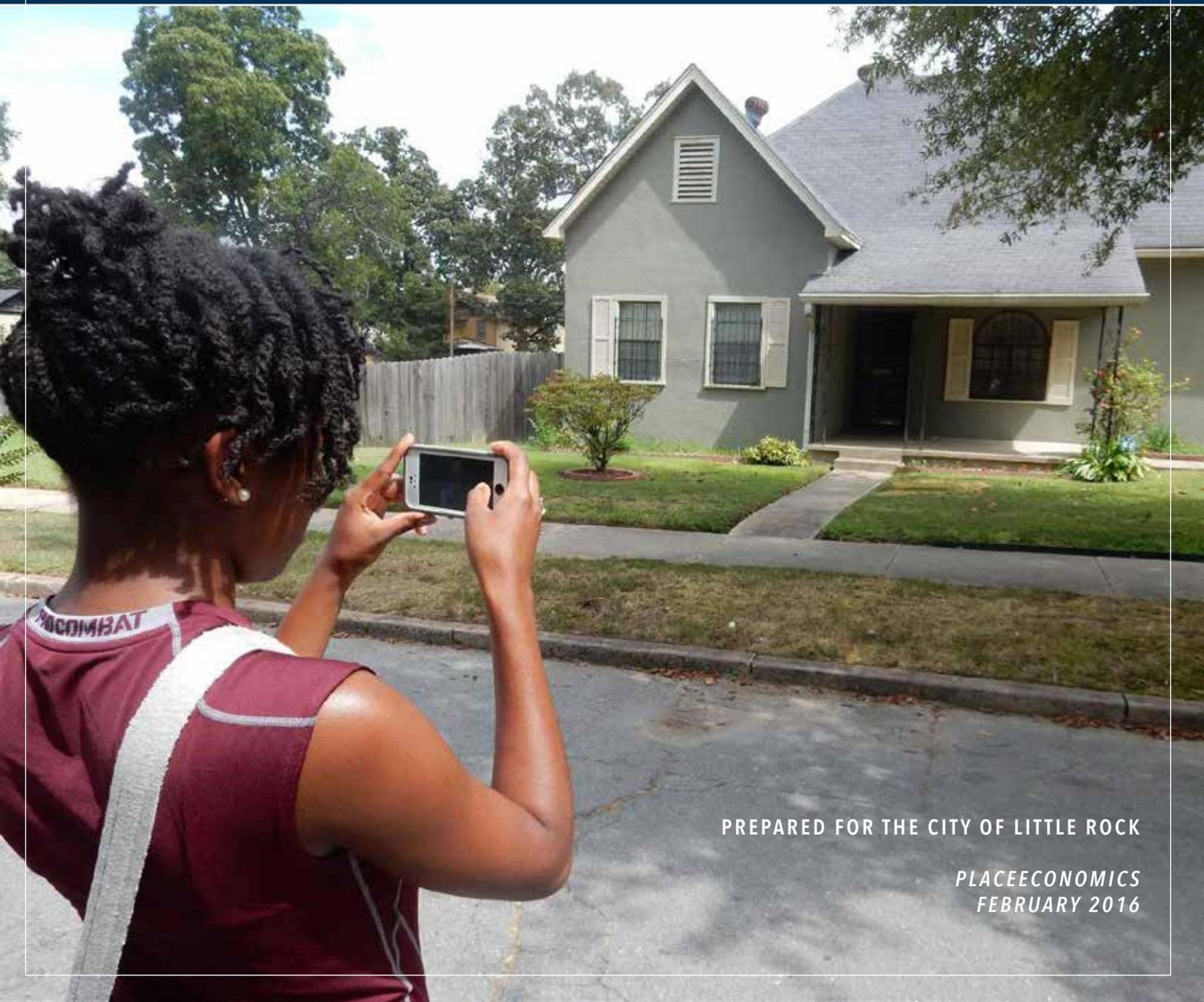


# A WAY FORWARD

## STRATEGIES AND TOOLS FOR ADDRESSING VACANCY IN LITTLE ROCK



PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF LITTLE ROCK

PLACEECONOMICS  
FEBRUARY 2016



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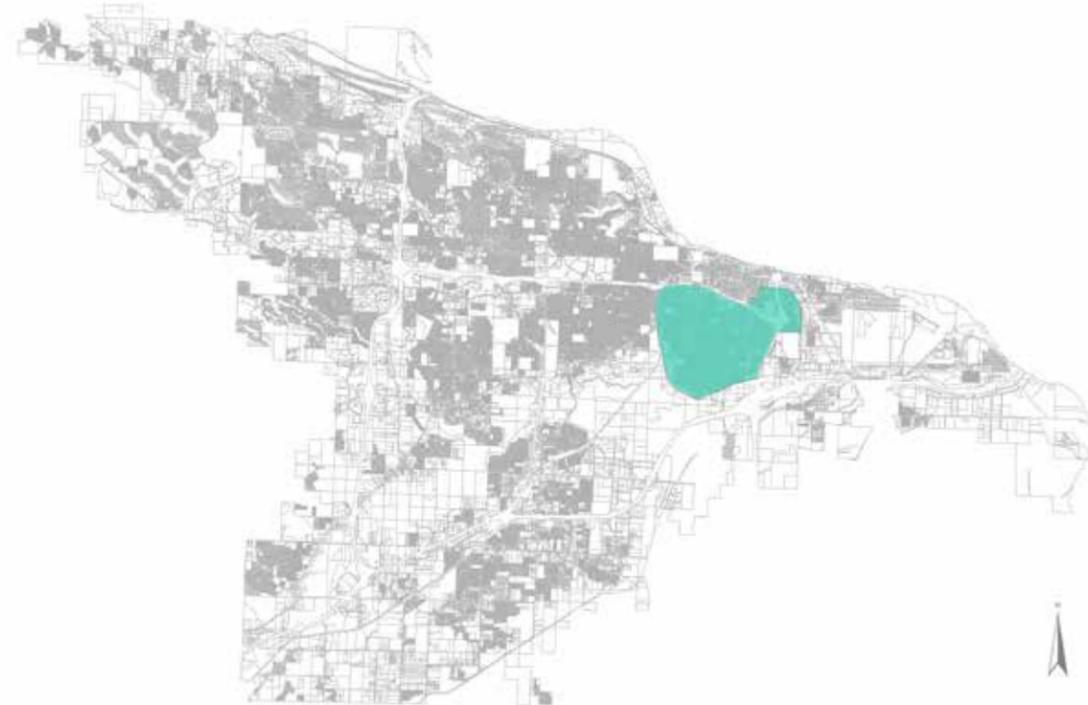
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



STUDY AREA HIGHLIGHTED  
WITHIN LITTLE ROCK

**13%**  
OF ALL BUILDINGS IN THE STUDY  
AREA ARE VACANT

**22%**  
OF ALL STUDY AREA PARCELS ARE  
VACANT LOTS

When population declines, whether on a city or a neighborhood level, the consequences can be severe. These losses affect employment opportunities, economic stability, and local tax revenues, reducing resources available for reinvestment in city infrastructure and other necessary improvements. Unlike some American cities, Little Rock has continued to grow in recent years. But some neighborhoods within Little Rock have lost population, including the areas that are the subject of this report.

Population losses mean more buildings than there are people to fill them. Over time, as vacant buildings are demolished or otherwise removed, vacant lots are left behind in various states of maintenance.

Determining where scarce resources should be allocated to have the greatest impact is challenging, but important. Strategic allocation of funds is key to effective interventions today that meaningfully affect the near- and long-term future of the area. And to do so requires a big-picture view of where each parcel, block, and neighborhood stands today.

The Relocal tool is designed to support this planning approach and facilitate strategic decision-making by taking a comprehensive approach to assessing neighborhood strengths and challenges, identifying current physical conditions, and analyzing neighborhood trends.

In Little Rock, Relocal was applied to a study area around the city's downtown that was divided into five subareas: Central, East, North Central, South, and West. The Relocal study area is roughly bounded by I-630 on the north, jogging up to Capitol Avenue and over to include Hanger Hill; I-30 on the east; Fourche Creek on the south; and the railroad tracks behind Central High on the west.

As part of the Relocal project, parcel, block, and subarea characteristics were analyzed within the study area using 74 quantitative metrics across 8 categories plus a community priority survey. The results yield an array of practical recommendations for treating and reusing apparent liabilities – vacant buildings and empty lots – in a way that strategically contributes to the vitality of the surrounding area and improves quality of life for residents. Local stakeholders can select specific strategies based on other plans, available funding, and collaborative coordination.

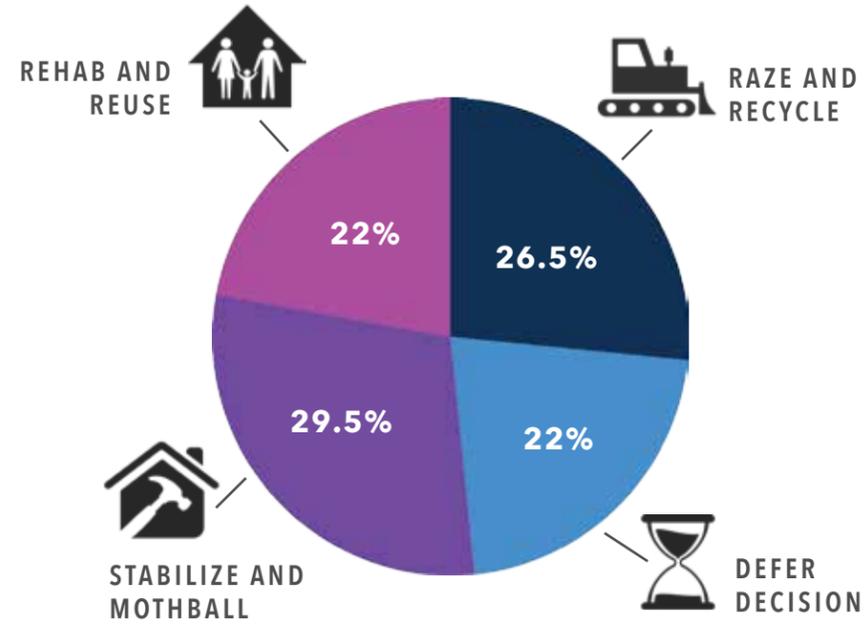
This report serves two purposes:

1. To offer an array of data-based recommendations for each vacant building and vacant lot in the Little Rock study area for the intermediate term (1-5 years); and
2. To establish a flexible framework for local decision-making for multiple entities with different roles and priorities.

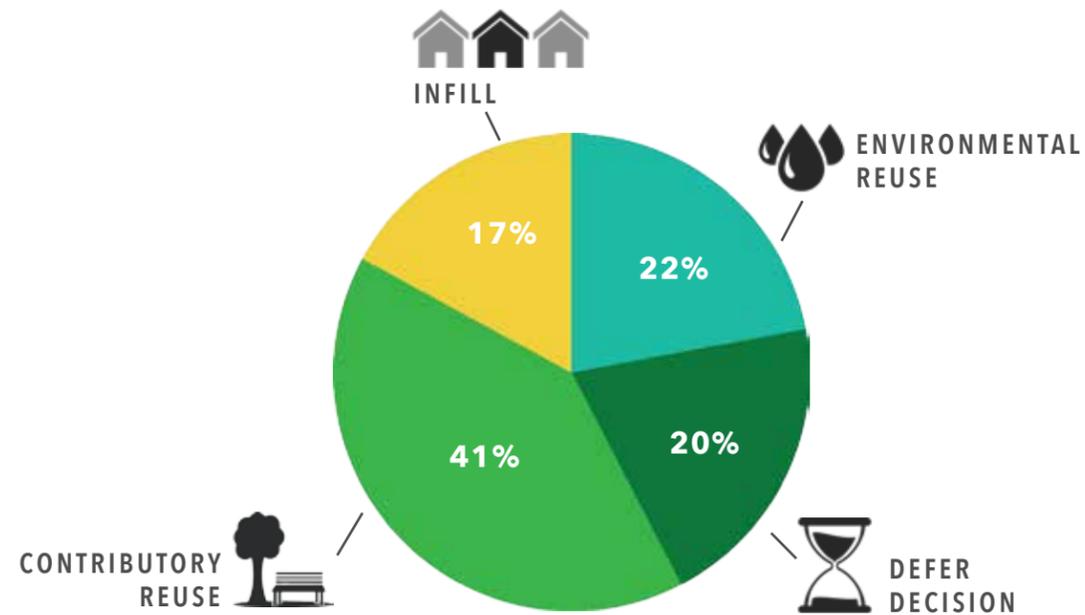
Within the study area, each subarea had particular strengths and weaknesses, while other variables were consistent among all subareas. Using the Relocal metrics, each area was scored and then that score was measured against the maximum score possible. Three of the five subareas – East, South, and West – scored within 59-63.5% of the total possible scores, with North Central and Central scoring highest, 71% and nearly 72.5% respectively. More information on specific findings within the eight categories for each subarea can be found in the results section.

Vacancy is present throughout the five subareas. A total of 13% of all buildings with the study area are vacant, and 22% of all parcels are vacant lots. Parcel level recommendations are intended to help

## RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY



### VACANT BUILDINGS



### VACANT LOTS

turn perceived liabilities into assets that meet local need. In some cases, the recommendation is to defer decision and to focus limited resources on other properties. This implies that the neighborhoods and city are changing, and that there are properties whose ultimate strategy are contingent on other investments being made first to see where they fall.

Across the subareas, recommendation breakdowns are as follows.

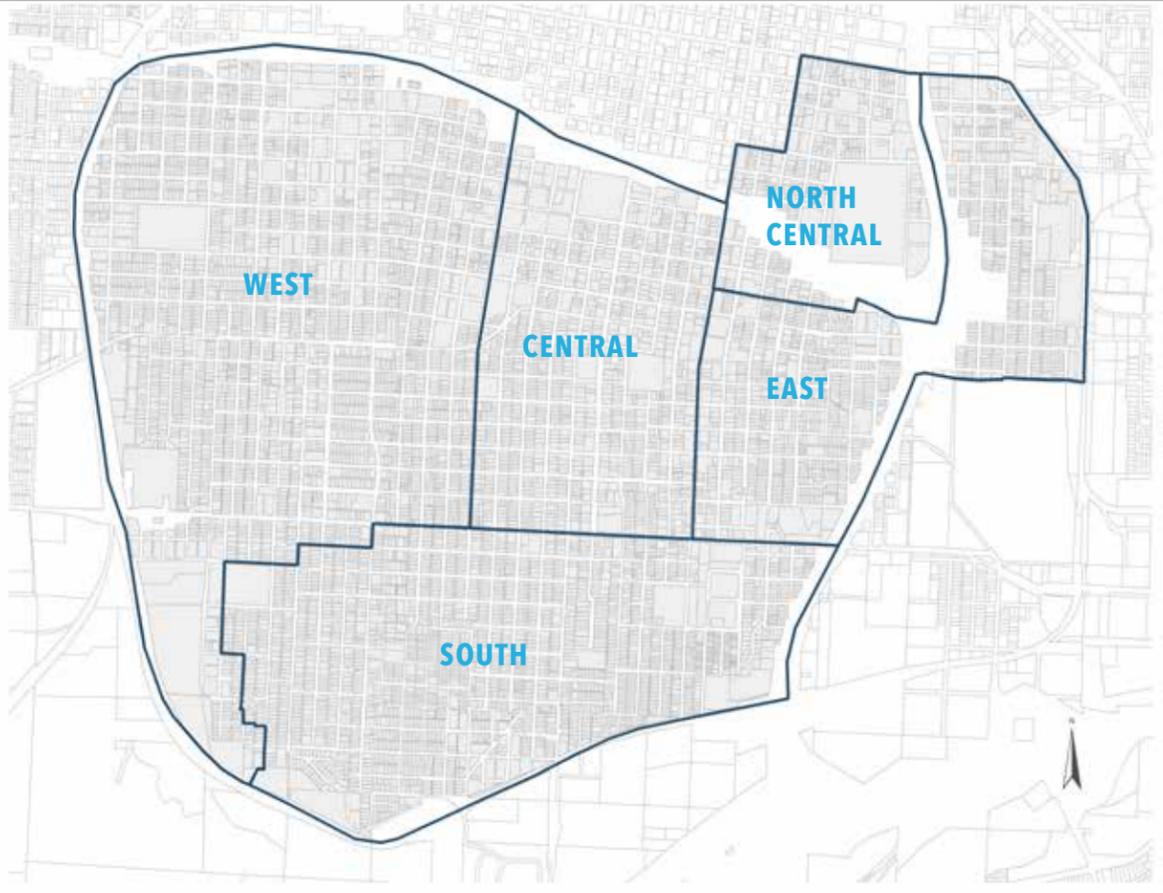
For vacant buildings:

- 22 percent recommended for rehabilitation and reuse, prioritizing those with high character in fair or good condition that are located on more intact blocks
- 29.5 percent are recommended for stabilization and mothballing
- 22 percent are recommended for defer decision
- 26.5 percent are recommended for razing and recycling

For vacant lots:

- 17 percent are recommended for infill development
- 41 percent are recommended for contributory reuse that supports community needs and benefits residents. Contributory reuses could include side lot acquisition, pocket parks or other recreational uses, or community gardens.
- 20 percent are recommended for defer decision
- 22 percent are recommended for environmental reuse that would transform the land into natural ecosystems -- whether a single parcel or a contiguous string of parcels -- such as blue-green infrastructure or other stormwater runoff management systems, wooded areas, or renewable energy production.

# INTRODUCTION



**FIVE SUBAREAS  
WITHIN THE RELOCAL  
STUDY AREA**

**LITTLE ROCK CONTEXT**

The Relocal study area in Little Rock encompasses neighborhoods with monumental histories. These neighborhoods span 19th-century mansions, early 20th-century craftsman bungalows, and 1940-50s working class housing within mixed use neighborhoods. Little Rock's Central High School, a landmark in Civil Rights history, lies in subarea West.

While Little Rock continues to grow in population, in part due to continual annexation, many of the older and first ring neighborhoods around the downtown that comprise Relocal's study area have lost population over the past few decades. This population loss has led to vacant and neglected buildings, vacant land resulting from building removal, and loss of economic prospects. Racial and economic segregation, the placement of highways as physical barriers to neighborhood cohesion, destruction of built resources as part of highway construction and development, and "white flight" to the suburbs over the last 40+ years are among the factors that have led to neighborhood decline.

However, the subareas and their neighborhoods also have vital stabilizing qualities that include long-time residents, character-rich building stock, public transportation access, and much more. Some areas like South Main have seen dramatic turnarounds in the last ten years, and neighborhood residents and organizations are actively working to address challenges of crime and safety, deteriorating buildings, and support for youth and seniors.

Relocal serves as one tool to help inform strategic decision-making in these contexts that uses data as a basis for determining movement forward.

**RELOCAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY**

The Relocal tool measures neighborhood vitality through eight quality-of-place categories:

- Real Estate
- Stability
- Neighborhood Character
- Walkability
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Economic Opportunity
- Engagement
- Environment

Each category is comprised of 6 to 15 metrics from a variety of sources and scales that identify strengths and challenges at the neighborhood level. The tool includes 85 metrics, 74 of which were applied in the Little Rock study area. The remaining metrics were not used because the metric was not applicable, information was not available, or available data was not up-to-date.

**The Role of Scale**

To make parcel level recommendations founded in solid data and analysis, it is important to understand what is happening at multiple scales within the study area.

When taken in together, all the metrics spanning the eight categories outlined above weave a cohesive picture of activities, trends, and current conditions within each subarea. It also provides a comparison from one subarea to the next, and in some metrics against citywide trends as well.

Next, Relocal looks one layer deeper at the block level. Block stability plays a critical role in determining the viability of future investments in buildings or land, and is key to making strategic reinvestments retain their value. Block stability contributes to desirability, land and property values, and a feeling of safety for residents. Each block's vacancy rate played a role in determining parcel level outcomes.

Lastly, each parcel – built or unbuilt– was evaluated as part of Relocal's field survey. Each building's character, condition and other factors were evaluated as part of the field survey, or each unbuilt parcel's apparent use and maintenance level was observed and recorded. Each of these factors contributed directly to parcel-level outcomes.

Together, these three scales of data collection and analysis produce a body of recommendations that takes into account not just the individual parcel, but its role and position within the broader context of the block and subarea.

**Weighting**

Each metric measures subarea performance for a specific element, such as foreclosures, architectural character, or voter participation, to name a few. However, not every metric is of equal importance. For example, public art is of value, but less significant in evaluating long-term neighborhood health than the condition of the local building stock. Consequently, each metric was assigned a weight relative

to other metrics in the same category. These weights reflect the importance of each metric in contributing to a healthy neighborhood, and are applied when aggregating metrics into categories. Similarly, each category was assigned a weight to reflect its relative importance to long-term neighborhood viability.

### Community Priority Survey

Next, a community priority survey was used to gauge local elements of importance. The survey is an opportunity for local citizens to apply their own values and priorities to Relocal's dozens of objective metrics. To measure what they feel are important, Relocal includes a community priority survey that asks how important dozens of neighborhood attributes are from "Very important" to "Not important" on a 1 to 5 scale. It then asks how strongly locals feel their neighborhood is meeting key needs.

With outreach assistance from the City of Little Rock's Planning Department, Quapaw Quarter Association, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, and Preserve Arkansas, surveys were distributed electronically and in hard copy form throughout the subareas. Responses were obtained from every subarea. The results were used to adjust each category's weight according to its relative importance to the community.

Notably, South valued walkability, stability, and engagement more significantly than other subareas, while North Central valued walkability especially less.

### Outcomes

Relocal offers strategies and tools to help local decision-makers and advocates evaluate how to best reutilize vacant buildings and lots. Relocal's strategies are designed to facilitate effective use of scarce public resources, raise the quality of life for current residents, and allow highly local decisions to be made within a strategic framework.

An array of recommendations are applied to every vacant building or lot. Taken cumulatively, they will help effectively direct available resources and enable neighborhoods to become more stable, vibrant, and sustainable. These recommendations are for the short- to intermediate-term, one to five years. This timeframe acknowledges that external factors will affect properties in the long run, but allows entities to lay out future plans and seek funding for multiple years and to stage implementation.

Recommended strategies vary: some are very simple, while some are complex. Some are low-budget but require political willpower or strong community support; others take more financial resources. Similarly, some tools aim to catalyze small changes, while others have more ambitious goals. Strategies for two vacant buildings on a block may differ, but both contribute to the same long-range neighborhood vision.

### BUILDING AND LAND STRATEGIES

Each recommendation for vacant land or vacant buildings falls within one of four opportunity categories. Appendices in this report identify a menu of available tools for implementation at the local, state, and national levels, as well as best practices from elsewhere that might be utilized in Little Rock to implement recommendations.

#### VACANT BUILDING STRATEGIES

**Rehab and reuse:** Vacant buildings that have high architectural character, are in fair or good condition, and are located on low-vacancy blocks with strong subarea contexts are recommended for near-term reuse. These buildings should be prioritized for rehabilitation dollars and incentives.

Strategies in this category include a rehabilitation by a private property owner, with or without public assistance or incentives; acquisition and rehabilitation by a public entity such as the land bank, with reconveyance to a private owner or reuse for a public use; and acquisition and rehabilitation by a nonprofit organization. Buildings in this category may also be good candidates for relocation if long-range neighborhood plans for the surrounding area change or block stability deteriorates.

**Stabilize and mothball:** Some vacant buildings have high character, condition, and construction quality, but are in areas struggling with higher vacancy levels or other negative factors. Others have less exceptional building-specific qualities but are in more stable areas. Stabilization and mothballing – ensuring properties are secured from vandals, made stable, and kept watertight – is an opportunity to keep key buildings standing while giving the area time to recover and/or providing time for funds to be secured for the next

course of action. Stabilization and mothballing of strategic properties also improves local safety and preserves density on stronger blocks.

Strategies include public entities, nonprofit organizations, and private property owners acquiring, stabilizing, and potentially reconveying a property, with or without public assistance.

**Defer decision:** Other vacant buildings have mixed strengths and weaknesses, and/or are in areas where trends around vacancy and revitalization are unclear. With the understanding that funds for intervention may be tapped on executing strategies across the other three recommendation categories, these properties are recommended for a deferred decision. The eventual treatment of these buildings largely depends on contextual patterns and trends – including investments made to parcels within other recommendation categories – in the subarea and neighborhood. If extra funding is available for mothballing, these buildings may be the next in line to be boarded up.

**Raze and recycle:** Some vacant buildings were built quickly and cheaply, or have been neglected for decades to the point where they are "too far gone." Some are located on blocks with very high levels of vacancy. Buildings in these situations may be recommended for demolition or deconstruction and encouragement for materials recycling.

Strategies in this category focus on removal and reconveyance or reuse of the vacant lot, potentially with acquisition included. These steps can be completed by a public entity, nonprofit organization, or private property owner. Parcel strategies are provided for each building recommended for raze and recycle.

| RELOCAL CATEGORY              | WHAT IT MEASURES   | Central | East | North Central | South | West |
|-------------------------------|--|---------|------|---------------|-------|------|
| <i>Real Estate</i>            | Past disinvestment and prospective reinvestment                    |         |      |               |       |      |
| <i>Stability</i>              | Population trends and related quality-of-life issues               |         |      |               |       |      |
| <i>Neighborhood Character</i> | Built environment qualities; Sense of place                        |         |      |               |       |      |
| <i>Walkability</i>            | Proximity to local assets and amenities                            |         |      |               |       |      |
| <i>Fiscal</i>                 | Economic costs & contributions of neighborhood elements            |         |      |               |       |      |
| <i>Economic Opportunity</i>   | Wealth-generating opportunities for residents                      |         |      |               |       |      |
| <i>Engagement</i>             | Resident participation in neighborhood                             |         |      |               |       |      |
| <i>Environment</i>            | Past land uses, current quality-of-life factors, natural resources |         |      |               |       |      |

#### SUBAREA PERFORMANCE BY CATEGORY

- Above Average
- Average
- Below Average



## VACANT PARCEL STRATEGIES

**Infill:** Vacant lots in strong areas are good candidates for infill development. This may include a lone vacant lot on a largely intact and stable block, or may be contiguous vacant lots in a stronger area that could be suitable for medium- to large-scale development. Strategies in this category focus on acquisition and reconveyance for construction.

**Contributory reuse:** Vacant lots can also be activated in a way that creates a sense of ownership and adds to local quality of life. For example, a single vacant lot might be acquired by the City and designated as a pocket park, or resold as a side lot to an adjacent property owner. Clustered vacant lots might be reused as the site of a pop-up neighborhood market or a community garden stewarded by a nonprofit. This category of reuse can be achieved with low upfront investment, and can include minimal landscaping, tree planting, benches, or other modest interventions. The toolkit found in the appendix provides examples from other cities where this approach has been successful.

Strategies for this category include straightforward public acquisition and public use with minimal effort or reconveyance for private use, creative partnerships with community or arts groups, and private acquisition and use.

**Defer decision:** Vacant lots in areas with mixed trends or as-of-now unclear patterns are recommended for deferred decision. As with buildings recommended for deferred decision, the eventual use of these parcels should be decided with reference to subarea trends and block evolution down the road. Also, deferred decision recognizes that funds are limited and should be prioritized for vacant lot redevelopment across the other three recommendation categories. The future of these properties should be revisited as markets change, further reinvestments are made, or other trends become clear.

**Environmental reuse:** Vacant lots in higher vacancy areas provide an opportunity to thoughtfully convert land to environmental uses. Potential passive uses include blue-green infrastructure such as stormwater management systems, alternative energy production, or a return to native ecosystems. These interventions can be implemented on single lots or contiguous properties. These uses may be executed by public or private entities. A long-range stewardship plan is essential.



*Left: Vacant land (above) and neighborhood streetscape (below) seen in the Little Rock Relocal subareas*

# COMMUNITY PRIORITY SURVEY

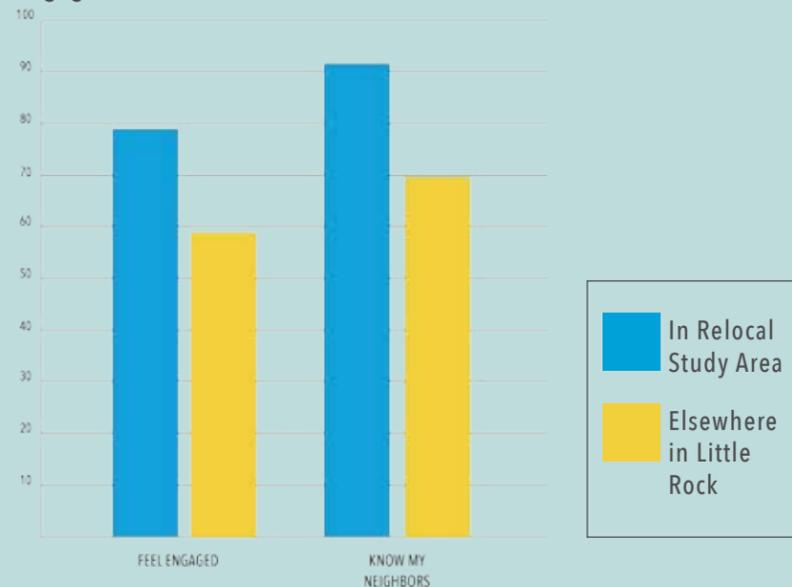
A community survey has always been built in as part of the Relocal process. As originally conceived, the purpose of this component was to determine if a particular neighborhood (or, in the case of Little Rock, a subarea group) placed an emphasis on one or more of the analysis areas (i.e. environment, community engagement, real estate, etc.) than did the other areas. If the survey responses so indicated, we have used any differences to readjust our metric scoring to reflect those local priorities. Based on the more than 200 surveys received, we did make some adjustments based on this local input.

But what we have learned in the Relocal process is this survey can also reveal information that can be useful in policy decisions as well as replacing the presumed or “common knowledge” assumptions with more reliable, response-based information. While there were interesting results from each of the 15 questions asked, below are those either most surprising or potentially the most useful in making decisions by a variety of stakeholders in the Relocal study area of Little Rock.

## ENGAGEMENT

Because there were responses from both residents within the study area and in other areas of Little Rock it was possible to identify any significant differences between those two groups. One of the most striking was a sizable difference in whether people felt engaged in their neighborhood. The survey question was, “Do you feel engaged in the subarea in which you live?” Respondents were then asked how they felt engaged and by far the most common response was “I know my neighbors.”

### Engagement



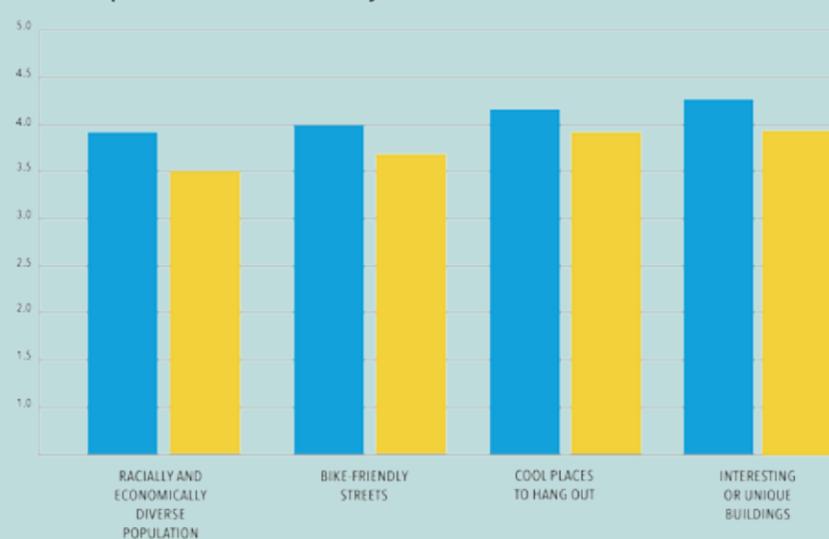
## NEIGHBORHOOD VARIABLES

In some of the questions respondents were asked the importance they attached to certain neighborhood variables ranging from a 1 (Not Important) to 5 (Very Important). Based on a weighted average of the responses, three neighborhood factors emerge as most important to Relocal study area residents as well as residents of other parts of the city and, most notably, there is almost no statistical difference in the responses:

- Safety
- High Quality of Life
- Low Crime Rate

There are, however, neighborhood qualities that are more important to residents within the Relocal study area than for people living elsewhere in Little Rock. There are four particular measures that, while also important elsewhere in the city, are particularly held as valuable in the Relocal study area: a racially and economically diverse population, bike friendly streets, cool places to hang out, and interesting or unique buildings. Arguably those characteristics are more true in this historic study area than in most Little Rock neighborhoods.

### More Important in Relocal Study Area



## HOW GENERATIONS DIFFER (AND DON'T)

Survey respondents were asked to identify their age within one of four brackets: 20-35, 36-50, 51-65, and 66 and older. Among more than 30 neighborhood characteristics, the top three in importance for all of the age cohorts were the same: Safety, Low Crime Rate, and High Quality of Life. Beyond the top three, however, there emerged interesting differences among the age brackets.

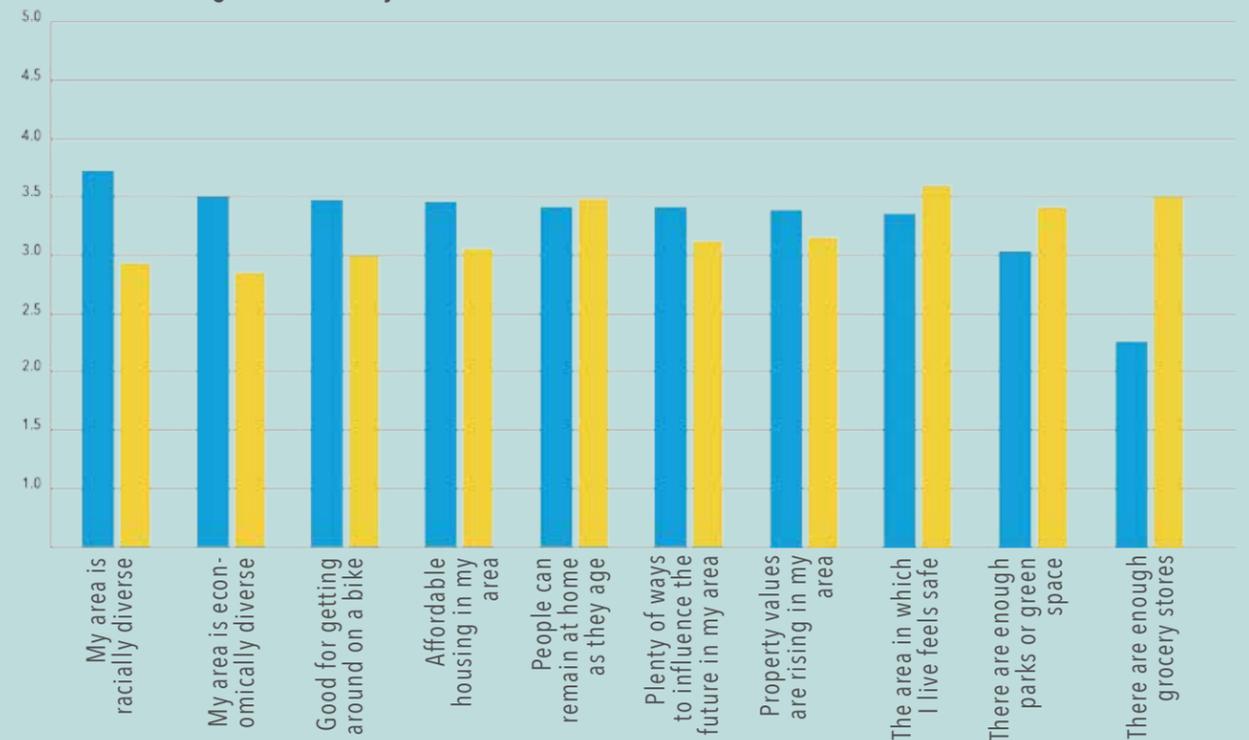
### Most Important Variable after Safety, Low Crime Rate and High Quality of Life

| 20-35                          | 36-50                        | 51-65                      | 66+                                   |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Ability to Easily Walk Places  | Neighborhood Look and Feel   | Not Many Vacant Buildings  | Neighborhood Stability                |
| Close to Parks or Greenspace   | Stable Property Values       | Stable Property Values     | Stable Property Values                |
| Cool Places to Hang Out        | Neighborhood Stability       | Neighborhood Look and Feel | People Can Remain at Home as they Age |
| Close to Shops and Restaurants | Close to Parks or Greenspace | Stable Real Estate Market  | Ability to Easily Walk Places         |
| Neighborhood Look and Feel     | Not Many Vacant Buildings    | Neighborhood Stability     | Stable Real Estate Market             |

## HOW IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD DOING?

Finally a series of questions were asked which focused not on what people felt were important qualities of the neighborhood, but rather how they thought the neighborhood actually met expectations. Ten statements were given, each of which the respondent answered between a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to a 5 (Strongly Agree). In the graph below the answers are shown for those who lived in Relocal study area and those who live elsewhere in Little Rock.

### How Are We Doing? Relocal Study Area vs Elsewhere in Little Rock



Overall, Relocal study area residents see their neighborhood as more racially and economically diverse, containing more affordable housing and better for getting around on a bike than do residents from elsewhere in Little Rock. On the other side, study area residents are less satisfied with the amount of green space in the neighborhood and significantly less satisfied with the availability of groceries in the area. Perhaps surprisingly the people who actually live in the neighborhoods feel their neighborhood “feels safe” at nearly the same rate as those who live elsewhere feel about their neighborhoods.

## RELOCAL METRICS OVERVIEW

### REAL ESTATE

Foreclosures  
 New Construction  
 Diversity of Unit Size  
 Change in Property Values  
 Unsafe & Vacant  
 Institutionally Owned Land  
 Remodeling/Renovation  
 Property Sales  
 Affordability  
 Vacant Buildings  
 Vacant Land

### STABILITY

Percent Owner Occupied Properties  
 Demolition Permits  
 Crime  
 Fire Calls  
 Economic Integration  
 Long-Term Residents  
 Neighborhood Pull  
 Population Change (13 yrs)  
 Diversity  
 Signal Population Trends

### NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Architectural Character  
 Local Historic District  
 National Register Historic District  
 Quality of Building Stock  
 Condition of Building Stock  
 Overlay Districts  
 Public Art  
 Vacant Parcel Use  
 Maintenance of Vacant Parcels  
 Graffiti

### WALKABILITY

Bike routes  
 Medical Services  
 Neighborhood Business District  
 Public Facilities  
 Community Centers  
 Public Transportation  
 Proximity to Schools  
 Street Connectivity  
 Sidewalkability Index  
 Sidewalk Presence  
 Sidewalk Condition  
 Traffic Volume  
 Walk Score  
 Walking Trails

### FISCAL

Demolition to Rehabilitation Ratio  
 Population Density  
 Density Potential  
 Stranded Investment  
 Replacement Cost of Public Infrastructure  
 Tax Delinquency  
 Property Tax Generation  
 Property Value Per Acre

### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Aggregate Household Income  
 Aggregate Household Spending Power  
 Spending Power per Acre  
 Employment Centers  
 Foreign Born/Diversity  
 Neighborhood Business District  
 Unemployment Rate  
 Available Workforce  
 Small Business

### ENGAGEMENT

Neighborhood Associations  
 Senior Organizations  
 Third Places  
 Voter Registration  
 Voter Participation  
 Youth Organizations

### ENVIRONMENT

Air/Odor Pollution  
 Brownfields  
 Embodied Energy  
 Floodplains  
 Tree Cover  
 Water Resource

# SUBAREA RESULTS

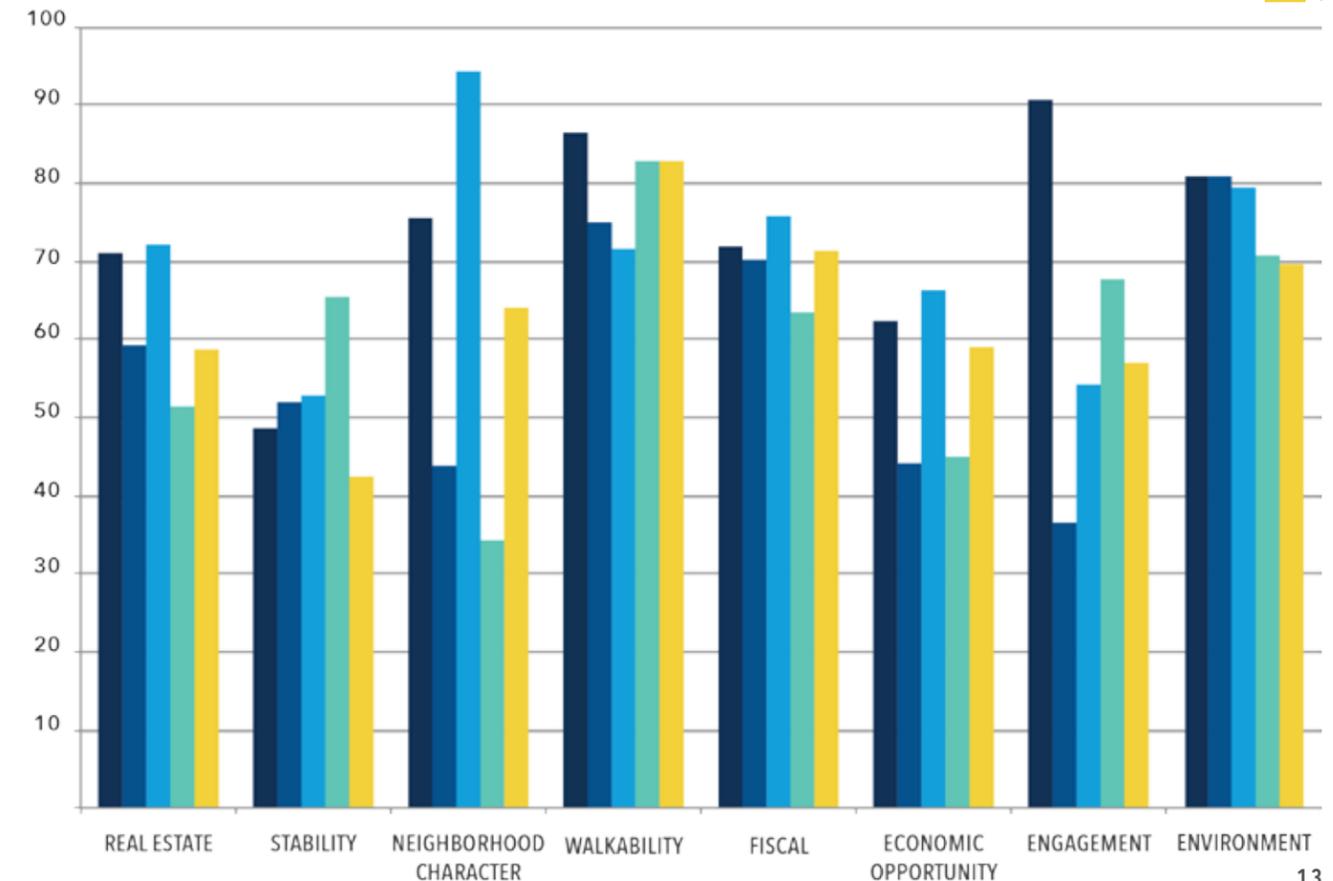
Within the eight Relocal categories, 74 metrics were utilized to evaluate each subarea. The majority of metrics yielded a range of scores across subareas. However, some findings were consistent across all five subareas, as outlined below. All subareas had:

- Highest possible score on proximity to public transportation (bus stops)
- High air quality as an environmental metric
- High scores in street connectivity, meaning short blocks with many intersections, which is desirable for walkability
- A low share of jobs in small firms and startups out of the city as a whole
- Significantly lower foreign-born residents than the city as whole
- Low economic integration, with high concentrations of low-income residents in each subarea as compared to the city as a whole
- Low graffiti counts, meaning very little graffiti was identified during the field survey

For more detail on specific metrics, how they were measured, or where data was collected from, please reference the appendix on Relocal Metrics Explained at the end of this report.

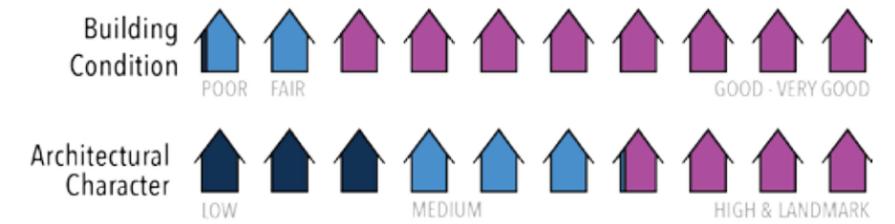


SUBAREA SCORES WITHIN EACH RELOCAL CATEGORY

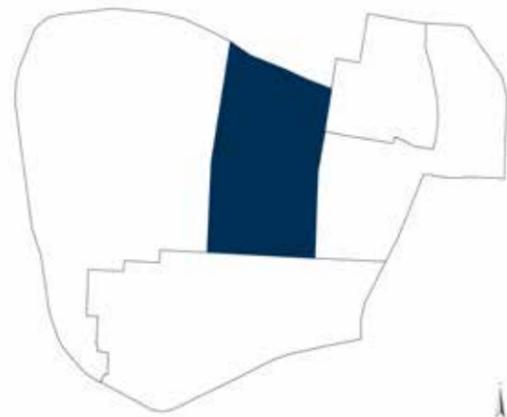


# CENTRAL

## CENTRAL'S BUILDINGS OVERALL



**84%** OF CENTRAL'S BUILDING PERMITS ARE FOR REHABILITATION AND RENOVATION



The Central subarea is bounded by I-630 on the north, Main Street on the east, South Chester St on west, and West Roosevelt Road to the south.

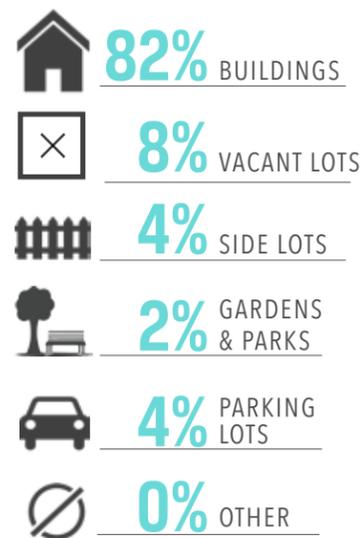
Central scored highest among all subareas. It particularly excelled across the categories of walkability, engagement, environment, and scored well in neighborhood character. Central has the highest number of parcel recommendations of rehab and reuse (40 total) as well as the highest number, by far, of parcel recommendations for infill of vacant lots (80 total). Central's good architectural stock, proximity to Dunbar Community Center, and walkability to Main Street among other factors makes it a prime location for focusing rehab and development dollars.

### REAL ESTATE

Central did well above average in the real estate category. Reinvestment is happening in Central, with 84% of total building permits going towards renovation and rehabilitation. Citywide, this figure is 66%. Relative to other subareas, Central has a large percentage of institutionally owned developable land with no buildings, a metric that indicates an opportunity to leverage institutional entities' roles in communities to reactivate vacant land. Central also scored well in the affordability metric, which looks at affordability as the combined costs of housing and transportation consuming no more than 45% of income. Notably, Central also scored well in vacant lot and vacant building metrics, with vacant lots accounting for 8% of its total parcels and only 7% of buildings identified as vacant through the field survey.

### STABILITY

Central scored a bit below average in the stability category. One indicator for stability is owner occupancy rates, which in Central is 37% – second lowest among the subareas – as compared to 57% citywide. Long term residency shows 32% of Central's residents have lived in the area 15 years or longer, while a majority having moved in since 2000. Central's demolition permits are 6% of all permits in the subarea, which is on par with the city's average of 7%. Racial diversity in Central is strongest among all subareas, and mirrors the city's diversity as whole, a strong indicator of area stability. However, Central has lost residents across key age demographics of both 18-34 and 35-64 year olds.



### NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Central scored above average in the neighborhood character category. Central scored high in the architectural character, building quality, and building condition metrics. While Central has no local historic districts, 24% of properties are within the Capitol Zoning District and 71% of properties are in a National Register district. Of all parcels in Central, only 18% are land without buildings, meaning the majority of parcels have a structure on the lot. Of the total parcels without buildings, 30% were identified as being a park, garden, or attached side lot in Central – twice as much as each of the other subareas – as opposed to a vacant lot or parking lot. And 68% of all parcels without a building were labeled as having good maintenance.

### WALKABILITY

Central scored above average in the walkability category, and received the highest score of all subareas. In Central, 78% of all occupied properties are within ½ mile of a community or neighborhood resource center, 72% are within ¼ mile of a school, and 73% are within ¼ mile of public facilities like museums, libraries, police and fire stations. Additionally, 95% of Central is served by sidewalks, 79% of which are either in good or fair condition. In the sidewalkability metric, Central had the highest ratio of linear feet of sidewalk to road, which ideally would be a ratio of 2:1 signifying sidewalk on both sides of the street.

### FISCAL

Central scored average in the fiscal category. Central's rehabilitation to demolition ratio was 15 to 1, demonstrating that reinvestment is happening within the subarea at nearly twice the rate of the city as a whole. Central also generates high property tax revenues at just over \$1.5 million, though its tax delinquency rate was highest among the subareas. Central had strong population density scores when looking at population, households, and residential buildings per acre. Central's annual stranded investment is \$87,778, second lowest among the subareas, indicating that its high density means relatively little underutilized infrastructure not generating revenue. Central also has nearly twice the property value per acre as Little Rock on the whole.

**Stranded Investment:** When infrastructure that is built to serve neighborhood capacity is not being fully utilized because a house or lot sits vacant, it creates a "stranded investment." In other words, it is an investment that is not being fully utilized.

### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Central scored above average in the economic opportunity category. The median household income in Central is \$28,470, the highest among subareas. The aggregate household income is \$30.2 million annually within the subarea, and Central's aggregate spending power is \$44.45 million. Though quite low across all subareas, Central had the highest percentage of foreign-born residents, a metric of population diversity. Central's unemployment rate was second lowest at 10%.

**Spending power** comes from the consumer expenditure survey. It is much better for understanding the potential opportunity on the neighborhood level than aggregate household income.

### ENGAGEMENT

Central did very well in engagement metrics, scoring 91% of the total possible score for the engagement category. Central contains ten "third places" identified by the community priority survey, the greatest of any subarea. Voter registration and participation were also high scoring. Central is proximal to Dunbar Community Center, which serves as both a youth and senior center in addition community gathering place.

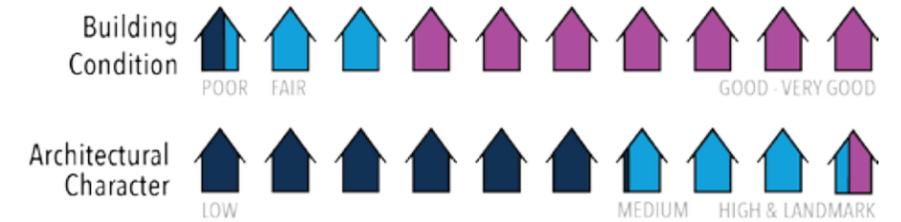
### ENVIRONMENT

Central scored above average in the environment category. Central has no identified air pollution, no brownfields within the subarea, and has no properties within a floodplain. It enjoys good tree cover, though low walkability to water resources.

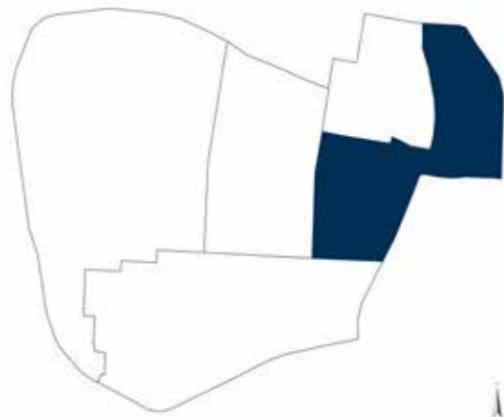
**49%** OF RESIDENTS IN EAST HAVE LIVED IN THE AREA 15 YEARS OR LONGER

# EAST

EAST'S BUILDINGS OVERALL



**13%** AVAILABLE WORKFORCE IN EAST, WHICH INCLUDES PEOPLE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 16 AND 65 WHO ARE NEITHER WORKING OR LOOKING FOR WORK. AVAILABLE WORKFORCE PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL ACTIVATION.



The East subarea has two segments. It includes Hanger Hill as bounded by E. 5th St on the north, I-30 to the west, railroad tracks to the east, and E. 17th to the south, as well as the area south of MacArthur Park bounded by Main Street to the west, E. 15th to the north, I-30 to the east, and W. Roosevelt Rd to the south.

East had the lowest total score among the subareas. While East scores among the highest subareas in environment and its lower segment enjoys proximity to Main Street, it suffers from low engagement and economic opportunities, as well as generally lower architectural character and construction quality of its buildings.

## REAL ESTATE

Overall, East scored below average in the real estate category. East scored well on the affordability metric and had slightly fewer foreclosures than the city as a whole, 5% to the city's 6%. Among all subareas, East did have the highest percent of vacant buildings in proportion to their total building count at 14%, and 29% of parcels in East are composed of vacant lots. Of all building permits in East, 69% are for renovation and rehabilitation and 13% are for new construction, the latter being among the highest across subareas.

## STABILITY

East scored right at average for the stability category. East had slightly higher crime and fire call rates than the city as whole, but comparatively little across subareas. The homeownership rate of East is 47% as compared to 53% renters, but 49% of residents in East have lived in the area longer than 15 years. This implies there's a strong contingent of residents who are invested in the area in a long-term way. While East lost residents in the age cohort of 18-34 from 2000-

2013, the area gained residents in the 35-64 age group, which signals that East is increasingly being considered a place to plant roots by residents in this key stability age bracket. However, of all building permits in East, 18% were for demolition.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

East scored below average for neighborhood character. Only 7% of East's buildings were categorized as high or landmark character from the field survey and 30% of buildings identified as medium character. To condition, 69% of all buildings were labeled as either being good or very good condition. Only 7% of East properties fall within a National Register district, and none are within a local historic district. Notably, nearly 39% of East's total parcels consist of land without buildings, and of those 75% are vacant lots (as opposed to parks, side lots, or gardens). This presents an opportunity to reactivate lots using a mix of interventions on vacant land.

## WALKABILITY

East scored slightly below average in walkability. In East, 55% of all occupied properties are within 1/2 mile of a community or neighborhood resource center, 58% are within 1/4 mile of a school, and 41% are within 1/4 mile of public facilities. Just 68% of properties in East had a sidewalk, and only 39% of those were in good or fair condition, which makes walking safely a challenge for pedestrians and limits mobility for the handicapped.

## FISCAL

East was on par with the average score for fiscal. Though East had the lowest annual property tax revenue, it also had particularly low tax delinquency. East's rehabilitation to demolition ratio is 3.8 to 1, which signifies a higher proportion of demos occurring as opposed to reinvestment across subareas. East scores high in the replacement cost of infrastructure metric, with nearly \$10 million per acre to replace current sewer pipes and other infrastructure. This figure, coupled with East's overall \$302,269 of annual stranded investment, paints a picture of significantly underutilized infrastructure that would be costly to replace, and thus interventions that support the reutilization of this existing investment makes sense fiscally.

*Replacement Cost of Infrastructure identifies the cost of replacing existing public infrastructure investments, indicating an existing investment that should be considered when determining where to direct future development.*

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

East had the lowest score for the economic opportunity category among the subareas. Its median household income was \$23,262, second only to North Central. Even though East's aggregate spending power was the lowest among subareas at \$30 million, that is a sizeable sum of money available to support the local economy. East's unemployment rate was 13% and available workforce was also 13% of the population.

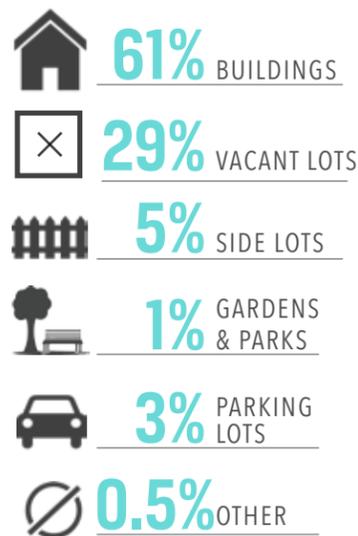
## ENGAGEMENT

Representation from neighborhood associations was low in East, and this subarea also contained no youth or senior organizations. However, five "third places" were identified within the area, meaning there are locations within the subarea local citizens have identified as gathering places.

*Third places are informal community gathering places such as coffee shops, bookstores, or bars. They provide safe places for people to casually meet and interact with friends, neighbors, and strangers. Third places are derived directly from the Community Priority Survey.*

## ENVIRONMENT

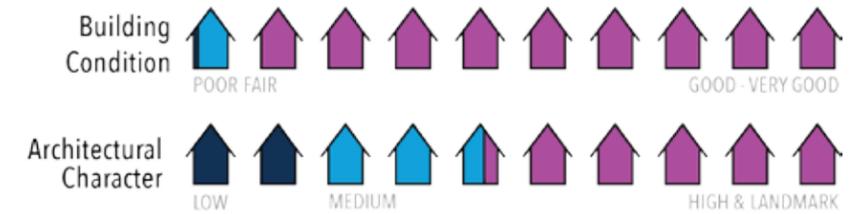
East scored above average in environment. East has no properties within a floodplain and has no identified air pollution, though it does contain a brownfield in need of cleanup. Brownfields are a liability but also provide an opportunity to capitalize on available funding to put contaminated sites back into use. Additionally, 88% of properties in East are within 1/2 mile of a water resource.



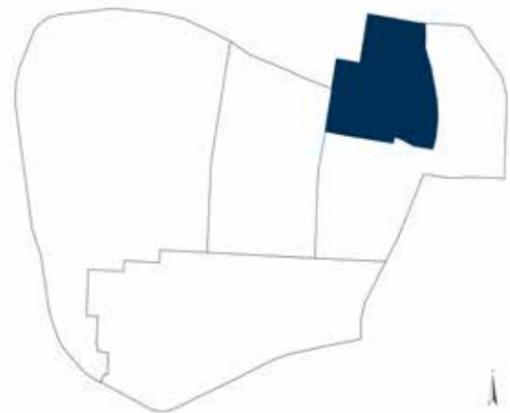
\* Numbers do not total 100% due to rounding

# NORTH CENTRAL

## NORTH CENTRAL'S BUILDINGS OVERALL



**NORTH CENTRAL HAD THE LOWEST PROPORTION OF VACANT LOTS TO TOTAL PARCELS IN THE SUBAREA**



**54%** OF NORTH CENTRAL'S BUILDINGS WERE IDENTIFIED AS HAVING HIGH OR LANDMARK ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

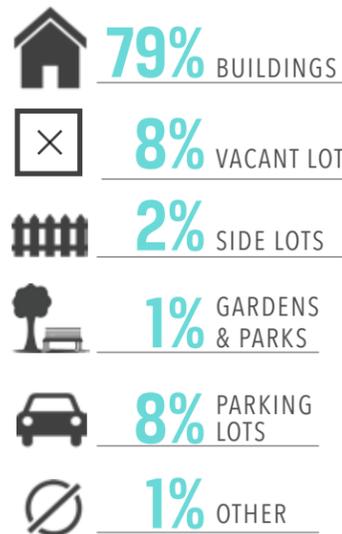
North Central has the smallest land area of Relocal's subareas and is closest to downtown. It contains buildings with notably high character. North Central encompasses MacArthur Park, and is bounded by E. 5th on the north, 1-30 on the east, E. 15th St on the south, and Main Street on the west that jogs up to Cumberland at E. 9th St.

### REAL ESTATE

North Central scored the highest among subareas in the real estate category, as measured by the percentage of possible scoring across the category's metrics. Specifically, North Central had the lowest rate of foreclosures among subareas at 4%. Of total building permits, 90% of North Central's permits were for renovation and rehabilitation. North Central's houses tend to be larger, with 61% being greater than 1,950 square feet. The result is a lower relative score for property size diversity. Among subareas, North Central had the lowest percent (8%) of vacant lots to overall parcels.

### STABILITY

North Central scored average in the stability category. There is a clear neighborhood draw to North Central, as seen across the board in numerous metrics, and this has mixed consequences for neighborhood stability. While 94% of residents have moved to North Central since 2000 – indicating a highly attractive neighborhood – only 6% of residents in North Central have lived in the area longer than 15 years (by far the lowest figure across subareas) signifying low long-term resident stability. North Central is 83% rental as compared to 17% home ownership. North Central is the only subarea to have gained population from 2000-2013 in both the 18-34 and 35-64 age cohorts, signifying its draw for both younger mobile residents and those looking to settle down. In particular, while Little Rock gained 5% of 18-34 year olds from 2000-2013 and all other subareas lost populations in this cohort, North Central gained 26%. North Central also had the lowest percent of demolition permits of all subareas, with only 3% of the total number of permits subarea-wide.



### NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

North Central scored far above average for neighborhood character, achieving 94% of the total possible score. North Central scored very high on architectural character and condition metrics, and average on construction quality. As the only subarea to contain a local historic district, North Central got a boost as an area with strong protections for historic properties, 94% of which are also within a National Register historic district. North Central also had the highest count of public art by twofold. Of all North Central's parcels, only 21% are land without buildings, and of those, only 40% are vacant lots – the lowest of all subareas. The other 60% of land without buildings is composed of parking lots, parks, gardens, or side lots.

### WALKABILITY

North Central scored below average for walkability. In North Central, 0% of buildings are within ¼ mile of a community or neighborhood resource center and only 17% are within ½ mile. Additionally, 57% of buildings are within ¼ mile of a school, but 100% are within ¼ mile of public facilities like museums and libraries. For sidewalks, 94% of all properties in North Central are serviced by a sidewalk, and 77% of those are in good or fair condition. This speaks well for the walkability and pedestrian safety of the subarea.

### FISCAL

North Central scored above average and highest among the subareas in fiscal. Most notably is the rehabilitation to demolition permit ratio of 26.7 to 1, evidencing significantly more reinvestment in built resources than the removal of them. North Central has the lowest annual stranded investment of just under \$45,000 which signifies that the subarea is maximizing its infrastructure investment through maintaining residential and population density, a metric in which North Central also scores well. North Central also has the highest property values per acre of all the subareas, over twice as much as the citywide average.

### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Among the subareas, North Central scored the highest in the economic opportunity category. It had the lowest median household income of \$22,323, but aggregate spending power is \$36.5 million within a compact subarea. North Central scores well as an employment center, with 105% of jobs per person (meaning, more jobs than residents). This subarea also scores well in the neighborhood business district metric and has the highest concentration of clustered businesses. Unemployment rate is 11% with an available workforce of 12% of the population. North Central contains 4% of all jobs in small firms and startups citywide, highest among subareas.

*Public Facilities include museums, libraries, fire and police stations, and are a metric within Walkability. City-recognized Community Centers and Neighborhood Resource Centers are also a metric within that category. Both are assessed by how many properties in each subarea are within 1/4 or 1/2 mile of them.*

### ENGAGEMENT

North Central contains one senior organization – one of only two active centers identified within the entire study area. Seven “third places” were identified in North Central through the community priority survey, second only to Central. North Central has neighborhood representation via the Downtown Neighborhood Association.

### ENVIRONMENT

North Central scored above average in environment. As with East, North Central contains one brownfield site in need of cleanup, but it provides an opportunity to leverage regional and national resources to get those sites back into productive use. North Central has the lowest percentage of tree coverage of all subareas, but not by much. And 100% of properties in North Central are within a ½ mile of a water resource.

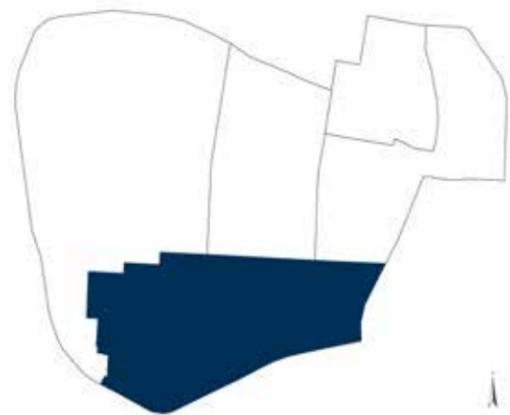
\* Numbers do not total 100% due to rounding

# SOUTH

## SOUTH'S BUILDINGS OVERALL



**\$52.7M** IN AGGREGATE SPENDING POWER IN SOUTH, SECOND HIGHEST AMONG SUBAREAS



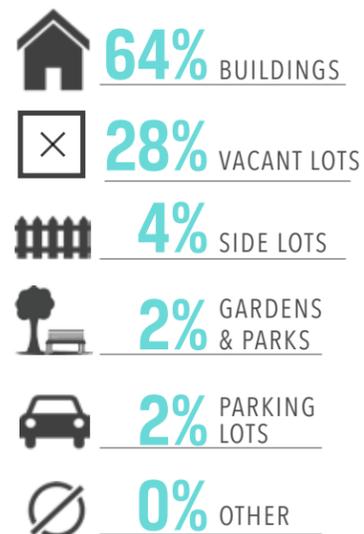
The South subarea is bounded by West Roosevelt Road to the north, I-30 to the east, Fourche Creek on the south, and a zigzag of streets on the west (each only a block or two long) that include S. Battery, S. Summit, S. Schiller, S. Wolfe, and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

### REAL ESTATE

South scored the lowest among subareas in the real estate category. Though equivalent to the city as a whole, South had the lowest ratio of rehabilitation and renovation permits to total building permits across the subareas. Of the total parcels in South, 28% are composed of vacant lots, and 13% of all buildings in South are vacant. South had the lowest change in property values from 2006 to 2014, and also had a 1% lower rate of foreclosures than the city as a whole.

### STABILITY

South scored above average in the stability category, and scored highest among all subareas. This is due to a few metrics in particular. The homeownership rate in South is highest among the subareas at 57%, which is an exact mirror to the city as a whole – an indicator of neighborhood stability. Additionally, 77% of South's residents have lived in the neighborhood for more than 15 years, the highest among all subareas, indicating a high level of long-term investment and stewardship within the neighborhood. And, while South lost a significant portion of population from 2000-2010, it has rebounded and at a greater rate than other subareas from 2010-2013. However, demolition permits were highest in South, representing 19% of all permits subarea-wide. South has lost significant population within the 18-34 age cohort from 2000-2013, but has gained 1% in that same timeframe of 35-64 year olds.



**27%** OF SOUTH'S PROPERTIES ARE IN HIGH RISK FLOODWAYS

### NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

South scored below average in the neighborhood character category. Only 5% of South's buildings scored a high or landmark character, with 65% of buildings identified as low character. Additionally, 57% of South's buildings were labeled as good or very good condition, with 33% labeled as fair. None of South's properties are within a historic district locally or on the National Register, and no overlay districts were identified within South. No public art was identified in South. Of all of South's parcels, 36% are composed of land without a building, and 79% of those are vacant lots – the highest of all subareas – as opposed to other uses like parking lots, parks, or gardens. Of the parcels without a building, 58% were in poor or fair condition. As with East, this presents an opportunity to initiate vacant lot interventions that benefit local residents.

### WALKABILITY

South scored above average in walkability. South enjoys short blocks and good street connectivity, which makes for more desirable walkability. In South, 19% of buildings are within 1/4 mile of a school and 65% are within 1/2 mile, the lowest percentage of school proximity of all subareas. Similarly, 19% of buildings are within 1/4 mile of a community or neighborhood resource center and 67% within 1/2 mile. And 48% of buildings are within 1/4 mile of public facilities. However, South has the lowest percent of properties serviced by a sidewalk at 54%, and of those sidewalks, only 25% are in good or fair condition. This represents a real challenge for mobility and safety for pedestrians.

### FISCAL

South scored below average in the fiscal category. South's rehab to demo permit ratio was the lowest among the subareas at 3.6 to 1. South's existing infrastructure has both a high replacement cost (at over \$13 million per acre) and an annual stranded investment of

nearly \$419,000, signaling a significant underutilization of existing infrastructure investments that would also be costly to replace. South scored second lowest across subareas for population density. South's property value per acre is \$148,499, the lowest among the subareas.

### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

South scored below average in the economic opportunity category, in large part because there are few employers in South relative to its population and geographic size. However, while the median household income is just under \$27,000, the aggregate household income is the largest among the subareas at \$41.3 million due to its large resident population. Moreover, South's aggregate spending power is second highest at \$52.7 million, meaning there is a great deal of expendable income in South that can be leveraged to stimulate the local economy. South is not a home to immigrant populations and had 0% foreign-born population. Its unemployment rate was 15%, while its available workforce was lowest at 9%.

### ENGAGEMENT

South scored above average on engagement. South had the strongest representation in active neighborhood associations, but was the only subarea with zero "third places" identified in the community priority survey. South has one of only two youth organizations identified within the study area, but despite a large number of seniors in the subarea, does not contain a senior organization.

### ENVIRONMENT

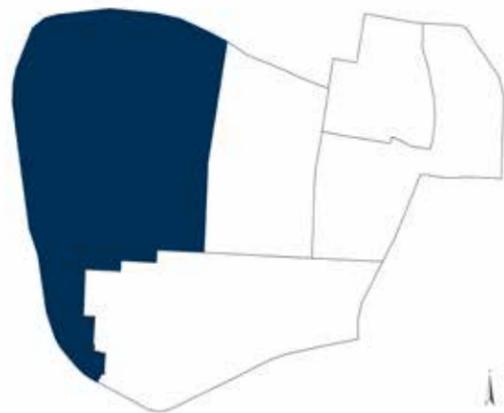
South scored below average for environment. While South enjoys good air quality and the highest percentage of tree coverage among subareas, 27% of South's properties are in high-risk floodways. South has no unremediated brownfields.

# WEST

## WEST'S BUILDINGS OVERALL



**\$52.8M** IN AGGREGATE SPENDING POWER IN WEST



West contains historic Central High School and is the largest of the subareas geographically. West is bounded by W. Roosevelt Rd on the south, railroad tracks behind Central High on the west, I-630 on the north, and Chester St. on the east.

### REAL ESTATE

West scored below average in the real estate category. West had the highest percent of vacant buildings to total buildings at 15%, with 21% of all parcels comprised of vacant lots. However, West scored highest in diversity of unit size, implying that the area has a range of unit sizes available to accommodate a diversity of people, incomes, and families. Additionally, 78% of all building permits in West are for rehabilitation or renovation, but that is juxtaposed with little new construction, which registers at only 6% of total building permits. Also in West, 11% of total acreage is developable, unbuilt, and institutionally owned land, offering an opportunity to leverage local institutions for activation of underutilized land.

*Educational, medical, or religious institutions, among others, have a stake and presence in the city and community, serve as employment hubs, and have economic impacts locally. Institutionally owned land presents an opportunity to reactivate vacant parcels in partnership with local stakeholders.*

### STABILITY

West scored below average in the stability category. West has a relatively high rate of homeownership (51%) and a high percent of

long-time residents (69%). However, West has a low percentage of new residents (since 2000) coming into the neighborhood, and scored poorly on racial diversity and economic integration. Additionally, 16% of all building permits in West are for demolition. Fire and crime call rates are twice as high as the city as a whole, and notably higher than other subareas.

### NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

West scored just above average in neighborhood character. Of all buildings in West, 40% were identified as medium character and 13% as high or landmark. West's construction quality was the highest among subareas, and 68% of buildings were identified as being in good or very good condition. In West, 19% of buildings have some sort of overlay district, though no local historic district. West is home to the landmark Central High School, and 41% of all properties in this subarea are within a National Register historic district.

### WALKABILITY

West scored above average in walkability. In West, 75% of buildings have sidewalks present, and of those 48% are in good or fair condition, implying that while sidewalk presence is relatively good, maintenance is needed. West scored second highest in proximity to community or neighborhood resource centers, with 93% of all buildings falling within 1/2 mile. Over half (57%) of buildings are within 1/4 mile of public facilities like libraries, parks, and fire and police stations. West also scores well in school proximity, with 64% of buildings falling within 1/4 mile of a local school.

### FISCAL

West scored average in fiscal. West had the lowest population density score among the subareas, but generates \$1.5 million in annual property tax revenue with very little property tax delinquency. West's infrastructure replacement cost is over \$33 million per acre

(almost three times more than South), an existing asset that should be utilized. It has nearly \$500,000 of annual stranded investment, indicative of the low population density and population loss that results in underutilized infrastructure. Property value per acre in West is \$178,500.

### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

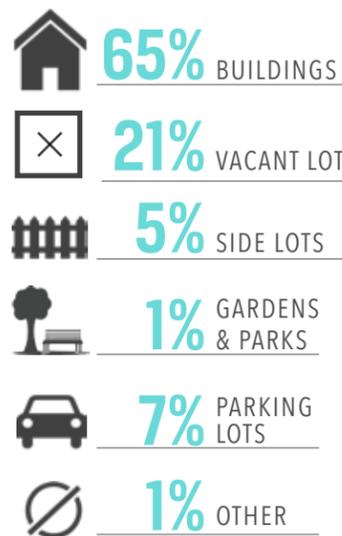
West scored above average in the economic opportunity category. Median household income is \$26,466 with an aggregated household income of \$39.6 million. Moreover, the aggregate spending power in West is highest among subareas at \$52.8 million. Out of total jobs in Little Rock, West contains 2% of small firms and startup jobs in the city. West has the highest ratio of jobs per person, with nearly 1.5 jobs per each resident, though its unemployment rate is the highest among the subareas at 21%. This disparity presents an opportunity to better align employers in West with unemployed local residents regarding job prospects.

### ENGAGEMENT

West is well represented by active neighborhood organizations, including the Central High Neighborhood Association and the Wright Avenue Neighborhood Association, and scored high in this engagement metric. Voter registration is also high at 92% of the population of eligible voters. Three "third places" were identified in West.

### ENVIRONMENT

West also scored below average in environment. West has the lowest percentage of properties within 1/2 mile of a water resource, but it does enjoy good tree coverage, no air pollution or brownfields. However, 8% of West's properties are at high-risk within a floodway.





# RELOCAL FIELD SURVEY

The Relocal field survey is an important component of the study and serves two key roles:

- 1) To gather data that informs numerous Relocal metrics
- 2) To meaningfully engage local residents and stakeholders

Relocal's field survey involves collecting data on current neighborhood and property conditions that inform metrics across categories, with particular emphasis on metrics within neighborhood character. The field survey also serves the important role of identifying the vacant buildings and vacant lots on which Relocal's final recommendations are based. The field survey utilizes volunteers as boots on the ground, and smartphone technology enables them to execute the survey swiftly and efficiently.

The Relocal field survey uses a web-based survey platform called LocalData that can be utilized on any smartphone or tablet. LocalData enables a surveyor to locate each property easily – with an interface akin to Google satellite view and with each parcel clearly outlined – and then to take a photo of the property and answer a series of questions about it, starting with whether there is a building on site. If a building is present, questions will follow as to its architectural character, building condition, and occupancy. If no building is present, questions follow about the use of the land and its maintenance. Questions are also asked about each property's sidewalk presence and condition, and whether public art or graffiti is present, among others.

In Little Rock, the Relocal field survey took place September 8-12, 2015. A call for local survey volunteers was circulated by the City of Little Rock, Quapaw Quarter Association, Preserve Arkansas, and the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, among others. Local news coverage helped to spread the word as well.

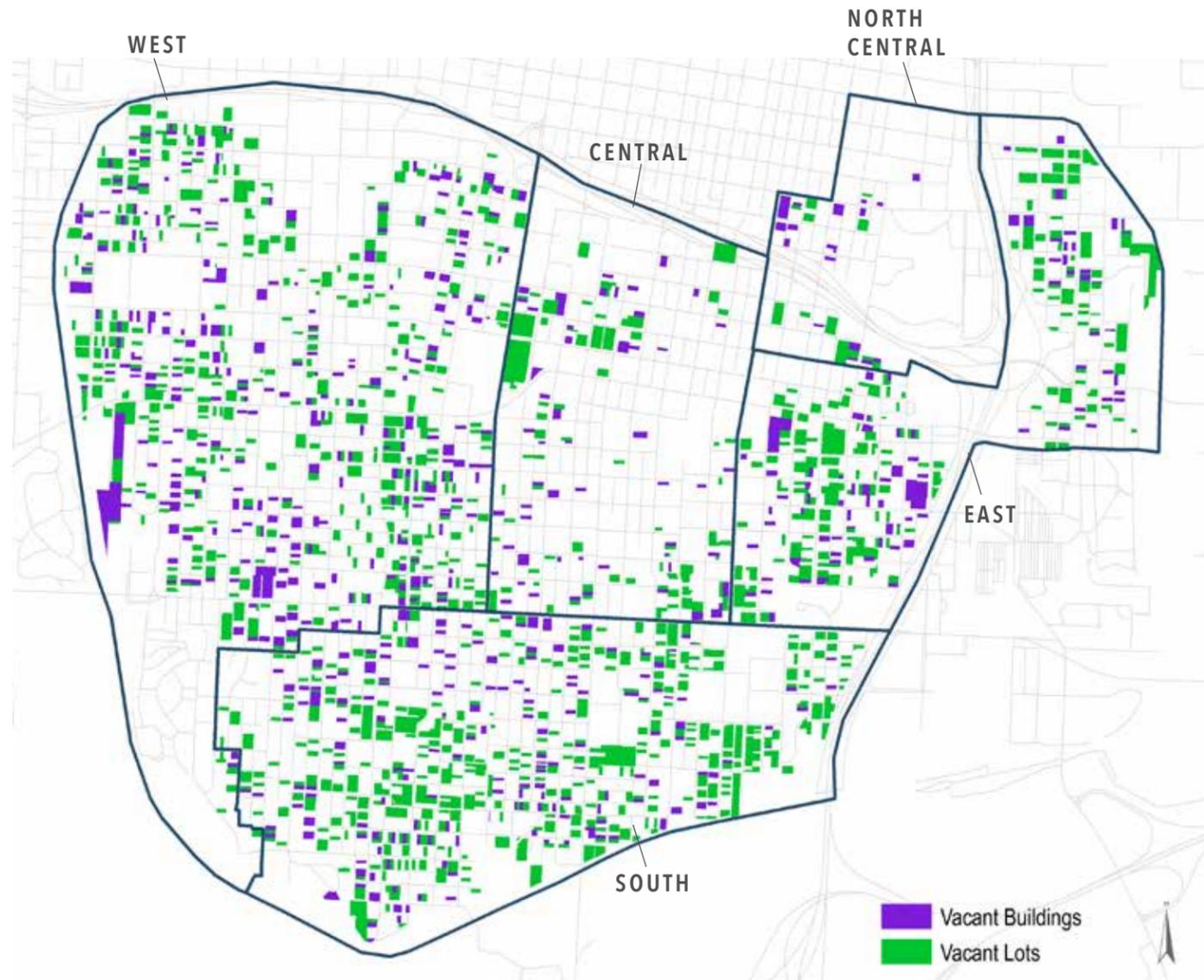
As a result, over 50 local volunteers came out to survey over five days. Their backgrounds included finance, IT, business, public relations, real estate, urban planning, architecture, and historic preservation. Some volunteers were students while others retired, and still others took off of work to be a part of the project. Many lived in historic homes or loved history or had an affinity for older buildings.

Each volunteer used their smartphone or tablet to execute the survey across each subarea. All surveyors were trained extensively and sent into the field in pairs or trios, and each group was equipped with a field manual on questions, answer choices with photos, and technical support. Additionally, each individual was supplied with FAQ sheets to hand out to curious local residents and property owners they would encounter while surveying. These FAQ sheets provided background on the Relocal project, contact information for questions, and directed recipients to the Community Priority Survey as a means to be involved.

In total, nearly 8,000 parcels were surveyed in the Relocal study area, providing an important foundation for the project. The field survey is not only key to gathering data, it provides opportunities for local residents to feel engaged: with the Relocal project and process; with local organizations and their efforts; and with each other.

*Left: Little Rock volunteer surveyors out in the field using smartphones to gather data for Relocal.*

# RECOMMENDATIONS



ALL IDENTIFIED VACANT LOTS AND VACANT BUILDINGS THROUGHOUT THE STUDY AREA

The Relocal study area overall contained good building stock and a high proportion of character-rich buildings, although these are primarily concentrated in the Central and North Central subareas. Concentrations of high and landmark character buildings are also seen in West, with scattered sites throughout East and South. These patterns are echoed in parcel level recommendations. Of the total vacant buildings per subarea, the highest percentage recommended for rehabilitation are located in Central and North Central, as are the highest percentage of vacant lots recommended for infill development.

Rehabilitation and stabilization are recommended for vacant buildings on generally intact blocks with high character, fair to good condition, and medium to high construction quality while demolition focuses on lower-quality buildings or buildings in largely vacant areas. Infill is a sound strategy for vacant parcels on particularly strong blocks, but many parcels are recommended for measures that will return the parcel to a contributory reuse or as an environmental asset, thereby improving quality of life in the immediate area. Qualities used to determine vacant lot strategies include parcel level conditions and the amount of vacancy on its surrounding block as well as subarea outcomes. Where deferred decision is recommended, it is an opportunity to focus limited resources on other properties and that these are sites whose future use may be contingent on the impact of other nearby investments or changes.

As discussed in the introduction, vacant buildings are classified into four opportunity categories:

- Rehab and reuse
- Stabilize and mothball
- Defer decision
- Raze and recycle

Vacant parcels are also classified into four opportunity categories:

- Infill
- Contributory reuse
- Defer decision
- Environmental reuse

# CENTRAL

Central had strong scores in metrics across the real estate, neighborhood character, walkability, and engagement categories in particular. Overall, Central's buildings had high character, construction quality, and condition. Its predominance of building permits for rehabilitation and renovation show investment is happening in the existing building stock. Central's proximity to neighborhood centers, businesses, and schools as well as good sidewalk presence and condition heighten the area's desirability. The area's low vacancy rate and relatively low percentage of vacant lot land coupled with high population density and strong property values per acre paint a picture of an area ripe for reinvestment.

Central contains 9% of the vacant buildings across the study area with a total of 61 vacant buildings identified in the field survey. Forty-one of those are recommended for near-term rehabilitation, while 15 are recommended for stabilization and 4 for deferred decision. Only one building is recommended for raze and recycle.

In Central, 15% of the subarea's acreage is composed of its 95 vacant lots. Central's high rate of rehabilitation recommendations is complemented by a high rate of recommendations for infill development on vacant lots. In Central, 83 lots are recommended for infill, 12 for contributory reuse, and none for environmental reuse or deferred decision.

PARCEL MAP OF CENTRAL WITH VACANT BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS



PARCEL MAP OF CENTRAL WITH VACANT LOT RECOMMENDATIONS



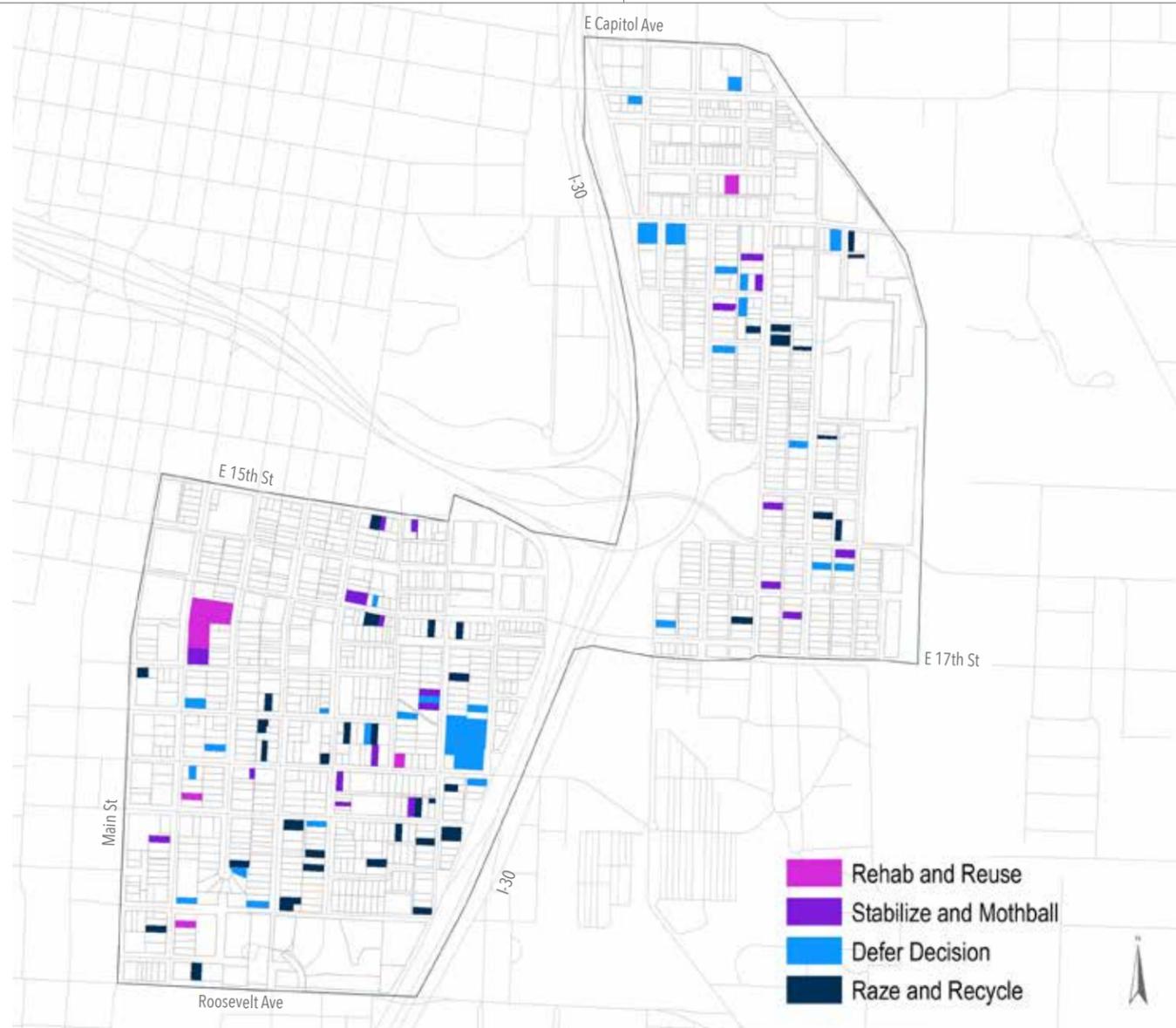
# EAST

East scored within average range in the stability and fiscal categories, with relatively high population density and long-term residency, low tax delinquency, and a slight increase in population from 2010-2013. While East scored well in the environmental category, the area scored below average across all other categories. In East there are relatively few economic and engagement opportunities, and East's buildings had lower scores across architectural character, condition, and quality relative to other subareas. Additionally, 29% of East's total parcels are composed of vacant lots, and remaining parcels without buildings are being used for parking lots and side lots, as well as a small number of parks and gardens, or some other uses.

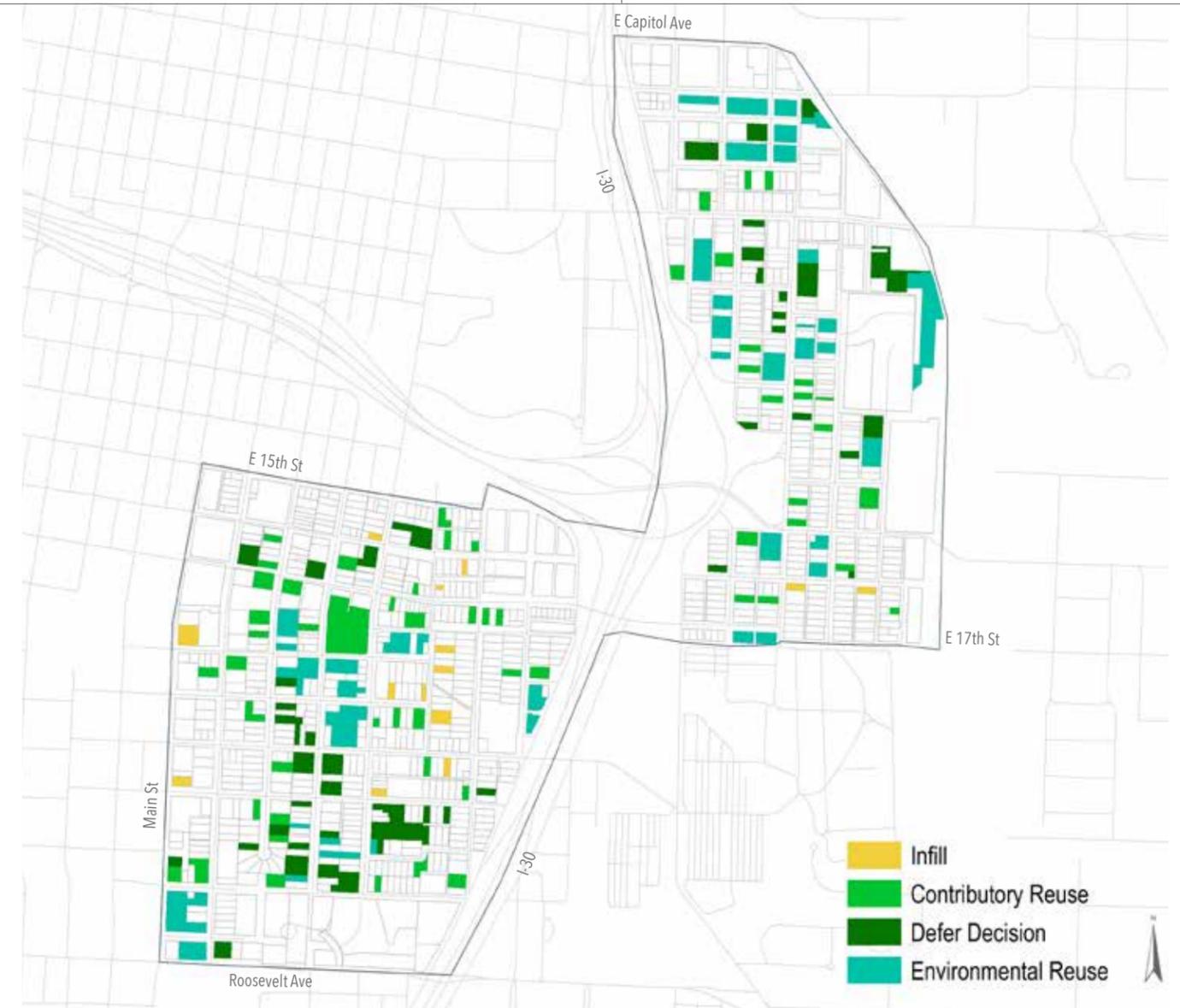
East has 97 vacant buildings identified from the field survey. Of those, 6 buildings were recommended for rehab, 21 for stabilization and mothballing, 28 for deferred decision, and 42 for raze and recycle.

East contained 330 vacant lots identified by the field survey, which is 19% of the total number of vacant lots across the study area -- a relatively high concentration for one of the geographically smaller subareas. East's high concentration of vacant lots creates an opportunity for alternative uses for that land. Eighteen of East's vacant lots were recommended for infill, 89 were recommended for contributory reuse -- such as side lots, pocket parks, or urban gardens -- 93 for deferred decision, and 130 for environmental reuse.

**PARCEL MAP OF EAST WITH VACANT BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS**



**PARCEL MAP OF EAST WITH VACANT LOT RECOMMENDATIONS**



# NORTH CENTRAL

North Central scored well across real estate, neighborhood character, fiscal, economic opportunity, and environmental categories. North Central has a strong neighborhood pull as indicated by few foreclosures, the highest number of single family property sales among subareas, a high number of rehabilitation and renovation permits, and an influx of residents in the working age cohorts of 18-64, as well as other metrics. This signifies the subarea is offering attractive features for people across age ranges. Additionally, North Central's neighborhood character score was superb, as evidenced by high architectural character and condition of buildings, as well local protection of historic assets.

In North Central there were 19 vacant buildings identified through the field survey. Of those, 15 are recommended for rehabilitation, 3 for stabilization and mothballing, 1 as deferred decision, and none for raze and recycle.

North Central had 25 vacant lots identified by the field surveyors, which is just over 1% of the total vacant lots across the study area. Of those, 6 were recommended for infill development and 19 were recommended for contributory reuse, such as a side lot split, neighborhood market, or pocket park. None were recommended for deferred decision or environmental reuse.

PARCEL MAP OF NORTH CENTRAL WITH VACANT BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS



PARCEL MAP OF NORTH CENTRAL WITH VACANT LOT RECOMMENDATIONS



# SOUTH

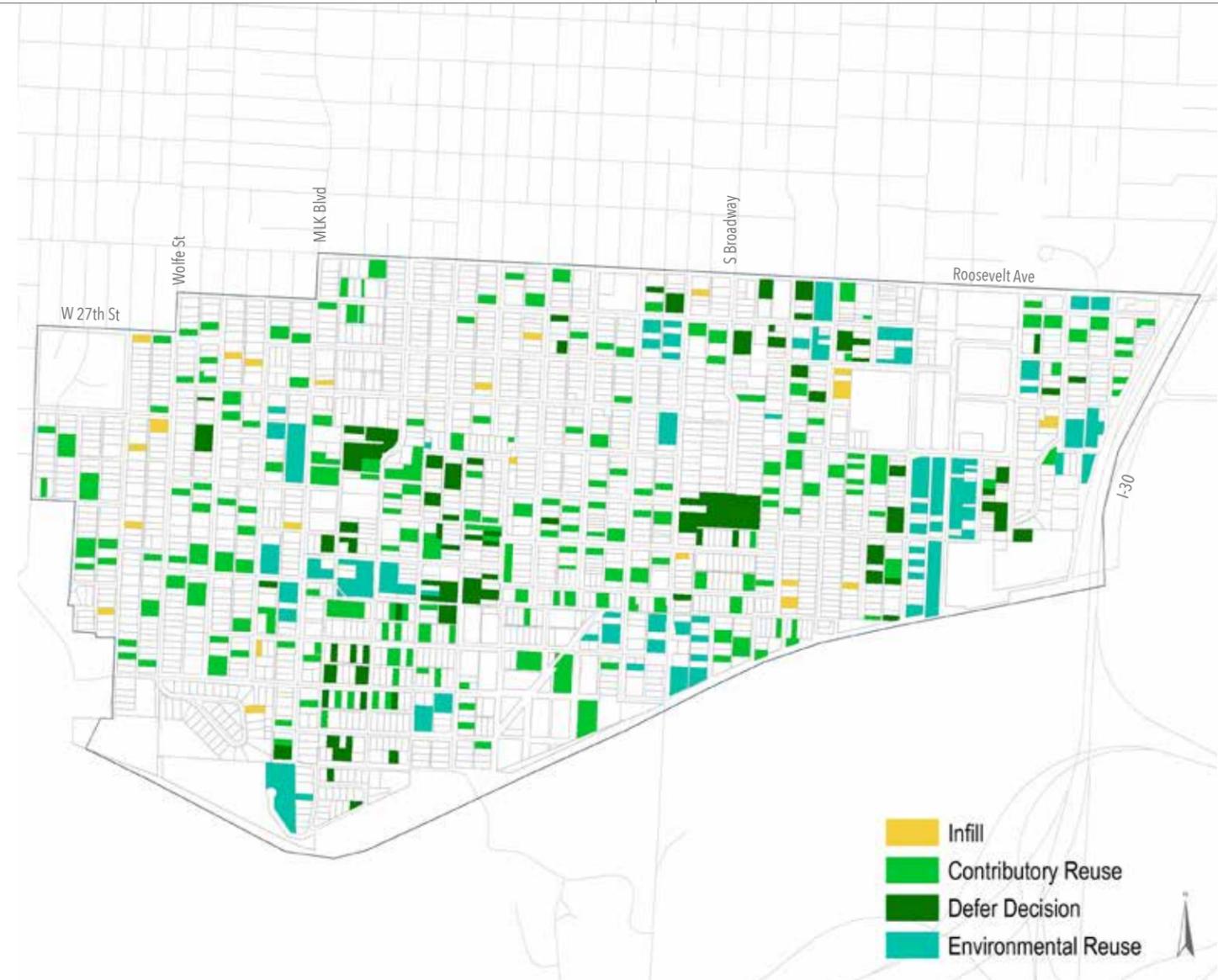
South has strong resident engagement, with multiple neighborhood associations servicing the area, and the importance of engagement was echoed in the results of the community priority survey where residents from the subarea indicated that engagement mattered significantly more to them than in other subareas. South has a strong long-term resident population as well as a high percentage of owner-occupied buildings, indicators of deep-rooted residents in the neighborhood. South also has had some population rebounding since 2010. However, South had the highest percentage of low character vacant buildings, and overall scored the lowest on neighborhood character. Economic opportunities are few in South, there are fewer institutional property owners to leverage, and property sales were lowest in South among all subareas.

In South there were 189 vacant buildings as identified in the field survey. Of those, 11 were recommended for near-term rehabilitation, 51 for stabilization and mothballing, 49 for deferred decision, and 78 for raze and recycle.

South has 655 vacant lots identified by the field survey, which is 38% of all the vacant lots identified across the study area. Of those, 25 are recommended for infill, 282 for contributory reuse, 145 for deferred decision, and 203 for environmental reuse.

PARCEL MAP OF SOUTH WITH VACANT BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS

PARCEL MAP OF SOUTH WITH VACANT LOT RECOMMENDATIONS



# WEST

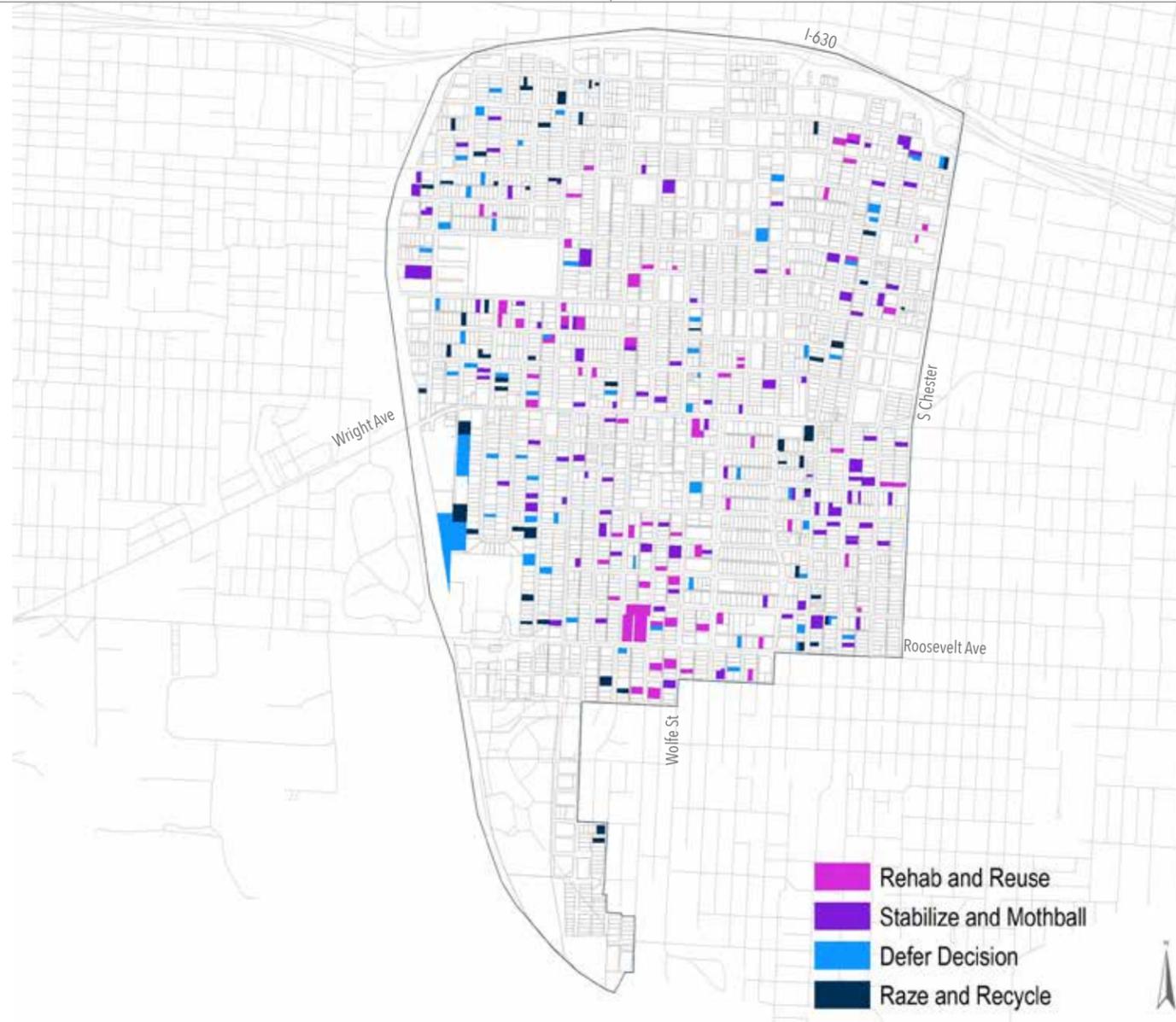
West scored well across fiscal and walkability categories as well as metrics within neighborhood character and economic opportunity. Properties in West are proximate to schools, community centers, and public facilities. West's high replacement cost for infrastructure means there's a great deal of investment already made, and thus strategic rehabilitation and stabilization of properties as well as infill development will help capitalize on that existing investment. Additionally, West's high scoring across architectural character, condition, and quality as well as high proportion of rehabilitation and renovation permits signify a desirable built environment. West also had the widest diversity of unit sizes of all the subareas, which

indicates a range of residential options for families and individuals of all sizes. The area is well served by active neighborhood associations by providing multiple opportunities for engagement.

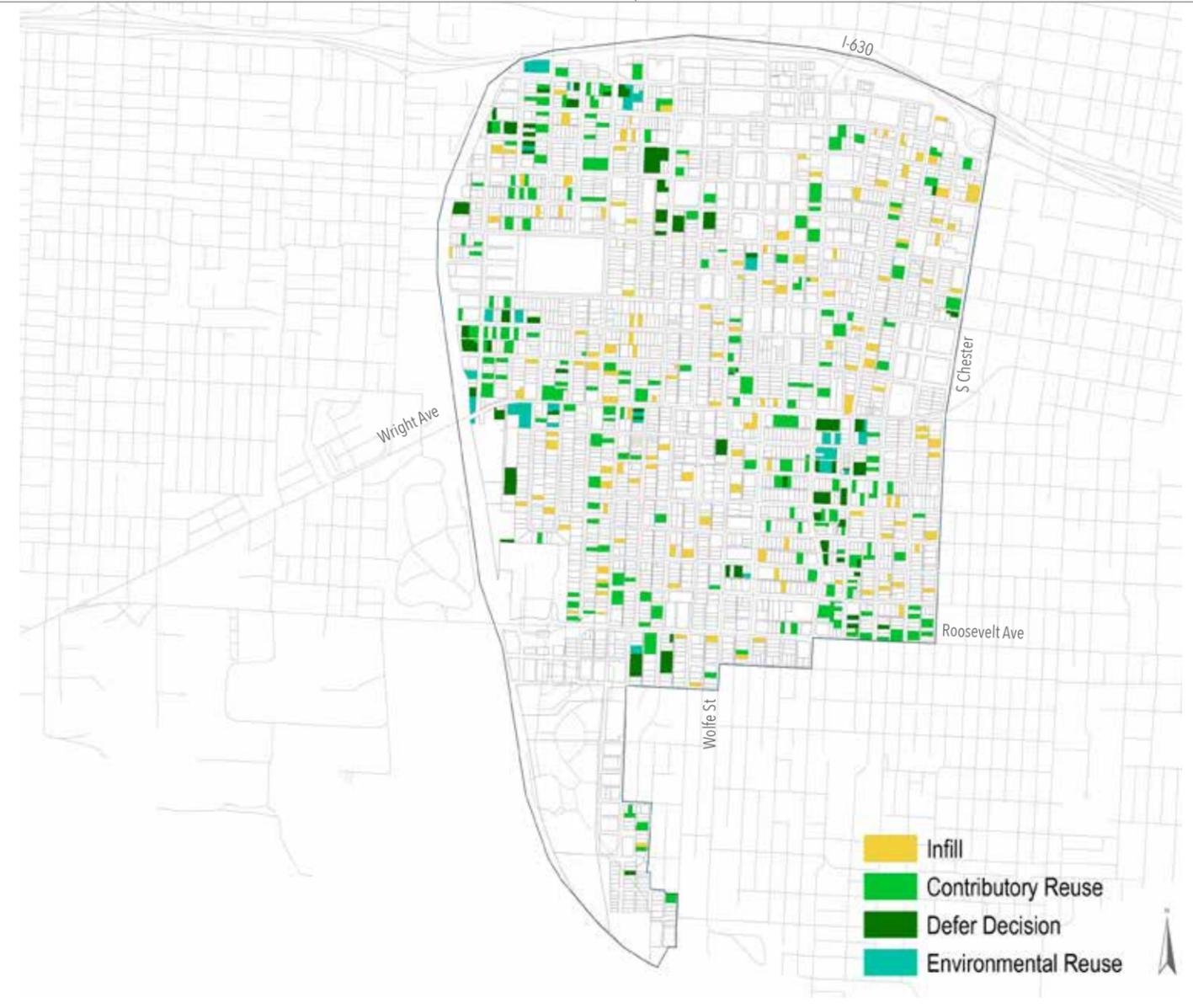
In West, there were 297 vacant buildings identified by the field survey, the largest share of vacant buildings among the subareas. Of those, 39 are recommended for rehabilitation, 117 are recommended for stabilization and mothballing, 112 for deferred decision, and 30 for raze and recycle.

In West, 21% of its parcels are composed of vacant lots totalling 634 as identified by the field survey. Of those, 165 are recommended for infill, 303 for contributory reuse, 115 for deferred decision, and 51 for environmental reuse.

PARCEL MAP OF SOUTH WITH VACANT BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS



PARCEL MAP OF SOUTH WITH VACANT LOT RECOMMENDATIONS



# APPENDIX

PARCEL-LEVEL STRATEGY TOOLKIT

TOOLS DEFINITIONS

RELOCAL METRICS EXPLAINED

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# APPENDIX A

## PARCEL-LEVEL STRATEGY TOOLKIT

### REHAB AND REUSE

#### Strategies

- Market transaction
- Public acquisition and reconveyance
- Public acquisition, rehabilitation and reconveyance
- Public or nonprofit rehabilitation and use
- Public or nonprofit assistance to private owner
- Private rehabilitation and use
- Move building to parcel recommended for infill

#### Local/Statewide/National Tools

Little Rock's Model Block Program  
 Save-A-Home Program  
 Stop the Demolitions, Little Rock  
 Main Street Creative Corridor  
 HOME Program  
 Community Development Block Grant  
 HUD's Dollar Homes Program  
 State Rehabilitation Tax Credit  
 Code Enforcement

#### Best Practices Used in Other Cities/States

Obsolete Building Rehabilitation Act (MI)  
 Abandoned Building Revitalization Act (SC)  
 St. Louis Preservation Fund (MO)  
 Providence EveryHome Program (RI)  
 Detroit Land Bank Authority Vacant Home Auction (MI)  
 Detroit Land Bank Authority's Rehabbed & Ready (MI)  
 Expert House Movers (General)

### STABILIZE AND MOTHBALL

#### Strategies

- Public or nonprofit acquisition, stabilization, and potential reconveyance
- Public or nonprofit assistance to private owner
- Public or nonprofit stabilization
- Private acquisition, stabilization, and potential reconveyance
- Private stabilization

#### Local/Statewide/National Tools

Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)  
 Receivership  
 Code Enforcement

#### Best Practices Used in Other Cities/States

Mothballing (General)  
 Vacant Property Registry (OH)

### RAZE AND RECYCLE

#### Strategies

- Public or nonprofit acquisition, removal, and potential reconveyance or use
- Private acquisition, removal, and potential reconveyance or use
- Private removal and potential reconveyance or use

#### Local/Statewide/National Tools

Demolition of Unsafe Residential Structures  
 Inmate Training in Pine Bluff  
 Habitat for Humanity Deconstruction Services  
 Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

#### Best Practices Used in Other Cities/States

Deconstruction Training Programs  
 Strategic Demolition

# APPENDIX B

## TOOL DEFINITIONS

### INFILL

#### Strategies

- Public acquisition and reconveyance
- Private acquisition and construction
- Nonprofit acquisition and construction

#### Local/Statewide/National Tools

Little Rock's Model Block Program  
 Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)  
 New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) Program  
 Serve as site for moved building

#### Best Practices Used in Other Cities/States

The Infill Design Toolkit: Medium Density Residential Development (OR)  
 Infill Development Standards and Policy Guide (General)  
 Compatible Infill Design: Principles for New Construction in Oregon's Historic Districts (OR)

### CONTRIBUTORY REUSE

#### Strategies

- Public acquisition and reconveyance
- Partnerships with community/non-profits/arts groups
- Private acquisition and construction

#### Local/Statewide/National Tools

Little Rock Land Bank Commission  
 Community Gardens on Vacant Lots  
 Fit 2 Live Community Gardens

#### Best Practices Used in Other Cities/States

Memphis Mow-to-Own Program (TN)  
 Philadelphia Land Care Program (PA)  
 Exercise Lots in Detroit (MI)  
 Vacant to Vibrant (IN, NY, OH)  
 Lots of Green (OH)  
 Afterhouse (MI)  
 BioCellar (OH)  
 Working With Lots: A Field Guide (MI)

### ENVIRONMENTAL REUSE

#### Strategies

- Public acquisition and reconveyance
- Partnerships with community/non-profits/arts groups
- Private acquisition and construction

#### Local/Statewide/National Tools

EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Funding (RLF)

#### Best Practices Used in Other Cities/States

Vacant to Vibrant (IN, NY, OH)  
 Afterhouse (MI)  
 BioCellar (OH)  
 Working With Lots: A Field Guide (MI)  
 Geothermal Wells (General; OH)

#### Abandoned Building Revitalization Act (ABRA)

The Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation, a statewide partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, created an initiative and allows an income tax credit of up to 25 percent of the expenses involved in rehabilitating any income-producing building (historic or otherwise) that has been at least two-thirds vacant for five years or more. The act was supported by a coalition of preservationists, community activists, fire and police departments, and elected officials, including the mayor. Legislation was passed in 2013 and the incentive is capped at \$500,000.

[www.masc.sc/pages/legislative/sc-abandoned-buildings-revitalization-act.aspx](http://www.masc.sc/pages/legislative/sc-abandoned-buildings-revitalization-act.aspx)

#### Afterhouse

Detroit Afterhouse is a project conceived by the Architectural Research Collaborative (ARCHOLAB) focused on demolishing the worst of the worst buildings in Detroit and using foundations as subterranean geothermal greenhouses.

[archolab.com/archives/445](http://archolab.com/archives/445)

#### BioCellar

A project out of the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative, "the BioCellar initiative proposes to salvage the most valuable part of a derelict house-it's masonry foundation. An existing foundation wall, surrounded by earth, is an insulated container that can store energy and serve a variety of productive functions such as greenhouses, solar collectors, aquaculture facilities, stormwater filtration, and other new uses.

[www.cudc.kent.edu/projects\\_research/projects/biocellar.html](http://www.cudc.kent.edu/projects_research/projects/biocellar.html)

#### Code Enforcement

The City of Little Rock employs Code Enforcement Officers to address complaints regarding trash, high grass and weeds, overgrown lots, illegal dumping and non-running automobiles on private property.

Code Enforcement Officers also enforce ordinances regarding graffiti and vacant, unsecured, residential structures, as well as dilapidated structures.

[www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing\\_programs/neighborhoodprograms](http://www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing_programs/neighborhoodprograms)

#### Community Development Block Grant

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding was created by Congress with Passage of Title I of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1974. CDBG Program is intended to benefit principally low- and moderate-income persons, eliminate slum and blight, and address the needs that result from natural disasters.

[www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing\\_programs/cdbg\\_housing/](http://www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing_programs/cdbg_housing/)

#### Community gardens on previously vacant lots (Little Rock)

A number of community gardens have sprung up in vacant lots around Little Rock, including: Scott-Bussy Urban Garden; and Woodruff Community Garden; Victory Garden Project.

[boiledownjuice.com/dealing-with-drought-portraits-from-three-little-rock-community-gardens/](http://boiledownjuice.com/dealing-with-drought-portraits-from-three-little-rock-community-gardens/)

#### Compatible Infill Design: Principles for New Construction in Oregon's Historic Districts

This is a special report created by the Historic Preservation League of Oregon in 2011. The report includes criteria for successful guidelines, implementation strategy, and recommended approach of regulations combined with incentives and added rights for property owners

[restoreoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/UPDATED-RO-Special-Report-Compatible-Infill-Devel-Final\\_print.pdf](http://restoreoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/UPDATED-RO-Special-Report-Compatible-Infill-Devel-Final_print.pdf)

### **Deconstruction Training Programs**

Many cities have deconstruction programs that train local residents -- including the un- or underemployed and former convicts -- in deconstruction. This provides local jobs as well as creates a skilled workforce able to safely deconstruct and buildings and recycle their materials. Deconstruction also serves to put materials back into circulation for restoration and rehabilitation projects. Some examples of deconstruction training programs include the Rebuilding Exchange in Chicago and EcoWorks/Reclaim Detroit in Michigan

[www.rebuildingexchange.org/job-training](http://www.rebuildingexchange.org/job-training)  
[www.ecoworksdetroit.org/](http://www.ecoworksdetroit.org/)

### **Demolition Delay**

As of 2013, the City of Little Rock committed to delay the demolition of historic structures on the "unsafe and vacant" listing for 180 days. Approximately 700 structures are currently on this list.

[www.arktimes.com/ArkansasBlog/archives/2013/08/11/little-rock-to-give-more-time-to-rehab-derelict-proper](http://www.arktimes.com/ArkansasBlog/archives/2013/08/11/little-rock-to-give-more-time-to-rehab-derelict-proper)

### **Demolition of Unsafe Residential Structures**

Residential structures that have been declared unsafe for occupancy by Code Enforcement are submitted to the Little Rock City Board of Directors for condemnation approval. Once officially condemned, the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs awards contracts for the demolition of these structures and supervises the demolition process to ensure that the site is brought into full compliance with City Ordinance.

[www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing\\_programs/neighborhoodprograms/](http://www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing_programs/neighborhoodprograms/)

### **Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs Redevelopment Map**

This redevelopment map is a publicly-available tool used to identify unsafe, vacant structures, Landbank properties, Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) developments, and demolished properties throughout the City of Little Rock.

[www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing\\_programs/little\\_rock\\_properties.aspx](http://www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing_programs/little_rock_properties.aspx)

### **Detroit Land Bank Authority Vacant Home Auction**

The Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) launched the auction website in May 2014 in an effort to connect potential homebuyers with vacant Detroit Land Bank-owned houses.

[www.buildingdetroit.org/our-programs/auction-program/](http://www.buildingdetroit.org/our-programs/auction-program/)

### **Detroit Land Bank Authority's Rehabbed & Ready**

The Detroit Land Bank Authority's Rehabbed & Ready program recognizes that many potential homeowners would like to move into homes that don't require money or time invested in rehabilitation. This program offers homes that are completely rehabbed, up to code and ready to be occupied. All homes are sold as a traditional real estate transaction and include brand new amenities. For purchasers interested in a mortgage, Quicken Loans has offered pre-approvals for this program.

[auctions.buildingdetroit.org/RehabbedAndReady](http://auctions.buildingdetroit.org/RehabbedAndReady)

### **EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Funding (RLF)**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awards supplemental funding to clean contaminated sites across the state. Some of these projects will help communities create jobs and many cleanups are in under-served and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

<http://www2.adeg.state.ar.us/hazwaste/bf/default.htm>

### **Exercise Lots in Detroit**

Piety Hill neighborhood in Detroit has over 300 vacant lots. Central Detroit Christian CDC received \$110k from Kresge to develop 7 lots that are less than 50 square feet (the minimum for residential development) into exercise spaces. Each lot contains all weather exercise equipment and basic landscaping.

[www.modeldmedia.com/features/cdc-fitness-lots-121515.aspx](http://www.modeldmedia.com/features/cdc-fitness-lots-121515.aspx)

### **Expert House Movers**

Well known for moving many types of buildings, this company can relocate buildings to more suitable areas. Their website provides helpful FAQs about moving buildings.

[www.experthousemovers.com/moving-resources/faqs](http://www.experthousemovers.com/moving-resources/faqs)

### **Fit 2 Live Community Gardens**

The City of North Little Rock supports community gardens through the Fit 2 Live Community Garden Program, which makes \$30,000 per year available to support the establishment or improvement of community gardens and urban farms. Community groups, faith-based organizations, and schools may request between \$1,000 and \$5,000 for garden construction materials, tools, and certain other expenses.

[nlr.ar.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=96203&pageId=96909](http://nlr.ar.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=96203&pageId=96909)

### **Geothermal Wells**

To heat and cool a home, as well as heat water, this technology uses the earth's renewable energy just below the surface. "Re-Imagining Cleveland: Vacant Land Re-Use Pattern Book" suggests placing Geothermal Wells on a vacant lot to provide adjacent houses with environmentally friendly and cost effective energy.

[www.earthdaycoalition.org/documents/patternbookFINAL\\_lo-res\\_file\\_1241529170.pdf](http://www.earthdaycoalition.org/documents/patternbookFINAL_lo-res_file_1241529170.pdf)

### **Habitat for Humanity Deconstruction Services**

Through this program, volunteers are trained to deconstruct non-structural elements of homes before they are demolished. Habitat for Humanity also run salvage warehouses call "ReStores," that sell donated materials at a low cost to help people of all income levels fix up their homes.

[www.habitatcentralar.org/volunteer](http://www.habitatcentralar.org/volunteer)

### **HOME Program**

Created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (NAHA) HOME is a Federally-funded, large scale grant program intended to strengthen the abilities of State and local governments to provide housing. HOME provides up to \$25,000 to bring substandard housing up to code to low- and moderate-income persons residing within a CDBG and HOME target area.

[www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing\\_programs/cdbg\\_housing/](http://www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing_programs/cdbg_housing/)

### **HUD's Dollar Homes Program**

This initiative helps local governments foster housing opportunities for low- to moderate-income families and address specific community needs by offering them the opportunity to purchase qualified HUD-owned homes for \$1 each and fix them up. Single-family homes acquired through foreclosures are made available after six months on the market.

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/housing/sfh/reo/goodn/dhmbout](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/sfh/reo/goodn/dhmbout)

### **The Infill Design Toolkit: Medium Density Residential Development**

This guide and toolkit contains a wide range of strategies for context-sensitive infill development, prototype designs that allow fast-track approval, technical design details, and a compilation of Portland neighborhood design policies.

[www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/49254](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/49254)

### **Infill Development Standards and Policy Guide**

Very comprehensive guide and model ordinance prepared by the Center for Urban Policy Research with commentary; also describes challenges and proposes best practices solutions from successful programs in other places

[www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/codes/alerts/pdfs/2006\\_6\\_rev2007\\_4\\_infill\\_dev\\_std.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/codes/alerts/pdfs/2006_6_rev2007_4_infill_dev_std.pdf)

### **Inmate Training in Pine Bluff**

The city received more than \$2M over a two year period to train inmates to evaluate and demolish condemned property.

[www.arkansasmatters.com/news/news/abandoned-homes-an-issue-in-pine-bluff](http://www.arkansasmatters.com/news/news/abandoned-homes-an-issue-in-pine-bluff)

### **Little Rock Land Bank Commission**

This Commission's goal is to reverse blight, increase home ownership and stability of property values, provide affordable housing, improve the health and safety of neighborhoods, and maintain the architectural fabric of Little Rock. These goals will be achieved through the study, acquisition, and disposition of vacant, abandoned, tax delinquent, and City lien property while collaborating with citizens, neighborhoods, developers, non-profit organizations and other governmental agencies.

[littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing\\_programs/landbankcommission/](http://littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing_programs/landbankcommission/)

### **Little Rock's Model Block Program**

This program is focused on bringing structures up to city code standards and to provide infill on vacant lots. CDBG funds are used to purchase the vacant lots and new, affordable homes will be constructed to improve the infrastructure around them.

[www.usmayors.org/bestpractices/cdbg/pub65.htm](http://www.usmayors.org/bestpractices/cdbg/pub65.htm)

### **Lots of Green**

The Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation initiative to clean up vacant land and remove barriers to maintenance such as debris, hazardous trees, and sinkholes. After cleanup, land is made available for transfer to adjacent homeowners through the Side Lot Program. Currently, residents can take title to vacant land through Lien Forward Ohio and the Mahoning County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank).

[www.yndc.org/programs/lots-green/vacant-land-stabilization](http://www.yndc.org/programs/lots-green/vacant-land-stabilization)

### **Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers this program to help encourage and fund the development of affordable rental housing for low-income households by providing an indirect federal subsidy.

[portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/affordablehousing/training/web/lihtc/basics](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/training/web/lihtc/basics)

### **Main Street Creative Corridor**

Mark Stodola, the mayor of Little Rock, envisioned that the Main Street could become what he called a “Creative Corridor”—a place where arts and culture could anchor a vibrant, mixed-use place in the center of the city and provide affordable housing to artists. The mayor assembled strategic partnerships between public, private, and non-profit entities to address a diversity of uses and issues.

[www.arts.gov/exploring-our-town/main-street-creative-corridor](http://www.arts.gov/exploring-our-town/main-street-creative-corridor)

### **Memphis Mow-to-Own Program**

The ordinance, sponsored by Councilman Berlin Boyd, is an avenue for property owners to mow an adjoining city- or county-owned vacant lot to earn credits toward buying it.

[www.commercialappeal.com/news/government/city/memphis-mow-to-own-program-passes-final-vote-in-city-council-24abb49c-9791-7630-e053-0100007fa76d-351215011.html](http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/government/city/memphis-mow-to-own-program-passes-final-vote-in-city-council-24abb49c-9791-7630-e053-0100007fa76d-351215011.html)

### **Mothballing**

This involves stabilizing, securing, and protecting a vacant structure from weather damage and vandals while preserving the structure for future use.

[www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/31-mothballing.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/31-mothballing.htm)

### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)**

This program run by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides states and selected local governments with funding to purchase and redevelop foreclosed and abandoned houses. For example, NSP funds have aided in the formation and continuation of land banks.

[www.hudexchange.info/nsp](http://www.hudexchange.info/nsp)

### **New Markets Tax Credits (NMTTC) Program**

This federal program focuses on generating economic growth in low-income communities by providing tax credits to investors who make equity investments in Community Development Entities (specialized financial institutions that help low-income communities or persons).

[www.irs.gov/pub/irs-utl/atgnmtc.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-utl/atgnmtc.pdf)

### **North Little Rock Community Development**

North Little Rock Community Development works to eliminate conditions of slums and blight and improve the housing quality throughout the community, with particular emphasis on housing available to and occupied by low to moderate income persons. Services provided include emergency repairs, weatherization, and technical assistance.

[nlr.ar.gov/government/a\\_z\\_department\\_list/community\\_development](http://nlr.ar.gov/government/a_z_department_list/community_development)

### **Obsolete Building Rehabilitation Act (OPRA)**

A community essentially freezes the existing taxable value on a designated facility for up to 12 years. By freezing the taxable value, it provides an incentive for the developer to make significant improvements to a building without increasing the property taxes on the building.

[www.michigan.gov/documents/taxes/MEDCGuidelines\\_280240\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/taxes/MEDCGuidelines_280240_7.pdf)

### **Philadelphia Land Care Program**

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) works with community-based organizations and city agencies to transform Philadelphia’s vacant land into neighborhood assets as part of a strategic approach to neighborhood redevelopment. The PHS LandCare program cleans, greens, and stabilizes vacant lots to help return them to productive use, now having installed and maintained interim landscape treatments for over 7,000 parcels covering nearly 11 million square feet in key transitional neighborhoods, in turn developing more than 850 properties for new housing and business.

[phsonline.org/programs/landcare-program](http://phsonline.org/programs/landcare-program)

### **Pop Up City**

The Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative developed this research program to demonstrate how vacant spaces can be turned into experiential, temporary spaces that encourage imagination and reuse.

[www.cudc.kent.edu/pop\\_up\\_city/index.html](http://www.cudc.kent.edu/pop_up_city/index.html)

### **Providence EveryHome Program**

This program addresses abandoned properties and produces local jobs for these projects through utilizing an expansion of the receivership program, withholding vacant properties from tax sales to promote rehabilitation and aligning federal investments with the goals of the initiative.

[www.providenceri.com/mayor/mayor-elorza-announces-everyhome-initiative](http://www.providenceri.com/mayor/mayor-elorza-announces-everyhome-initiative)

### **Save-A-Home Program**

The City of Little Rock acquires a house needing extensive repairs, rehabilitates it, then sells it to a low-income homebuyer at a cost as much as \$10,000 below the total investment by the City (if necessary) to make it affordable.

[www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing\\_programs/cdbg\\_housing/](http://www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/housing_programs/cdbg_housing/)

### **State Rehabilitation Tax Credit**

Properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places or are listed as “contributing” within a historic district on the National Register are eligible to claim a tax credit on their rehabilitation. Properties that will be eligible for listing following rehabilitation will also be considered.

[www.arkansaspreservation.com/Preservation-Services/rehabilitation-tax-credits](http://www.arkansaspreservation.com/Preservation-Services/rehabilitation-tax-credits)

### **St. Louis Preservation Fund**

In St. Louis, legislation was proposed that would add a small additional fee to electrical permits, half of which would go toward a preservation and mothballing fund, the other half to a demolition fund. While this bill did not ultimately pass, it presents an interesting model for contributing to an array of neighborhood interventions (preservation and demolition, or others) through one additional small fee.

[www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/morning\\_call/2013/10/bill-would-fund-building-preservation.html](http://www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/morning_call/2013/10/bill-would-fund-building-preservation.html)

### **Stop the Demolitions, Little Rock**

A community-focused Facebook page for use by residents who seek to develop, encourage, and share constructive and viable alternatives to the demolition of abandoned structures.

[www.facebook.com/StopTheDemolitionsLittleRock/](http://www.facebook.com/StopTheDemolitionsLittleRock/)

### **Strategic Demolition**

This involves a targeted, cost-effective approach to removing buildings, and most importantly, is integrated into a larger revitalization plan. It also includes the proper disposal of waste produced by the demolition.

[www.greaterohio.org/publications/strategic-demolition-report](http://www.greaterohio.org/publications/strategic-demolition-report)

### **Urban Garden District**

Cleveland’s zoning code specifically allows the City to reserve land for urban gardens and to prohibit all other uses for a property.

[planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/zoning/pdf/agricultureopenspacesummary.pdf](http://planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/zoning/pdf/agricultureopenspacesummary.pdf)

### **Vacant to Vibrant (Gary, IN; Cleveland, OH; Buffalo, NY)**

The goal of the project is to create joint stormwater management / neighborhood recreational assets on small, distributed vacant residential parcels in urban neighborhoods and to measure the effectiveness of these installations as green stormwater infrastructure and as tools for neighborhood stabilization.

[www.legacycitydesign.org/projects/28-vacant-to-vibrant](http://www.legacycitydesign.org/projects/28-vacant-to-vibrant)

### **Vacant Property Registry**

Owners of vacant properties in Painesville, Ohio - private or public - have to register their properties for \$200 (first year) and that fee doubles each year the property is vacant.

[bit.do/vacantpropertyregistry](http://bit.do/vacantpropertyregistry)

### **Working With Lots A Field Guide**

Detroit Future City has developed and designed an easy-to-use guide with for reutilizing vacant land in creative and environmentally-friendly ways. For each of the dozens of options available, the guide provides materials needed, long-term maintenance levels, and total cost for each design to be implemented, offering options along a spectrum of affordability for individuals, larger organizations, land banks, or municipalities.

[dfc-lots.com](http://dfc-lots.com)

# APPENDIX C

## RELOCAL METRICS EXPLAINED

This section provides more information on each of Relocal's eight categories and specific metrics measured in Little Rock.

### REAL ESTATE

A strong real estate market is rightly linked to healthy neighborhoods. It supports consistently valued property, sales (but not at a rate that is destabilizing to the community), low vacancy rates, few foreclosures and vacancies, and markers of continued investment like building permits for new construction and rehabilitation. Though the real estate market includes hundreds of nuanced factors that vary daily, the metrics included here incorporate major factors for evaluating past disinvestment and prospective reinvestment in transitional neighborhoods.

#### Change in Property Values

Property value reflects many variables in the health of a neighborhood. Steady or rising property values over time indicate that homebuyers and investors feel that the neighborhood is worth investing in. This score is based on property value trends over the last ten years.

#### Property Sales

Sales reflect the stability and desirability of a neighborhood. A low sales volume where properties spend relatively few days on the market indicates a stable neighborhood where people are eager to buy in; conversely, a high sales volume or long time on the market point to investor flipping or a hesitancy by prospective homeowners to invest. This score is based on sales volume and average sales price over time.

#### New Construction

New construction indicates optimism and investment in an area, as well as job creation. This score is based on construction activity (building permits) over a given period. Large redevelopment projects may be linked to a high number of demolition permits.

#### Remodeling/Renovation

Renovation and remodeling projects signal investment and long-term owner occupancy. They also create jobs and often source from nearby businesses, increasing local economic activity. This score is based on rehabilitation activity (building permits) over a given period.

#### Vacant Land

A high number of vacant land signals long-term disinvestment and depopulation, and potentially a greater investment needed to make a difference. This score is based on the proportion of vacant land to developed land in the neighborhood, excluding parks and other intentional open space.

#### Vacant Buildings

Vacant buildings are another indicator of disinvestment, depopulation, and devalued real estate. This score is based on the proportion of vacant buildings to occupied buildings.

#### Foreclosures

Foreclosures indicate a real estate market with a high number of underwater properties, where the value of the home exceeds the mortgage value, or more general economic distress. This score is based on the number of foreclosures in proportion to the total number of owner-occupied properties.

#### Institutionally Owned Land

Institutionally owned land, particularly when that land is vacant, indicates a redevelopment opportunity for property that is prime to be developed for any number of uses by or in conjunction with a local stakeholder entity. This metric excludes parks and schools, and includes land with no building that is developable and publically owned. Its scores is based on each subarea's proportion of public land to overall land.

#### Affordability

This category includes housing and transit, the two largest expenses incurred by the vast majority of households. Neighborhoods that have a range of housing choices (size and cost) and are located close to neighborhood business districts or downtowns are more likely to accommodate a broader range of incomes and more diverse residents. This score is based on the Center for Neighborhood Technology's H+T Affordability Index, which is calculated from block-level Census data. By combining a 15 percent allocation for transportation with the 30 percent housing affordability standard, CNT recommends a new view of affordability that combines housing and transportation costs and consumes no more than 45 percent of household income.

#### Diversity of Unit Size

A range of unit sizes allows a neighborhood to accommodate diverse household sizes and incomes and creates a more inclusive neighborhood. This score is based on parcel-level data on the size and type of residential buildings.

#### Community Development Corporations

Community development corporations (CDCs) are formed to help strengthen a weak market by developing properties, revitalizing commercial corridors, and taking risks where private-sector developers are unwilling to act. This score is based on the presence of a community-based organization, as well as its level of activity and investment. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

## STABILITY

Neighborhood stability plays a central role in determining whether investments will hold their value over time. An area that has or continues to experience population decline or is rapidly losing density may require interventions that are not possible given capacity. Understanding a neighborhood’s stability support allocation of limited resources to appropriately address the underlying issues and help ‘turn the tide.’

### Population Change

Population change is the number of people who have left or moved to the neighborhood over the last decade. A healthy, stable neighborhood will gain more residents than it loses. Population change is scored based on the population change from 2000 to 2013.

### Economic Integration

Economic integration reflects the diversity incomes within a subarea. A greater variety of housing choices will accommodate a greater range of incomes. This diversity creates a more livable environment for all residents. Economic integration is scored for each neighborhood based on whether the neighborhood reflects the income ranges of the city as a whole.

### Diversity

Racial and ethnic diversity points to a neighborhood that welcomes and sustains a variety of people. This type of neighborhood is likely to be more resilient in the face of external changes. Diversity is measured using the Gini coefficient and scored based on whether it reflects the demographics of the city as a whole.

### Owner Occupancy

Owner occupancy indicates a sustained financial, physical, and social investment in the neighborhood. Homeowners are more likely to make physical improvements to their homes, participate in local civic activities, and reside in the neighborhood longer. This score is based on proportion of homeowners to renters in the neighborhood.

### Long-term Residents

Long-term residents are an indicator of stability, connection, and commitment to place. A lower rate of resident movement means that residents stay in the neighborhood longer, contributing to lower turnover rates and higher feelings of neighborhood ownership. This score is based on the proportion of households who have lived in the neighborhood longer than fifteen years as of 2015.

### Neighborhood Pull

While long-term residents signify deep investment in their property and locality, neighborhood pull looks at influx trends of households moving to a neighborhood. This could be for any number of reasons, but indicates that the area is offering a range of desirable amenities – from affordable housing options to service proximity to public transportation access – that make it attractive to new households. This score is based on the number of households who have moved to each subarea since 2000.

## Signal Population Trends

A sharp increase in certain demographics, or “signal populations,” may signal the beginning of a larger neighborhood trend. This may be true even if the overall neighborhood population is decreasing. This score is based on neighborhood-level data compared with city-level data.

### Demolition Permits

Demolition permits measures the number of buildings that have been demolished in the subarea over a given period of time. Many demolition permits point to a high degree of change in the neighborhood as more familiar built fabric is removed. Demolition is scored based on number of demolition permits as a percentage of all building permits in the subarea. When the number of demolition permits is less than the number of building permits over the same period—that is, demolition may be associated with redevelopment—demolition scores are not treated as a negative.

### Crime

Crime rates affect the actual and perceived quality of a neighborhood. High crime rates discourage investment and improvements, make the neighborhood less attractive to prospective residents, and may even cause current residents to leave. This score is based on reported crime rates in recent years.

### Fire Calls

Building fires may be the result of outdated or poorly built facilities (such as poor wiring), arson, or simply accident. A high number of building fires indicate a high level of disinvestment and/or criminal activity. This score is based on fire calls linked to building fires in recent years.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Neighborhood character contributes to a sense of place. It helps distinguish one neighborhood from another through obvious and subtle differences in mostly physical elements: street width and sidewalk condition, street trees, building size and scale, building style and age. Many of these factors are measured in other categories. This category captures the indicators relating to a neighborhood’s buildings and history, as told through the built environment.

### Architectural character

Architectural character adds personality and charm to a neighborhood, whether through gingerbread houses swagged with Victorian trim, modest workers’ cottages, glassy mid-century houses, or a combination of different architectural styles in the same neighborhood. This score is based on field surveys.

### Building Quality

The construction quality of building stock helps determine how soon additional private or public investments will be needed. Higher-quality building stock holds its value longer—an important factor in areas prone to disinvestment. This score is based on field surveys or city records.

## Building Condition

Building condition indicates the regularity and quality of maintenance. This score is based on field surveys.

### National Register Historic Districts

The National Register of Historic Places is a record of places in the U.S. with local, state, or national importance, or significance. A historic district listed in the National Register is a collection of buildings or landscape features that are significant for the same reason, and which convey their significance (integrity) to residents and visitors. Historic districts indicate a well-preserved sense of history and place. This score is based on the existence of one or more National Register-listed historic districts and the proportion of neighborhood buildings included in their boundaries.

### Local Historic Districts

Local historic districts also denote collections of buildings or landscape features that are locally significant and have sufficient integrity to convey their significance. Local districts also carry the distinction of being regulated by a review board of local citizens, which ensures that publicly visible changes to private or public property are in keeping with the character of the district. This score is based on the existence of one or more local historic districts and the proportion of neighborhood buildings included in their boundaries; it is weighted more heavily than National Register historic districts because of the local review board’s regulatory oversight powers.

### Overlay Districts / Design Guidelines

Design guidelines in a neighborhood assist property owners in making improvements in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. They ensure consistency, and reflect local and/or municipal investment in retaining a local sense of place. This score is based on the existence and consistent application of design guidelines.

### Public Art

Though public art is not essential for daily life, it adds a cultural dimension to daily life, as it is open to everyone free of charge. This score is based on City lists of formally recognized public art, if available, as well as field surveys.

### Vacant Parcel Use

Vacant parcels without buildings can include vacant lots as well as gardens, side lots, parking lots, and parks of various sizes. Vacant lots can have detrimental effects on nearby properties and the broader neighborhood as well as provide opportunities for new interventions, and parks (both city sanctioned and informal), side lots, and gardens demonstrate a local initiative to reactive and care for non-building land. This metric identifies the uses of non-built land, and weights the presence of parks, side lots, and gardens. This information was gathered through the field survey.

### Graffiti

Graffiti creates and encourages the impression that a place is not actively watched or cared for. This score reflects the amount of graffiti noted in field surveys.

## WALKABILITY

Homebuyers and renters in urban areas increasingly value proximity to jobs, schools, shopping, and public assets as a contributor to quality of life. A walkable neighborhood allows people to access goods and services without driving and is also supported by public health advocates who seek to incorporate more exercise in daily activities. Reinvesting in walkable neighborhoods with nearby amenities is a long-term approach to building stronger, more sustainable, more livable communities. Walkability scores are calculated according to the proportion of buildings and occupied buildings within a given distance of a community amenity (generally one half-mile).

### Street Grid Connectivity

A street network with short blocks provides more options and shorter routes between points. A higher number of visually interesting routes means that walking or cycling is more pleasant, and raises the likelihood of people choosing an alternative (non-driving) modes of transportation.

### Sidewalkability Index

Sidewalks play an essential role in measuring walkability. They create a separate space for pedestrians and increase perceived and actual safety. Sidewalks are especially critical for those with limited mobility or higher vulnerability such as people with disabilities, seniors, and children; but they are important for everyone. This score is based on the proportion of sidewalks to roads in a neighborhood.

### Sidewalk Presence and Condition

Sidewalk condition also affects the walkability of an area, as well as its accessibility for community members with limited mobility.

### Public Transportation

Proximity to public transportation allows residents to access other areas of the city and may bring in business customers from other neighborhoods. Good access to a variety of transit options also contributes to a more equitable community, where residents without cars are not at a disadvantage in moving around the city. This score is based on number and proximity of public transportation routes.

### Bike Routes

Safe bike routes allow cyclists to ride to work, school, and errands, or for pleasure without concerns about safety. Bike routes could include streets with on-street bike lanes, sharrows, or separated bike lanes; as well as off-street pathways. This score measures the length of bike-friendly street segments as determined by a municipality, advocacy group, or citizen poll.

### Walking Trails

Walking trails provide pedestrians and sometimes cyclists with navigation options. By separating people from fast-moving cars that emit pollution and noise, these networks increase safety and enhance the experience of walking or cycling. This factor measures the length of bike path and walking trail segments.

### Traffic Volume

Roads that carry higher volumes of traffic are likely less pleasant to walk or bike on, and thus discourage alternative modes of transportation. This score is based on the average and peak traffic counts on selected roads in the neighborhood.

### Schools

An operating school is a significant neighborhood asset. It allows children and parents to walk or bike to school and creates a potential hub for community volunteer investment. A school building that is no longer in educational use remains a significant asset that can be reused for a variety of community-oriented uses, from housing to commercial/office space to culture.

### Neighborhood Business District

A healthy business district in the neighborhood provides basic goods and services to residents. This is a major asset in a walkable neighborhood. Even a struggling business district holds the potential to meet basic neighborhood needs with targeted, committed investment. In Little Rock, this was evaluated using business clusters within 100 feet.

### Proximity to Downtown

Downtown is typically a hub of jobs, transportation, culture, and entertainment. Proximity to these amenities—or the potential for these amenities, in some places—is a strength for residential neighborhoods. Additionally, efforts to make downtowns more vibrant can “spill over” with benefits to other nearby neighborhoods. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

### Community Centers/Other Public Facilities

Public facilities include libraries, schools, community centers, recreation centers, and parks - spaces designed and designated for public use. Proximity to these facilities allows neighborhood residents to not drive and opens access to people who do not drive because of income, disability, or age (youth and seniors). This score sums up the number and proximity of public facilities in and around the neighborhood.

### Medical Services

Proximity to medical services allows car-less residents, particularly seniors, to access important health services and generates local jobs. This score is based on the presence and proximity of medical services in and around the neighborhood.

### Walk Score

Walk Score is a scoring system developed by the Walk Score company that assigns scores to given places based on their proximity to businesses, schools, parks, transit, entertainment, and other common destinations. A higher Walk Score indicates that the place is more walkable.

## FISCAL

Fiscal responsibility is important for the long-term sustainability of any municipality, and especially for cities and towns that are already struggling because of long-term population loss and disinvestment. These indicators measure the costs and contributions of neighborhood elements, with the goal of enabling local governments to capitalize on existing assets and spend new funds conservatively and effectively.

### Property Value Per Acre

Property value evaluates the worth of land and buildings in a neighborhood according to estimated or actual market value. This score is based on property value per acre, according to the county assessor’s office.

### Property Tax Generation

Property taxes provide a significant amount of revenue to local government coffers. Looking at what areas generate property taxes recognizes that importance by aggregating and averaging property taxes in the neighborhood by area. This score is based on property taxes collected per acre.

### Tax Delinquency

Tax delinquency is a signal of economic distress and overall disinvestment. This score is based on the number of tax-delinquent properties and amount owed.

### Density

Areas where more people live and work concentrates activity and requires less public investment in infrastructure, transportation, public spaces, and other public goods. This score is based on the concentration of residents per acre.

### Density Potential

Density potential measures how many additional residents could fit in a neighborhood if current development patterns were to replace vacant residential properties. Though less important than current density, density potential looks to the future in considering what a neighborhood might look like with less vacancy and more infill development.

### Replacement Cost of Infrastructure

Public infrastructure represents past investments in the built environment for the public good, sometimes through generations. True fiscal responsibility requires that municipalities seriously examine the benefits of capitalizing on these long-term investments via incremental maintenance expenditures. The score is based on the replacement costs of various types of infrastructure.

### Stranded Investment

This indicator measures the investment in existing public infrastructure already made by the municipality over time, but that is not actualizing its full value due underutilization of the infrastructure. The resulting stranded investment is an annual figure representing underutilized infrastructure investments.

### Rehabilitation to Demolition Ratio

Demolition lowers property value by removing—or subtracting—the value of improvements from the overall value of the property. When demolition outpaces rehabilitation in a neighborhood, it signals a high level of disinvestment unmatched by reinvestment.

### Intervention tools available

Diverse tools exist for improving a community: sparking revitalization, encouraging rehabilitation and reuse, improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities, creating affordable housing, and many more. This score is based on the availability of intervention tools at all levels, from local to national. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

### Use of intervention tools

Intervention tools are of little value if they are not employed. This score is based on how frequently and effectively available intervention tools are used in a given neighborhood, with a focus on the municipal government’s use of the tools. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Economic activity contributes to neighborhood strength and sustainability by generating jobs and services to serve residents and perhaps attract visitors. A thriving business district, employment centers, and at-home businesses generate financial revenue for business owners and workers, as well as tax revenue for local and state governments. Economic opportunities for entrepreneurs also help determine residents’ ability to build wealth.

### Aggregate Household Income

Household income indicates current prosperity and trends over time. This score is based on household income compared to that of the city as a whole.

### Aggregate Spending Power

Aggregate purchasing power measures the cumulative income of all households in the neighborhood. Higher purchasing power means more opportunities for businesses, and thus more local jobs. This is scored relative to other neighborhoods in the city.

### Spending Power Per Acre

Purchasing power per acre is a geographically based measure of aggregated household income, which reflects the density of households in a neighborhood. This score is based on purchasing power per acre in the neighborhood compared to the city as a whole.

### Employment Centers

An employment center is a cluster of employers who provide job opportunities for locals and others. This score is based on the number of jobs in subareas.

### Neighborhood Business District

Small businesses in a neighborhood business district offer easily accessible goods and services, provide local jobs, and generate income and sales taxes. This score reflects the number of buildings that contribute to neighborhood business districts.

### Business/merchants Association

A business or merchants association promotes and sometimes recruits local businesses, helping to strengthen a neighborhood business district. This score is based on the presence and level of activity of a business or merchants association. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

### At-home businesses

Entrepreneurs working from home provide a level of economic and intellectual capital that helps energize a neighborhood and increase a city’s tax base. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

### Households with high-speed internet

High-speed internet provides access to communication, education, and commerce. A high number of households with high-speed internet points to increased opportunities for neighborhood residents. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

### Foreign-Born

In-migration reflects perceptions of economic and other opportunities as people move into and invest in a neighborhood. In particular, immigrants serve as a bellwether of economic development, as they are more likely to start new businesses. This score is based on the rates of in-migrants from other countries in the past 5 years.

### Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate is an indicator of the level of economic activity and opportunity in and around a neighborhood. This score is based on the neighborhood unemployment rate compared to that of the city as a whole.

### Available Workforce

People between the ages of 16 and 65 who are neither working nor looking for work are a population that provides an opportunity for local activation. This group is composed of people who may not need to work or who have withdrawn from active job searches. This category is distinct from the unemployed and does not include retirees over 65, active duty military, prisoners, or nursing home residents. Scoring is based on the percentage of available workforce as compared to the city.

### Small Business

Startup firms and small businesses are indicators of a vibrant local job economy, and small to medium office spaces – such as are found in older commercial buildings – tend to suit their workplace needs. Small firms are identified as 20 people or less, and startups are less than one year old. Scoring is based on the sum of total jobs in these two categories for each subarea as a portion of the city.

## ENGAGEMENT

Though public engagement is intangible, it has strong implications for the social and physical health of a neighborhood. A healthy neighborhood holds people who believe that they can make a difference, who gather to discuss problems and opportunities, and

who take ownership of public spaces. Some indicators for engagement are non-physical, such as voter registration; others are represented by a building or space.

### **Neighborhood organizations**

Neighborhood associations and block groups are a fundamental part of shaping city policy at the grassroots level. This score is based on the existence of an active neighborhood association or block groups, as judged through online activity, conversations with City staff, and interviews with group leaders, when possible.

### **Senior Organizations**

Senior organizations provide a way for seniors to socialize with each other and give back to the broader community. This type of organization improves the quality of life for senior residents and can serve as a hub for community service activities. This score is based on the existence of one or more active senior organizations and based on the ideal that one center should exist per 500 seniors (65 years and older) living in the subarea.

### **Youth Organizations**

Youth organizations focus on engaging young people in community activities. This score is based on the existence of one or more active youth organizations and based on the ideal that one organization should exist per 500 young people (18 and under) living in the subarea.

### **Third Places**

Third places are informal community gathering places such as coffee shops, bookstores, or bars. They provide safe places for people to casually meet and interact with friends, neighbors, and strangers. Third places are derived directly from the Community Priority Survey.

### **Voter Registration**

Voter registration signals that citizens are engaged and committed at a very basic level. This score is based on the proportion of eligible registered voters in the neighborhood.

### **Voter Participation**

Voter participation also reflects community members' civic engagement. It is based on voter participation in at least one election between 2012-2014.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Environmental factors constitute a broad category, and reflect past land uses such as with brownfields; natural resources such as trees and water; and current quality-of-life and health concerns such as noise, air, and odor pollution. Judicious long-term investments prioritize healthy places where people want to live, work, play, and invest.

### **Embodied Energy**

Embodied energy reflects past investments in time, physical labor, and materials. Reinvesting in places with a high amount of embodied

energy saves time and money now, and also capitalizes on past expenditures. This score provides an estimated aggregate of the embodied energy in a subarea's buildings.

### **Tree Cover**

Trees along public rights-of-way, in parks, and on private property add a sense of place, as well as more tangible benefits such as shade, aesthetic pleasure, and reduction of the urban heat island effect. A higher proportion of tree cover in a neighborhood results in a higher score.

### **Water Access**

Water can provide wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, and significant ecological benefits. This score is based on the presence and accessibility of bodies of water.

### **Floodplains**

Steep topography can be an asset in view properties, but it is a serious environmental concern. Buildings constructed on within floodplains are at increased risk for flooding and other damage as water levels change. This score is based on the proportion of acres within the 500-year, floodplain, and floodway categories.

### **Brownfields**

Brownfields are sites that have, in the past, held industrial uses that affect the ability of the property to be used for other uses. Brownfields may require cleanup to federal standards as part of redevelopment, though some federal funds are designated for planning and remediation. They may be weighted as an opportunity for new development or a liability inhibiting other new development and lowering property values, depending on community concerns, public and private impetus, and available funding. This score is based on the number and area of EPA-classified brownfields.

### **Air/odor Pollution**

Air pollution from traffic or industry affects resident health, particularly that of vulnerable populations such as children and seniors. This score is based on air quality levels and may be negative.

### **Noise Pollution**

Noise pollution affects quality of life, particularly for residential properties. If loud enough, it can disrupt sleep and daytime activities. This metric was not used in Little Rock.

# **APPENDIX D**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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