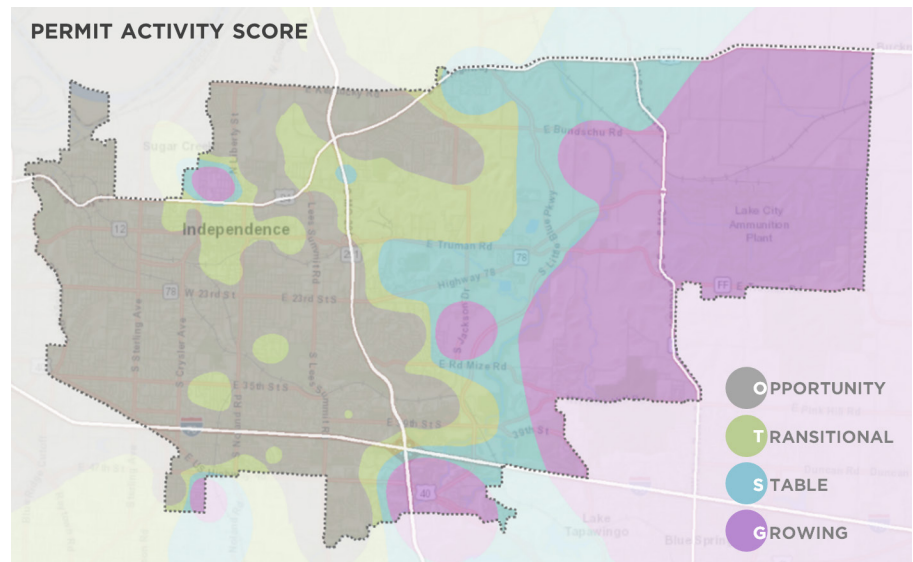
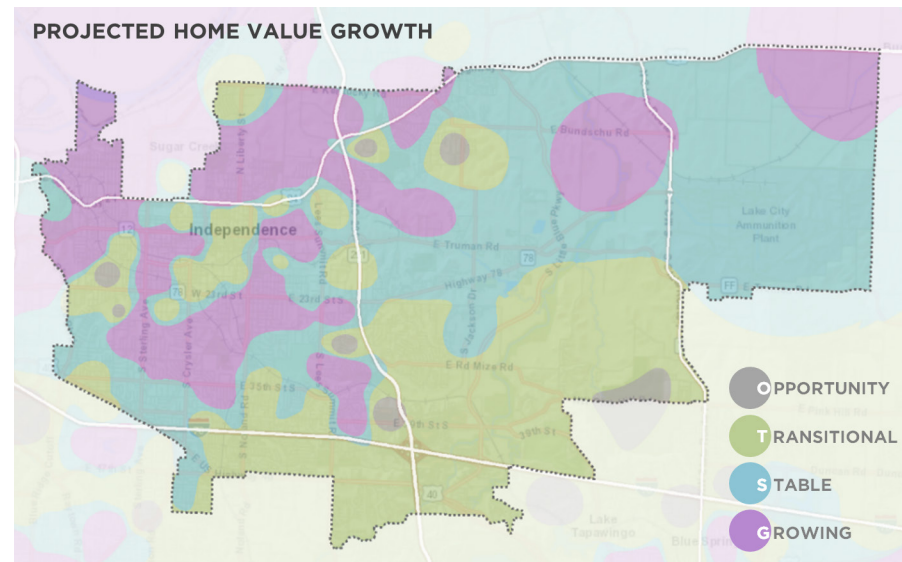
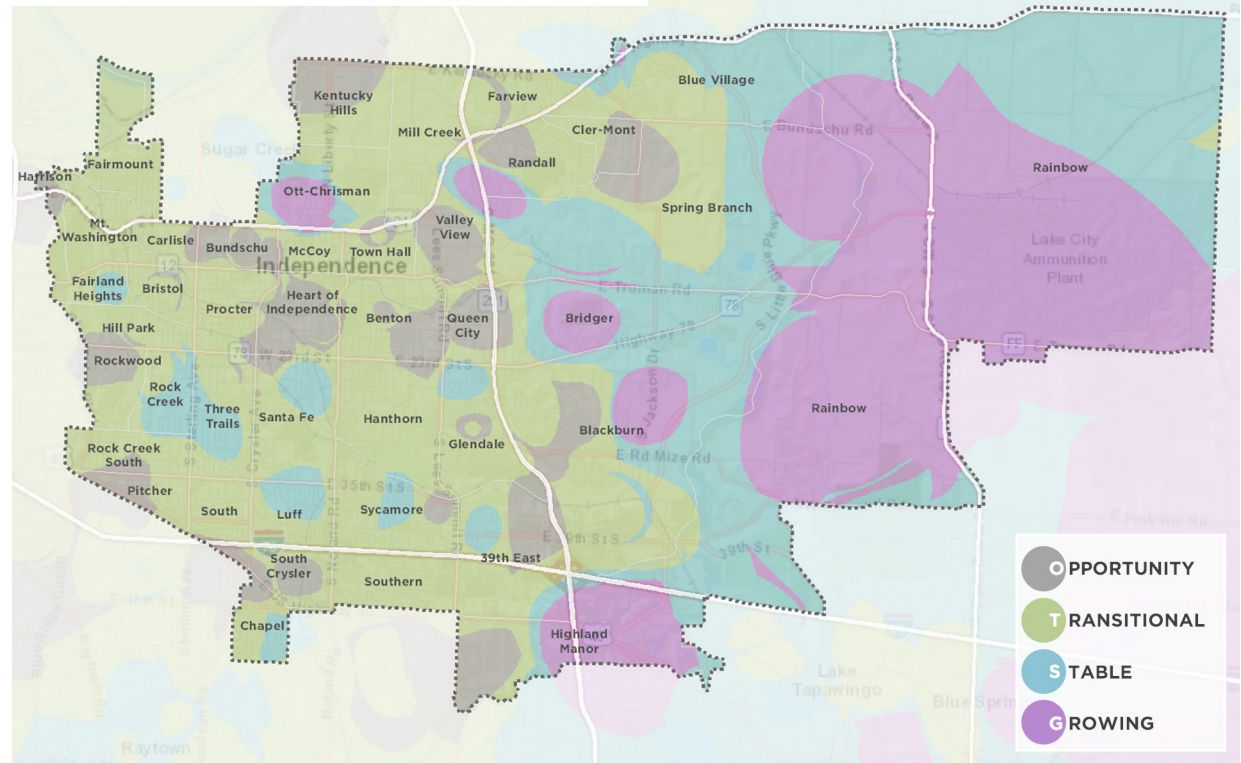


Projected Home Value Growth is a reflection of potential demand for an area. In some more modest neighborhoods, the higher growth rates can be a reflection of home and neighborhood investment leading to value increases, and a general rise in the cost of more affordable housing. In newer areas, the higher rates can be simply a function of new development. It is important to note that there are few low value growth areas in the city, reflecting the potential for wealth building, but also the potential for displacing people who cannot afford the rising costs.

Permit Activity is a reflection of investments in improvements, repairs and new construction. It is measured by residential permits issued in the past 5 years with a value above \$5,000. With few exceptions, including the area around Ott-Chrisman, McCoy, and Town Hall, the area west of Hwy. 291 has had relatively little permit activity.

While predominantly Transition in nature, the composite map shows considerable variability of Economic Prospects indicators west of Jackson Dr.

COMPOSITE MAP – ECONOMIC PROSPECTS



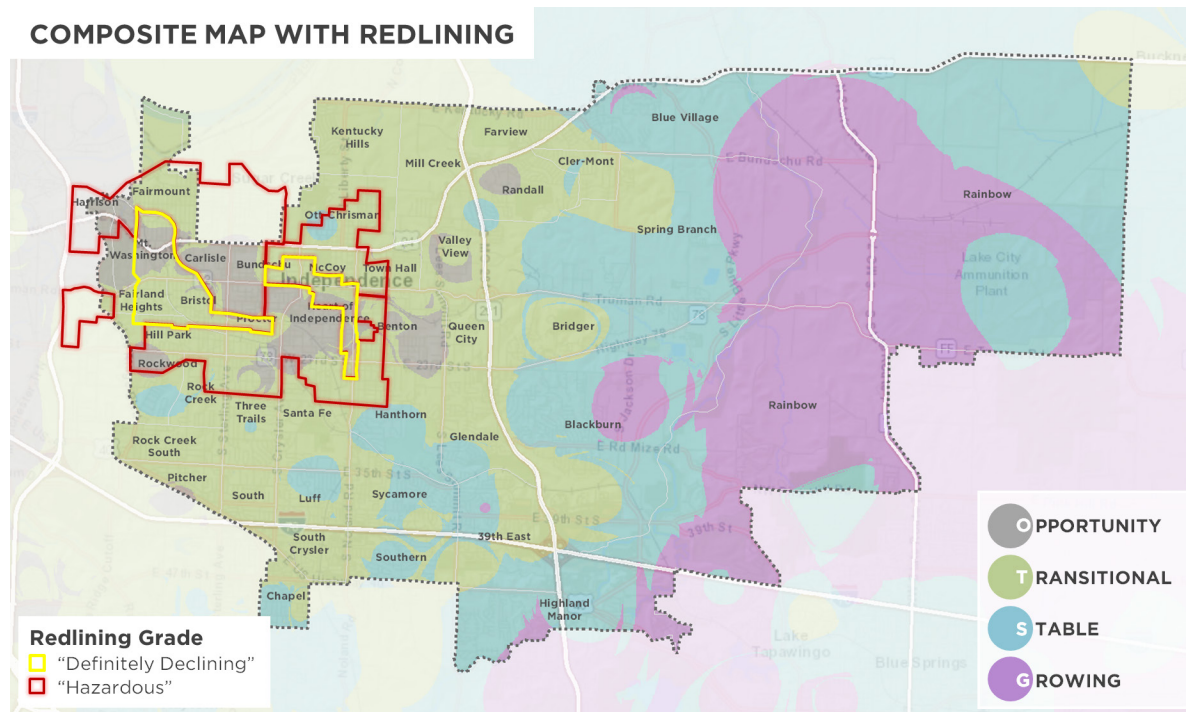
Composite Neighborhood Cycle Map

Blending the People & Households, Quality of Life, and Economic Prospects factors results in the neighborhood cycle classifications shown in the map to the far right. Opportunity neighborhoods are concentrated in central and west-central core of Independence and align with some of what stakeholders reported as the most challenged neighborhoods in the city. Transitional neighborhoods dominate the areas west of Highway 291, though there are pockets of stable neighborhoods to the south, especially approaching the Interstate. The areas east of Hwy. 291 are stable and growing, reflecting the recent focus on new single-family development away from the core of the city. It is important to note that while some of Independence's neighborhoods completely fall under one cycle, others have a mix of two or more, pointing to the challenge of classifying neighborhoods - they are dynamic places.

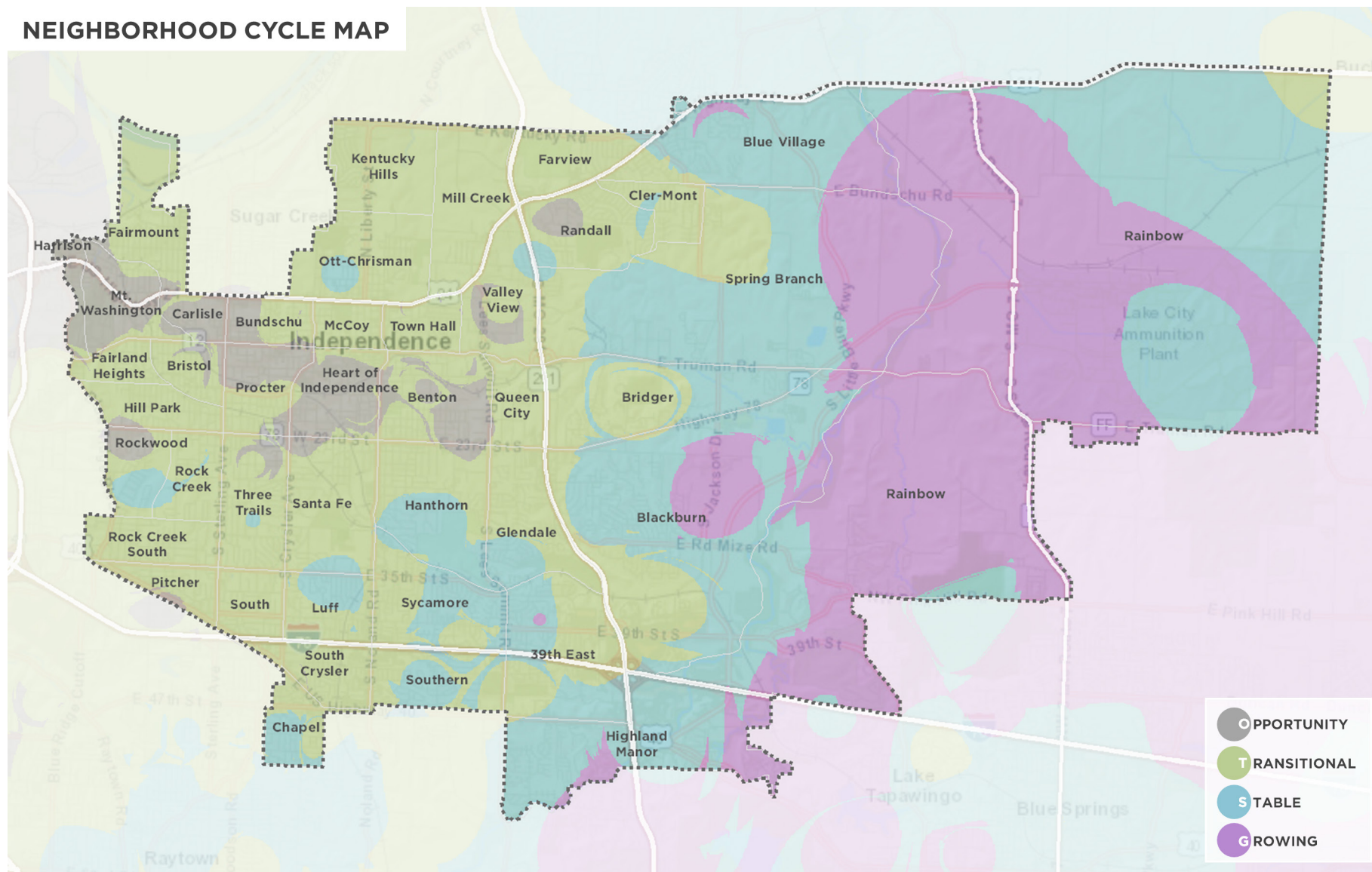
Neighborhood Cycles and Equity

Policies like redlining that influenced access to capital and credit created long-lasting effects on residential patterns, neighborhoods' economic health, and household accumulation of wealth. The map to the right shows that a most of the areas classified as the "opportunity" cycle within Independence were also classified as "hazardous" and "declining" in the past. It is interesting to note, however, that perhaps just as much area with the historic "hazardous" and "declining" grades shows as "transitional", indicating perhaps that history does not dictate the future, and change is already happening to reverse the influence racist policies.

COMPOSITE MAP WITH REDLINING



NEIGHBORHOOD CYCLE MAP



Metrics & Sources (mapped at Block Group Level):
 Share of Households under Poverty Line - ACS 2019 5 Yr Estimates, Share of Cost-Burdened Households - ACS 2019 5 Yr Estimates & Development Strategies 2021,
 Share of College Graduates - ACS 2019 5 Yr Estimates, Share of Owner-occupied units - ESRI 2021, Median Home Value - ESRI 2021,
 Vacancy Rate - ACS 2019 5 Yr Estimates & ESRI 2021, Code Violations - City of Independence: code violations in residential parcels 2020 to present,
 Indexed Crime Rate - ESRI 2021, Unemployment Rate - ESRI 2021, Decadal Population Change 2010-21 - ESRI 2021 & US Decennial Census 2010,
 Projected Home Value Change 2021-26 - ESRI 2021, Residential Permits - City of Independence: Permits issued in residential parcels 2016-present with value above \$5,000.



COURT HOUSE

INDEPENDENCE

INDEPENDENCE



6

Housing Strategy Framework

Housing Goals & Strategy Framework

The purpose of this strategic framework is to give the City of Independence an outline to address its housing needs and goals.

The study of existing conditions, analysis of supply and demand, community survey, and conversations with community stakeholders provides a thorough understanding of what Independence's housing challenges are, and what types of housing the community needs to grow, while providing existing residents more suitable housing options. The final component of this study is to provide a high-level strategic framework that is intended to organize and focus the city's future actions around housing and housing policy. While the city recognizes the need for a housing strategy and implementation framework, it first sought to understand the current housing context. The strategic framework will serve as a guide when the city is able to move forward with creating its housing strategy.

Housing Goals & Objectives

The basis for the strategic framework is to address the key housing goals and objectives that emerged through the course of this study.



Reinvest in what already exists

1

Objectives:

- Support aging in place.
- Leverage investments in The Square, the schools, and specific neighborhoods like Englewood.
- Reduce code violations and nuisance complaints.
- Limit impact of out-of-town property owners/landlords.
- Create more unique places and destinations.
- Enhance the community's marketability.
- Leverage historic assets.
- Create more infill and redevelopment opportunities.
- Demolish obsolete structures.
- Create and/or refine policies to support and enhance redevelopment.
- Utilize and upgrade existing utilities and public infrastructure.



Expand housing options

2

Objectives:

- Diversify supply of housing types and price points / provide more options.
- Capture Independence's share of regional growth.
- Leverage strong school performance and other community assets.
- Enhance the community's marketability.
- Support community growth.
- Expand housing options for seniors.
- Create new / modify existing policies to support and streamline development for housing types with demonstrated demand.
- Utilize city-owned utility capacity to support housing development.
- Strategically expand area served by utilities.



Improve housing stability

3

Objectives:

- Reduce the number of homeless individuals in Independence.
- Identify locations for shelters and permanent housing.
- Support long-term solutions, such as permanent supportive housing.
- Reduce the number of problem landlords, or those that do not keep up with maintenance or respond to tenant issues.

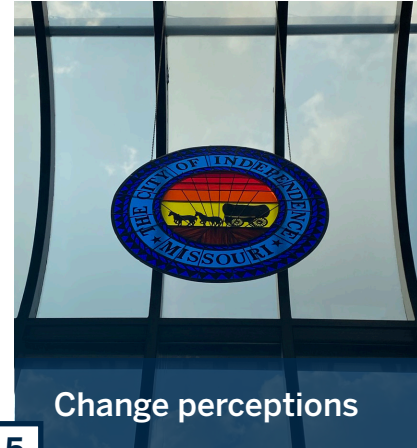


Streamline processes

4

Objectives:

- Attract new housing development and redevelopment.
- Clearly define needed permits and responsible departments for development.
- Specify primary staff contact or project manager for development applications.
- Clearly define timelines for review and information needed to process applications.



Change perceptions

5

Objectives:

- Market the community's assets, including high-performing school districts.
- Create a new brand for the city.
- Attract new housing development and redevelopment.
- Address negative outside perceptions of the city.
- Expose new people to Independence's amenities.
- Support broader economic development efforts.
- Improve city hall experience.



Engage the community

6

Objectives:

- Build trust, especially in minority and immigrant communities.
- Connect residents with city resources.
- Clearly communicate and "demystify" city permitting and review processes.
- Better understand needs and challenges in individual neighborhoods.
- Support investments underway.

Housing Strategy Framework

This strategic framework outlines five complementary strategies to meet the broad range of housing needs in Independence.

No single strategy on its own will be sufficient; a holistic approach based on collaboration, coordination, and partnership is needed to advance the housing goals in an equitable and balanced way. This framework offers a means by which the city and its partners can begin to coordinate their efforts, plan ahead, and identify opportunities for collaboration around a shared goal.



The quality of the existing housing stock is important to neighborhood stability and the overall health of Independence. Enhancing the condition of what exists today can benefit the community in many ways, including improving housing stability for residents, reducing health-related impacts of poor housing conditions, maintaining affordability of existing stock, supporting local contractors, increasing the tax base, enhancing the overall aesthetic of the community, and leveraging ongoing investments.

Key programs and tactics:

- Align public infrastructure investments, demolition activities, home repair, weatherization, and other programs in focus areas to maximize impact.
- Partner with local and regional organizations to expand weatherization and home repair programs.
- Coordinate with Jackson County Land Bank.
- Partner with local and regional organizations to provide home improvements, services, and programs that support aging in place.
- Pursue local, state, federal, philanthropic, and other grants to expand housing services.
- Continue to work with landlords to improve the condition of rental housing.
- Provide residents with clear information on permitting processes to support homeowner investment in their own properties.
- Create policies that support infill development, such as allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
- Adequately fund code enforcement and continue rental registration programs.
- Conduct a parcel-level housing quality assessment and infrastructure assessment.
- Establish an affordable housing fund.



Strategy 2

Be proactive about new development.

New development is critical to accommodating future growth for Independence. Whether it is having new and diverse housing stock to meet the needs of changing demographics of the city's current population, or having the right stock and amenities to attract new residents from around the region and beyond, it is important for the city to encourage a diversity of market-supported development in specific locations throughout the city. The city can support development in many ways, including strategic investment in public infrastructure including utilities, parks, and streetscape improvements; targeted use of incentives; and attracting new, quality developers with active marketing, modern codes and standards, and plans that identify opportunities for development.

Key programs and tactics:

- Create a map and database of platted subdivision lots that are currently available, along with information about utilities, cost, price point of home in the area, and other pertinent information.
- Identify locations of ongoing and planned public investment.
- Map infill development opportunities.
- Use data from this study to market specific opportunities, such as a greater variety of senior housing options.
- Work with Chamber, KCHBA, Realtor's association, and others to promote development opportunities and identify barriers



Strategy 3

Be intentional about engaging the community.

The housing survey and associated outreach showed us that there is a need to improve relations between the city and the immigrant community, as well as other marginalized populations. For instance, we partnered with a local business to translate the survey into Spanish and conduct targeted outreach to encourage that population to participate. However, only 5 percent of respondents identified themselves as “Hispanic or Latinx”, compared to 8 percent of the total population. In follow-up conversations, individuals indicated that they did not trust how the city might use the information, and that focus groups and descriptions of the purpose of the study by city staff would be helpful.

Therefore, in order to build trust and better incorporate this growing population segment, and other minority groups, into the community, more intentional outreach and engagement is needed.

Key programs and tactics:

- Identify community partners to host public forums and focus groups
- Coordinate with and/or hire partners to facilitate meetings with translation services
- Create an engagement plan, with scheduled events around specific topics
- Ensure outreach is done as part of the planning and rollout of future programs

A woman with dark hair, glasses, and a lanyard is smiling and talking to someone whose back is to the camera. They are in an office setting with a bulletin board in the background.

Strategy 4

Address homelessness and overall housing stability for Independence's neediest residents.

Housing insecurity creates a number of challenges for individuals, families, and communities. For instance, housing insecurity is known to cause mental and physical health problems. It also impacts school attendance and job performance, and the overall health and well being of those affected. Homelessness adds to these challenges, and becomes a visual presence in a community, which is a concern communicated by many of the stakeholders we spoke with. Yet, there are few options for homeless individuals or families in the form of shelter beds or permanent supportive housing that helps them transition to a more stable situation.

Key programs and tactics:

- Expand supports to prevent and address eviction and homelessness.
- Connect vulnerable tenants to housing counseling, emergency rent/utility support, and other services.
- Support a Second Chance Tenancy program.
- Identify acceptable locations for shelters and permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families.
- Continue efforts to promote neighborhood stability.
- Provide housing options that support aging in place, including home repair and accessibility programs.

Strategy 5

Change the perception of the city, locally and around the region.

As an older and historic city, Independence faces its share of challenges, including those related to aging housing stock and infrastructure systems, as well as the long-term impacts of disinvestment cause by Redlining and similar policies. Some of these challenges have been compounded by negative press in the past about crime, concentrations of drug challenges, and even the purchase of homes by national REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts). While the city cannot control all aspects of these narratives, it can be a proactive advocate for itself with a brand and marketing campaign that tells the story of why Independence is a strong community, a good place to live, and a place with unique opportunities.

Key programs and tactics:

- Create a unique brand for Independence that leverages its history, strong schools, community amenities, location, and other factors.
- Establish a marketing campaign to better market the city and many of its assets.
- Market development (infill and new construction) and entrepreneurial opportunities in Independence.
- Create more welcoming gateways to the city along major corridors, and establish a reinvestment strategy around those gateways.

