



5 Years of Neighborly Love

Neighborhoods Rising Fund

NRF is made possible by the following funders

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HALL FAMILY
FOUNDATION



THE WILLIAM T. KEMPER
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Neighborhoods Rising Fund

The Neighborhoods Rising Fund (NRF) is a funding collaborative that annually provides grants up to \$3,000 for community-led revitalization initiatives that help build stronger and more effective neighborhood organizations.

NRF is
administered
by.



**COMMUNITY
CAPITAL FUND**

LLSC KC

Why We Do What We Do

Every community desires to improve the quality of life of its residents, but many face adversity on the road to creating change. Kansas City's neighborhoods are creative and skilled in solving problems, mobilizing volunteers, and building strong networks. Yet too often, a lack of access to funding sources prevents them from bringing their ideas to fruition. **The Neighborhoods Rising Fund (NRF) provides critical funding support to help neighborhoods leverage their residents' talents and energy to realize their collective dreams and make a positive impact.**

The NRF was created in 2015 with the simple goal of seeding dreams and aspirations in Kansas City neighborhoods. These microgrants to neighborhood organizations can be the difference between combating community deterioration or proliferating the outcomes of long-term neighborhood disinvestment.

For most neighborhoods supported by NRF, these funds are the only source available to them to support efforts in neighborhood preservation and growth. These small projects address systemic issues of inequality, while empowering residents through capacity-building efforts supported by CCF, our partners, and the neighborhoods leading these unique projects.

Project Types

NRF funds solutions for communities, solutions that are created by the community.

These project types represent typical categories of NRF funding derived from priorities expressed by our neighborhoods in the last five years.

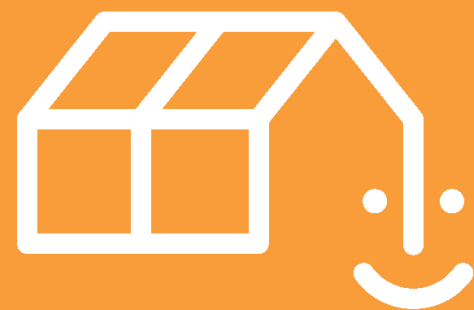
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**Neighborhood
Safety
& Security**



**Public Spaces,
Parks, &
Gardens**



**Neighborhood
Cleanup**



**Homes &
Property
Improvement**



**Membership
Development
& Social Cohesion**



**Celebration of Arts
& Culture**

Why build neighborhood capacity?

"Neighborhood organizations can provide mechanisms to help develop solutions for neighborhood problems. They are vehicles by which residents can develop leadership skills and take leadership roles, work cooperatively with local government, businesses, schools, churches, and other organizations; and communicate neighborhood news, information, and priorities."

- Steven E. Mayer & David M. Scheie, "Supporting Low Income Neighborhood Organizations," *Rainbow Research, Inc.*

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Neighborhood Investment



How success is defined

Our neighborhood leaders are fearlessly dedicated to solving problems that are often caused by systemic societal and economic issues and historic underinvestment. The resources provided by NRF help neighborhoods create solutions to these problems.

Success is also defined by the neighborhoods. NRF utilizes a data-driven format that is built alongside grantees to measure the outcomes that are most important to them. Together, we are working to develop a bottom-up approach to community and economic development. The following report gives a sense of what is most important to our neighborhoods.

75%

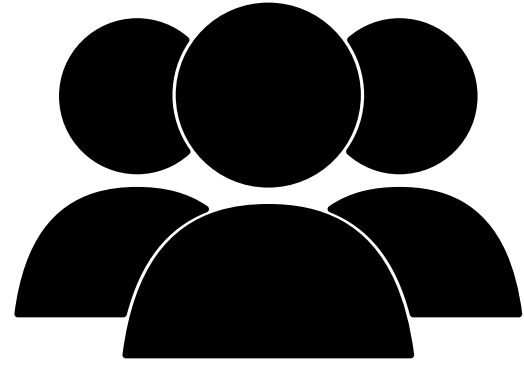
Reported a significant increase in **RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT**

76%

Reported a significant increase of **RESIDENT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

80%

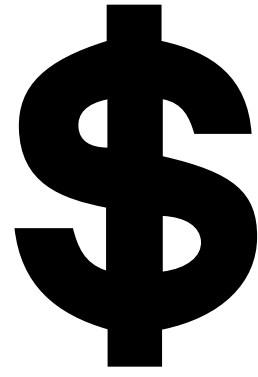
Reported a significant increase in **SENSE OF COMMUNITY**



ENGAGED RESIDENTS

105,726

People who attended programs and events organized by NRF grantees.



DEPLOYED

\$406,298

Total amount awarded to NRF grantees.



VOLUNTEERS

43,568

People who helped make the projects happen.

NRF by the Numbers

(2015-2019).

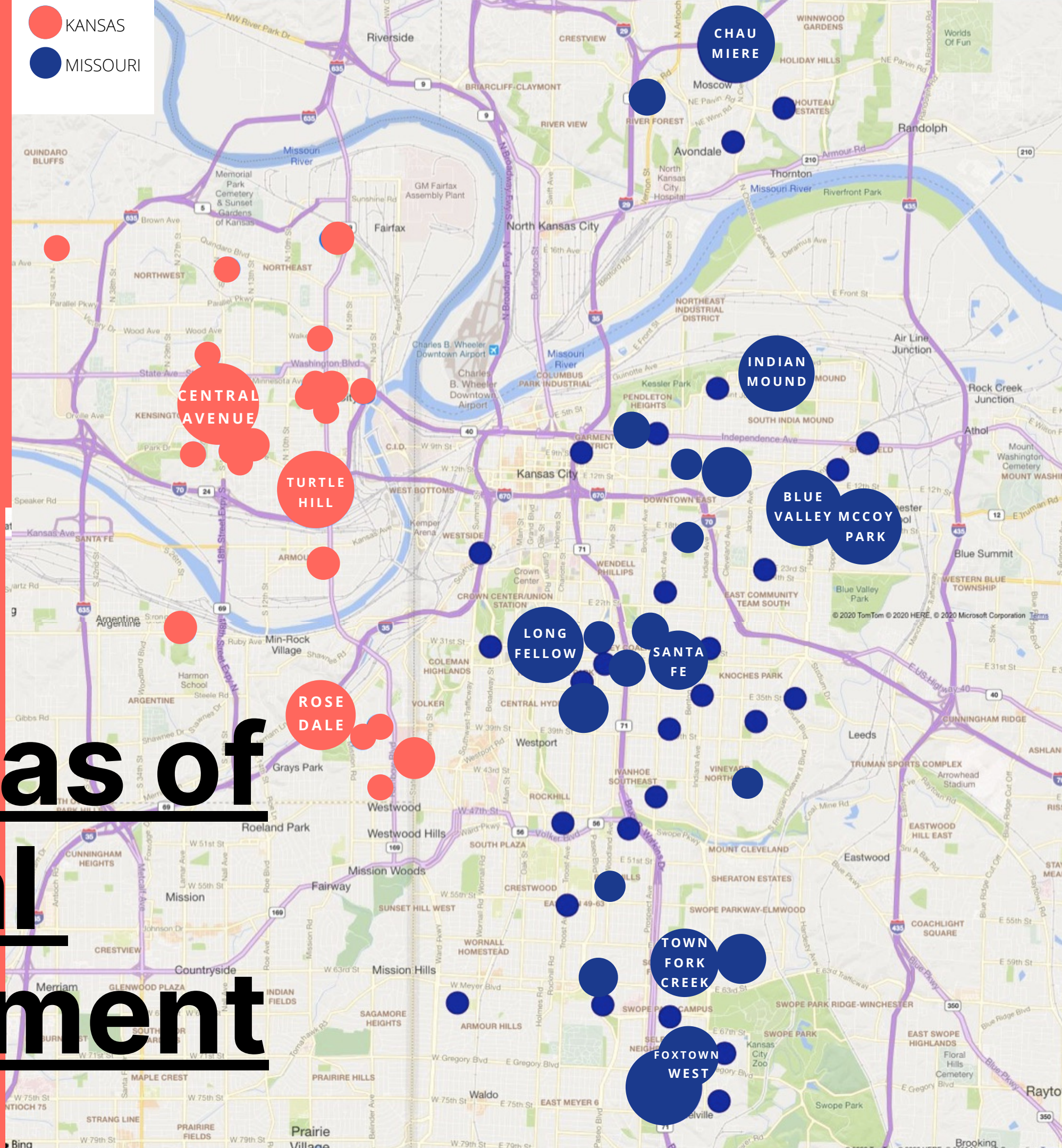


FUNDED PROJECTS

164

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● KANSAS
● MISSOURI



10 Areas of Critical Investment

1. **Central Avenue:** \$14,700
2. **Longfellow:** \$12,000
3. **McCoy Park:** \$11,710
4. **Rosedale:** \$11,500
5. **Indian Mound:** \$10,973
6. **Blue Valley:** \$10,295
7. **Town Fork Creek:** \$10,143
8. **Santa Fe:** \$10,000
9. **Turtle Hill:** \$9,779
10. **Foxtown West:** \$9,214

Public Spaces, Parks, & Gardens

Urban gardens and orchards offer an innovative way for those within urban food deserts to access fresh fruits and vegetables at little to no cost. These activities bring residents together and engage younger residents. Over the last five years, the concept of creating urban gardens has grown in popularity as more neighborhoods around highly urban areas adapt to use formerly vacant properties in this innovative way.

Several neighborhoods supported by NRF have provided thousands of pounds of free, fresh fruits and vegetables to residents. Volunteers, made up of neighbors, have helped maintain the gardens and orchards, while learning new skills during their work. Neighbors, including youth, have delivered foods from these gardens and orchards to elderly neighbors, a growing need for support.

Jerusalem Farm,
"Jerusalem Farm/Maple Flats"



Turtle Hill Community Association

NRF Grantee 2016-2020

In 2017, the Turtle Hill Community Association expanded their Giving Community Garden and Liberty Orchard. These spaces now provide more fresh vegetables, fruit, nuts and berries to Turtle Hill residents annually. Additionally, produce is donated to food pantries and homeless shelters around Northeast Kansas City, Kansas.

Longfellow Community Association

Longfellow Community Association was one of the first NRF grantees to focus solely on food and vegetable production as a neighborhood organization. Since 2015, they have grown the capacity of the Longfellow Farm through committed, devoted neighborhood engagement.

NRF Grantee 2015-2020



Chestnut Avenue Resource Center,
"Neighbor to Neighbor Network"

Neighborhood Safety & Security.



Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council, "INC Art"



Over time, Kansas City neighborhoods have found creative ways to address issues of crime and safety.

Several neighborhoods routinely engage youth in volunteer activities that not only create positive outlets but build a sense of neighborhood identity and pride.

Other neighborhoods have tackled issues of crime and safety with a more direct approach, using NRF funds to distribute resources and install surveillance cameras.



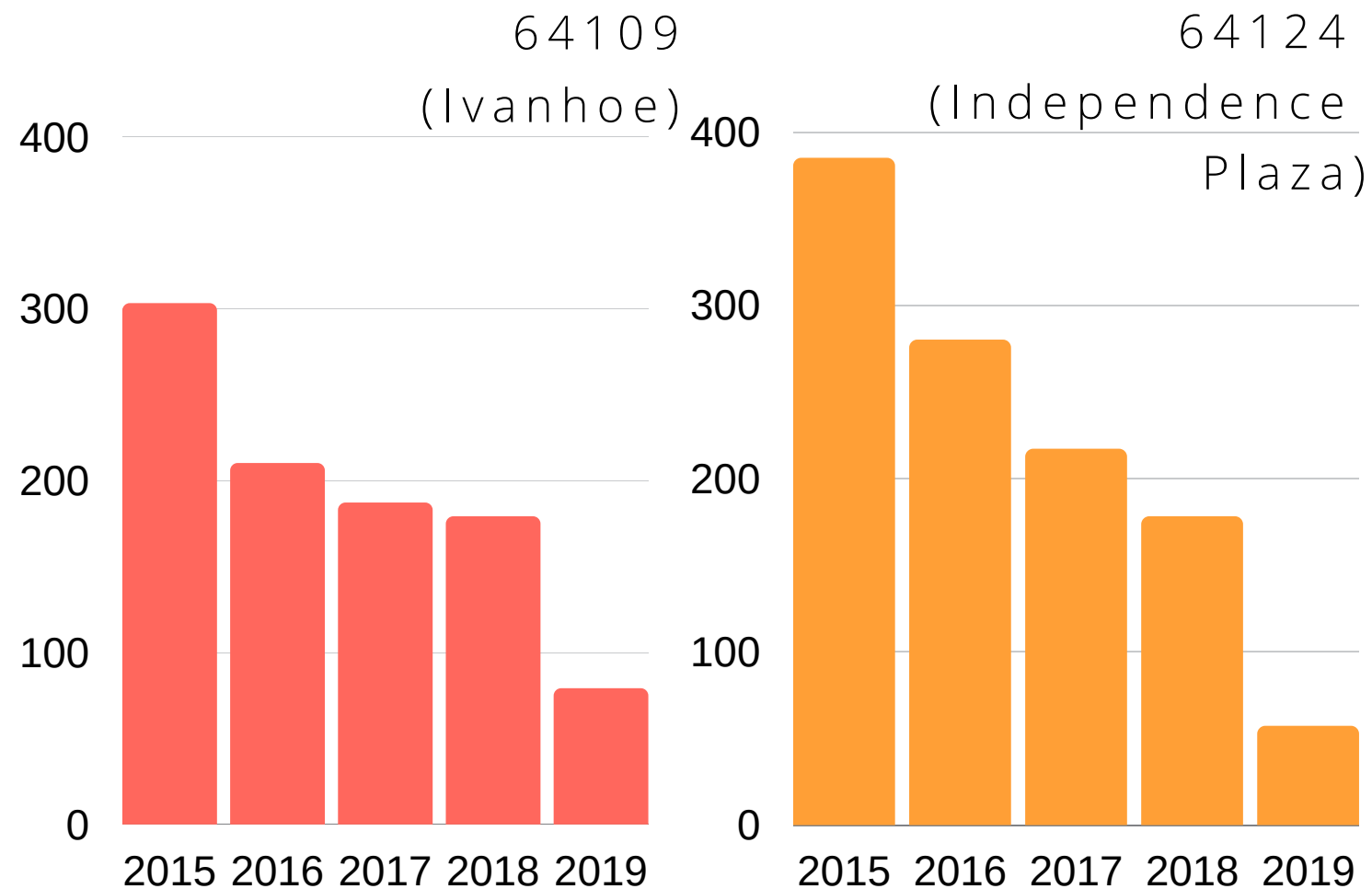
Cameras for Good

In 2018, NRF partnered with Jackson County COMBAT, Connecting for Good, AdHoc Group Against Crime, and LISC Greater Kansas City to support the Cameras For Good Pilot Program. This program helped several grantees purchase neighborhood-owned surveillance cameras and support additional safety measures. This initiative helped residents identify crime hot spots, led residents in block watch training, and provided technical assistance. It was a prime example of what collaboration can look like at a community-wide level. The cameras and resident training sought to prevent violent crime, illegal dumping, and burglaries from occurring - and to provide evidence if they do occur.

Neighborhoods participating in Cameras for Good: Blue Hills, Blue Valley, Center City, Independence Plaza, Ivanhoe, Santa Fe.

Number of Burglaries

While many factors play a role in lowering crime, the graphs below show how several neighborhoods have changed when communities lead efforts to improve safety.



Data from KCPD Crime Data, Opendata KC

Douglass/Sumner Neighborhood Association

NRF Grantee 2016-2020

Safety initiatives aren't always about crime. In 2019, Douglass/Sumner designed a new type of safety initiative by assembling and distributing safety bags to residents in the neighborhood. These bags included fire extinguishers, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and other resources for neighbors.





Membership Development & Social Cohesion

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One of the most common challenges neighborhood organizations throughout the area face is the aging status of their most active and dynamic volunteers. Neighborhood leaders are proud of the incredible work they have been part of, but also state the need to engage younger residents to continue the work of preserving and strengthening neighborhoods.

Multiple organizations, from Independence Plaza to East 23rd St PAC, take an active role in creating block captain and youth engagement programs. These opportunities not only engage younger residents but offer them leadership opportunities and valuable relationships.



Indian Mound Neighborhood Association

NRF Grantee 2016-2020

Indian Mound Neighborhood Association has organized events as a dynamic way to engage and bring together residents of all ages. Their annual National Night Out has grown over the course of the last five years to bring together five hundred people annually, with activities all ages enjoy. They also host additional events throughout the years, which have steadily grown their engagement and membership.

East 23rd St PAC has hosted their annual Family Day in the Park Against Violence for sixteen years. This event brings together both young and old as one big family. In 2019, East 23rd also launched their L.O.T.S (Leaders of Tomorrow) program, where younger residents are assigned small tasks to support their neighbors.

NRF Grantee 2017-2020

East 23rd St PAC Neighborhood Association

Neighborhood Cleanups

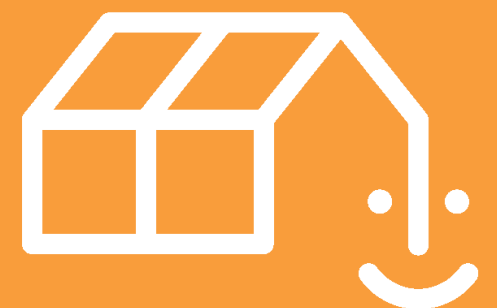
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Small neighborhood cleanups, especially in areas with heavy illegal dumping, allow neighborhoods an opportunity to address an underlying condition that can affect residents, both mentally and physically, and their perception of safety. Neighborhood organizations report that cleanups are necessary in addressing blight and can be a deterrent to crime. During cleanups, residents (including youth) gain a sense of pride for their community, lowering their chances of being involved in violent activity (as one neighborhood leader shared). Regular cleanups also reduce the chances that residents are written up for code violations – and the financial burden that can come with them.

“Illegal dumping is the most common environmental crime and leads to significant degradation of the area if left unchecked. It has a negative economic impact on the community and has been linked to a rise in other types of crime.” - City of Kansas City, Missouri Neighborhoods & Housing Services, "Illegal Dumping"



Lykins Neighborhood Association, "From Strangers to Neighbors: Blossoming the Community"



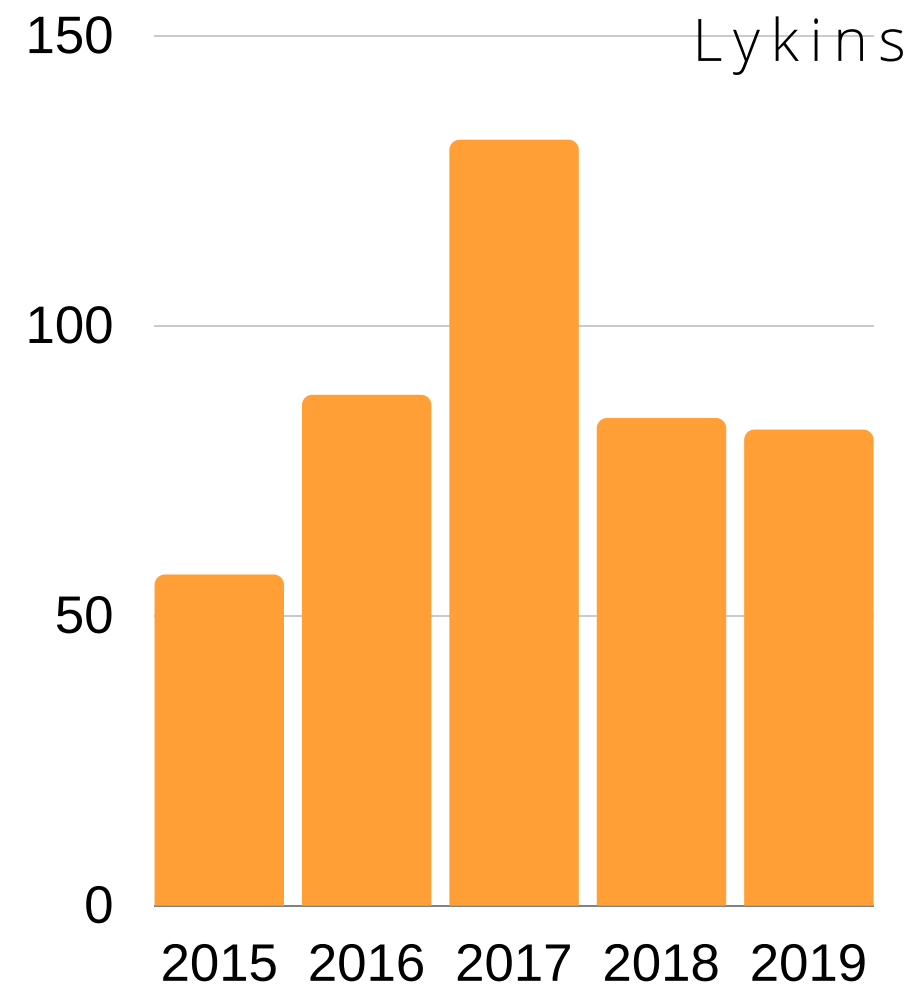
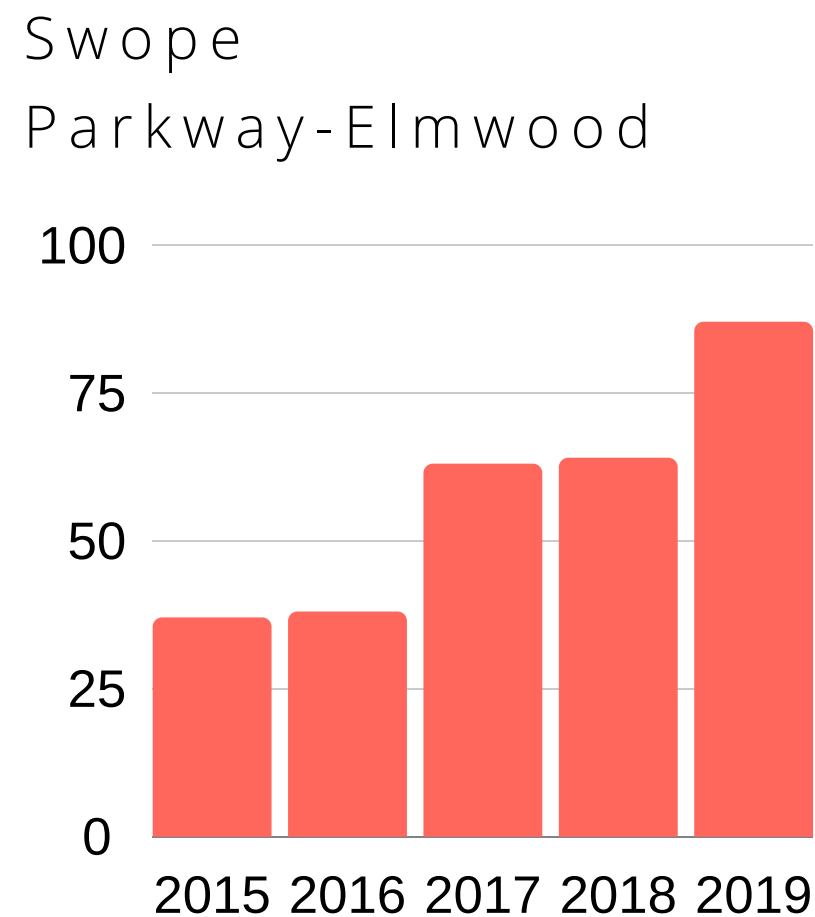
Swope Parkway-Elmwood Neighborhood Association

NRF Grantee 2016-2020

Swope Parkway-Elmwood has used NRF funds to secure dumpsters and organize cleanups since 2016. They see these cleanups as a way to engage neighbors and solve long-standing issues they have faced as a neighborhood.

311 calls on illegal dumping

The graphs below show the increasing need to support neighborhood cleanups (Swope Parkway-Elmwood) and the change that can occur when neighborhoods respond quickly (Lykins).



Lykins Neighborhood Association regularly hosts neighborhood cleanups as a crucial part of their annual programs. Each year they build capacity as they draw more volunteers to join in. In 2019, a total of 30 dumpsters were filled during a series of nine cleanup events. Lykins residents also see these cleanups as a way to build their reputation as a neighborhood and create community pride.

NRF Grantee 2016-2020

Lykins Neighborhood Association

Celebration of Arts & Culture



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Central Avenue Betterment Association,
"Day of the Dead Celebration"

NRF neighborhood leaders have organized cultural events to celebrate the cultural heritage and artistic talents of residents. Some neighborhoods have even organized their events and meetings in multiple languages to increase the participation of non-English speaking residents.

Residents use art to express their individual and collective cultural identities and histories. NRF neighborhoods have organized art education initiatives for youth, mural projects, parades, and more.



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Rosedale Development Association,
"42nd Street Mural Project"

NRF Grantee 2015-2020

Rosedale Development Association

Over the course of several years, Rosedale has finished panel after panel on their 800-ft public art project in the heart of the Rosedale neighborhood. The project blends the commissioned work of local artists as well as the help of residents from the neighborhood. The work tells the diverse history of the Rosedale area, drawing on the oral history of local activists.

Central Avenue Betterment Association (CABA).

NRF Grantee 2015-2020

At the heart of CABA is a mission to empower the Latino businesses and residents along the Central Avenue Commercial Corridor. They have done this in a number of ways, organizing cleanups and small business events. But it is their celebrations of art that have helped drive their mission. Annually, their Dia de los Muertos parade draws hundreds of people and has become a staple in the area.

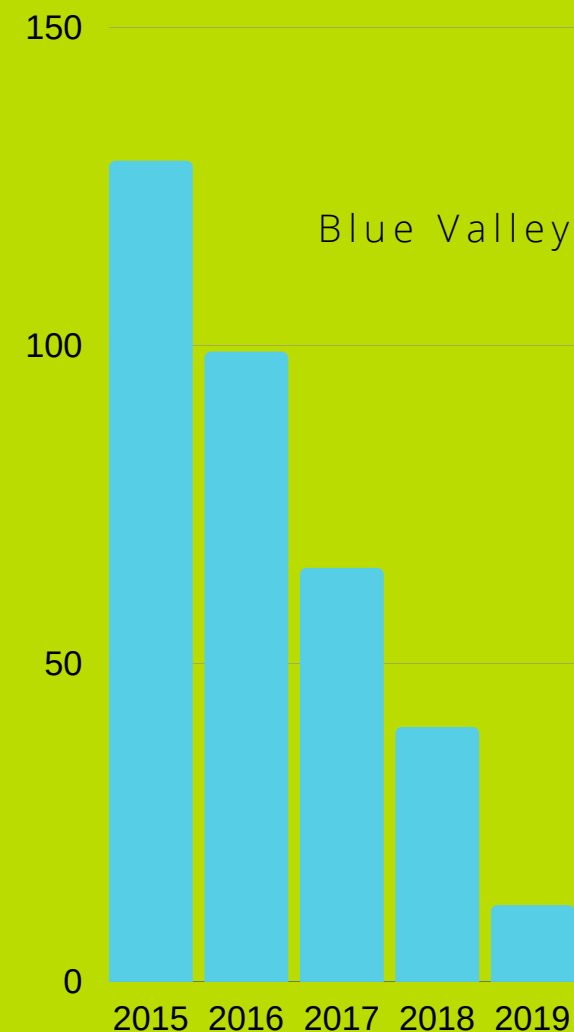
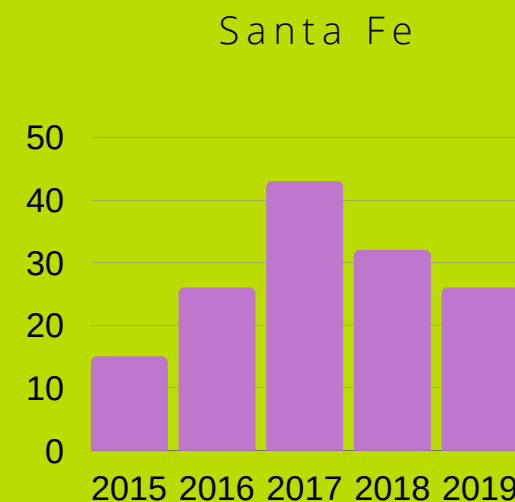


Homes & Property Improvement

Building organically upon the neighborhood cleanups, several NRF grantees have also addressed home and property improvement initiatives. These have given residents the resources to make minor home preservation through the distribution of tools and more (see East Meyer Cluster Organization's 2018 project below). These initiatives have also included support from neighborhood volunteers, assisting elderly neighbors with weeding and lawn maintenance.

While these improvements seem minor, they provide enormous benefits to residents who would otherwise be charged with code violations. Ongoing improvements and maintenance also serve as a way for residents to stay engaged with one another throughout the year.

311 calls for code violations



Santa Fe Area Council

NRF Grantee 2015-2020

Santa Fe has actively administered a Codes Abatement Program for the last four years. As a part of this program, Santa Fe used NRF funds to rent trucks and trailers to regularly haul trash for organizations. IOrganized in conjunction with the City of Kansas City, MO, the program out biweekly code violations patrols and 311 representatives. This helped residents in 2016 learn how to use 311 calls as a way to help, but also to prevent code violations from happening. As a result, Santa Fe has some of the lowest rates of code violations in the Central Kansas City, MO area.



Santa Fe Area Council,
"Santa Fe Codes Abatement Program"



East Meyer Cluster Organization,
"Leaf Bag Distribution"

NRF Grantee 2016-2020

Blue Valley Neighborhood Association

Blue Valley Neighborhood Association seeks measures to prevent resident code violations. Since the early days as a NRF grantee, Blue Valley residents have focused on building strong networks to provide innovative solutions and tangible resources to build community. This included putting out needle containers in public spaces. Leaders are active in civic and local government initiatives.

In 2017, Blue Valley Neighborhood Association leaders distributed recycle bins after neighborhood cleanups to residents in need.



The Future of Neighborhoods Rising Fund

Each year the Neighborhoods Rising Fund has evolved and adapted to best support the changing needs and solutions for our communities.

The events of 2020 have further highlighted the disproportionate effects of disinvestment in our neighborhoods.

Neighborhood safety and cleanup projects play a crucial role to address increased rates of violent crime and illegal dumping. Volunteer-led property improvement programs help keep residents in their homes. Access to healthy food created through community gardens continues to be a pivotal solution to the food insecurity.

The role of NRF and inclusive community and economic development has never been clearer.



Heart of the City Neighborhood Association,
"Make Music Day" (2020)

Still We Rise

Neighborhood and grassroots leaders across the Kansas City metropolitan area are organizing around creative solutions to deeply embedded problems. NRF resources are critical to this work.

The Neighborhoods Rising Fund is proud to support the project leaders, residents, and organizers who are working every day to build strong, vibrant communities.

For more information or to join us in this work, visit www.ccfkansascity.org.

