

Neighborhoods guiding innovative community transformation efforts

The Green Impact Zone initiative is an innovative partnership designed to transform an urban neighborhood into a sustainable community.

By focusing resources in a 150-square block area — from 39th to 51st Streets, and from Troost to Prospect and Swope Parkway — neighborhood leaders and community partners are working towards a vision of social, environmental and economic strength in the Green Impact Zone. This project will serve as a model for transforming other communities, both in the Kansas City area and across the country.

With guidance from neighborhood organizations in the zone (see map, page 3), the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is coordinating efforts to get funding for the Green Impact Zone from the federal stimulus program



Dignitaries cut the ribbon at the opening of the Green Impact Zone office. Left to right: Mike Chesser, CEO of Great Plains Energy; U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II; Rodney Knott, President, Historic Mannheim Park Association; Shaun Donovan, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Adolfo Carrion, Director, White House Office of Urban Affairs; and John Porcari, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

and other sources. A grant of \$1.5 million from the city of Kansas City, Mo., provided the funding necessary to launch the initiative. MARC provides administrative staff and services for the zone at the new Green Impact Zone office, 4600 Paseo.

The Green Impact Zone staff works with a coordinating council made up of neighborhood leaders and other partners. Initial projects in the zone will include home weatherization, job training and job placement efforts.

Green Impact Zone inspires changes to homeowner rebate program

The Metropolitan Energy Center, Kansas City Power & Light and Missouri Gas Energy have developed a unique program to help homeowners make their homes more energy efficient. KCP&L and MGE customers in the Green Impact Zone and throughout Missouri are eligible to participate.



Additional insulation, new energy-efficient windows and doors, and air-sealing work are some examples of the types of projects eligible for the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® rebate program.

The Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® program was designed as a rebate program where homeowners would pay for an energy audit and qualified improvements, then be reimbursed for up to \$600 through credits on their electricity bills. MGE and KCP&L announced a joint partnership in September that would increase the available bill credits to \$1,200 — \$600 from each utility.

At a Green Impact Zone committee meeting held in late summer, people pointed out that many homeowners may find it difficult to pay for the energy audit up front and wait for reimbursement. As a result of this discussion and feedback from other project partners, the utilities expanded the program option to allow customers to authorize KCP&L and MGE to use

the credit that would have gone on their gas or electric bills to make direct payments to certified contractors — with no out-of-pocket expenses for the homeowner unless the work exceeds \$1,200. This is an optional feature that may not be offered by all certified companies.

To participate, residents begin by selecting a certified company to perform an energy audit on their homes and determine what improvements are needed. Many homes may need more than \$1,200 to reach maximum energy efficiency, but the energy audit provides a road map that will help homeowners plan and budget for additional projects over time. To learn more, visit www.hpwes.net or call the Metropolitan Energy Center at 816-531-7283.



energy tip: Using a programmable thermostat can lower your heating and cooling bills by as much as 10 percent.

Ombudsmen connect residents to resources

In November, the Green Impact Zone's community ombudsmen began a door-to-door campaign to get acquainted with residents. This community outreach effort is intended to acquaint residents with the Green Impact Zone initiative, answer questions and connect them with potential resources.

The zone ombudsmen work with neighborhood organizations and city council districts to share information about upcoming community events and opportunities, including job training, education, youth programs, public safety, transportation, housing and city services.

The Green Impact Zone community ombudsmen and their areas of responsibility are:

- Arletha Bland Manlove — Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council and

Neighborhood Housing Services; employment, training and housing.

- Cokethea Hill — Blue Hills Neighborhood Association and Blue Hills Community Services; data and housing.
- Pauline Mbogo — 49/63 Neighborhood Association, Troostwood Neighborhood Association and Town Fork Creek Neighborhood Association; public safety and weatherization
- Jermaine Reed — Historic Mannheim Park Association and Swope Community Builders; public safety and youth programming.

Community ombudsmen are available to meet with residents by appointment at the Green Impact Zone office. Call 816/474-4240 for more information.



conservation tip: Lower your water bill and conserve water by using a rain barrel to collect rainwater from downspouts. Use it to water your lawn and outdoor plants.



Join the Community Leadership Program

Want to become a leader in your neighborhood? Green Impact Zone residents are eligible to participate in MARC's Community Leadership training program at no cost.

Through this program, you will earn certificates in five areas — Personal Strengths, Facilitation Skills, Problem Solving, Relationship Building and Community Building.

Each of the five programs is made up of five, two-hour sessions, held one night each week from 6 to 8 p.m. at a location in the Green Impact Zone.

**For more information
visit www.marc.org/clp
or call 816-701-8216**

Community Crews tackle stormwater drainage problems

Many of the older homes in the Green Impact Zone have problems with stormwater getting into basements because of dilapidated sidewalks and foundations that need repair. And many young people in the zone need to learn a trade and find steady employment. Why not bring these two together?

Earlier this year, with support from federal stimulus funds, the Full Employment Council worked with the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council to do

just that, training two groups of young people to repair and replace damaged sidewalks, sloping the concrete away from foundations to redirect stormwater runoff.

Building on this successful effort, the Green Impact Zone's Neighborhood Leadership Committee will soon deploy two more Community Crews to work on stormwater diversion, beginning in the Historic Mannheim neighborhood and continuing throughout the zone. The goal is to repair at least 72 more homes in the next year.

Community Crew members will receive classroom and hands-on training. In addition to concrete finishing skills, they will learn how to dig out and replace old sidewalks, fill in around foundations, and plant rain gardens to absorb stormwater.

For more information, contact Margaret J. May, executive director of the Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council, or call the Green Impact Zone office at 816-474-4240.



Many older homes in the zone have drainage problems due to cracked or damaged sidewalks that direct stormwater runoff towards foundations and basements. After receiving training, Community Crew members can repair and replace damaged sidewalks, sloping them away from foundations.

Surveyors documenting current conditions in the Green Impact Zone

In order to make the best use of resources in the Green Impact Zone, project partners need to know exactly what the physical, historical and social conditions are in the zone right now.

The Mid-America Regional Council has contracted with the UMKC Center for Economic Information to hire two data collectors to conduct a block-by-block survey of the Green Impact Zone. The data collectors, both of whom are long-time community workers, are trained to evaluate property from the street so that they do not trespass on private property.

These surveyors will document the number of vacant homes and lots, homes that need repair, broken sidewalks and other information that will help Green Impact Zone staff facilitate improvements. The baseline data will also be useful in measuring progress over time.

The Center for Economic Information will also compile secondary data such

Abandoned houses and vacant lots are a problem in the Green Impact Zone.

Foreclosure rates were high in the zone even before the 2009 housing crisis, and more than 1,000 of the zone's 4,042 residential lots are vacant lots with no structures.

The Green Impact Zone initiative will work through neighborhood organizations to rehabilitate foreclosed properties and convert empty lots to community gardens or rain gardens.



as crime reports, Census data, utility data and health data for the zone.

In a second phase of survey work to be done this fall, representatives from the University of Kansas will research social and perceptual information in the zone. Surveyors will walk through each neighborhood with neighborhood leaders, noting issues, assets, desires and perceptions. Next spring, once

necessary funding is secured, 300 to 400 zone residents will be surveyed about employment, health, education, energy use and perceptions. This survey will be conducted by paid surveyors who are residents of the zone.

Students from the UMKC Urban Planning and Design program are also collecting information in the zone for a senior class project.

THE GREEN IMPACT ZONE

This area of Kansas City was selected for the Green Impact Zone initiative not only because of the challenges — including high unemployment, poverty and crime rates — but because of its strengths. The zone is home to 10 active neighborhood organizations that are key partners in the initiative:

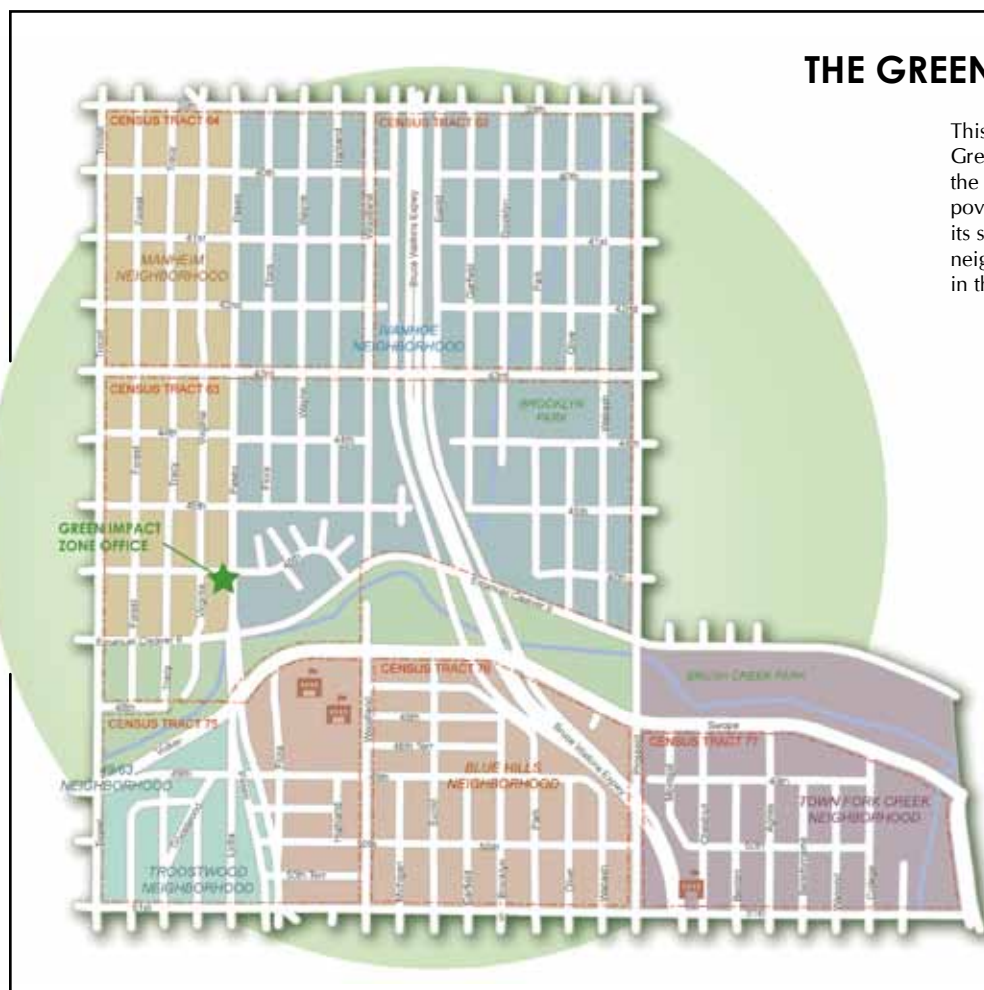
- Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council
- Historic Mannheim Park Association
- Troostwood Neighborhood Association
- 49/63 Neighborhood Association
- Blue Hills Neighborhood Association
- Town Fork Creek Neighborhood Association
- Blue Hills Community Services
- Neighborhood Housing Services
- Swope Community Builders
- Brush Creek Community Partners



quick facts:

Population.....	8,374
Single-Parent Households.....	25%
Persons in Rental Units.....	48%
Persons in Poverty.....	31%
Median Household Income ...	\$22,397
Unemployment.....	12.9%

Source: 2000 Census





Green Impact Zone

4600 Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64110

Office Hours

Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Evenings by appointment

Phone: 816-474-4240

Fax: 816-421-7758

Web: www.greenimpactzone.org

E-mail: greenimpactzone@marc.org

United States®
Census
2010

IT'S IN OUR HANDS

Watch for information
about the 2010 Census
in our next issue.

keep it green keep it clean

WEATHERIZATION

Heating bills too high? Weatherizing your home may help. Call 816-513-3025 for information and an application.

PAINT PROGRAM

Exterior of your house need painting? Call 816-513-3252 to see if you qualify for free paint and supplies.

WEEKLY TRASH PICKUP

The city will pick up two bags per household for free each week. Additional bags must have a special tag. You can buy tags for \$1 each at Westlake Ace Hardware or Price Chopper stores.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Things like paint, batteries, pesticide, oil and other hazardous products shouldn't go in the regular trash. You can drop these items off at the city's HHW facility at 4707 Deramus, but you must call 816-513-8400 for an appointment.

CURBSIDE RECYCLING

Put plastic bottles, aluminum cans and other recyclables in your blue bin on the curb on trash day. Don't have a blue bin? You can buy one for \$9 at Westlake Ace Hardware or Price Chopper stores.

OTHER RECYCLING

Have questions about what you can recycle and where to take it? Call 816-474-TEAM or go online to www.recyclespot.org.

NEW! GLASS RECYCLING

Ripple Glass has placed convenient recycling bins for glass drop off around the Kansas City area. For more information, call 816-221-GLASS or go online to rippleglasskc.com.

BULKY ITEM PICKUP

Have old furniture or appliances you need to get rid of? Call 311 to make an appointment for a bulky item pickup.