

NORTH LIMESTONE CULTURAL PLAN

Laying the groundwork for more equitable, creative, and democratic
Community Development practices in Lexington's North End.

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FOREWORD

There is a growing national trend of communities becoming increasingly disconnected as neighbors.

Less in Common, a 2015 study by City Observatory, shows that on average, Americans are spending 33% less time with their neighbors than they were in the 1970s. This same study also shows dramatic declines in levels of trust between neighbors during that same time period. For most communities across the country this is occurring in parallel to a dramatic climb in income inequality and increases in demand for centralized, urban living. These cultural changes paint an unsettling portrait of what it means to be neighbors in our modern age and shows many of the root causes for the tension that is occupying downtowns and first-tier suburbs across the country.

Gentrification, the process of the socioeconomic and cultural change of a place through the introduction of wealthier users, is a topic that is on the minds of many communities, including ours. Some make arguments that gentrification is better than concentrated poverty (see City Observatory's *Lost in Place* study) but it is clear that no matter what the data says about macro-gentrification, changes in community's makeup on a neighborhood level cause the erosion of community culture, adding to the trauma and inequality that so many already experience.

It is important to understand that the changes that are taking place in the North End of Lexington, KY (which you will see in the data section) are not happening in a vacuum. They are the results of generations of sustained (and oftentimes intentionally caused) inequities that continue to manifest iterations of themselves. Many sections of this document discuss the impacts that discrimination and economic segregation have had on the culture and economy of Lexington's North End. These issues led to the instability of this neighborhood over the past 40-50 years, and are what allows the accelerated economic, social, and cultural changes that are occurring today.

This issue is incredibly difficult to "solve" without complete sea changes across economic, political, and cultural structures. It is difficult to stop the market completely. We can, however, make an attempt to impact the transformation that the North End of Lexington is currently undergoing with the goal of building positive change for everyone in the community.

We began the process of creating the North Limestone Cultural Plan in late 2013 with an award from the National Endowment for the Arts' *Our Town* program. As a brand-new Community Development Corporation focused on art and culture, we believed that creating a plan oriented around arts and cultural development in our community could help create a new narrative for the neighborhood. Almost three years later, we now see that was misguided and overly simplistic. So, we are releasing a Cultural Plan that is very different than what was originally intended.

We hope this plan and process sets the groundwork for community development practices that will guide the North Limestone CDC - and hopefully other organizations that work in the North End - moving forward.

The framework of this plan was developed over a long period of time as a response to the changes occurring in our neighborhood, and in reaction to specific events and issues that were happening in real time. What originally started as a single-source grant-based initiative snowballed into a melting pot for other one-off engagements, and because of that this plan will read very different than a more traditional plan.

Even at the onset of this process, we did not want the typical type of city planning document; we already have that - the 2009 Central Sector Small Area Plan. We also did not want the process to be a handful of town-hall meetings and then a copy-and-paste plan from some national consultants. Instead, we wanted a document that was rooted in community voices and was developed by practitioners.

Speaking of the Central Sector Small Area Plan (which covers both the North End and surrounding areas), this document should by no means be considered a replacement for it. It is more of an addendum to it, trying to incorporate more human elements of what defines place and documenting the experiences of our neighbors.

Over the past three years, we have spent a lot of time in community. We hosted community walks, inviting neighbors to use their senses to inform their vision for the future of arts, culture, and public space. We hosted a series of community dinners with neighborhood residents and business owners where we discussed food access, what it takes to start a business, and what the neighborhood needs to be successful and whole. We did one-on-one interviews with neighborhood business owners to get a better understanding of what it was like to own a business in the North End. We conducted on-the-street interviews with individuals walking around. We hosted mobile listening stations in the CDC's airstream trailer. We engaged youth to hear their vision. We made every attempt to hear those that are not typically heard in community planning processes - though we understand that we can always try harder and do more.

While this Cultural Plan identifies several key aspects of what the community needs, it does not take into account a lot of the most pressing issues, including the need for equitable access to affordable housing and accessible employment - perhaps our neighborhoods two largest needs. This is largely a result of the limited bandwidth of a small staff; but also we wanted to ensure that any visioning that went into the Cultural Plan had adequate community engagement and input behind it. It would be easy to shoot from the hip to say what we think is best for housing and other issues, but that would not be in keeping with the spirit of this document. So, while there are many gaps that need to be filled in, this is what we have, now - and this is what we have heard.

There are so many people to thank. This document simply *would not have existed* if it were not for the friends, neighbors, collaborators, agitators, and accomplices that live in this beautiful and rich community. So, thank you all, and we hope that you are pleased with the result. If not, I'm sure we'll hear from you, and we'll work to do better next time.

One of my favorite quotes comes from the book *Equity, Growth, and Community*, by Manuel Pastor, the Director of USC's Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, and Chris Benner, Director of the Everett Program for Digital Tools for Social Innovation at USC. I am hopeful that it can frame this moment, both in our neighborhood, and in our country:

"There is a better side of American politics that seems to be in the waiting. After all, a growing number of people recognize that widening inequalities undermine not just the promise of opportunity for all but also our very economic health as a nation; understand that strength lies in our diversity and that fights over policy priorities should be carried out in a manner rooted in a sense of our common destiny; and acknowledge that a truly inclusive process must seek out the voices of the marginalized and excluded, and recognize the dangers of narrow perspectives, half-truths, and distortions."

We must understand, as individuals and as organizations, that we have common goals and common goods that we can work together on. We must not let our privilege erode our ability to have empathy or admit when we are wrong. We must not insist that we alone have the answers. We must not make judgments about others without engaging with them. The truth is that no individual, no organization, and certainly no long-range plan can build community. Building community takes mutual trust, vulnerability, a willingness to listen. It takes time.

We hope that this plan can be a first step towards supporting and promoting a more united and cohesive community in a way that values everyone's perspectives.

We hope that it helps build a better neighborhood for all that have lived here, do live here, and will live here.

- Richard Young

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout this document, you will find the words, images, and values of North End residents displayed in all of their varying forms. This variation reflects the complexity of the socio-economic changes happening in the North End.

Throughout the process, the Cultural Plan uncovered opinions of many longtime North End residents that were less polarized than the dialogue that tends to accompany conversations around community change and gentrification. Residents valued seeing public art, but wished it better reflected the diversity of the neighborhood. Residents valued seeing the historic buildings that they grew up around being repaired and renovated, but worried that increases in property values could potentially drive them out of their own homes. Residents loved seeing new businesses open, but wished that those businesses better served their needs or was at a price point they could afford.



Lexington's North End

This contradictory nature of development and change in the North End is partially the result of a lack of focus from any community or economic development entity on what the neighborhood actually wants or needs *as a whole*. While different entities focus on different groups within the community - from younger, wealthier newcomers to those that are the most marginalized - none focus on the patchwork quilt that is the whole of the North End. This does nothing to help shift the feelings of social fragmentation, unwelcomeness, and economic segregation that have underpinned narratives of the North End for generations.

In order to both provide a sense of focus and incorporate a wide swath of community development work happening in the North End, the Cultural Plan takes a multi-faceted look at the changes that are currently happening.

It begins with a **History** of Lexington's North End written by Peter Brackney, a local historian who authors the blog *Kaintuckeean*. The history of the North End of Lexington is a complex narrative consisting of both entrepreneurship and the struggle of marginalized communities. The History section pulls together information about the North End from various sources to tell the stories of individuals and events that shaped the neighborhood into what it is today. Stories ranging from the agrarian industrialism of Luigart and Loughridge to the horrific lynchings that occurred in Brucetown in the late 1870s, these moments and individuals describe the neighborhood and frame its complex legacy.

The next section of the Cultural Plan - **Data** - lays bare the changes that are happening in the North End. Much of this information and mapping was put together from the 2000 US Census and the 2014 American Community Survey by Jessi Breen a University of Kentucky's Department of Geography PhD candidate and North End resident. The Data section attempts to give factual evidence illustrating that there are significant demographic changes taking place in the North End.

From 2000 - 2014, the North End saw a significant drop in African-American population from (40.4% of the total population down to 32.7%). This coincides with population growth among both the White and Latino populations. The significant growth of the Latino population shows that the North End is not entirely following the "typical" gentrification paradigm, usually associated with a replacement of poorer non-white residents of a community with wealthier, white ones.

The North End's housing landscape is also in flux. Gross rents in the North End are increasing - with almost a complete disappearance of rents in the less than \$350/month range. It is important to note that these trends mirror the gross rent movement of Fayette County as a whole, while still remaining less expensive, on average. There was also a significant increase in property values during this period, which are still proportionally lower than than the rest of Lexington.

Often omitted from typical plans is the human impact of neighborhood change. In an effort to address that, the Cultural Plan contains a series of images and quotes gathered from residents in our community about the changes that they are seeing. These stories and images of **Neighbors** were gathered by Steve Pavey, another North End Resident. The images add another layer to the complex narrative surrounding the North End. There are photos of both longtime and new residents, accompanied by their words about the changes that are occurring, juxtaposed with images of neighbors meeting and interacting.

The goal of the first few sections of this Cultural Plan are to try to offer three distinct ways of looking at the current state of Lexington's North End: a data-centered approach, a history-centered approach, and a people-centered approach.



Following that is a series of sections regarding the community's vision for its future. It is organized into the following subsections: Assets & Culture, Businesses, Services, Food Access, Public Space, Arts, and Public Art. Each section ends with a list of recommendations for next steps.

Community opinions were gathered for these sections through a variety of means. In an effort to take community input out of the "town hall" and into the neighborhood itself, in 2014 & 2015 the North Limestone CDC and UK partners hosted several neighborhood walks with students from neighborhood schools - specifically Lexington Traditional Magnet School and the STEAM Academy. These walks, which included the principals of these schools as well as teachers (many of whom were residents of the North End), took place along the North Limestone Corridor from Third Street to Arceme / Park View; students took varying paths between the two boundaries.



During these walks, students and faculty were asked to use their five senses to observe their surroundings, and record the emotional impact that was elicited. Following these walks, which took 60-90 minutes, participants were then asked to fill out a 12-page survey, which included questions, mapping exercises, and more. This phase had people participate in groups of 20-30. After the youth phase of the process, several groups of North End residents, business owners, and social service organizations were also asked to participate in the process. During this phase, the groups were significantly smaller - groups of 5-10 - and took even more widely varying paths than the participants in the previous phase. Aside from the reduction in size of the groups, the process was the same as it was for the youth.



In late 2015 and early 2016, North Limestone CDC and University of Kentucky's Community Innovation Lab hosted a series of bilingual community dinners in the neighborhood. At these dinners, attendees were asked to share their ideas about food access, businesses & entrepreneurship, community assets, and more. Responses were recorded via post-it notes on the walls, group conversation, and one-on-one conversations.

North Limestone CDC staff also spent time in more personal one-on-one interviews, as well as on-the-street interviews.

These methods of engagement are what contributed to the **Vision** section

of the document.

The **Culture & Assets** section of the Cultural Plan discusses the tangible and intangible things that residents value about the North End. Neighborhood culture in the North End was associated with the people who live and work in the neighborhood; and residents indicated that seeing and hearing their neighbors is what makes them feel at home. In order to generate a better understanding of these assets, the Cultural Plan recommends that the North Limestone CDC create a human asset inventory of the North End. This Asset Inventory will allow a more fine-grained level of understanding of what human assets already exist within the North End.

The **Services** section of the document details community opinions and needs regarding the different types of services that are offered in the North End. It highlights the missed opportunities of connecting existing services with existing residents, which is a theme that runs throughout this document. This section recommends creating a better framework to connect existing residents and services through working groups and convenings, as well as conducting more in-depth studies of several fields in the neighborhood, specifically: Housing, Community & Social Services, Education, Healthcare, and Transportation.

The **Business** section of the Cultural Plan discusses the changing business landscape in the North End. While the neighborhood is seeing a growth in new businesses, it also shows a lack of businesses in the North End that meet daily needs for residents. While new jobs are coming to the neighborhood through new businesses, very few of them are hiring residents that have lived in the neighborhood for a significant period of time. The recommendations include improving networking between businesses, assisting businesses with growth opportunities, and creating incentives for making the business landscape more equitable and more representative of the neighborhood itself.

The **Food Access** section documents a lack of access (both geographic and economic) to fresh, healthy foods in the North End. The report highlights the successes of services like Fresh Stop Market and Seedleaf, and creates recommendations to build upon these services and models to encourage more access and availability of options.



Perhaps the most lengthy section is **Public Space**, which includes open public space, streets and roads, parks, and more. This section describes the importance of quality public space that is designed with everyone in mind. It discusses the overall poor conditions of the street and sidewalk infrastructure in the North End. It brings up design issues that neighbors have with the handful of parks in the neighborhood: Duncan, Castlewood, and Brucetown Park. It then creates a list of recommendations for specific issues dealing with public spaces in the neighborhood.



The **Arts, Culture & Creativity** section explores the connection between art, culture, creativity, and community development. It discusses the wide range of opinions regarding public art in the North End. The neighborhood has seen a significant increase in the amount of public art - specifically murals - in the area, and the community has had a variety of reactions. The section discusses how public art can make residents feel disempowered in their own communities if they do not value or identify with the artwork. It makes a series of recommendations to make the entire process of creating public art in the North End more equitable and inclusive, including the creation of a toolkit to allow more people to commission public art that is informed by neighborhood values. It then details arts and cultural organizations that exist in the North End. It talks about the tension between art, community development, and gentrification, and ultimately takes a deep look at how artistic process can be used as a tool to breed more inclusive community development practices through examining *El Sistema*, a group musical education model.



Following this Vision section is **Looking Ahead**, which brings the conversation back to what community development is, how it happens, and creates a set of guidelines for how community development should happen in the North End. These guidelines do not just apply to community development organizations, but also to anyone working in the broad scope of sectors that combine to make up the North End. These principles are as follows:

Community Development in Lexington’s North End should be:

- **Accomplished without Assumptions** - Information, data, facts, and direct conversation should underpin all decisions related to community development work in the North End. All information should be validated, people should be talked with directly, and all information should be seen within the context of the community.

- **Equitable** - Decisions regarding community development in the North End need to be informed by those that have been historically left out of the decision-making process, which might require different techniques and tactics to provide spaces in which all feel comfortable and empowered to contribute. True community development is messy - many people will disagree, but it is up to all to ensure that stronger voices in the conversation do not drown out those that are not typically heard.
- **Self-Determinant** - The community itself should set the course for community development in the North End, and should be provided with opportunities and tools to make it happen themselves. It should recognize that individuals in the community have the true expertise, and it should provide them with the tools to self-actuate their own wants and needs whenever possible.
- **Built on Existing Assets** - Community development in the North End should be built on what is already there, not on bringing in non-native things. This is not to say that all exterior influences should be barred and the neighborhood should become insular, but rather that more emphasis should be put on finding the hidden assets of the community and providing opportunities for those to grow to meet needs.
- **Creative** - Creativity and culture are a big part of life in the North End, and that needs to be imbued in all sectors of community development in the neighborhood. These aspects bring a humanity to community development that can otherwise be missing, and are essential for good practice.

The final section of the Cultural Plan discusses ways to keep the Cultural Plan updated and relevant moving forward. It provides specific instructions on how to update the current sections of the document on an annual basis, as well as indicating what topics still need to be researched and added to the Cultural Plan. A schedule for both of these points are provided at the end of the document.

This Cultural Plan contains three years worth of listening to and engagement with the residents, businesses, and social service organizations that make up the North End. Careful measures have been made to ensure that this document represents their wishes and desires, but it is impossible to reach everyone. It goes without saying that there are individuals and groups whose voices were not heard in this process. **No organization or individual can claim this document as justification for not engaging with the community in the future.** It is the hope that this document will provide the basis for organizations and individuals working towards community development goals in the North End to understand that **all** voices need to be heard.

HISTORY

An incomplete history of Lexington's North End, told through the stories of prominent individuals, industry, and events.

Gathered and Written by: Peter Brackney

Edited by: Richard Young & Kris Nonn

Early Lexington & North End

Introduction

A mile northeast of the “new” zero-mile marker in Lexington, Kentucky is the intersection of North Limestone and Loudon streets, at the heart of the North End. This intersection has witnessed a significant amount of change throughout its history.

By some standards, a place’s historical worth is measured only by the “George Washington slept here” standard where only a connection with a significant individual seems to matter, or if the soil contains the blood from a conflict between warring parties. But history is far more than major dates, events, or places. Another approach to viewing the history of a place is through the lives of people - where they lived, worked, played, and traveled; the interconnectedness of people with neighbors speaks far more to how a particular society functioned. This is the approach that this history will take.

But to fully understand and appreciate this, one must first recognize the North End’s role in how Lexington and the region developed.

Before the Settlers

Evidence of human activity in Kentucky extends back to around 13,000 BCE when Pre-Paleoindians first entered the region following the retreat of the last ice age. Many different Native American cultures co-existed in modern-day Kentucky over the millennia that followed, before they were destroyed or driven out by the colonization of the area by European settlers.

The name “Kentucky,” established by John Filson, likely originated from a Cherokee chief’s expression at the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals in 1775. Filson associated the phrase “Kentucky” with what he understood to mean “Dark and Bloody Ground”, referring to the Native American cultures seeking control over the rich hunting grounds in the area.

These hunting grounds were largely reliant on the buffalo traces that crossed the region, paths forged by herds of buffalo in search of salt licks, watering holes, and spots to graze on grass that grew from the fertile limestone soil of the region. Herds would leave the area for years at a time, allowing saplings of the region’s venerable trees to grow strong before the bison returned, creating woodland pastures around them.

Upon European colonization, these trees were used by the settlers as timber to build encampments, stockades, and homes. These clusters of trees would also make the area attractive for wealthy landowners to build large estate homes on the outskirts of early Lexington, which now dot the North End. Some of these trees remain near

the sites of these large estate homes, preserved by the creation of city parks like Duncan and Castlewood; because of this, the North End of today is one of the largest “hot spots” of ancient trees in Lexington.

Reaching Lexington, Kentucky

Lexington, KY, best known for its horse industry and college basketball tradition, is the home of more than 300,000 people. It traces its roots back to 1775, when European settlers from Pennsylvania camped at McConnell Springs – a spot located on the western edge of the modern city’s downtown core. These settlers returned to the area to establish a more permanent settlement, and named it Lexington - after the Revolutionary War battle which took place in Lexington, Massachusetts. A permanent structure – a blockhouse – was built at Lexington in 1779 to protect the settlers from the attacks of Native Americans resisting this colonization.

These were the early days of Kentucky’s modern history. Daniel Boone had crossed into Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap only eight years earlier. The first permanent settlement in Kentucky was founded by James Harrod, at Harrodsburg, in 1774. European settlers arrived in Central Kentucky through one of two ways. Many came through a southern overland route through the Cumberland Gap and the Wilderness Road. Others arrived from the north via the Ohio River.

Of this path, Gilbert Imlay wrote in his 1792 promotional treatise *A Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America* that

“Travelers or emigrants take different methods of transporting their baggage, goods, or furniture from the places they may be at to the Ohio, according to their circumstances, or their object – coming to the country. For instance, a man is travelling only for curiosity, or has no family or goods to remove, his best way would be to purchase horses and take his route through the Wilderness; but provided he has a family or goods of any sort to remove, his best way, then would be to ... carry his property to Redstone Old Fort [on the Monongahela River, modern Brownsville, Pennsylvania which is 10 miles upstream from Pittsburgh], or to Pittsburgh, according as he may come from the northern or southern States.” (Elsinger 2004, p. 7-8).

Once on the southern shore of the Ohio River, settlers had to take a 65 mile land road between Maysville and Lexington, which has had several names, including “Frontier Highway”. Some settlers began this trip further upstream along the Ohio River at its confluence with the Salt Lick Creek, including Col. Robert Patterson, who brought the first horses and first cattle to the region.

The trails that became the “Frontier Highway” came from the buffalo traces that spanned the region. These traces became more established as Native Americans used them for travel and hunting, and the mass arrival of European settlers and their slaves converted them into something more akin to the roads we think of today.

From the founding of Lexington until 1887, the portion of this path located within town limits was known as Mulberry St. In 1887, the Lexington city council changed the road’s name to Limestone Street.

Growing Lexington

The earliest town map of the city of Lexington featured smaller inlots near Main Street and larger outlots which extended northward from Main Street to near Seventh Street. At the onset, Lexingtonians used inlots for commercial, industrial, and residential purposes while outlots were used for agricultural purposes. As the city grew, outlots were subdivided for a wide range of uses.

In *Kentucky’s Frontier Highway*, Raitz and O’Malley expand on this evolution of Lexington’s outlots from 1800 through the 1990s. Throughout the nineteenth century, outlots along North Limestone transitioned from a natural environment to an agricultural landscape dotted with several significant large houses, and then into more developed residential, commercial, and industrial districts.

The emancipation of slaves following the Civil War significantly altered housing demands in the area, and incentivized large-scale employers to construct housing for workers - many of which had previously been their slaves. Prior to the conflict, subdivision of blocks varied in size, but most of the houses constructed (and their lots) remained at least moderately substantial. At the time the city limits of Lexington extended in a circle with a radius of one-mile in all directions from the city center. On North Limestone, the outlots already extended that distance from the city center.

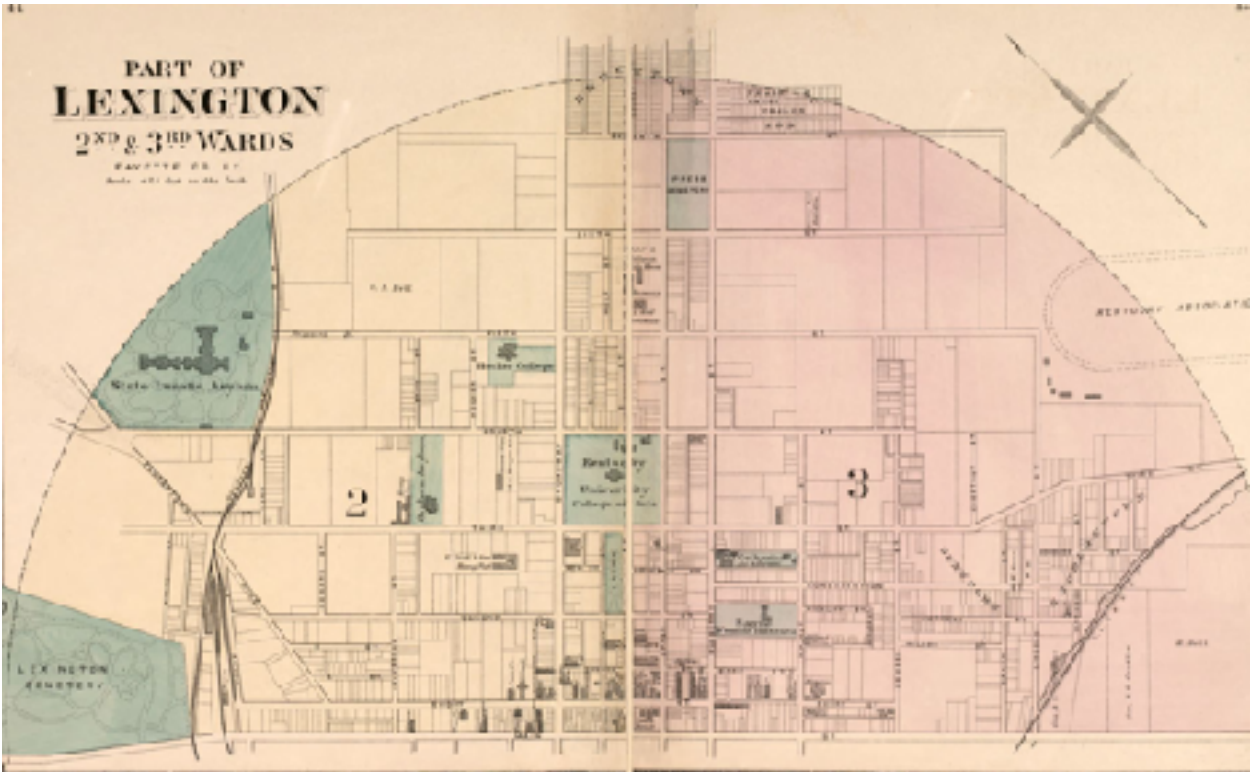
Seeing Growth - Sanborn Fire Maps

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps are one method of studying the evolution and development of the buildings within a community. These maps were created to aide insurance agents in determining how risky a particular property would be to insure. Maps were generated for communities across North America; Lexington, Kentucky’s first Sanborn map was prepared in 1885. Today, these maps are invaluable resources about the kinds of structures that existed decades and centuries ago, and are also key to seeing how a community grew and evolved.

Sanborn maps largely identified insurable structures. The absence of notation on a Sanborn map suggests a lack of significant structures, or perhaps an agricultural use. Heading north along Limestone Street (nee Mulberry Street), the 1885 Sanborn map ceases to describe the structures beyond Fourth Street. The block bounded by Sixth, Seventh, Upper and Mulberry was the old Presbyterian Cemetery. Though once “the leading burying ground in Lexington,” the bodies interred here were removed in 1889.

North of Seventh Street – just past the city limits – those drawing the Sanborn maps again recognized significant industrial structures, but largely ignored the residential areas to the north of Seventh Street on either side of

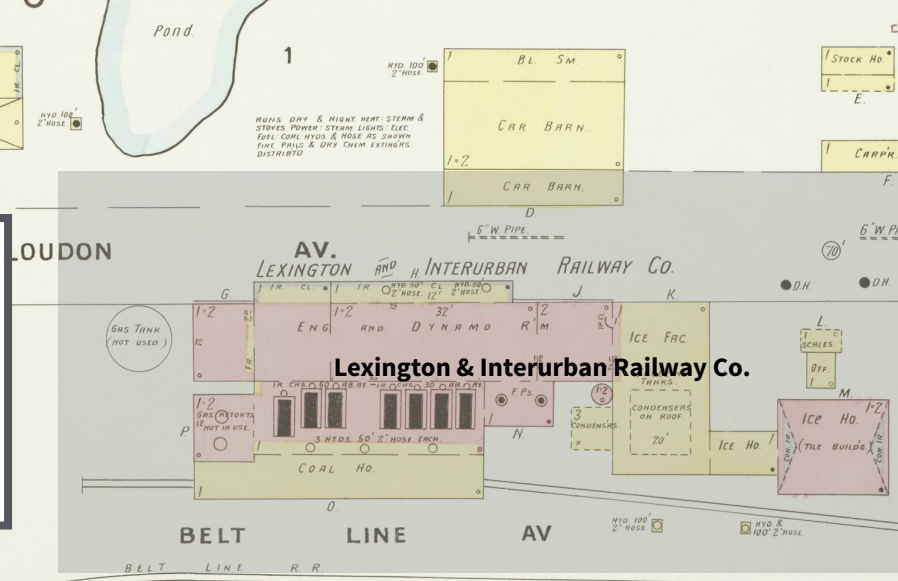
North Limestone being Brucetown to the west and the Neale & Pratts Addition to the east of the dividing roadway. Both of these residential areas existed and appeared in the earlier 1877 Atlas of Fayette and neighboring counties published by D.G. Beers & Co. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (shown below).



1877 Atlas of Fayette County

1907 SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAPS

The areas highlighted in grey boxes are discussed in the following sections.



BROADWAY

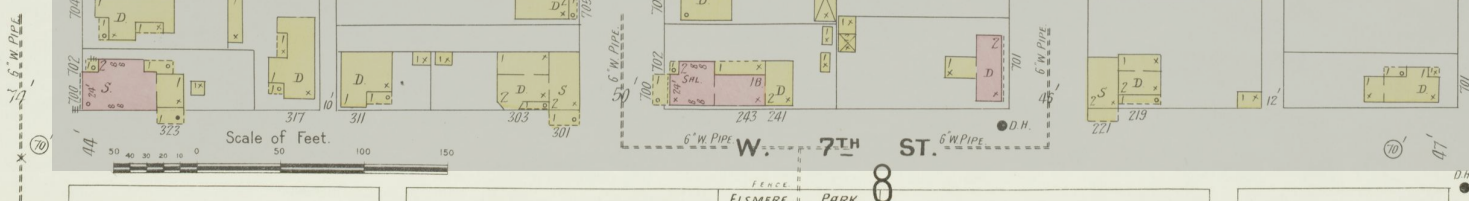
MILL

Brucetown

MARKET

N. UPPER

Scale of Feet.





LOUDON AV.

BRYANT STATION
Bluegrass Tobacco Warehouse

LUGART AV.

Lugart & Harting Factory

YORK

128 York St. Parcel

Eddie Street (previously Eddy)

EDDY

Scale of Feet.

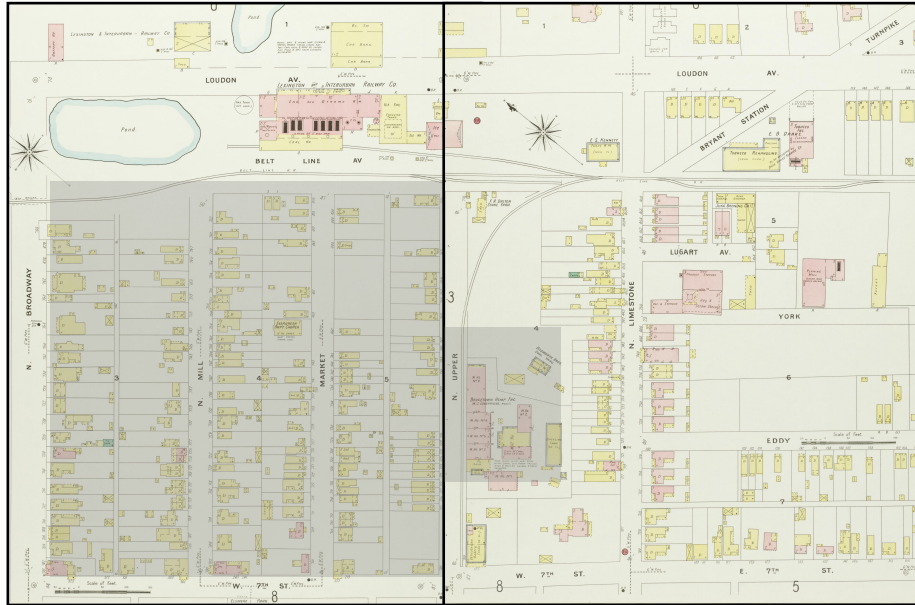
W. 7TH ST.

E. 7TH ST.

ST.

North End Residents

Brucetown - W.W. Bruce



On December 7, 1829, the heirs of John McNair sold a five-acre outlot identified on the initial town plat as No. 105 to Robert Wickliffe. Around 1838, Wickliffe had the notable nineteenth-century local builder John McMurtry construct for him a residence at the northwest corner of Mulberry and Seventh streets on outlot number 105.

McMurtry acquired the property himself in 1844, but conveyed the property later that year to a man named W.W. Bruce. The property in the deed was described as such:

“bounded on the South-east side by the Maysville Turnpike, on the South-west side by 7th St., running with 7th St. North-west from the Maysville Turnpike into Mrs. Hickey’s lot, formerly owned by Oliver Keene, thence North-east with Mrs. Hickey’s line to Dr B.W. Dudley’s line (which is Fairlawn), thence South-east with Dudley’s line and West’s line to the Maysville Turnpike, thence South-west with same to the beginning.”

W. W. Bruce was the son-in-law of the first millionaire west of the Allegheny Mountains, John Wesley Hunt. Hunt’s residence, Hopemont, was built in 1814 and is located at Gratz Park at the northwest corner of Mill and Second streets. Much of Hunt’s fortune was amassed as a hemp manufacturer, an industry and occupation that Bruce seemed to have inherited and continued to develop from his father-in-law. Much of the family’s wealth was generated largely through forced slave labor, prior to emancipation. Following the Civil War, many small

neighborhoods were formed across Lexington to house former slaves that were now workers who had few other options than to work for many of their previous owners.

In 1865, W.W. Bruce subdivided old Outlot No. 105 into what would become known as Brucetown. The land, consisting of “a low field,” now includes the area north of Seventh Street including properties on Jenkins Alley, Dakota Street, Florida Street, N. Upper Street, and Idaho Avenue. This land would likely not have been suitable for the construction of larger residences due to the problems with drainage in the area and was probably not suitable for a residential use at all. That notwithstanding, W. W. Bruce built housing on this land for his newly freed slaves, many of which became employees of Bruce’s hemp factory, located at the northwest corner of Limestone and Seventh streets.



Brucetown Hemp Factory area c. 1976

Bruce’s home received the assignment of residence number 1 in the subdivision, and was the “prize for a lottery” of homes in Brucetown for his employees. In reality, the sheer size and ornate detailing of the structure made it impossible for newly freed slaves to afford to maintain, and as a result it fell into irreversible disrepair. According to Dunn in his undated typescript, *Old Houses of Lexington*, the house was “shorn of its early glory and today ensconced in a junk yard.” The home was demolished in 1965.

Following the emancipation of slaves at the close of the Civil War, there were numerous acts of racial violence against newly freed slaves throughout Kentucky. In George Wright’s book *Racial Violence in Kentucky, 1865-1940*, he details one such incident perpetrated against the newly-freed slaves living in Brucetown.

In January 1878, an African-American man by the name of Stivers was suspected of having killed a white man, and was immediately hanged. After two weeks, some white men in Lexington determined that justice had not been fully served, and that Stivers must have had accomplices. A white mob descended on Brucetown and the home of Tom Turner, who was shot and killed in his home in the presence of his wife.

Next, the mob turned to Edward Claxton and John Davis. These two men, who had no known association to Stivers, were dragged to one of the nearby trees and were executed by lynching. Because

MOB VIOLENCE IN KENTUCKY.

FOUR NEGROES MURDERED BY THE SUSPICION OF HAVING KILLED A WHITE MAN—ONE OF THEM SHOT DOWN IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS WIFE—NO CLUE TO THE IDENTITY OF THE MURDERERS.

Special Dispatch to the New-York Times.

CINCINNATI, Jan. 17.—Two weeks ago the notorious George Kennedy, who is known to have killed half a dozen men in Kentucky, was, after a long and expensive trial, set loose to resume his lawless operations. Last night three colored men, who were merely suspected of having knowledge of the murder of a white man, were killed by a mob near Lexington. The murder of the white man took place about two weeks ago, and a negro named Sliver was immediately hanged for the crime. This was not thought to be sufficient to vindicate the law, and last night a mob was formed, and proceeded first to the residence of Tom Turner, near Brucetown. They called for him to leave his cabin and go with them, but he refused, saying if they wanted to kill him they must do it there. He would not submit to be blindfolded, and was shot in the presence of his wife. He was found to-day by the Coroner lying in his night-clothes in his bedroom, and with four bullet holes through his body, and with four mortal wounds. In the woods near by were found the bodies of Edward Claxton, of Lexington, and John Davis, both colored, hanging to the limb of a tree. Nobody in the neighborhood could give any information as to the murderers of these men, except that warrants for their arrest had been issued the day before, and had not been served. There were seven men in the party which killed Turner, but none of them could be recognized by his wife. The affair occurred in a rich and thickly settled district, where the machinery of the courts is supposed to be in full operation.

The New York Times
Published January 18, 1878
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no jury convicted any party, no culpability was determined. The incident was profiled in the New York Times to assail the scourge of lynching across the South.

Incidents like this were not uncommon in the area. While many former slaves now had their freedom, some had to rely on their previous owners for employment, often at sub-standard wages. These substandard wages allowed hemp and agricultural production to dominate the area for the latter half of the nineteenth century. Bruce's hemp factory continued to exist and operate. The still extant brick Warehouse No. 3 from the Bruce Hemp Factory, appeared on the 1890 Sanborn map and remains standing along Upper Street just south of the power plant. William Loughridge would then take over the Bruce Hemp Factory from his father-in-law and continue the family trade.

Two other brick structures from the Bruce Hemp Factory survive on land that functioned as a junkyard for much of the twentieth century. These structures have been "considerably altered and enlarged" from their original form, with the older structure dating perhaps to before 1855. That structure runs parallel to the Warehouse No. 3 and perpendicular to the other brick structure that first appeared on the 1886 Sanborn map.

Each of these two buildings was described by Langsam in 1980 as a one-story "brick gabled structure [with] various additions and alterations, but basic structures apparently intact" albeit in poor condition. The 1886 structure was a hackling house, the 1855 structure a warehouse (Langsam: FANE-162). Together, as observed by Walter Langsam, these three structures are "among the earliest surviving from this once-major industry in Lexington."

Eddie Street - Rev. Greene, the Fish & Bibbs Families

After the Civil War, many outlots in the North End were divided by narrow alleys, with small parcels upon which small-scale housing was constructed over the ensuing decades. Many of these structures are not considered "historically significant," however, the close proximity of these freestanding houses is important to the tight-knit nature of the North End community.

One structure that embodies this archetype is the home at 165 Eddie, likely built prior to 1900. It was once the home of a "United Methodist minister and Lexington civic leader" named Horace Henry Greene. Among Rev. Greene's accomplishments included his stint as the first African-American president of the Louisville Ministerial Association (1961), the first African-American to sit on the school board in Lexington, and the first African-American to run for city council in Lexington. Rev. Greene and his family owned the property for several decades. It is currently a rental property



**Eddie Street; 736 N. Limestone Street;
128 York Street**

owned by an out-of-state landlord.

Around the corner from Eddie Street stood 736 North Limestone, built around 1905. This duplex house was an example of box frame construction, a low-cost type of wood construction for workforce housing at the time. According to the 1911 city directory, the house at 736 North Limestone was the home of Joseph and Hattie Fish. Joseph Fish was a laborer and, by 1912, the couple had moved onto Eddie Street.

In the 1921 city directory, 736 North Limestone was occupied by Benjamin and Lena Bibbs. Mr. Bibbs was a “well-known” citizen when he died in 1931, and his family name often appeared in the “colored notes” section of the Lexington Leader. According to the Notable Kentucky African American Database, Mr. Bibbs was a shoe shiner at NY Hat Cleaners in 1931, had registered to serve his country in World War I, and had been a “tinner at State University on Limestone [now the University of Kentucky].” The Bibbs would later relocate to 167 E. 7th Street.

736 North Limestone was demolished in 2015.

Eddie Street also suffered from the same problem that much of the North End of Lexington still does to this day - poor drainage and stormwater issues. The Lexington Leader reported in January 1913 of flooding that drove out Eddie Street’s residents: “the recent heavy rains have caused a great gathering of the waters in the low section of the city around Eddie Street, and many of the families were forced to leave their homes at a late hour Saturday night to escape being drowned in their beds.”

York Street - J.W. Miller

During the rehabilitation of 128 York Street by the North Limestone CDC, a handwritten ledger was discovered which was incredibly informative about a small aspect of the North End’s history. The double entry ledger was contained in a Herald Square Account Book which, according to the frontispiece, was “Made Expressly for F.W. Woolworth Co.” Handwritten above it read:

J. W. Miller
Radio Service
128 York St
Yearly Record

An examination of Lexington’s 1943 City Directory identified J.W. as James W. Miller. He and his wife, Susanna, lived at 128 York Street, and James was a painter at the University of Kentucky. A couple with the same names, living in Lexington on American Avenue, appeared on the 1940 census. In 1940, the couple had two children: Goldie, 14, and Louise, 2. James Miller, 40, was listed as a painter who had attended school through the eighth grade while Susanna, a homemaker, had attended school through the sixth grade.

At some point between 1940 and 1943, the young family relocated from Lexington's south side to the North End. The property on American Avenue was a rental property, and York Street consisted primarily of rental property as well.

The ledger began in January 1943 and continued through May 1944. Most of the accounts were paid, though several accounts remained due in a list compiled at the rear of the ledger.

Miller's entrepreneurial spirit found him four customers in his first month. In June, that number had risen to eighteen. His second customer was Mrs. Ethel Peel. She paid \$2.25 for parts and service of her radio. Her husband, Mr. Homer Peel, returned the following month to have a radio serviced at the cost of \$1.25. According to the city directory of 1943, Mr. and Mrs. Peel resided on Forest Park Road which is just south of Waller Avenue on the city's south end – near Miller's former residence on American Avenue. Relationships developed in multiple areas of town, as well as his University connections established as a painter at UK, helped to support his enterprise. And, Mr. Miller must have done good work: in addition to being repeat customers, Homer Peel sent family members to Mr. Miller for radio repair work.

The ledger itself is a unique snapshot into 1943 Lexington, revealing connections between parts of town and individuals that would otherwise be unknown. Miller identified many customers by name, though often the identifier was less specific like "Lady on Maple Ave.," "Paper Boy," or "Man in Country." Other times, he might reference an address, a street name, or an occupation.

James Miller conducted this side business of repairing radios in an era when radios were a primary source of household entertainment. The radio was introduced to Lexington in the 1920s and, by the mid-1940s, the appliance could be found in most households. It isn't known how Miller learned this craft, but it is clear that this occupant of 128 York Street took initiative and had an entrepreneurial spirit. His connections to various parts of the community benefitted him financially, though the ledger also reveals that he repaired the radios of his neighbors, irrespective of their racial identity, as well.

Unlike Miller, most lived in the North End because of the industrial employment opportunities that existed up until the 1950s. These large factories - including hemp, tobacco, and malt brewing - provided walkable and reliable employment opportunities for neighborhood residents.

Spalding's Bakery

In 1929, Bowman J. Spalding and his wife, Zelma, started baking donuts from their home on Rand Avenue. Five years later, they opened the B.J. Spalding Bakery, located at the southeast corner of North Limestone and Sixth streets. Their donuts became famous across Lexington, with workers, church groups, and others from across the city. In an interview with the Herald Leader in 1990, B.J. Spalding's son said that his father, then 85, was still going strong "so I guess we're going to be here for a while longer."

Spalding's Bakery was there a little longer. It wasn't for another fourteen years that Bowman J. Spalding would retire and the family would close the neighborhood bakery. Fifteen months later, the family reopened at a new location on Winchester Road with a façade designed to mimic the old location.

North End Industry

Luigart & Harting Complex

At the northeast corner of Limestone and York streets is the old Luigart & Harting complex, which has been known by many names over its long history.

The earliest reference to the parcel in the local newspapers occurred on March 23, 1850, when *The Kentucky Statesman* reported that at “about one o’clock on Thursday morning last, the Rope-Walk and Bagging Factory of the Messrs. Randall, situate on Mulberry street, near the city limits, was discovered to be on fire.” Although two fire companies responded to the blaze, the fire “could not be arrested before all the buildings were consumed” and the loss was estimated at \$4,000.

In its place is the still standing 1850 structure described in Perrin’s History of Fayette County, Kentucky as “the first hemp factory in Fayette County operated by steam power.” Perrin went on:



Luigart & Harting Complex

After Randall & Bro., the factory carried on for a time by Dr. Gillespie, a son-in-law to Judge Robertson. It was first used as a malt house by Swigert [sic, should be Luigart and corrected hereafter] & McLellan, in 1870, and, after running it about eight months, Luigart bought McLellan out, and for two years conducted the business on his own accord and alone. In 1873, Mr. Harting was admitted into partnership, since when the firm has been, as above, Luigart & Harting. The grounds comprise four acres. The water is obtained from a spring nearby; there is also a well on the ground, which is used in dry weather. ... The floor of the old building is 12,800 square feet; the new building in process of erection (1881), will have a floor space of 15,000 square feet. The warehouse holds over five thousand bushels of barley. The firm handle annually 75,000 bushels of malt, make 30,000 bushels, and with the new building (now being erected), will make 75,000 bushels per annum; 75% of the barley used is purchased in the county. One thousand bushels of coal is consumed annually by this establishment. ...

Joseph Luigart, incorrectly identified by Perrin as having the last name Swigert, was an immigrant from Württemberg, Germany. A brewer by trade, Luigart was born in 1829. Upon his arrival in America in 1855, he worked first as the foreman at a brewery in Cincinnati, Ohio and later at a brewery in Logansport, Indiana. While in Logansport, he and Gerhard Fuchs patented a beer cooler technology that remains in use today. Luigart returned to Cincinnati to manufacture the technology then sold his interest in that operation before relocating to Lexington, Kentucky in 1875. Here, Mr. Luigart worked at the Wolfe and Yelham brewery and introduced Lexingtonians to the German lager style of beer, whetting their appetites for his own brews that he would make after acquiring the old hemp factory.



Dixieland Gardens

Luigart's partner, William Harting, also hailed from Germany. Born in 1833 and immigrating to the United States in 1854, Harting, too, settled in Cincinnati, Ohio. Four years later, Harting relocated to Lexington, Kentucky in 1858 where he became a respected jeweler and watchmaker. He joined Luigart in the malting business in 1873, but continued the jewelry trade as well. Beginning in 1881, Harting served for two years as the president of the Lexington City National Bank before retiring from poor health. He died in 1887.

The historic value of the 1850 structure as the "first hemp factory in Fayette County operated by steam power" is made that much greater by its continued presence in the neighborhood. It stands today as one of the oldest hemp factories in Kentucky and among the oldest in the nation. (Langsam: FANL-41). The historic building was given a second story in 1927 and, along with it, a

"very fanciful treatment, with round-arched openings on the front-section, a balcony on center of the Limestone St. front, a shingled oriel over a high first-story window on the south; the entire second-story on the south side overhands on shaped and carved beam ends; there are variegated pilasters, panels, and plaques between round-arched single and double openings on the new front section and along the south upper walls; there is also an interesting batten door on the alley. Grotesque human heads and busts, lions' heads, foliage in relief, and figurative gutter spouts enliven the surfaces."
(Id).

Originally, this 'new' second story was occupied by the Star Hotel and the structure also served for a time as a dancehall known as Dixieland Gardens. For decades in the middle of the twentieth century, the spot was a popular luncheonette for the discussion of Democratic politics. Langsam described it as "one of the most interesting examples of 'primitive' decoration in the city and, combined with the significant industrial structure behind, a major urban landmark."

In 1980, the building housed a repair shop and supply storage in the warehouse section while the front section of the building had first-floor storefronts with second-floor apartments. As of this writing, the first floor of the front contains the Charmed Life Tattoo parlor, and the second story contains apartments. The warehouse is used as storage, and a variety of other uses.

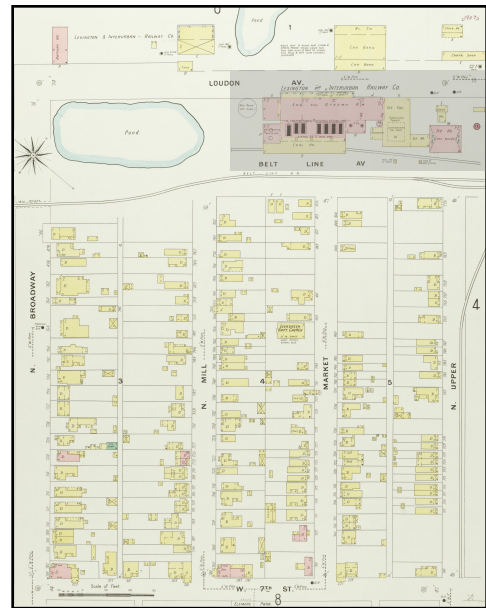
The 1881 addition mentioned in Perrin’s History was the design of architect Herman L. Rowe and was among Rowe’s earliest Lexington designs. Rowe, another German immigrant, would later design both the Lexington Opera House in 1886 and the Lexington Public Library (now the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, located in Gratz Park). It was not the only project Rowe completed for Luigart; according to Langsam, Rowe later designed a planing mill complex further east on York Street as well as other Luigart residences and buildings.

The bushels of barley described by Perrin provided several cities with Luigart & Harting Malt. The variety of barley, however, was winter barley. This variety fell out of favor as demand for northwestern spring barley spiked. Business waned, and Luigart died on June 26, 1896. During Luigart’s final decade, Sanborn maps identified the project as the “Joseph Luigart Malt House.” Five years after his death, however, it was “formerly” the malt house and identified as “Old and Vacant.”

Shelby Bros. Tobacco Company

Between the Belt Line Railway and Loudon Avenue, is the ca. 1893 Shelby Bros. Tobacco Company building at 787 North Limestone Street. Excavation for the building’s foundation was reported on February 13, 1893, on “land adjoining the Hercules ice factory” according to that day’s issue of the Lexington Leader.

The 1896 Sanborn map identified the structure as the Shelby Bros. Twist Tobacco Factory. And another Sanborn map shortly after the turn of the century noted the building’s role in the tobacco industry. Then, it was noted as “David Reed Occupant as Tobacco Re-Handling House, W.J. Loughridge (Owner)” Later, the structure experienced a change of industry according to yet another Sanborn map: “Wholesale Beer and Soft Drinks.” It is not surprising to see the change in the building’s role, considering much of Lexington’s tobacco industry shifted to the south of Lexington anchored by countless warehouses and the Liggett and Myers Rehandling Plant on Bolivar Street.



**Shelby Bros. Tobacco Company
& Belt Line Railway**

Tobacco was a staple American industry with international demand. The Bluegrass region’s climate and soil is well suited toward the crop’s growth and entrepreneurs took

advantage. Access to railways and navigable waterways made the growing, handling, twisting, and packaging of chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, and snuff a boon for the local market.

Blue Grass Tobacco Company

The anchor of the neighborhood's tobacco trade, however, was not Shelby. Rather, it was the Blue Grass Tobacco Company Warehouse. The five-story building stands at the southeast corner of the intersection of Loudon and Bryan Avenues, and was built in two stages in 1904 and 1907.

The first stage was begun in August of 1904, and it was associated with Ernest B. Drake, another Lexington entrepreneur who would become involved in a myriad of industries and businesses including large-scale tobacco distribution. Prior to constructing the 1904 building, however, Drake seemed primarily involved in farming and the sale of related implements at a "stand" on Cheapside. Among these implements was a "tobacco-worm destroyer," a device that was critical for farmers growing the cash crop.



Blue Grass Tobacco Company

In April 1904, the Blue Grass Tobacco Company suffered a major loss from a fire at its leased Louisville factory. The news, however, proved good for the North End - the company announced in June that all operations would be located at a new complex on Loudon Avenue. Soon after, ground was broken on the now-dominant five-story structure.

By 1908, Blue Grass Tobacco Company was employing 300 workers, and producing 30 different tobacco brands. It was considered a good place to work, being a fully equipped, modern space that was well-lit and "airy." Some reports concluded it a "healthful place to work."

Also in 1908, yet another structure was added to the neighborhood at the intersection of the Belt Line and North Limestone. The one-story structure had six rooms and served as joint offices for Blue Grass Tobacco Company and the American Hemp Company.

Each of these two entities were led by W.J. Loughridge, the son-in-law of W. W. Bruce. Born in Mississippi, Loughridge appeared almost as the caricature of a southern gentleman "in manner, appearance and voice" but in terms of his energy seemed to have "the spirit of the energetic easterner or northerner in promoting affairs and in business ventures" according to a sketch published in the Lexington Leader in May 1909. Just as Hunt had become incredibly wealthy from hemp, Loughridge's wealth came from both hemp and tobacco.

In 1909, Blue Grass Tobacco Company was partially sold to a northern syndicate and was reorganized as the Blue Grass Tobacco Works. Without any change in ownership, the name was again changed in 1910 to the J.D. Moore Tobacco Company. Good planning, Loughridge's family ties, and entrepreneurial success were not the only causes for Blue Grass Tobacco's success. Another opportunity for Loughridge was the politics of the tobacco crop towards the end of the Black Patch War.

The Black Patch War began as a response to the American Tobacco Company operating as a trust, fixing prices on tobacco through its control of the market. Farmers organized to boycott sales to the American Tobacco Company while a more militant group, known as the Night Riders, burned the crops of those who ignored the boycott. Most of the Night Riders' actions occurred in western Kentucky and Tennessee, though the effects were felt across the industry.

Local tobacco industry, like Blue Grass Tobacco, operated outside the trust and largely maintained favor with local farmers. On November 27, 1908, the Lexington Leader reported that more than a dozen salespeople who had been sidelined due to diminished crop availability, likely resulting from the Black Patch War, were being put back on the road.

Faded painting on the five-story structure bares allegiance to some of these name changes – the words “Blue Grass Tobacco Works” are still visible. The ghost painting advertisements also reveal that tobacco wasn't the only industry to be supported by the building's presence - others included coal, hay, corn, oats, lime, sand, cement, and more.

Another industry, parachute manufacturing, also occurred in the single-story part of this structure now identified as 720 Bryan Avenue. From 1950 through 1952, the Irving Air Chute Company, Inc. of Buffalo, N.Y. manufactured parachutes and other items from the location. The company, best known for its manufacture of parachutes used during the Allied invasion of Normandy on D-Day, had opened its first Lexington factory on West Main Street in 1942. A plan in 1950 would have relocated the manufacturing facility to South Broadway, but the move was opposed by the Fayette Fiscal Court. Instead, the parachute company rented the space at 720 Bryan Avenue. After only two years, however, the company relocated to a space on Versailles Road.



Irving Air Chute

North End Transportation

As was discussed in earlier sections regarding the “Frontier Highway,” access to transportation was essential for the North End’s growth. As technologies developed, the neighborhood kept pace, offering connectivity with the rest of Lexington and the region. This allowed neighbors to easily access goods and services across the city, and industries to be able to affordably bring in materials from throughout Central Kentucky.

In 1882, Kentucky’s General Assembly authorized the incorporation of the Lexington City Railway Company so that horse-drawn streetcars could operate in Lexington. A month later, the city approved the company’s operation and set forth restrictions for where and how the streetcars were to operate. On authorized roads, including Mulberry (Limestone) to the city limits, the company could erect single tracks whereupon it could operate registered and numbered cars with customer fares fixed at five cents. These lines were extended and improved throughout the 1880s providing mule-drawn access for Lexingtonians to the cemetery, the fairgrounds, the university, Woodland Park and destinations in between.

Electric Streetcars

In 1890, those seeking to take advantage of the technological advances achieved during the previous decade acquired the old mule-drawn railway company. The group of investors included, among others, William Loughridge. The same men also formed another company that would be critical to the neighborhood’s development and future: the Belt Line Company.

Pullman cars, purchased for \$1,350 apiece, were ordered by the new company and they arrived during the summer of 1890. The cars’ arrival in Lexington was front page news: “The new electric street cars, shrouded with canvas, are today being unloaded from trucks on which they made their journey to Lexington, at the plant on North Limestone.” On September 1, 1890, these streetcars began traveling a loop from Main Street to Loudon Avenue utilizing both North Broadway and North Limestone. To enable the operation of these electric streetcars, electricity was needed, so a three-story powerhouse was erected to the west of North Limestone Street on Loudon Street’s south side.



**A Streetcar in Downtown
Lexington, KY**

The division of the streetcar company designated to electric power for the streetcars would eventually be divested into a new entity, the Lexington Utilities Company (later known as Kentucky Utilities).

An Interurban, a Streetcar, and an Era

The Belt Line Railway Company was organized in the 1880s for the purpose of “connecting all of the railway entering Lexington thus affording facilities for transfer of freight cars from one railroad to another.” It, and many of the companies referenced in this section, were interrelated or at various times under common ownership.

In 1902, the first interurban constructed in central Kentucky came to fruition with a connection between the communities of Lexington and Georgetown. The organizing company was the Blue Grass Traction Company which also began plans for an interurban connecting Lexington with the communities of Bourbon County.



Lexington Interurban Line

Initially, plans called for connections to Millersburg, Kentucky, but the political power of the Bourbon County Judge Executive thwarted this route as he did not want the tracks to be run through his own property. The shortened line would end in the county seat of Paris, Kentucky.

Finally, at 7:00 a.m. on October 31, 1903, the company’s first run of the Lexington-Paris Interurban departed from Lexington. Each one-way trip took about an hour and service continued each way every other hour. This interurban, too, passed along Limestone Street through the North End.

The racist Jim Crow segregation laws applied to Kentucky railroads and were also imposed on the interurban lines. In February 1904, the Lexington-Paris County interurban, which traveled through the North End, was the scene of an example of the Jim Crow laws. Returning from Lexington to Paris, a group of white men left their car for the segregated section whereupon Martha Scroggins complained to the conductor of their presence. As reported in the February 12, 1904, edition of *The Bourbon News*:

On Tuesday evening, quite a crowd of Parisians were returning from the Cohans’ matinee, at Lexington, on the interurban, when it was exemplified to the discomfort of eight or ten of our most gallant gentlemen that a good rule does work both ways. It all came about this way: The white compartment of the car was crowded, every seat being filled and quite a crowd of gentlemen standing. In the colored compartment there was only one passenger, Miss Martha Scroggins, of color, (alias “Sweet”) and eight or ten of the gentlemen walked in the colored ward and found very comfortable seats. The conductor soon came along, and when collecting the fare of Miss Scroggins, she arose from her seat and said: “Mr. Conductor, it’s a poor rule that won’t work both ways, the white folks won’t let niggers ride in their car, and I don’t want the white folks to ride in my car, so you can just put them out of here, or stop the

car and I will get off.” The rule worked, for the Conductor said: “Gentlemen, you will have to go back in the white compartment.” And with a few threats about throwing Miss “Sweet” over the fence into a cornfield for the hogs and crows to feed on, they marched out of the “Jim Crow” compartment.

In 1905, the Blue Grass Traction Company became a subsidiary of the Lexington & Interurban Railway Company along with two other entities. It would continue to grow and improve both interurban and streetcar services, with its operations centered just west of Limestone Street, north of the Beltline Railway on both sides of Loudon Avenue. On the north side of Loudon was the entity’s car barn where streetcars were housed and maintained, and on the south side of Loudon were facilities for the production of electricity necessary for operation. In a 1906 booklet on leading community businesses, the local chamber of commerce wrote about the Lexington Railway Company that “the men in authority are among the best in our state. They believe in Lexington – they believe in the splendid towns and cities all around us, and have done much to develop the great possibility of this section.”

Despite the early success and rapid growth of these services, the business eventually suffered from economic woes as automobiles became increasingly popular. The Lexington & Interurban Railway Company was liquidated in 1911 and its assets were acquired by the Kentucky Traction & Terminal Company. For some time, their streetcar services remained popular and the company was profitable, but the ubiquity of the automobile spelled eventual ruin for the enterprises. Five years into the Great Depression, the Kentucky Traction & Terminal Company was forced to file for bankruptcy. On April 21, 1938, Lexington’s last streetcar travelled from the Loudon Avenue car barn to the old courthouse on Main Street.



The Loudon Avenue car barn became a “boneyard” littered with old streetcars that were eventually scrapped for metal during World War II. It would later be utilized as part of the Lexington Railway System’s motorbus service. In 1956, this entity became the Lexington Transit Corporation and was itself acquired by the City of Lexington in 1972 whereupon it became The Transit Authority of Lexington Fayette County (LexTran). On the site of the old Loudon car barn, the city built a garage for its LexTran buses.

Improving the Roadway, Increasing Residential Opportunity for Some

The transition from streetcar and interurban to automobile was accompanied by continued improvement of the roadbed itself. In 1909, the Joint Improvement Committee of Lexington and Fayette County recommended that “pavements on North Limestone from Third Street to the city limits” be laid. (Lexington Leader: May 21,

1909). To accomplish this, the committee would order some 800,000 brick from the Peebles Brick Company of Portsmouth, Ohio. The work was carried on block-by-block, accompanied with the removal of the track of the Lexington Street Railway Company. The job was completed within a year.

As a result of these infrastructure improvements, residential development followed close behind. Suburban lots in Highlawn, a neighborhood on North Limestone beyond the city limits, were in great demand in the early 1910s. Churches, schools, and commerce followed the new residents. In the 1930s, Avondale's "beautiful new homes" became available in "one of Lexington's newest and most promising additions" which was located "on North Limestone street near Loudon Avenue [and] runs through" to Bryan Station.

Greyhound Building

On the northwestern corner of the intersection of Loudon Avenue and North Limestone stands 101 West Loudon, a structure added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2014. It was originally constructed in 1928.

In the 1920s, the North End witnessed a decline in its passenger rail traffic, and was able to capitalize on the increasing popularity of automobile motorbus traffic. The Consolidated Coach Corporation, an entity incorporated in Lexington in 1926, quickly became a leader in the industry with lines running as far north as Minnesota (the birthplace of Greyhound) and throughout the southeast, all the way to Florida. In 1936, the entity renamed itself the Southeast Greyhound Line. Although the local depot was located on East Short Street just past Walnut Street (now, Martin Luther King Blvd.), the company's administrative offices and maintenance facilities were located at 101 West Loudon.

In fact, during the 1940s, Southeast Greyhound was Lexington's single largest private employer. Beginning in 1951, the Southeast Greyhound was, as an entity, absorbed into the Greyhound company, but the company would remain the subsidiary's headquarters throughout the decade. It would be abandoned, however, in 1960, during a corporate reorganization. As discussed above, the city of Lexington assumed control of local bus transit in 1972. That year, the city acquired the old Southeast Greyhound property for its use, and the property went to Lexington's transit authority, now known as Lextran.

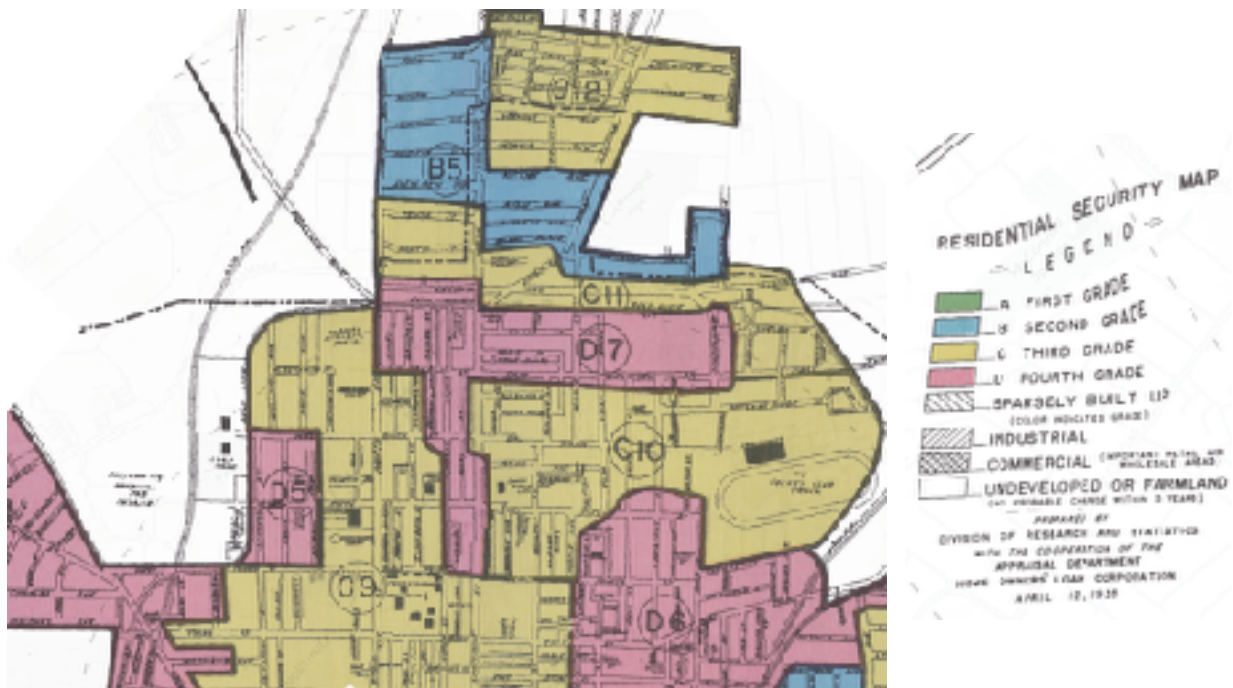
The building itself is, per its National Register application, in the "muted Art Deco" style "with few overt decorative features," its most prominent being "a large diamond-shaped panel" which serves as "the building's visual climax atop the central bay of the front façade." (Williams).

Impacts of Governmental Policies

The demographics and racial makeup of the North End has been in flux over its long history. As Lexington's outlots were subdivided in the late 1800's, the North End was at its highest level of class and race diversity. In the early 1900s, as the neighborhood became increasingly industrial those who could afford to move elsewhere (including wealthy white landowners) did so, causing shifts in the neighborhood's racial makeup.

In the 1930s, with the blessing of both state and federal officials, U.S. Highways 27 and 68 were routed into Lexington from the north via North Broadway. North Limestone was no longer the primary north-south thoroughfare for the first time in the city's history, a change that would result in a reduction in visibility and economic strength.

A residential security map dated 1936 and produced by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), a government-sponsored corporation founded in 1933, shows many parts of the North End as being in the two lowest grades of security. This map guided investment and development through the restriction of access to home loans for property poor and minority communities, otherwise known as "redlining". By labeling areas in the North End in low-grade security categories, HOLC's security map presented barriers to individuals wanting purchasing homes in the area. These divisions tracked almost exclusively with race, and areas noted in previous parts of this section are almost all in the lowest-possible grade.



1936 HOLC Residential Security Map

From 1920 to 1940, the North End did not experience as massive a flight of wealthy residents as was experienced further south along North Limestone -between Main and Third streets- but the population did change. This was largely due to the outmigration patterns that accompanied automobile use, leaving behind those that could not afford to own one. According to the city's 1939 housing report, housing units in Brucetown, as well as those on York and Eddie streets, were more than 50% African-American.

Some residents could afford to move from the North End to new subdivisions outside the city limits because of the ubiquity of the automobile. Although the neighborhood was once the center of Lexington's transit system, public transit use had waned in the latter part of the 20th century. According to the comprehensive plan of 1967, fewer than 5% of "vehicular passenger trips were handled by public transit in 1965" with rates expected to continue to fall "unless we can do something to properly change our riding habits and preferences – and we'd better!" Those that could not afford to own an automobile were again largely left behind.

Another indicator of neglect for the North End's population can be seen in Lexington's 1967 comprehensive plan detailing the fallout shelter plan for the city. For those that lived below Fifth Street, their fallout shelter was within walking distance in downtown Lexington. Those that lived north of Fifth Street, largely without access to automobiles, were not placed at the shelter closest to them, but instead were expected to somehow make it to the University of Kentucky, leaving North End residents at a strong disadvantage in the event of a nuclear attack.

New industrial operations, like the opening of the wastepaper baling operation in 1974 on Luigart Court, near North Limestone Street, provided walkable jobs in 1974, but did little for neighboring property values. This kind of industry was noisy, and was more than likely located in the North End due to its perceived status as a lower-class neighborhood. Even today, industrial zoning and uses are situated directly next to residential areas in the North End. It is difficult to imagine that this mix of uses would be welcome or tolerated in wealthier neighborhoods.

This handful of examples only scratches the surface of the total governmental actions that have negatively impacted the North End and its residents. Like many communities around the country, some policies that impact the North End seem to be designed to be detrimental to the community, and are handled with far less regard than communities with a higher median income and less heterogeneous demographics.

DATA

Information about the current state of the North End, and how it has changed in recent years.

Gathered and Mapped by: Jessi Breen

Land Use

North Limestone Cultural Plan Boundary Locator



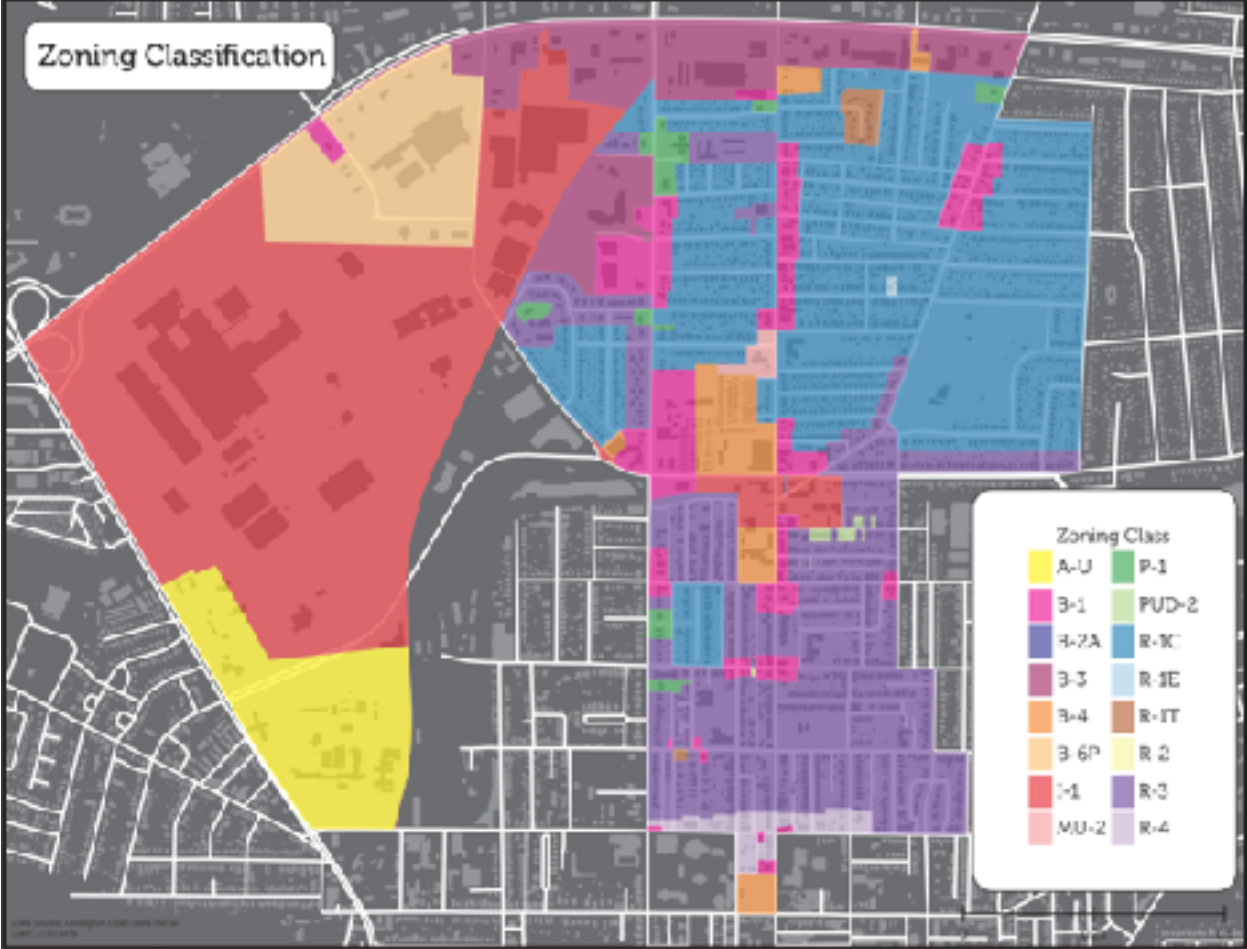
Land Use

North Limestone Cultural Plan Boundaries



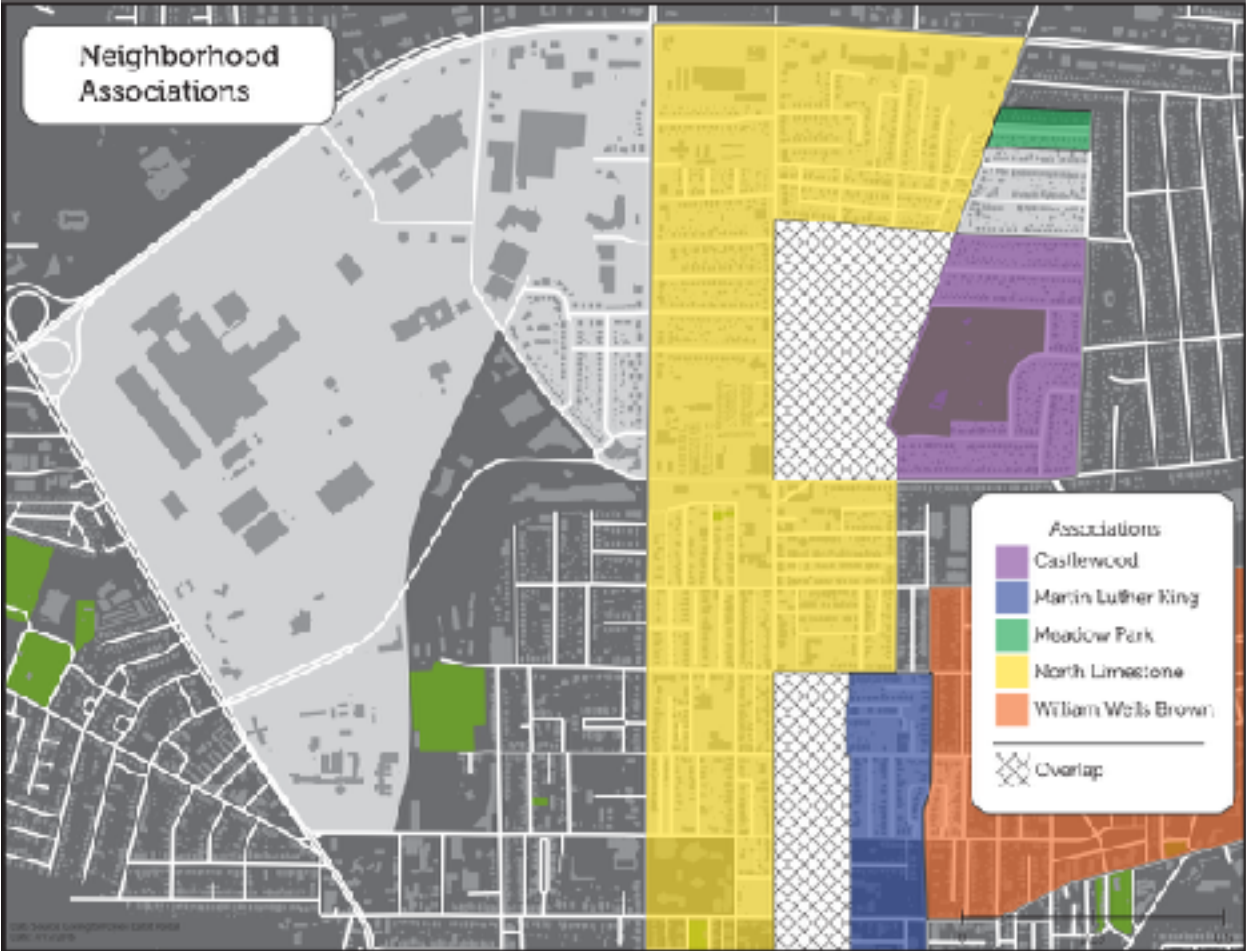
Land Use

Zoning Classification



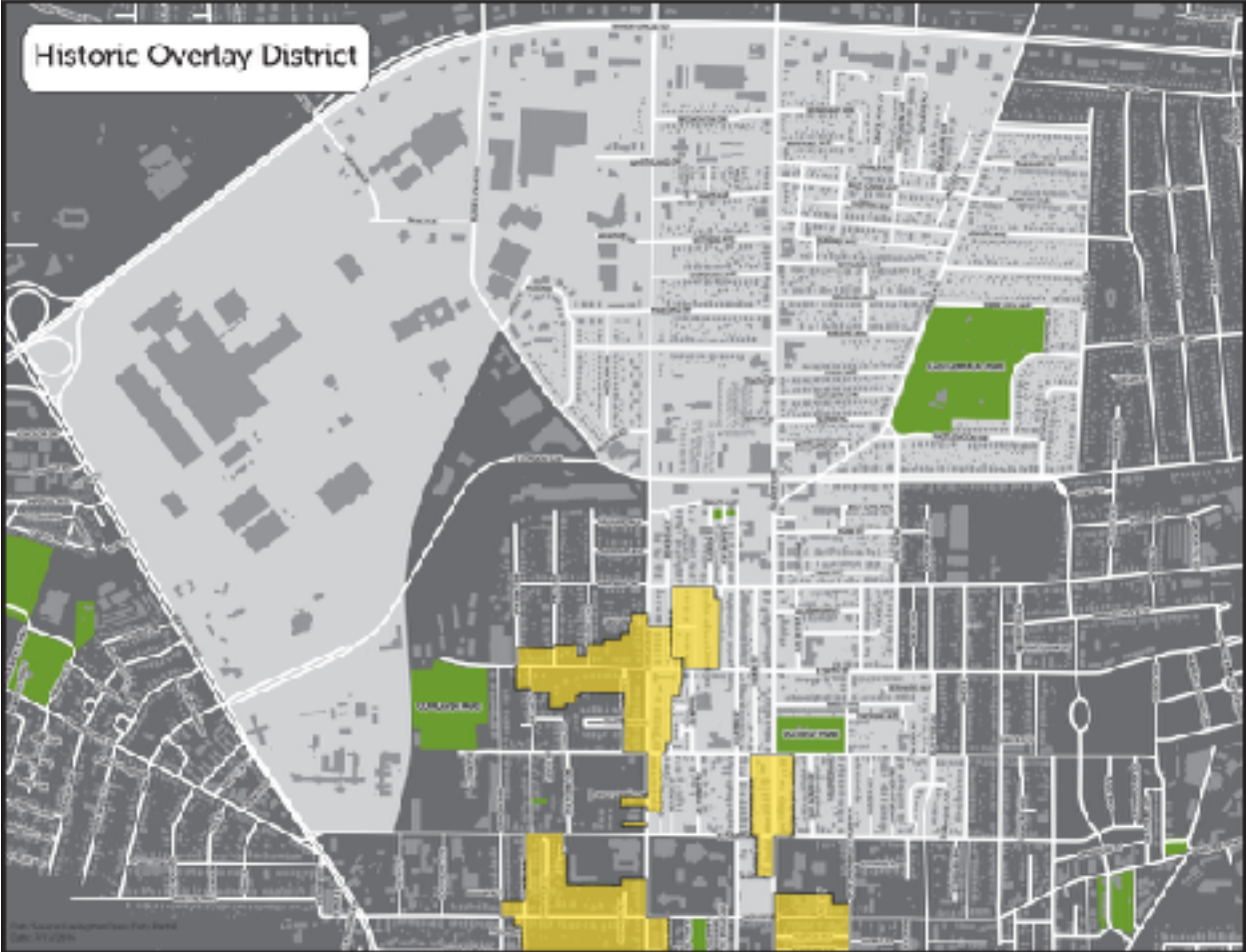
Land Use

Neighborhood Associations



Land Use

Historic Overlay District

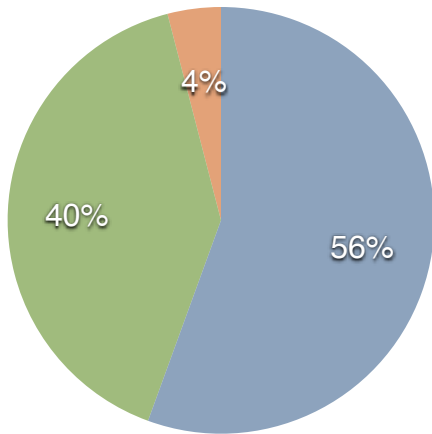


Demographics

Race

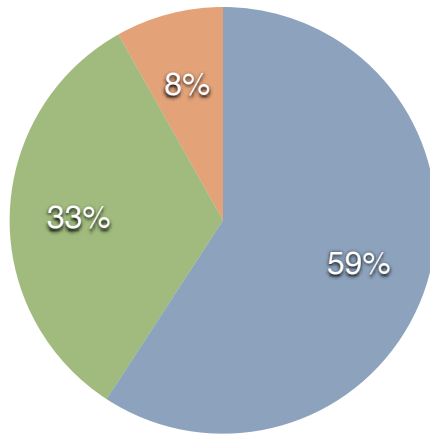
North End, 2000

- White
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic / Latino



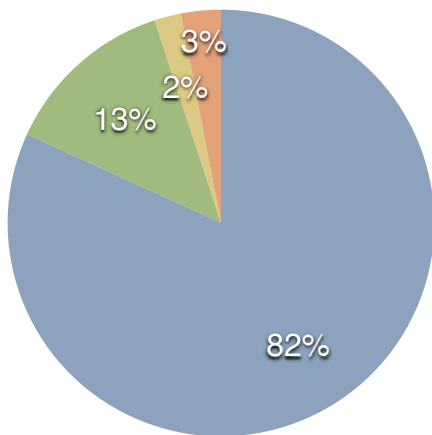
North End, 2014

- White
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic / Latino



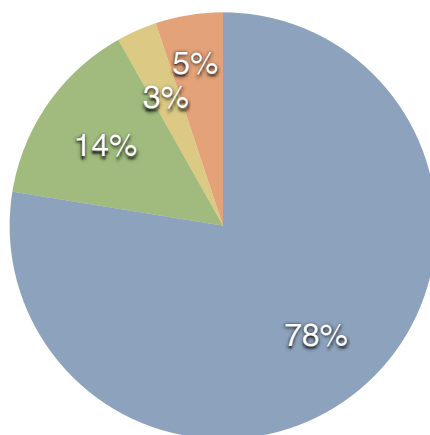
Lexington, 2000

- White
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic / Latino



Lexington, 2014

- White
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic / Latino

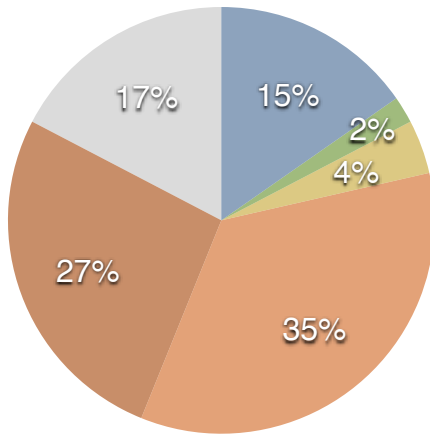


Demographics

Age

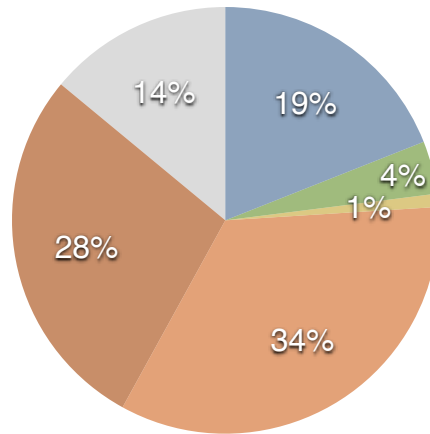
North End, 2000

- Under 15
- 15 to 17
- 18 to 20
- 21 to 44
- 45 to 64
- 65 & over



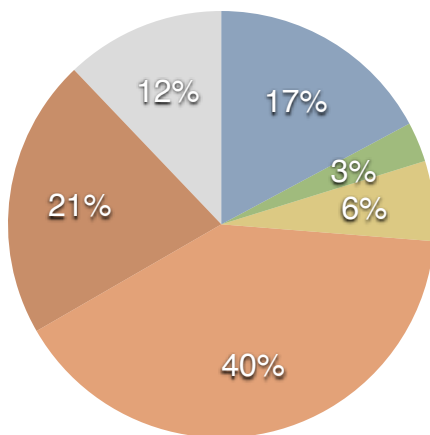
North End, 2014

- Under 15
- 15 to 17
- 18 to 20
- 21 to 44
- 45 to 64
- 65 & over



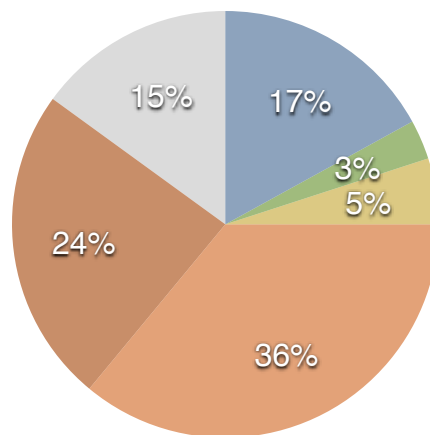
Lexington, 2000

- Under 15
- 15 to 17
- 18 to 20
- 21 to 44
- 45 to 64
- 65 & over



Lexington, 2014

- Under 15
- 15 to 17
- 18 to 20
- 21 to 44
- 45 to 64
- 65 & over

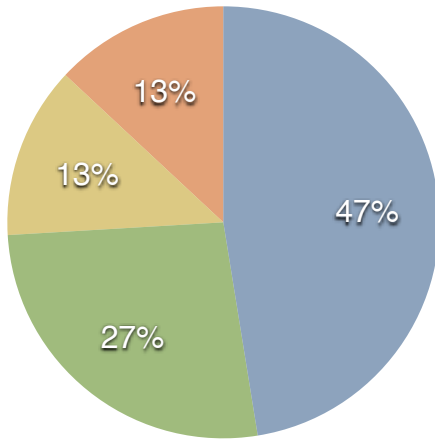


Demographics

Education

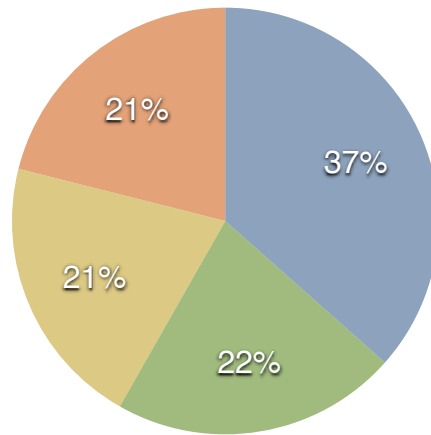
North End, 2000

- Less than High School Diploma
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- College Degree



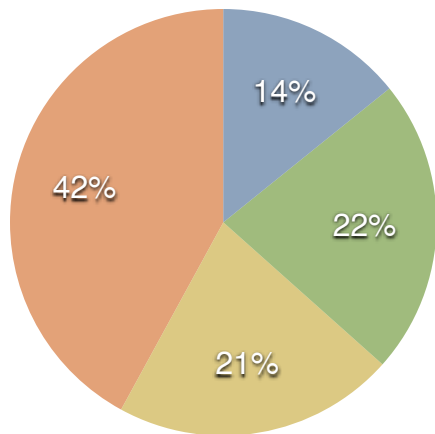
North End, 2014

- Less than High School Diploma
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- College Degree



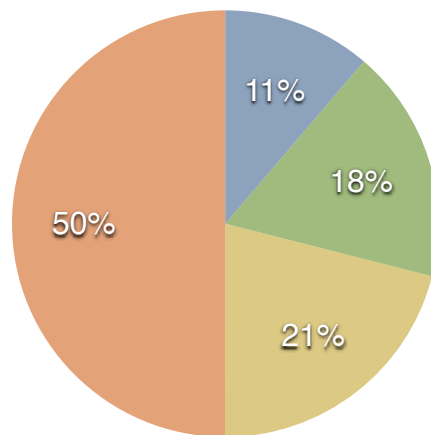
Lexington, 2000

- Less than High School Diploma
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- College Degree



Lexington, 2014

- Less than High School Diploma
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- College Degree

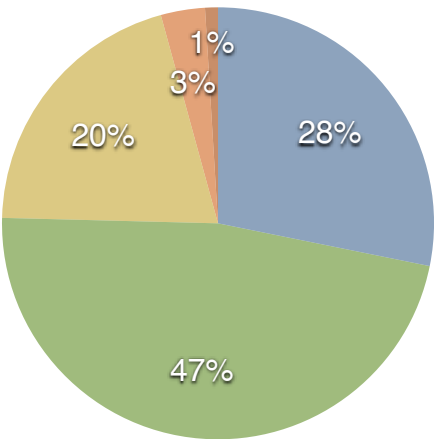


Demographics

Household Annual Income

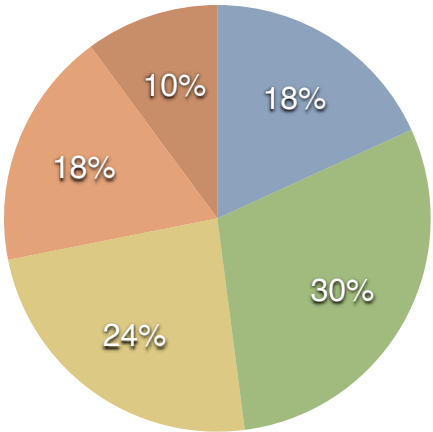
North End, 2000

- > \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$24,999
- \$25,000 - \$44,999
- \$45,000 - \$75,000
- \$75,000+



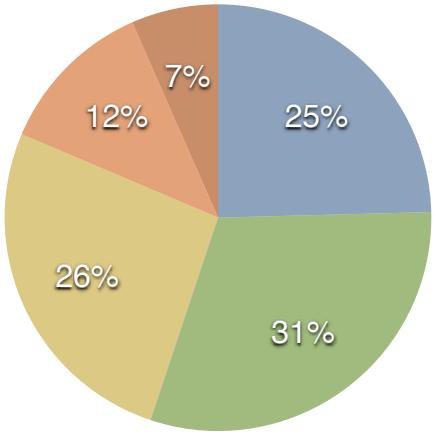
North End, 2014

- > \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$24,999
- \$25,000 - \$44,999
- \$45,000 - \$75,000
- \$75,000+



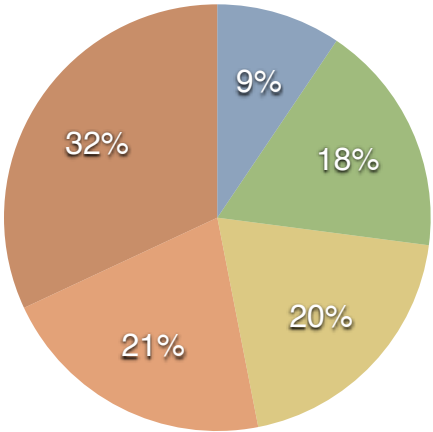
Lexington, 2000

- > \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$24,999
- \$25,000 - \$44,999
- \$45,000 - \$75,000
- \$75,000+



Lexington, 2014

- > \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$24,999
- \$25,000 - \$44,999
- \$45,000 - \$75,000
- \$75,000+

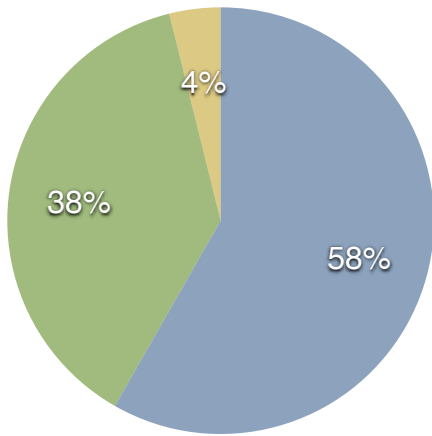


Demographics

Employment

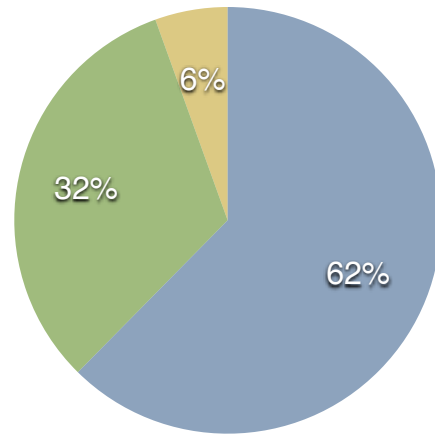
North End, 2000

- Employed
- Out of Labor Force
- Unemployed



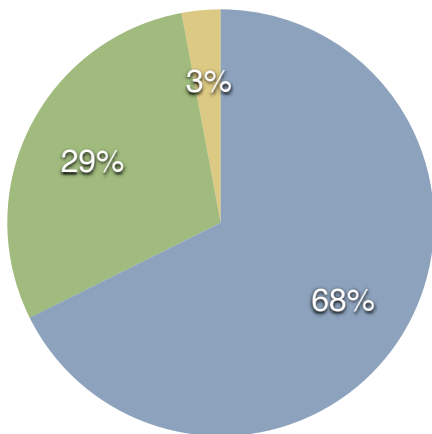
North End, 2014

- Employed
- Out of Labor Force
- Unemployed



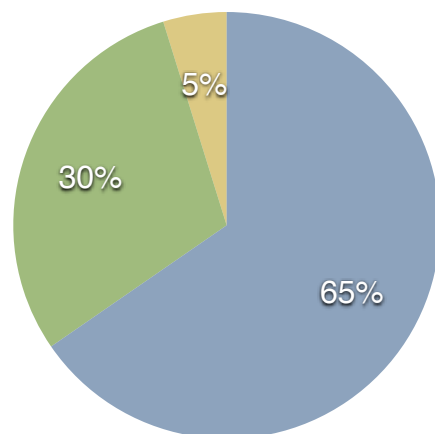
Lexington, 2000

- Employed
- Out of Labor Force
- Unemployed



Lexington, 2014

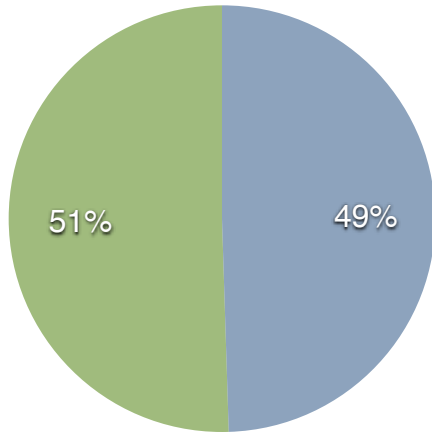
- Employed
- Out of Labor Force
- Unemployed



Housing Ownership vs. Rental

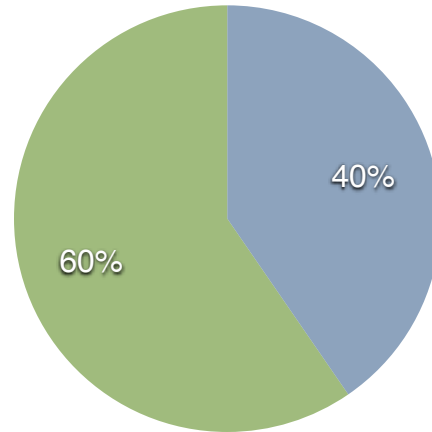
North End, 2000

● Owner Occupied ● Renter Occupied



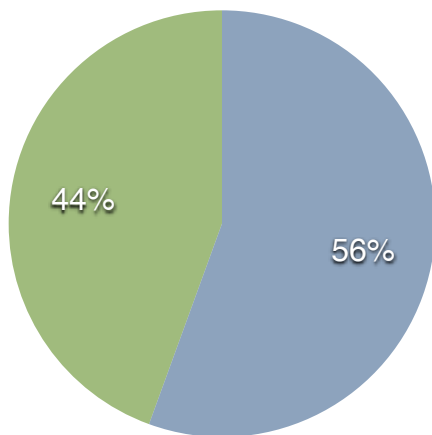
North End, 2014

● Owner Occupied ● Renter Occupied



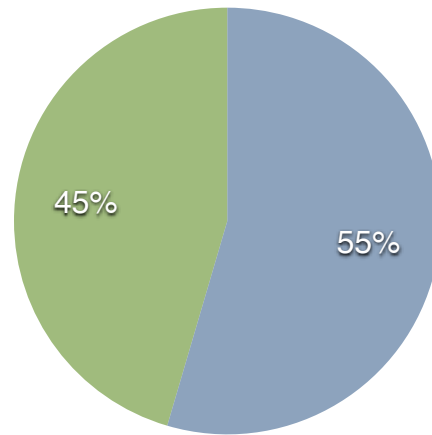
Lexington, 2000

● Owner Occupied ● Renter Occupied



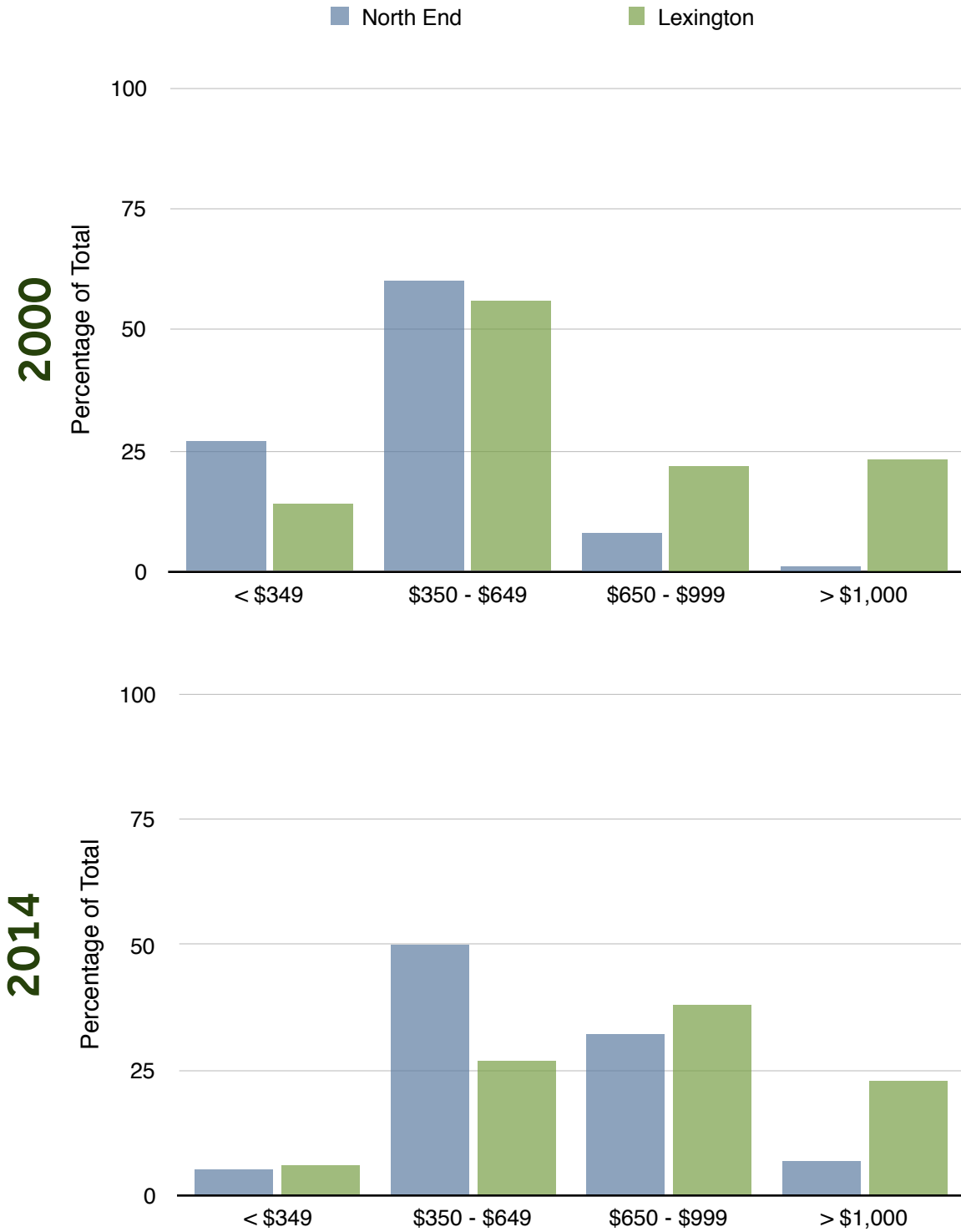
Lexington, 2014

● Owner Occupied ● Renter Occupied

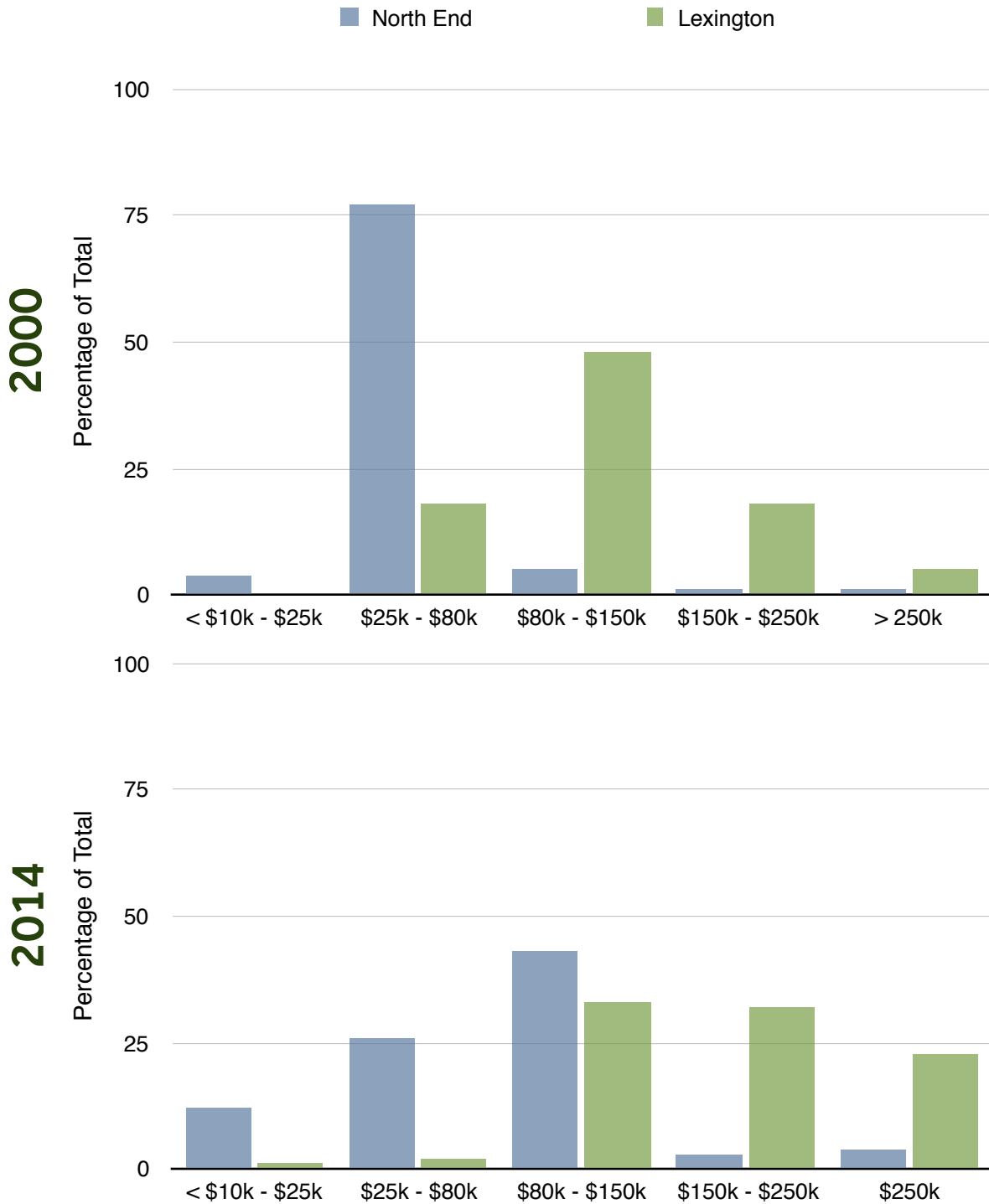


Housing

Median Rent

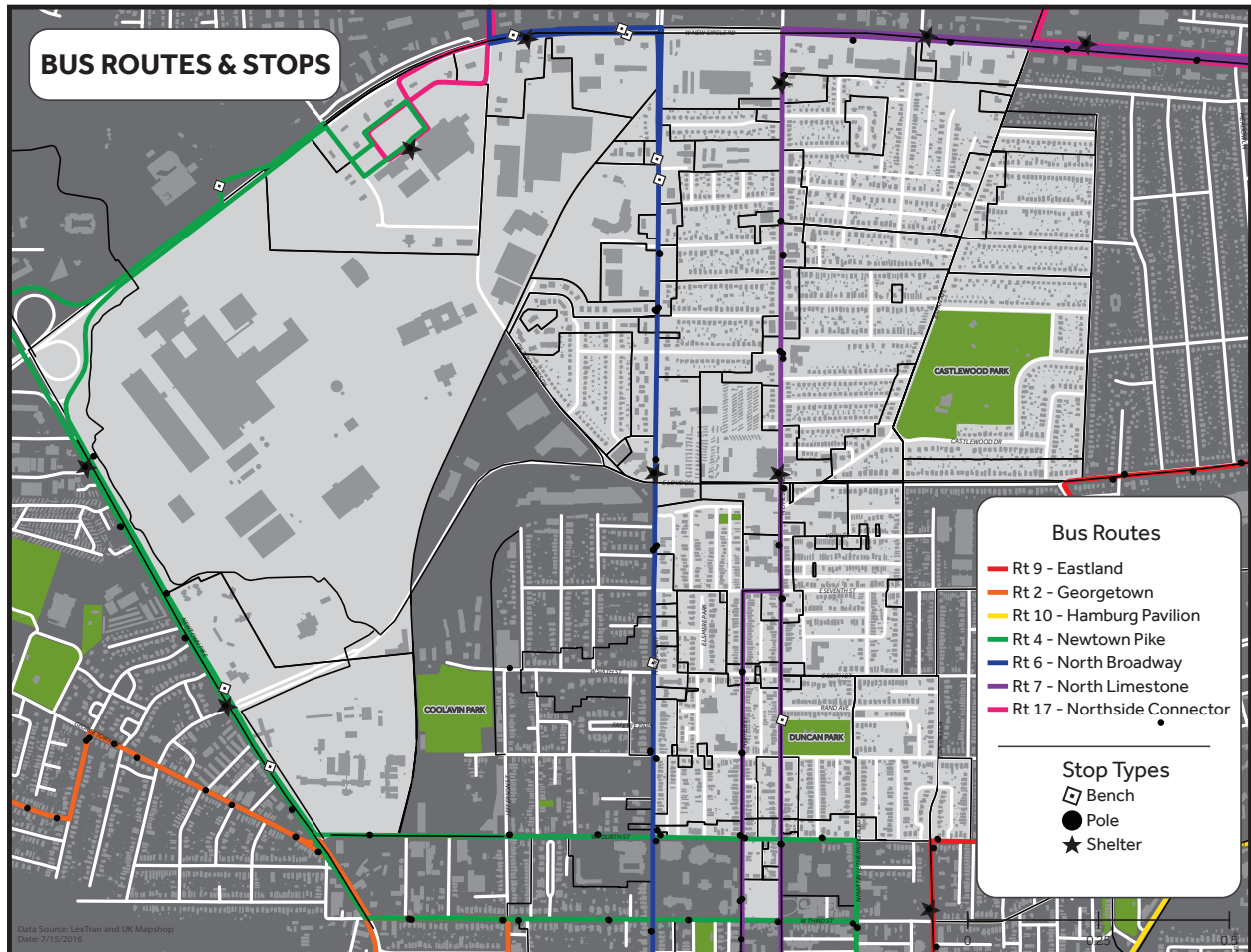


Housing Property Values



Transportation

Bus Routes & Stops



Transportation

Bike Infrastructure



NEIGHBORS

The stories and actions of North End Residents

Gathered by: Steve Pavey

“I love our neighborhood. I especially love Common Good and Embrace, they are like family and so important for my children. Life here is better than where we came from, the violence. I know where my children are and what’s around them here.”



“I’m really worried about the development happening around where we live. Houses and buildings are being bought up and friends of ours are being kicked out. They cannot stay because it now costs too much to live there after they are fixed up. I have to rent and we like our place, but I’m worried we will have to move and leave this neighborhood.”



“I want to own my own home, but I can’t because I don’t have papers. I have the money, I just cannot get a loan.”

Interview with an undocumented Latinx family living in the neighborhood 8+ years





“Coach Roach was one of the best coaches ever and also he had more integrity in his pinky finger than I do in my whole body . . . now that’s a guy we need to have a statue for somewhere. Growing up, there were two names spoke highly of in the neighborhood, Roach and Peebles, that stood up for black people. Peebles was our Martin Luther King.”

Interview with a white man in his 60s who grew up in the neighborhood, remembering desegregation and the Dunbar School on Upper Street



Neighbors planting trees for each other.



“I walk my dog regularly in the park (Duncan). As an older person, I wish there were benches I could sit down on and rest.”

Interview with a long-time white resident in her 70s





Neighbors listening to each other.



"I am really glad to see a place like Wild Fig come into the neighborhood. We need more places like this."

Interview with a long-time black resident in her late 60s





Neighbors talking over a bonfire.



“Duncan Park is too dark at night, even along the street walking at night. It needs lighting.”

Interview with a white man in his 60s who grew up in the neighborhood



Neighbors chatting at the Castlewood Fresh Stop Market.



“Things are changing, maybe not for the better. But I’ve always felt safe in this neighborhood as long as you stayed out of trouble.”

Interview with a white man in his 60s who grew up in the neighborhood



Neighbors taking care of the North Pole Community Garden.



“Here is what I really want to say to the developers. I like that the property values are rising and things are looking better around here, but they need to know that a lot of us have been living around here for a long time, long before they moved in here. And they need to know that many of us lived on fixed incomes and we do not have all the money to fix things up like we would like. So please stop complaining about us to code enforcement and stop harassing us to get our properties. Please believe that we are doing the best that we can. They need to know that we have emotional attachment to our properties. We love our homes and our community. So stop harassing us to get our properties just for money. People that have been living here for a long time deserve more respect. We can live together. I really appreciate the diversity in the neighborhood. We don’t have to look like or make all our properties look alike.”

Interview with a long-time black resident in her late 60s

“I don’t have a problem with people calling it something new, but I do have a problem with people forgetting our history, that people lived in what I still call Brucetown and the Meadows.”

Interview with a long-time black resident in her late 60s

VISION

The visions of North End residents, business owners, and social service organizations, broken down through different sectors of community development.

Information Gathered by: Bryan Hains, Ron Hustedde, Jayoung Koo, and Kristina Ricketts; University of Kentucky Community Innovation Lab & Depts. of Landscape Architecture and Community Leadership and Development; and many neighborhood residents.

Narratives Written by: Richard Young & Kris Nonn

Introduction

The North End of Lexington has a diverse but fragmented population. In countless interviews and meetings with North End community members, residents discussed a lack of social cohesion between different populations within the neighborhood. This lack of social cohesion was in many ways engineered through place-based social and economic injustices - including redlining, absentee landlordism, and predatory real estate practices. Considering this alongside the national decline in neighborliness and social mixing, it is no wonder that there are different sets of priorities, needs, and desires from group to group. Add in the neighborhood's demographic changes, and you can see a community in which consensus might be incredibly difficult to reach.

In order to take the first step towards consensus, this plan relied on several different engagement mechanisms to gather information, including neighborhood walks, community dinners, on-the-street interviews, and common themes pulled from neighborhood stories. The purpose behind this was to allow different people to engage on terms that were comfortable to them, and was not reliant on just a few town hall or group meetings to gather input. Extra consideration was given to identify any gaps in participation (versus the neighborhood demographics) to ensure that the plan represents as much of the neighborhood as possible.

In changing communities like the North End, new resources bring new residents and businesses, which bring cultural changes. As this neighborhood sees new investment, businesses, and residents, it is imperative that there is an attempt to bring together these diverse value sets with already existing ones to build a culture of inclusivity. This vision section is an attempt to document and analyze these value sets, viewpoints, and priorities.

During all engagement methodologies for this document, every attempt was made to provide space for open and honest dialogue with everyone in the community. However, we understand that more can and should always be done.

Culture & Assets

What defines a community? What makes a neighborhood feel like home?

These are very culturally dependent questions that get to the heart of one's sense of attachment and place. The Culture & Assets section of this plan is an attempt at conveying the characteristics that make the North End of Lexington feel like home to so many.

In 2010, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Gallup Polling undertook "The Soul of the Community Survey" - a research project to understand what drives people's attachment to the place where they live. Lexington, Kentucky was one of the locations studied. It found that social connectivity, aesthetic beauty, and openness to new and diverse populations were some of the driving factors in the appreciation that Lexingtonians felt for their city.



While conversations about what drives attraction to place are important and interesting, it is difficult to pick out specific details that make people love a place, especially when they are sitting in a town hall meeting, or in a one-on-one interview.

In order to get at these granular details, the North Limestone CDC and the University of Kentucky took several groups of residents, business owners, and social service organizations on walks through the North End and asked them to use their senses to determine what they valued and what they did not value about the area. Despite the diverse and varied populations and perspectives in the neighborhood, their sentiments regarding the North End overlapped significantly.

Neighborhood Culture

In the North End, community members agreed that the neighborhood culture could be summed up with one thing: people.

Across all engagement methods and all demographics, neighborhood culture in the North End was identified with the people who live and work in the neighborhood; and residents indicated that seeing and hearing their neighbors is what makes them feel at home. Whether it was seeing them walking on the street, or at community events and church, interacting with neighbors is what defined their sense of place for many North End residents.

What is not clear is how the definition of neighbors changed from group to group. Different social groups have their own set of community members, and it is not clear if community members felt the same sense of attraction

to people from outside of their social group, despite living in close proximity to each other. Despite this, the majority of community members valued people and relationships as common bonds that hold their community together. This makes the possibility of building a stronger sense of solidarity and community as a whole neighborhood encouraging.

Another heavily valued characteristic was the diversity of the neighborhood, although what aspect of diversity was valued was unclear. These responses show that residents value differences as well as commonalities. There was also a common sense of frustration from many that certain aspects of the neighborhood - from businesses to public art - did not necessarily reflect the neighborhood's diversity.

Physical Environment

In terms of the physical and built environment of the neighborhood, many of the residents and business owners responded with similar sentiments regarding their sense of attachment to the North End. Residents enjoyed seeing mature trees, green space in the parks, and public art. They enjoyed seeing renovated and fixed up houses, and new businesses like The Wild Fig. They valued the playfulness and creativity of small art projects and Community Gardens.

Residents enjoyed the sounds of birds in the trees and the sounds of music coming from car stereos as they drove by. Residents enjoyed hearing the sound of children playing and neighbors talking as they walked on the streets. They enjoyed the sounds of dogs barking and leaves crunching, and the smells of fresh mowed grass, coffee, donuts frying, and flowers.

Infrastructure

Residents felt frustrated by the poor state of infrastructure in the North End - from rapidly deteriorating curbs and sidewalks to boarded-up buildings. They indicated concern that the renovations occurring on housing would make them unaffordable to longtime residents. There was a distinct feeling of economic segregation that troubled residents on a property-by-property basis - rundown substandard housing next to expensive, beautiful housing. Tall privacy fences made residents feel as if they were not valued in their own communities.

Residents did not enjoy the sounds of construction on homes and the jackhammering/repair of streets. Almost all residents expressed displeasure at the traffic noise as cars drove by. One group of residents was even yelled at by a passing driver to get further away from the street, despite walking in the middle of the sidewalk. They did not enjoy the smell of trash and litter that accumulated on the street, pet waste left on the sidewalk, or the manure that they associated with urban farming. Individuals also did not like the smell of the ginkgo tree in Duncan Park.

Vision for the Future

Residents had hope and optimism about the future of the North End, and clear ideas for what they would like to see in the future. They wanted better street infrastructure - more bus shelters, complete streets, pedestrian crossings, and public trash cans. Residents wanted to see well maintained places that their children would actually want to use to recreate - more soccer fields and basketball courts.

They wanted to see more gardens, flowers, and landscaping. They wanted to see more buildings restored by neighborhood residents for businesses started by neighborhood residents. They wanted to see markers telling the history of the neighborhood, and children playing in the street. They wanted slower traffic and more conversation between neighbors. They wanted to smell baking bread and taste food that was more representative of the diversity of the North End.

Sacredness

Residents also listed several things that they found sacred. These aspects of Neighborhood Culture were what were valued above all other things listed above. These included physical things that make the North End of Lexington iconic in the greater Lexington landscape: historic buildings and architecture, Castlewood and Duncan Parks, the African-American cemetery on 7th Street, and the variety of churches throughout the community.

Culturally, community members found the people of the North End sacred. They valued the working class demographics of the neighborhood, people with deep roots in the community, and new residents interested in being a part of the community. They appreciated the variety of religious groups that do work in the neighborhood and neighbors that open up their homes to the community. They valued the complex history of the community and people that seek to lift up what might not be known in that history.

Welcomeness & Unwelcomeness

As the North End goes through demographic shifts, it is important to keep in mind what makes people feel welcome and unwelcome. This is a notion that can also feel very abstract to people - what makes one person feel welcome is different than what makes another person feel welcome. In an effort to gain a better understanding of what makes people feel welcome and unwelcome in their own neighborhood, these two topics were brought up to participants in a number of community engagement sessions.

The people of the North End were identified as most important aspect of neighborhood culture that made people feel welcome in the North End. Respondents described that the diversity of the neighborhood, which was earlier defined as one of the things that made this neighborhood unique, was also one of the things that made them feel the most welcome in this place. The acceptance of different lifestyles made residents feel welcome, as did the social relationships and bonds amongst neighbors. "Front porch culture" and the community presence of churches like Embrace and Total Grace Baptist Church were also highlighted as key producers of the feeling of

welcomeness. Physical characteristics of the neighborhood that made North End residents feel welcomed were the presence of community parks, businesses, the accessibility and walkability of the area, and historic buildings.

Responses regarding what made North End residents feel unwelcome in their own place tended to be more infrequent, but longer than the responses about what made people welcome.

Respondents felt that the poor quality of sidewalks, run-down properties, and trash on the streets make people feel unwelcome. Fences that are too close to sidewalks, such as the Kentucky Utilities property on the 700 block of North Limestone, and the large privacy fence on the 600 block of North Limestone made people feel that they were unwelcome. Several people also responded that not seeing people that looked like them made them uncomfortable.

Residents indicated that high crime rates make them feel unsafe, but that signage that described “you are being watched” and other anti-crime methods made them feel equally uncomfortable. Many respondents indicated that being perceived as an outsider in their own neighborhood make them feel very unwelcome - some indicated that new residents moving in did not engage with them on the street, or looked at them like they were out of place in their own neighborhood.

New cultural amenities that serve a younger clientele made many respondents feel uncomfortable. Another trend that appeared in the answers had a racial dynamic - with a few respondents saying that the presence of younger white people makes them feel uncomfortable.

Despite a number of residents indicating they felt unwelcome in their own neighborhood, there was significant hope for bringing the community together.

Neighbors wanted more spaces to gather together, building on the already existing Park infrastructure. These ideas included building a stage in Duncan Park and an activity space in Castlewood Park. Residents also wanted tax incentives to keep people in their homes, and heritage celebrations to showcase the different cultures and nationalities that exist within the neighborhood. They wanted to widen sidewalks so that people have more room to stop and talk with each other as they pass, or to stop and talk with people on their front porches. They wanted more public transportation infrastructure and local employment programs to encourage businesses to hire from within the neighborhood.

Neighbors wanted less “outsiders coming in and more initiative from longtime residents.” They wanted more family-friendly activities and music venues that are more family-oriented. They wanted opportunities to share differing opinions and beliefs in a safe and respectful environment, and more events and festivals to build pride of place, and pride of community.

These ideas, centered around bringing together North End residents, could help strengthen assets that already exist in the North , growing bonds between different types of social groups that exist side-by-side in the North End.

Moving Forward

The remainder of this document will show a wide range of community input, and differing visions for the future of the North End of Lexington. However, just because this input has been gathered does not mean that these viewpoints represent everyone in the North End.

It is important to understand that there are many different ways of looking at the North End. While some people might look at dilapidated housing and see blight, others might see childhood memories. Where one sees a beautiful mural celebrating the vision of an artist, another might see a new identity placed on their neighborhood that they had no say in, don't like, and can't get rid of.

There is a need to create spaces for open and honest dialogue about the changes that are happening within the culture of the neighborhood. Inevitably, older generations of people will be replaced by younger ones, and the North End culture will shift. The neighborhood is at a crucial turning point, and it is important for people to meet others where they are, and understand that they might have different viewpoints.

Many of the changes that are currently happening in the North End of Lexington can either erode the cultural fabric of the neighborhood, or lift it up and celebrate it. Many neighbors that are moving in (which largely have more access to economic, political, and social capital) can help bring about the changes that have been desired by North End residents for generations; however, these changes cannot come solely from new influence and capital. This work needs to be rooted in the relationships and existing assets in the North End, with new influence and capital augmenting it.

Services

In 2012, the city of Portland, Oregon published the *Portland Plan*, which “developed in response to some of Portland’s most pressing challenges, including income disparities, high unemployment, a low high school graduation rate and environmental concerns.” In this document, the authors frame the concept of “complete neighborhoods.” According to the *Portland Plan*, “complete neighborhoods” represent the following, in summary:

“An area where residents have safe and convenient access to goods and services they need on a daily or regular basis. This includes a range of housing options, grocery stores and other neighborhood-serving commercial services; quality public schools; public open spaces and recreational facilities; and access to frequent transit...”

While this definition of “complete neighborhoods” is fairly common sense, it provides a framework around which to develop goals and ideals for how a neighborhood can best serve the community that lives there. For the purposes of this document, Neighborhood Services will be all necessary services that fit into the defined framework of a “complete neighborhood.”

This is not a new concept. Before widespread access to automobile transportation, Lexington’s North End had many of the services that would qualify it to be a “complete neighborhood.” It had easily accessible public transportation via the electric in-ground streetcar and bus system that was fed out of the SE Greyhound Line building. It had markets and grocery stores within walking distance - such as the Kroger on North Limestone. It had affordable eateries and diners like Mom’s Loudon Lunch or the Greyhound Cafe. It had easily accessible health care services and housing options.

The North End of today retains some aspects of a complete neighborhood. It has a number of faith-based institutions spread throughout, and it has public schools that are within walking distance. It has green spaces for people to gather. However, there are many elements which both neighborhood residents and social service organizations identify as being absent from the area.

The following section details information regarding the attitudes and perception regarding the availability and quality of Neighborhood Services in the area.



Former Kroger on North Limestone - 1940's
courtesy: Kentucky Digital Archive



Interior, Kroger on North Limestone - 1940's
courtesy: Kentucky Digital Archive

In addition to the resident-identified neighborhood services, North Limestone CDC and a number of other organizations in the community identified additional services, many of which were not necessarily thought of as “services” by residents that attended the community engagement sessions.

Due to funding restrictions, not all of these service types were studied, and it is recommended that in-depth studies of those without their own sections be conducted and added to the North Limestone Cultural Plan.

The Neighborhood Services which will be given their own section in this edition of the North Limestone Cultural Plan are:

- Arts
- Businesses
- Access to Food (broken out from businesses)
- Public Space
 - Parks & Recreation
- Public Art

The Neighborhood Services which should be further studied and then added to the North Limestone Cultural Plan in the near future are:

- Housing
- Community & Social Services
- Education
- Healthcare
- Transportation

Resident-Identified Neighborhood Service Types

- Arts & Culture
- Businesses
 - Access to Food
 - Restaurants & Bars
 - Retail
- Community & Social Services
- Education
- Faith-Based Institutions (can be combined with Community & Social Services)
- Parks & Recreation
- Public Space & Public Art

Other Neighborhood Services

- Housing
- Healthcare
- Transportation

Most Used Neighborhood Services

According to an assessment of North End residents, the most frequently used service in the North End was the parks system. More details about the preferences of neighborhood residents and identified needs for these parks will be detailed in the Public Space section of this document.

A close second were the restaurants, grocery stores, and food access options, though they were limited. A few specific locations were mentioned including Al's Bar, Maria's Kitchen, and the Sav-A-Lot on North Broadway. Residents did distinguish these traditional business models from alternative economic models such as Fresh Stop Markets and Community Gardens. Issues involving food access in the North End of Lexington will be detailed further in the Food Access section of this document.

The next most frequently used neighborhood services were the retail businesses that exist in the neighborhood. Of these retail businesses, residents identified the Dollar Tree on North Broadway, and the Rite-Aid at the corner of Loudon and North Broadway as the most used. More about neighborhood businesses will be discussed in the Business section.

Also identified were city and social services, including mention of the School System, Police and Fire, as well as Waste Management. Non-profit organizations were also lumped into this category, with several being specifically mentioned - the Dunbar Community Center on North Upper, Community Action Council, Common Good at Embrace Church, and the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, located just south of the North End.

Services Needed in the North End

North End community members identified a significant number of services that were needed in the neighborhood. Responses broke down into three major categories: **Continuing Education**, **Food Services**, and **Community Spaces**.

In the **Continuing Education** category, residents emphasized the need for accessible secondary education and bilingual services. Residents wanted employment programs that could help individuals learn how to apply for jobs, create a resume, and train individuals for reentering the workforce. Also mentioned were financial literacy classes, including specific topics like home budgeting and business planning.

To reiterate, there was a particular emphasis expressed for the need for bilingual versions these services.

In the **Food Services** category, residents expressed a need for increased availability of fresh and healthy eating alternatives. This was expressed through three specific outlets: a farmers market, a better grocery store, and inexpensive healthy dining options. While much of this will be detailed in both the Food Access and the Business sections of this document, it is important to touch again upon the serious need for healthy, affordable, and accessible eating opportunities in the North End.

Lastly, there was a need for **Community Spaces** identified by residents. They expressed a strong need for a more centralized Community Center that could promote the commingling of different people within the neighborhood. They also expressed the need for more family facilities, particularly affordable daycare options and family-friendly community arts activities and music venues

Several other things were identified as needs by neighborhood residents. These included a dog park, additional public gathering space and green spaces, affordable fitness and health classes, healthcare and medical services, increased transportation options, venues to express the diversity in the neighborhood, and more children's activities. These aspects were not mentioned as frequently as the others listed previously.

Interestingly, a number of these services already exist within the neighborhood, particularly financial support services. Community Ventures, a nonprofit organization that is located on North Broadway, provides financial assistance programs that few in the neighborhood were aware of. Providing better on-the-ground connection between these already-existing services and the community members that need them is a simple and effective way to help fill some of the needs indicated by residents.

In the following sections of this document, more detail will be given on individual Neighborhood Services which were studied by the North Limestone CDC and partners on the North Limestone Cultural Plan.

Recommendations

| | |
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| 1 | Create a working group of residents, business owners, and social service organization representatives for addressing neighborhood services. |
| 2 | Create a North End-specific framework and strategy to assist it in becoming a “complete neighborhood”. |
| 3 | Complete studies of Housing, Community & Social Services, Education, Healthcare, and Transportation in the North End; Add these studies to the North Limestone Cultural Plan. |
| 4 | Build better connections between already existing services and residents in the North End; ensure these services have adequate multilingual access. |

Businesses

Publicly accessible businesses are one of the backbones of the economic success of a neighborhood, and are one of the most important public or private “third spaces” that communities can have. Throughout the history of the North End, one can see the presence of small-scale, neighborhood-focused businesses, from long-time fixtures like Spaulding’s Bakery or the Loudon Square Buffet to newly opened Push Push Press and Wild Fig Books + Coffee, both of which opened less than 5 years ago.

Newer businesses have quickly set the defining tone for the economic development trajectory in the neighborhood - one that seems to be based around entrepreneurship and “artisanal” goods. While these new businesses are bringing economic vitality to the neighborhood, these businesses can feel foreign to long-time residents.

In addition, many of these businesses tend to offer non-essential services and goods instead of everyday necessities for neighborhood residents. While new businesses are by no means required to serve the immediate neighborhood, this issue contributes to the cultural changes in the North End. This stems from the perception that these new businesses are not culturally, racially, or socio-economically diverse and are not universally affordable or accessible. It is difficult to control what types of business enter the North End on a granular level, but there are opportunities to help make the businesses and entrepreneurial activities that occur within the North End better reflect its diversity and provide access and options for all.

In an ideal world, the very fabric and architectural framework of the North End would bring increased opportunities for more diverse entrepreneurs to start businesses, as compared to what typically occurs in traditional development contexts. A 2014 study from the National Trust for Historic Preservation found that “neighborhoods with a smaller-scaled mix of old and new buildings host a significantly higher proportion of new businesses, as well as more women and minority-owned businesses than areas with predominantly larger, newer buildings.”

While this smaller scale development could potentially be a positive sign for the success of diverse businesses within the North End, there are significant economic disparities that supersede that. A study from the Minority Business Development Agency at the United States Department of



Mom's Loudon Lunch
courtesy: KY Digital Archive



Wild Fig Books + Coffee
courtesy: Kris Nonn



Vacant Storefront
courtesy: Kris Nonn

Commerce states that Minority Firms are less likely to receive loans, more likely to pay higher interest rates, and receive lower loan amounts than Non-Minority Firms, and that “limited financial, human, and social capital as well as racial discrimination are primarily responsible for the disparities in minority business performance.” These disparities exist in the North End, stemming from the same racially-motivated policies and actions described in previous sections of this document.

To help make neighborhood businesses better reflect the population of the North End, these disparities in access to capital need to be addressed.

There is a rich range of businesses within the North End. From long-time businesses such as the Loudon Square Buffet to brand new ones like Broomwagon Bikes + Coffee, the wide range of businesses within the neighborhood have many different sets of challenges, opportunities, and needs. In order to assess the needs of existing businesses, the North Limestone CDC and University of Kentucky Community Innovation Lab took a two-step approach.

The first step was a series of community dinners for North End residents and business owners co-hosted by North Limestone CDC and University of Kentucky Community Innovation Lab. At these dinners, residents and business owners were asked questions about businesses and business growth in the North End. This was followed up by interviews with individual business owners.

Businesses Interviewed for the Cultural Plan:

- Minton’s at 760
- Sim’s Antiques
- Shannon’s Lamp Service
- Loudon Square Buffet
- Julie’s Custom Draperies
- Affordable Restaurant Equipment
- Progress Market
- North Lexington Veterinary Clinic
- Wild Fig Books + Coffee
- North Lime Coffee and Donuts
- La Cabaña
- Maria’s Kitchen

Support for Existing Businesses

The largest opportunities for growth detailed by residents and business owners involved the expansion of restaurants and eateries within the neighborhood. This was largely based on precedent - in the past year, Maria’s Kitchen, North Lime Coffee & Donuts and Minton’s at 760 have all expanded, albeit in different ways.

In early 2016, Maria’s Kitchen relocated to a significantly larger indoor space (formerly occupied by Willie’s Locally Known) just a couple doors down from its previous outdoor-only location on North Broadway. In mid-2015, North Lime Coffee and Donuts expanded by opening an additional location on the south side of Lexington. Also in mid-2015, Minton’s at 760 expanded with the “Little Brother,” a food truck operation. Originally debuted at the North Limestone CDC-run Night Market, the “Little



Former Maria’s Kitchen Location
courtesy: ILoveLexington.com

Brother” has allowed Minton’s to increase their catering operation and event service.

The main strategies brought up by community leaders for achieving this growth were centered around creating better connection points between existing resources and business owners. The needed resources included business planning support, affordable “turnkey” space and affordable suppliers, as well as broader marketing of neighborhood businesses. Many indicated that these needs could be met by extended and new services of the North Limestone CDC.



New Maria’s Kitchen Location

Some businesses in the North End have issues maintaining the current size of their business, and are not worried about growth or expansion at the moment. For many businesses that fall into this category, it is important to build better connections with the community. However, some of these businesses are already well-connected with the community, but offer community services that do not necessarily add to their bottom line. For these, a potential leg-up could exist in subscription-based services that are already being used to support non-profits and artists nation-wide by “crowdfunding” an additional regular income or subscription service

Connections Between Existing Businesses and Residents

Despite the growing number of successful businesses within the North End, there are disconnects between some long-time neighborhood residents and new businesses. In a series of street-level conversations, North Limestone CDC staff asked pedestrians in the neighborhood about their perceptions of new business startups in the area.

Of those interviewed, roughly one-third of the interviewed pedestrians reported that they patronized newer businesses in the North End and more than half of this group suggested that the price point of the new businesses within the North End was too high, or that they did not feel like the businesses were “for them.”

While this is not a scientific sample, it is clear that there is a cultural divide between some long-time residents of the North End and the new businesses that are opening in the area. While this is not necessarily the fault of either party, there are potential steps that new businesses could take to make long-time residents of the North End feel more welcomed in their business. These strategies could include discounts for neighborhood residents or “neighborhood days”, alternative marketing strategies, or even simply new business owners getting into better relationship with existing neighborhood residents.

North End Business Needs & Obstacles

Overall, there was significant consensus among community members that retail/service and food were two of the largest business needs within the community - and the two most likely to succeed. Retail/service needs focused mostly on general neighborhood uses: laundry services, a hardware store, and a book store (the survey was conducted before the addition of Wild Fig Books to the neighborhood). There was a significant emphasis placed on the need for these businesses to be locally-owned, and preferably owned by neighborhood residents; however, there was also demand for chain and franchise stores, as well as fast food restaurants.

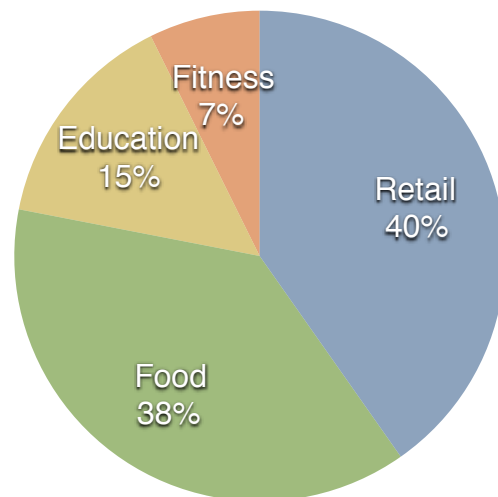
In the food category, the heaviest emphasis was on produce availability - specifically mentioned were farmers' markets and food markets, and the need for more restaurants with affordable, quality, and healthy foods. Respondents felt as though there were many food options, but that options that are healthy and quality were usually too expensive.

Other trends that rose to the top across all of the categories and needs mentioned were the need for locations for teenagers and families to spend time together. Residents noted that affordable, family-friendly restaurants did not exist within the neighborhood (although this gap can start to be filled by the new Maria's Kitchen location, as well as La Cabaña, on Bryan Ave.). Another strong need was "third-spaces" for young people.

Most Desired Types of Businesses in North End (By Response Rate)

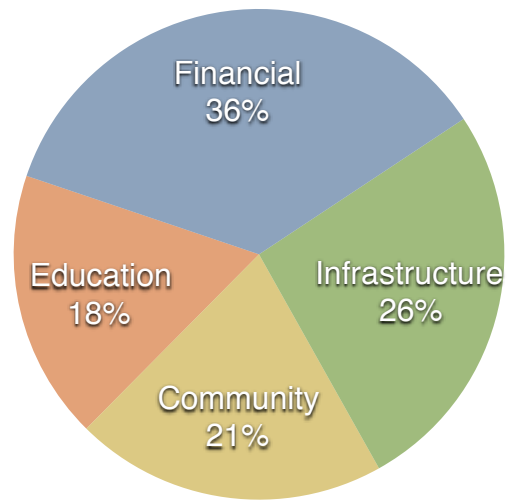
- Grocery / Market with fresh produce and carry-out meals
- Restaurants with affordable, healthy food
- Hardware Store
- Gym or Fitness Center with affordable childcare
- Laundry Services
- Safe space for neighborhood teenagers

“What kind of new businesses are likely to succeed in the North Limestone Neighborhood?”



The largest reported obstacle for residents starting businesses in the North End was financial limitations. This aspect will be discussed in the next section, on Neighborhood Entrepreneurship.

“What are the obstacles for a new business in the North Limestone Neighborhood?”



Education Issues

- No business training systems
- No central business organization
- Language barriers
- Lack of knowledge about market

Community Issues

- Perception of neighborhood as dangerous
- Crime issues / safety concerns
- No mingling between neighborhood cultures

Infrastructure Issues

- Lack of Parking
- Poor Public Transportation
- Bad Sidewalks
- Zoning Restrictions
- No affordable, fixed-up real estate or rental space

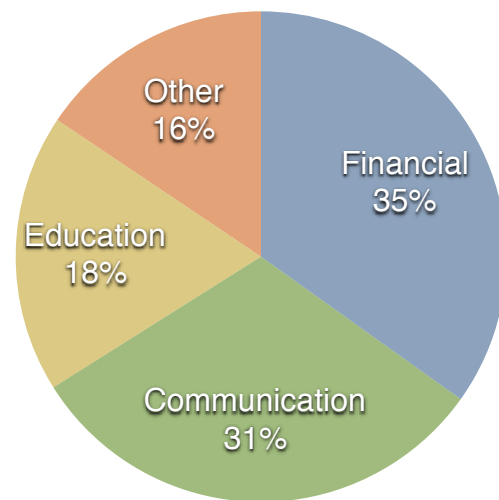
Neighborhood Entrepreneurship

The economics of the neighborhood immediately makes it difficult for neighborhood residents to take on any entrepreneurial endeavors. Neighborhood residents expressed difficulty in finding accessible employment opportunities in order to provide the financial stability to start a business within the neighborhood. Although many residents indicated there was an abundance of inexpensive property that was in disrepair, access to low-cost space for retail and restaurant businesses was difficult to find, as was financing to renovate those properties in disrepair.



Also mentioned was the need for educational resources, including small business startup training, job training for entry-level employment, and financial literacy education. Lack of education on entrepreneurship, coupled with the lack of financial resources indicated above, makes it nearly impossible for residents of the North End to start-up their own businesses. Potential solutions to this issue might lie in the second-most referenced answer in the question regarding entrepreneurship: networking.

“What do we need to do to encourage more entrepreneurs in the North Limestone neighborhood?”



Many of the resources that residents indicated a need for already exist in Lexington, and many of them are located in the North End itself. The non-profit organization Community Ventures offers entrepreneurial training as well as access to capital for first-time business owners. Jubilee Jobs, another non-profit in the North End, provides entry-level employment connections - and specifically focuses on recently-incarcerated. Many of the residents indicated that better methods of distributing this information would make it easier to consider entrepreneurship; and in particular, many referenced that much of the materials and programs that provide educational and financial assistance are only in the English language, leaving out many Spanish-speakers and other Non-English speakers.

Recommendations

| | |
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| 1 | Provide support for existing businesses through support grants, promotion, and any other means feasible. |
| 2 | Encourage new and existing businesses to hire residents from the North End. |
| 3 | Utilize granting resources and funds to create a venture capital and micro-granting fund for new businesses. |
| 4 | Incentivize the creation of minority-owned businesses within the neighborhood through specific programs. |
| 5 | Create subscription-based services to provide regular support to new businesses, as well as existing business that offer significant social and community benefits. |
| 6 | Facilitate the reorganization of the North Limestone Business Association. |
| 7 | Provide connections between North End residents wanting to start businesses and financial and educational resources. |
| 8 | Profile, document, and share stories of successful businesses within the North End. |
| 9 | Address infrastructure issues within the neighborhood to create a more pedestrian and mass-transit-friendly environment. |
| 10 | Help develop business plans for the most requested business types within the North End. |
| 11 | Work with new businesses to make programs and changes that allow all North End residents feel more welcome. |
| 12 | Work with businesses on creating price structures to ensure that businesses can be accessible to all North End residents, regardless of socio-economic status. |

Food Access

Access to fresh and healthy food is one of the main building blocks of a successful and healthy neighborhood. A 2010 white paper published by *PolicyLink* and *The Food Trust* (which references over 130 other studies) shows that increases in fresh and healthy food availability leads to significant benefits for communities, including healthier eating options, lower risks of diet-related chronic diseases, and the potential for creating employment opportunities for neighborhood residents.

In the North End of Lexington, access to fresh and healthy food options is limited. The image located below comes from a University of Kentucky Department of Geography's Atlas for a Community Mapshop and displays the lack of options in the North End, which is highlighted in red.



In late 2015 and early 2016, the North Limestone CDC co-hosted a series of community dinners and workshops with the University of Kentucky's Community Innovation Lab and 10 community researchers. These community dinners looked to determine barriers that currently existed for healthy food options in the North End, what residents' ideal remedies to these barriers were, and then identify the obstacles that would need to be overcome in order for those remedies to work. To determine this, the following questions were asked:

- How can people get healthy fresh food in the North Limestone neighborhood?
- What is your vision for food access in the North Limestone neighborhood in the next five years?
- What are the barriers to purchasing healthy, fresh food in the North Limestone neighborhood?

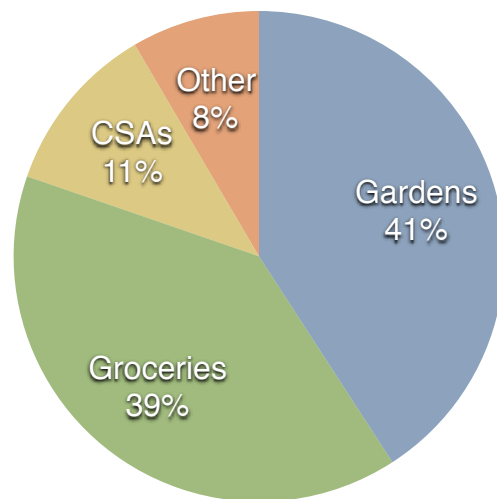
These questions were designed to create a strategic plan for growing access to fresh and healthy foods based on the perspectives and viewpoints of neighborhood residents. The questions and their responses are catalogued in the *Northside Common Market Community Report*, published by the North Limestone Community Development Corporation and the University of Kentucky Community Innovation Lab. The following sections detail some of the findings in that report.

Current Ways to Access Fresh and Healthy Foods

Many of the attendees at the community dinners reinforced the evidence of limited options for purchasing fresh and healthy food within the North End. The majority of respondents indicated that the current options for accessing healthy foods were through grassroots approaches - including community gardens and CSA programs.

Several respondents also indicated they accessed fresh and healthy food outside to the North Limestone area, including locations like Sav-A-Lot, Kroger's, and Trader Joes. While these options are within driving distance of the neighborhood (with Sav-A-Lot and the Kroger's on Bryan Station Rd. being the closest), lack of access to auto transportation made them largely inaccessible. Of the locations that were walkable, residents indicated they were concerned about crossing the busy roads that essentially "cut them off" - North Broadway for Sav-A-Lot, and New Circle Road for Kroger's.

“How can people get healthy fresh food in the North Limestone neighborhood?”



Unique Food Access

As a response to few options for fresh and healthy food access in the neighborhood, the North End has become home to many unique options for accessing fresh and healthy foods, including Seedleaf's community gardens, and the co-operative Fresh Stop Markets program. While these options provide relief for residents, without increased support they can not necessarily fully replace a full-service grocer located within the neighborhood. Community Gardens in the North End are also profiled in the Public Space section of this document.

Seedleaf

Seedleaf exists to nourish communities by growing, cooking, sharing, and recycling food. Seedleaf has 16 community gardens, an area composting program, Master Community Gardener classes, and cooking classes for kids. Seedleaf operates several Community Gardens in the North End, including the North Pole Garden and New Beginning / Castlewood Garden.



Fresh Stop Markets

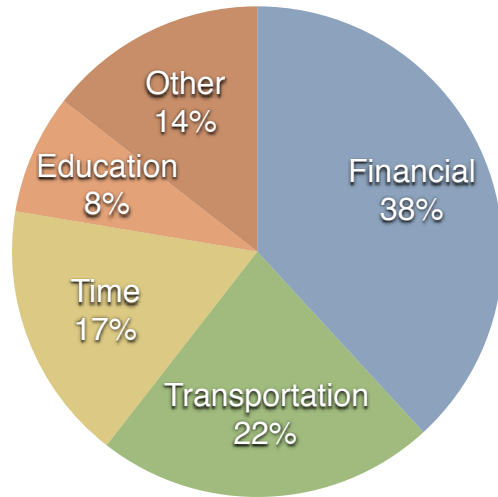
Fresh Stop Markets are bi-weekly fresh food markets that "pop-up" at local churches and community centers in fresh food insecure neighborhoods. Community members purchase shares of 10-12 varieties of seasonal produce in advance so that farmers don't face the same degree of risk as they would with a standard farmers' market.

Barriers to Growing Food Access

There are significant barriers towards growing food access in the North End, many of which stem from the histories of economic and racial segregation that are discussed in other sections of this document. Due to the economic realities that some North End residents face combined with the low margins of the grocery business, it would be difficult for a traditional for-profit neighborhood grocer to be able to successfully establish a location in the North End.

Many residents identified significant barriers for growing access to fresh and healthy food options within the North End that extended beyond simple access and availability. Out of all of the responses to the question regarding barriers to access, the three largest barriers to fresh and healthy food access in the North End involved the cost, the time to prepare it, and the transportation get to it.

“What are the barriers to purchasing healthy, fresh food in the North Limestone neighborhood?”



Financial Barriers

The largest reported barrier to purchasing fresh and healthy food in the North Limestone Neighborhood / North End was economic. Community members noted that the high price of fresh and healthy food, in tandem with the economic constraints of limited income, make the prospect of increased access very difficult. This is, more than likely, the reason that alternative economic models were frequently brought up when discussing how to improve food access.

Bluegrass Double Dollars, a pilot project of Bluegrass Farm to Table, is designed to make healthy, local produce more readily available to SNAP users in the Lexington area by doubling the purchasing power (up to \$10 per transaction) of SNAP participants to be used toward local produce at locations throughout Lexington.

One user of the Bluegrass Double Dollars program is the Castlewood Fresh Stop Market CSA. Its cooperative economic model is a prime example of a grassroots food justice effort that provides equitable access to residents of all types. Their tiered pricing model - a share costs \$6 for WIC recipients, \$12 for SNAP recipients, and \$25 for everyone else - allows for community members at all economic levels to purchase local produce. Castlewood CSA runs from June through October.

Time

For many, locating, purchasing and preparing healthy food is challenging, and consuming more time to do so, especially when fast food is more readily and quickly available. Many stores in the area don't even offer adequate healthy food options alongside "fast food" options.

Transportation

Transportation also proved to be a barrier. For residents that relied on public transportation, the difficulties of using LexTran's hub-based transit system made traveling with bags of groceries very difficult. For many, the Kroger's on Bryan Station and Sav-A-Lot on North Broadway were just far enough away to be inconvenient, especially those working multiple jobs or those with large families to feed.

Vision for Expanding Affordable, Fresh, & Healthy Food Access

There were many strategies discussed by North End residents for how to expand affordable fresh and healthy food access. These ideas mostly focused around expanding the current grassroots efforts, as well as working to establish a grocery or market with healthy food options within the community.

Residents also discussed alternative models, which demonstrated a concern that many residents had about the topic in general. While the introduction of traditional groceries and small markets might technically address the availability of fresh foods, this would only remove the physical access barrier, and not the many economic barriers that residents face. Building on cooperative models like Fresh Stop, and low-cost community-maintained models like Seedleaf’s community gardens can help expand food access, but in order for the problem to be fully addressed, more systemic issues need to be considered.

Discussed Alternative Models for Expanding Food Access

- Educational resources on growing & preserving food
- Cooperative economic models and systems
- Delivery services for elderly residents
- City policies that allow food to be grown in front-yards and allow the sale of produce from community gardens



Recommendations

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| 1 | Provide support for grassroots, neighborhood-based alternative economic programs like Fresh Stop Market to expand their services. |
| 2 | Continue the community conversations / dinners regarding needs for improving access to fresh and healthy foods. |
| 3 | Determine methods to increase locations with affordable, fresh, and healthy food options, as well as examine methods to increase transportation access to locations that already have these options. |
| 4 | Encourage neighborhood restaurants to put low-cost healthy food options on their menus, and create and carry affordable, pre-prepared “fresh-to-go” meals. |
| 5 | Create incentives for new and existing businesses to hire long-term and low-income neighborhood residents. |
| 6 | Encourage policies to better allow food to be grown in front-yards and allow the sale of produce from community gardens. |

Public Space

While the concept of Public Space is deeply rooted in human culture, it has begun to see a resurgence as a key component of civic design in American cities through the New Urbanist movement, which grew as a reaction to the traditional auto-centric development patterns of the 1950s-1990s.

This time period in American urban design dispersed and compartmentalized communities into like-parts: suburbs, strip malls, shopping centers, and drive-thru shops. This compartmentalization also grouped race and class groups into like-parts, increasing economic segregation through a variety of means. “Urban renewal” projects demolished small-scale shops and historic buildings, replacing them with larger-scale apartment buildings and offices. Suburbanization saw the out-migration of the mostly white middle and upper classes from downtowns and “inner-ring” neighborhoods to planned neighborhoods outside urban centers. In Lexington, the KY-4 bypass (New Circle Road), which sought to make transportation by vehicle easier, allowed for suburbanization to take place at a much quicker pace.



Construction of New Circle Road
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

As populations with financial and political capital moved out of urban areas, much of the infrastructure of inner-cities and neighborhoods - sidewalks, parks, etc. - fell further and further into disrepair. People of differing socio-economic classes, who once lived within blocks of each other, suddenly were miles apart. Out in the suburbs, neighborhoods were being built solely with cost-efficiency, compartmentalization, and auto-centric design in mind - many planned completely without public space. These factors - along with inspirational writings of people like Jane Jacobs and financial incentives from the government to improve urban cores - contributed to the rise of the New Urbanist movement.

New Urbanism began to creep into city design throughout the 1980s, but the movement got a strong boost from the founding of the *Congress for New Urbanism*, a multi-disciplinary group of civic professionals that believed in the concepts of New Urbanism. The Charter of the New Urbanism begins with: “The Congress for the New Urbanism views disinvestment in central cities, the spread of placeless sprawl, increasing separation by race and income, environmental deterioration, loss of agricultural lands and wilderness, and the erosion of society’s built heritage as one interrelated community-building challenge.”

With the growth of New Urbanist thinking in cities throughout the country, declining public spaces and infrastructure in downtowns, neighborhoods, and suburbs have come under increased scrutiny. Organizations, academic institutions, and philanthropy have all undertaken efforts to improvise new approaches to dealing with public space. *The Project for Public Spaces* sprung up to advocate for better public space design. MIT’s Department of Urban Studies and Planning began a series of studies to analyze the impacts of Public Spaces.

Philanthropic foundations have begun funding public space improvements as a way of expediting and innovating upon the traditional government processes.

Public Space's function is to provide no-cost common space for people to exist and interact in. From parks to piazzas and sidewalks to alleyways, Public Space is now recognized as an essential component of any community. From a blog post on the The Project for Public Spaces:

“On the surface, it’s easy to look at great public places and see them as nothing more than well-designed physical locations. But beneath the surface, these places can be so much more. They are locations where community comes alive, where bonds among neighbors are strengthened and where a sense of belonging is fostered.”



Triangle Park - Downtown Lexington
courtesy: Triangle Park Foundation

While this increase in Public Space has been positive, questions of welcomeness and ownership come up. A 2014 article in *The Atlantic* entitled “How Cities Use Design to Drive Homeless People Away” discussed how cities use public space infrastructure like park benches and sidewalks to as deterrents to discourage use of public space by the homeless for sleeping or loitering.

Increasingly, public space (including privately-owned Public Space) can be intentionally designed to cater to only a specific audience. This is expressed in the book “Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity”. In it, the authors state that both unintentional and intentional “...*exclusion practices can reduce the vitality and vibrancy of the space or reorganize it in such a way that only one kind of person - often a tourist or middle-class visitor - feels welcomed*”. A *Huffington Post* article from June 2016, goes even further: ‘In sum, public spaces have gradually transformed into areas that are less open, less democratic, less comfortable, less enjoyable and less “ours.”’

In an ideal world, good public space should be designed with and by the current, immediate community. This is no exception in the North End of Lexington, where accessible Public Space is at a minimum - consisting of parks, streets, sidewalks, some publicly-owned buildings, as well as privately-owned buildings and green spaces.

Castlewood Park

Castlewood Park, located in the center of the Loudon-Meadows subdivision just north of Loudon Avenue, is a 32-acre public park, and is one of the oldest in the city of Lexington. The park is a small remnant of the family farm owned by the Hunts, mercantilists that made a fortune in the hemp and textile industry in 19th Century Lexington. The land was sold to the city of Lexington in the 1920s. Castlewood Park is currently surrounded on all four sides by residential properties built in the 1920s - 1950s.



Castlewood Park in the 1970's
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

In the middle of the park sits the iconic Loudoun House. Designed by famed New York architect Alexander Jackson Davis, the Loudoun House was built in 1851 for Francis Key Hunt and is one of the largest and finest examples of Gothic Revival architecture in the state of Kentucky. The house cost around \$40,000 to construct and is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building's name came from Hunt's wife's favorite song, *the Bells of Loudoun*.

The Loudoun House is home to the Lexington Art League, one of Lexington's premiere visual arts organizations. Operated with the community in mind, the Art League's gallery in the Loudoun House is open to the public during weekdays, and they also operate a summer program for neighborhood youth in partnership with the Castlewood Community Center, located directly behind the Loudoun House. The Loudoun House is also home to North Limestone MusicWorks. Both of these groups are profiled in the Arts section of this document.

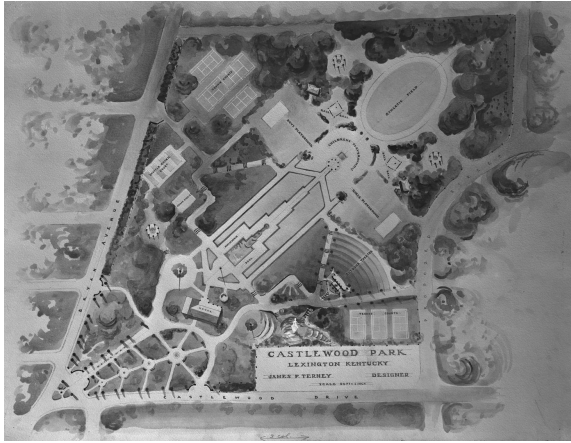


Loudoun House - 1932
courtesy: National Park Service



Loudoun House - 2015
courtesy: Jayoung Koo

Castlewood Park was originally designed as a sprawling, Victorian-inspired park, with varied recreational programming opportunities. Today's Castlewood Park, seen on the right hand image, has several amenities amidst a vast greenspace, including a large aquatic center, a recently installed playground, five tennis courts, a basketball court, and three baseball fields. Almost all of these facilities are regularly occupied during summer months, according to a passive survey by the North Limestone CDC. The sole exception to that would be the tennis courts - rarely occupied - which were constructed during the Tennis Boom of the 1970s.



Castlewood Park - Original Design
courtesy: Kentucky Digital Library



Castlewood Park - Current Aerial Image
courtesy: Google Maps

In a series of community walks and interviews, North End residents discussed what they value about Castlewood Park. The “bucolic” open spaces in the park, which allow for a variety of self-selected activities from pickup soccer to picnics, and the large, historic trees in the park were some of the main draws for residents to the park. Residents also mentioned the high-quality playground equipment and sports facilities as being essential to the park - especially the aquatic center. The Loudoun House - both the architecture and the presence of the Lexington Art League - was also mentioned as a major asset to the park.

Residents, however, also detailed many things they would like to see improved in and around the park. Pedestrian access to the park was mentioned as being incredibly dangerous for children and families - especially coming from the direction of Arlington Elementary and Embrace Church. There is only one crosswalk to get across Bryan Ave for the entire quarter-mile stretch. Residents felt that the chained-down picnic tables and the lack of proper lighting made the park feel unsafe. Programming was also mentioned as a need for the park - specifically public, outdoor events that are free for the community were specifically mentioned. Residents identified the need for more trees in the park and better walkways as well.

Duncan Park

On the southern side of the North End, historic Duncan Park sits atop a hilly area at the corner of North Limestone and Fifth Street. The overarching history of Duncan Park is similar to that of Castlewood Park: it started as a farm and out-lot of a wealthy family, a mansion was constructed on the site, and it eventually was sold to the city of Lexington - but the details of that history are much more rich.

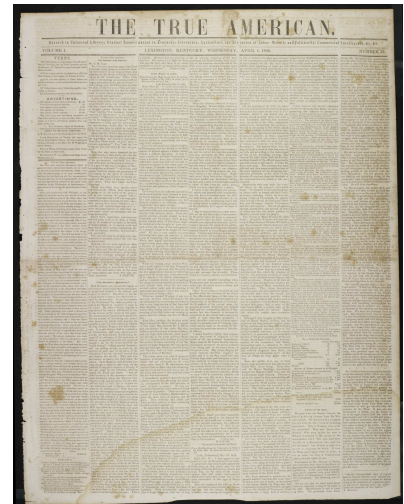


Duncan Park - 2015
courtesy: Jayoung Koo

In 1795, William Morton purchased a 22 acre plot of land just north of the settlement of Lexington for one sterling shilling. Morton, an immigrant from England who was a successful mercantilist in Pennsylvania, operated a drug store at the corner of Main and Upper Streets. In 1810, Morton constructed his home on the lot, facing Mulberry Street (now North Limestone).

Morton died in 1836, and the house was then sold to Cassius Marcellus Clay. Clay, the son of Green Clay, the largest slave-holder in the west, was a cousin to Lexington's famous Henry Clay. Cassius was a staunch and vocal abolitionist. He attended Transylvania University, located just a few blocks south, and Yale College - where he was inspired by William Lloyd Garrison's anti-slavery movement.

He served in the Kentucky House of Representatives, and, in 1845, Cassius Clay began printing an anti-slavery newspaper called *The True American*. One of the most hated individuals in Kentucky, Clay would survive an assassination attempt during a debate with a pro-slavery group. In 1850, Clay sold the home to Dr. Lloyd Warfield, who subdivided it to create what is now the Martin Luther King neighborhood.



The True American - printed by Cassius M Clay
courtesy: KY Digital Archive

Herman Heaton Clay, the ancestor of a slave owned by the Clay family, named his son after Cassius Clay, who would in turn name his son Cassius M. Clay Jr. This Cassius later changed his name to Muhammad Ali, saying that Cassius Clay was his "slave name".

Eventually, the house and surrounding acreage ended up as the property of Henry T. Duncan - a two-term mayor of Lexington and co-founder of the Lexington Daily Press (which eventually became the Lexington Herald-Leader). The five-acre area surrounding the house became a public park in 1912, designed by the firm of Frederick Olmsted - who also designed NYC's Central Park.

In 1915, Duncan Park was the site of a significant women's suffrage

demonstration. From 1916 - 1956, Duncan Park was part of Lexington's segregated parks system, only admitting whites to the park, with Douglass Park serving as its counterpart for the black community. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s "white-flight" of white, middle class residents to the suburbs, the neighborhood saw a significant increase in African-American residents, yet the park still remained segregated.

In the 1970s a 200-person civil rights demonstration took place in Duncan Park in protest of the closing of inner-city schools. In the 1980s and 1990s the park was largely neglected by the city of Lexington, as it was said to be a hot-bed of crime for the neighborhood. Although the city of Lexington did create a Master Plan for Duncan Park in the early 1990s, the only aspect of this plan that was executed was the closing of the swimming pool in Duncan Park in 1995, and its demolition in 2000.



Duncan Park viewed from MLK
courtesy: Jayoung Koo

Currently, Duncan Park houses a basketball court and a small playground. Inside the Morton House is The Nest Center for Women, Children, and Families. Due to the original siting of the mansion, Duncan Park looks largely like the private estate that it once was. The Morton House blocks street view of the playground from North Limestone, a steel fence runs along Fifth Street, and the Northern edge of the park is closed off by the backyards of houses on Rand Ave. Together, these barriers give Duncan Park a very "closed off" feel from any approach except North Martin Luther King Drive.

In a series of community engagement sessions, residents mentioned several aspects of Duncan Park that made it feel welcoming to them. Similar to Castlewood, residents expressed that the large, historic trees in Duncan Park were one of their favorite, defining characteristics. In addition to the trees, residents said that the recreational activities in the park - the playground and the basketball courts - were very important to have in the neighborhood. Many also mentioned that the location and easy access made the park special to residents that could walk to it.

There were more aspects that residents wanted improved in Duncan Park than Castlewood Park. Residents were very frustrated by the removal of benches and trash cans from the park - their removal made it much more difficult to have family gatherings and generally spend time in the park. Alongside the benches and trash cans, residents mentioned that the park needs more upgraded drinking fountains, and permanent brick-and-mortar bathroom facility. The portable toilet in the park made residents feel unsafe, and is occasionally overturned. One of the largest needs mentioned by residents was for additional basketball facilities.

Residents said that from the North Limestone side, Duncan Park seems very inaccessible. Residents mentioned potential ideas which could better activate the "front" of Duncan Park - including public art, colorful flags, and information about the history of the park. Interestingly, many also mentioned that the deteriorating columns at

the front of the park made the park look uncared for. Similar to Castlewood Park, the picnic table (there is only one) is chained to a tree - instantly implying that the park is unsafe.

Streets & Sidewalks

Streets and sidewalks are the most ubiquitous and universal public spaces in a community. While we don't necessarily think of these areas as "Public Space," they are publicly-owned and maintained through tax dollars. The most frequently "touched" Public Spaces, streets and sidewalks are incredibly connected to our perception of a place. Many studies also indicate that the quality of streets and sidewalks have wide-ranging implications across the health spectrum.

The evolution of streets and sidewalks are interestingly connected with other aspects of community development.

Pre-automobile, streets and sidewalks were an important place of interaction for people of all backgrounds. As the car became more and more central to middle-class American culture - alongside the spread of suburbanization - streets began to evolve into quick-moving streams to move people around as quickly as possible. This focus on efficiency and quickness caused governments to raise speed limits, widen roads, and turn roads into one-way streets. All of this quick-paced traffic had a dramatic impact on the pedestrian accessibility of sidewalks. While newly-developed suburbs were mostly slower roads that were "fed into" by larger highways and wider city roads, already existing neighborhoods - like the North End - saw their main streets become "pass-throughs" for people traveling into and out of downtown.



Shopping on North Limestone - 1920
courtesy: Kentucky Digital Library

None of this was an accident. The Project for Public Spaces puts its best: "Traffic and road capacity are not the inevitable result of growth. They are the product of very deliberate choices that have been made to shape our communities around the private automobile." These intentional decisions, made by a select few traffic planners and city officials, directly impact the lives of neighbors, and the health of communities.

Research in countries across the world show links between increases in traffic and a decline in physical health among residents, as well as a reduction in social cohesion. A study in Bristol UK, which mirrored the 1971 studies of Donald Appleyard, showed that "motor vehicle traffic is responsible for a considerable deterioration of residential community, measured by the average number of social contacts, extent of perceived 'home territory,' and reported street-based social activity. Charles Montgomery, in his book *Happy City*, discusses one of many common sense reasons that this could be the case - noise. "...traffic's social corrosion also stems from the noise

it produces. We are less likely to talk to one another when it is noisy. We end conversations sooner. We are more likely to disagree, to become agitated, and to fight with the people we are talking to.”

While the physical and social impacts of streets are enormous, that is only just half of the equation. Sidewalks should be of equal importance as streets in an urban context, yet often they are an afterthought. In Lexington, with the exception of downtown proper, sidewalk care is on the homeowner or property owner to take care of. In many low-to-moderate income communities like the North End, many residents do not have excess income to make necessary sidewalk repairs, allowing sidewalks to fall into disrepair.

This causes an impact not just on the obvious physical utilitarianism - pedestrian accessibility - but also on a more emotional level. A study in *The Journal of Civil Engineering and Urbanism*, authored in 2015, suggests that there is a strong link between the design of urban sidewalks and a psychological sense of security in a place - implying that where sidewalks are quality and maintained, people are happier, healthier, and safer.



Sidewalk Conditions on North Limestone
courtesy: Kris Nonn

There is a national movement to reclaim the streets from automobiles and instead reconfigure streets and sidewalks to be designed for who they were made for - people. Brought into the national spotlight by Jeff Speck's *Walkable City*, the concept of designing neighborhoods around walkability is not a new concept - it is taking places back to what they once were. Through relatively simple steps - slower traffic speeds, broader sidewalks, curb bump-outs, dedicated bike lanes - cities and neighborhoods are making real progress toward several goals of community betterment: lower obesity and diabetes rates, lower noise and air pollution levels, and increases in the size of residents' social networks.

In the North End of Lexington, the sidewalks and streets are inadequate. The main artery of the neighborhood - North Limestone Street - is currently designed as an one-way street exiting Lexington from downtown. Once a small two way street that fit with the residential characteristics, it is now a multi-lane, one-way street heading out of town. This one-way street collides with itself at the intersection of Seventh Street, where it turns back into a two-way street. Resurfaced several times, North Limestone's street level is at times even with the sidewalk, giving no sense of separation between sidewalk and road.

North Limestone - one of the first two streets in Lexington - gets even worse once it crosses Loudon Ave. North of Loudon, which was county territory before Lexington's city-county merger in the 1970s, is in worse shape than the southern stretch due to the lack of maintenance done by the county for a significant period of time. There are numerous flooding and stormwater issues, and there are even several places where there is no sidewalk whatsoever.

Other places in the North End are not much better. West Loudon Ave. between North Broadway and North Limestone is completely missing sidewalks on the south side of the street, and is missing them in parts as well on the north side. This is one of the most high-traffic pedestrian strips in the neighborhood, frequently seeing large groups walking to the LexTran bus stop or the Hope Center further down Loudon Ave. North Broadway, a main auto thoroughfare through the city, only has two pedestrian crossings along the mile strip north of Loudon Ave., yet it is lined on both sides with single-family residential housing in many parts.



Where the Sidewalk Ends on West Loudon Ave.
courtesy: Google Maps

Residents, when asked about their opinions regarding sidewalks and streets in the North End, did not have many positive things to say. Aside from occasional positive comments regarding what you could see while traveling on the sidewalks, but generally, residents were more displeased with them than pleased - with most positive comments being simply that they existed.



Missing Sidewalk on North Limestone and Paris Ave.
courtesy: Google Maps

Residents identified several key issues regarding sidewalk and street infrastructure in the North End. Specifically, there was a need for sidewalks to be present where they are currently absent. Of the sidewalks that do exist, residents say that they are frequently too narrow, and are in dramatic states of disrepair. This disrepair includes crumbling concrete, gaps in the concrete, lack of curb ramps at crosswalks, and vertically uneven concrete panels.

This state of disrepair in sidewalk infrastructure presents several issues for users. Besides the obvious tripping hazards for walking, it creates several extreme disadvantages for the physically impaired. There are several places in the North End where the sidewalks are in such disrepair that individuals can frequently be seen steering their wheelchairs down the roadway, choosing to travel in traffic over the challenges of navigating sidewalk obstacles. This condition also presents several obvious issues for those that are visually impaired.

Other infrastructure issues were also identified by residents as major problems in the North End. The speed of auto traffic and its proximity to the sidewalk was noted by several respondents, who complained not just about the dangers of the situation, but also the noise and smells that it brings into the neighborhood. They also mentioned the need for repairing curbs and creating new crosswalks to make crossing the street easier - particularly in areas that were near public amenities (parks, schools, etc.), as well as additional trash cans to cut down on the litter issues.

Community Gardens

According to a recent study published in the *Journal of Community Practice*, around 23% of land in American cities lies vacant. Community Gardens are one of the emergent trends in transforming these vacant lots into viable Public Spaces in cities and towns across the country. Since 2009, there has been a 19% increase in the prevalence of Community Gardens nationally.



North Pole Community Garden
courtesy: Kris Nonn

Numerous benefits have been noted regarding the presence of Community Gardens in neighborhoods. A study in the *Journal of Public Health* showed a link between Community Gardens and measurable improvements in the physical health of participants in Community Gardening (specifically improvements in their Body Mass Index), as well as their mental health - through improved self-esteem and mood. Community Gardens also provide “opportunities for constructive activities, contributions to the community, relationship and interpersonal skill development, informal social control, and exploring cognitive and behavioral competence.” They also have significant positive impacts on nutrition and food access in communities with little access to fresh and healthy produce.

Community Gardens can also have significant economic impacts. A study of community gardens in New York City shows that they can improve property values on surrounding lots by as much as 9.4% in less than five years and an increase in tax revenues of \$500,000 per garden over a 20 year period. While there are some issues with this study’s scale - it focuses solely on one of the largest and most expensive cities in the country - it does demonstrate that there is a potential economic incentive for the installation of Community Gardens.

This economic benefit is not necessarily entirely positive. A 2014 article in *The New Yorker* by Lauren Markham titled “Gentrification and the Urban Garden” discusses the tension between the positive aspects that Community Gardens have and the potential for those positive aspects to be co-opted by property developers as a tactic to improve the aesthetics (and property values) of the surrounding area.

It is unclear if the referenced economic impacts of Community Gardens play out in communities at the scale of Lexington’s North End due to differences in the scale and pace of property development.

While these economic impacts may depend on the scale of property development - the physical, mental, and community health benefits seem less likely to depend on the external factors in the same way as the economic impacts.

In the North End, there are two prominent Community Gardens - the North Pole Community Garden and the New Beginnings Castlewood Community Garden. Both of these gardens are owned by non-profit organizations

NYC Planning - POPS Regulations

All Privately Owned Public Spaces must be:

1. **Open and inviting at the sidewalk** - A public plaza must be visually interesting and easily seen from the street—evidence that it is an open, public space. Seating must be easily visible with generous paths leading into the plaza.
2. **Accessible** - A public plaza should generally be located at the same level as the adjoining public sidewalk to encourage easy access by all passersby. Pedestrian circulation is encouraged by a pleasant and rational layout of paths and open space.
3. **Quality seating space** - A public plaza must accommodate a variety of well-designed, comfortable seating for small groups and individuals, which may include fixed and movable chairs, benches and broad low walls.
4. **A sense of safety and security** - A public plaza must be oriented to, and visibly connected to the street to avoid any sense of isolation. It must be well-lit and contain easily accessible paths.

(North Pole by the North Limestone CDC, and Castlewood by New Beginnings Church), and are maintained and operated by the non-profit Seedleaf. Both are free and open to the community.

These spaces serve many of the same functions as Community Gardens detailed above. They provide locations for neighbors to come together to grow and celebrate food. However, they are not without their issues. There is a strong need for more dedicated funding streams for infrastructure and maintenance costs for the gardens. In addition to this, legislation legalizing the status of Community Gardens is needed. This could allow Community Gardens to have proper signage, sell produce and goods, and any other specific needs not met by the residential zoning ordinances found in most municipalities.



Brucetown Park
courtesy: Google Maps

Other recommendations for North End Community Gardens include more signage near the street explaining the purpose of the garden, and signage throughout the garden. Also, more garden hours —times when the garden is staffed by somebody who can give a quick tour and orientation— as well as person-to-person visits with neighbors would be advisable to make the gardens more inclusive and actuated. Having events onsite, such as trainings or community grill-outs, would also help people feel more welcome.

Other Public Spaces

Brucetown Park

Situated between 7th Street, Florida Street, and the RJ Corman Railroad tracks sits Brucetown Park. Part of the historic Brucetown neighborhood (which was profiled in the *History* section of this document on pages 23 & 24), Brucetown Park is a small greenspace that also contains a playground set, a basketball court, and a couple of benches. Brucetown Park is in relatively good repair, but is in need of additional lighting.

Privately Owned Public Spaces

There are several privately-owned public spaces in the North End of Lexington that are intended to function as Public Space. While privately owned public space is nothing new, it is part of a growing trend of privatizing Public Spaces. In New York City, the NYC Planning Department has specific requirements for privately owned public spaces (POPS) that are a part of new development projects.

In the North End, POPS include “pocket parks” like the one located on the corner of North Upper Street and Sixth Street and outdoor seating areas for businesses like Broomwagon Bikes + Coffee’s “courtyard” area. While the majority of these spaces in the neighborhood are positive assets, it is important for future projects that include Privately Owned Public Space to keep the community in mind when designing the space. The above listed NYC planning rules are a good starting place for best practices for designing and installing POPS.

Opportunities for Improved Public Spaces

While there are significant improvements that can be made to the Public Spaces that already exist in the North End, there is also potential to create brand new Public Spaces that can be designed from the ground-up by and for neighborhood residents. Later in this section is a list of spaces that could serve a higher and better use than they currently do, as determined by surveys done by the North Limestone CDC. Many of these are inefficient spaces that are currently underutilized and can be repurposed using a trial-and-error process called tactical urbanism.



Better Block Framework
courtesy: Better Block Foundation

Tactical Urbanism is a term for the deployment of low-cost, temporary changes to the built environment to improve spaces for community use. While the concept of Tactical Urbanism is very old - people have been setting up “pop-up” shops on streets for centuries, it has become increasingly popular since Janette Sadik-Khan, the former transportation commissioner of New York City, used lawn chairs and umbrellas to transform Times Square. It has also been broadly popularized through initiatives like the Better Block Project, which also uses temporary street-paint, planters, and trees to make better public spaces temporarily.

Tactical urbanism and similar temporary projects allow communities to try out multiple changes at a relatively low cost before making any permanent alterations to the public infrastructure of their neighborhood.

The following are five locations where this approach could be deployed to make improvements to the neighborhood’s public space.



An executed Better Block Project
courtesy: Better Block Foundation

Location 1: Bryan Avenue



The 700 Block of Bryan Ave., which connects North Limestone St. and Loudon Ave. in a triangle, serves no real purpose aside from access to the old parachute factory (see page 33) and rear access to the few houses that are on Loudon Ave. Moving further up Bryan Ave., the Loudon/Bryan multi-way intersection is incredibly dangerous - it has no crosswalks on any side, and the eastbound Loudon Ave does not stop, while all other sides do. Another problem lies at the Bryan/Castlewood/Maple multi-way intersection, where the road connects to the park and redirects, eventually turning into Bryan Station Road.

This area could be substantially reworked for the benefit of North End residents. Community members' opinions could be solicited to determine a better use of the 700 block of Bryan Ave. Each of the intersections between Loudon and Castlewood should be better oriented for pedestrians, complete with crosswalks and pedestrian signals, due to the high traffic volume on all three streets.

Location 3: North Broadway at the Whitaker Bank Ballpark

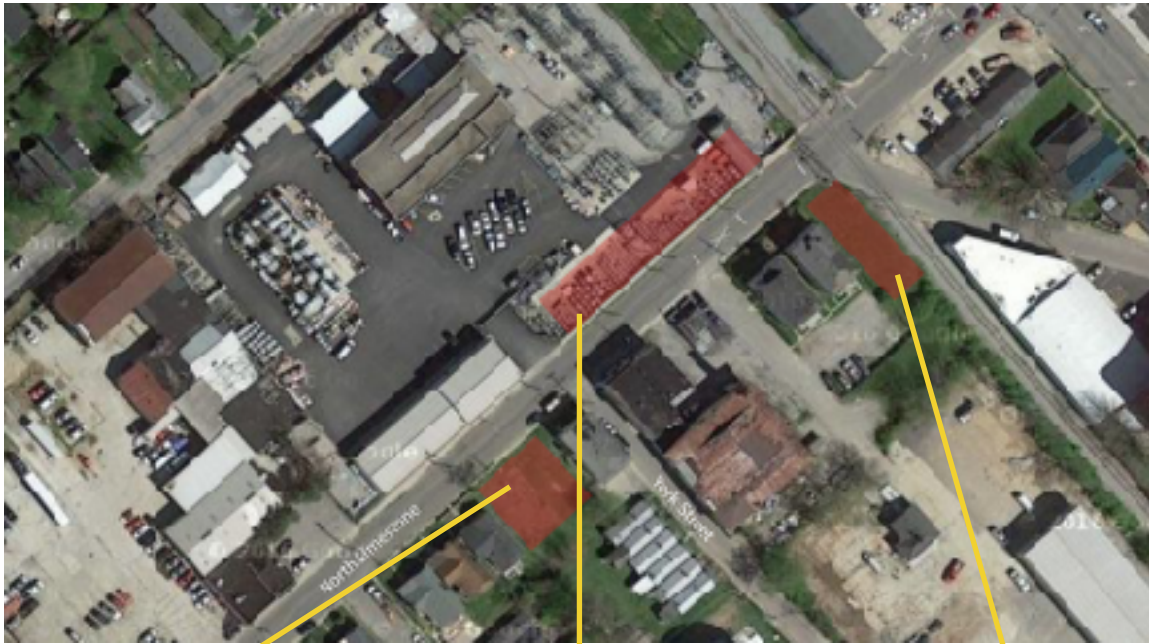


The large parking lot on North Broadway between Fairlawn and Withers appears to not be used on any regular basis, aside from potential overflow parking from the Whitaker Bank Ballpark lot across the street. Occasionally the lot will also be used for food trucks in the area to set up and vend, or for pop-up markets. This lot sits along the most trafficked road in the North End, and is in between two residential streets - Fairlawn and Withers.

This lot could be repurposed for a multitude of uses - including building out more infrastructure around the food trucks that already set up in the lot occasionally. It is recommended that significant engagement be done with the neighbors on Fairlawn Avenue and Withers Avenue before starting any sort of Pilot Projects.



Location 4: North Limestone Street - 700 block



The 700 block of North Limestone has a number of empty spaces that could be filled through temporary installations and projects on three sites. The grassy lot on the corner of York Street and North Limestone was occupied formerly by a duplex-home that was demolished. Now vacant, the lot occasionally is home to the *Art on the Move* mobile art education trailer, though it is never open there. The second site is the Kentucky Utilities fenceline along North Limestone. Directly behind the fence a collection of transformers and other electrical equipment is stored. The third site in this area is a vacant green space situated between a residential structure and the railroad tracks at the intersection of North Limestone and Bryan Ave.

Any or all of these sites would be perfect locations for Pilot Projects to improve the North Limestone corridor, but all would require partnering with the private property owners to make them possible.

Location 5: North Limestone Street - 600 block



The fifth location for potential Public Space improvement projects is a set of two spaces in the area of Sixth and North Limestone. Sixth and Limestone is one of the busiest areas of the North End - with people going in and out of North Lime Coffee and Donuts, Arcadium, Al's Bar, Cutting Edge, Metro PCS, and Progress Market as well as students attending the STEAM Academy. All of these places serve different clientele, making these public space interventions ideal candidates to promote common space for the entire community.

The grass lot location on North Limestone sits in between Progress Market and a residential house. This location would be a perfect option to create an intervention that is designed in cooperation with the area business community and residential neighbors. An even more interesting opportunity lies in the second space, located in the field immediately next to the STEAM Academy. The location and ownership of the property (it is owned by Fayette County Public Schools) immediately makes this space a great partnership opportunity with the STEAM Academy.

Recommendations

| Castlewood Park | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | Improve Pedestrian Access to Castlewood Park - particularly access across Bryan Avenue, and the intersections at Bryan Avenue/Castlewood Drive/Maple Street. |
| 2 | Encourage the installation of more seating, benches, trash cans, and lighting. |
| 3 | Work with other organizations to help program more outdoor events and family-friendly gatherings in the Park. |
| 4 | Work with neighborhood organizations to plant more trees in Castlewood Park. |
| 5 | Ensure all trees in Castlewood Park are properly mulched and maintained. |
| Duncan Park | |
| 6 | Work with LFUCG Division of Parks & Recreation to reinstall benches, tables, trash cans, update the water fountains, and install new lighting throughout the park. |
| 7 | Work with LFUCG Division of Parks & Recreation to create a feasibility plan for installing brick-and-mortar bathroom facilities. |
| 8 | Work with the Nest and area arts organizations to help program the North Limestone side of the park to make it more accessible and inviting. |
| 9 | Work with Martin Luther King Neighborhood Association to encourage more programming and events in the park on a more consistent basis. |
| 10 | Advocate for funding to provide better maintenance of Duncan Park basketball courts. |
| Streets and Sidewalks | |
| 11 | Create a full survey of streets, sidewalks, and intersections that are in need of repair, ranked in priority order of need. |
| 12 | Advocate for further reductions in speed limits in the North End. |
| 13 | Advocate for turning North Limestone into a completely two-way street to reduce the speed of traffic and allow greater ease of transportation. |
| 14 | Advocate for the installation of new public trash cans on streets throughout the North End. |
| 15 | Advocate for street reconfiguration to include separated bike lanes and high-quality sidewalks, planted buffers and street trees where space allows. |
| 16 | Partner with LFUCG to enhance / supplement / advertise the Sidewalk Reconstruction Assistance program. |

| Community Gardens | |
|---|---|
| 17 | Advocate for the creation of a new type of Code of Ordinance which allows for greater usage of Community Gardens, to be applied to a wide range of zoning classification. |
| 18 | Work with Seedleaf and other Community Gardening organizations to complete any necessary repairs or expansions in infrastructure for Community Gardens in the North End. |
| 19 | Determine, advocate for, and secure dedicated funding streams for Community Garden maintenance and operation. |
| Other Public Spaces | |
| 20 | Work with LFUCG Division of Parks and Recreation to provide more lighting in Brucetown Park. |
| 21 | Work with the residents of Brucetown neighborhood to determine further needs and issues with Brucetown Park. |
| 22 | Work with developers and private property owners to encourage any new Privately Owned Public Space to comply with the principles of the NYC Division of Planning's POPS guidelines. |
| Opportunities for Improved Public Spaces | |
| 23 | Determine, advocate for, and secure funding streams for public space interventions in the North End of Lexington. |
| 24 | Work with Bryan Ave. residents, business owners, and employees as well as the LFUCG Division of Planning to determine the potential of creating public space interventions on and along Bryan Avenue. |
| 25 | Evaluate the Castlewood Street Soccer Court Pilot Project to determine if future a permanent facility for street soccer is required and assess the demand for tennis courts in the park. |
| 26 | Discuss the opportunity of a public space intervention with the property owner of the North Broadway parking lot; if successful, work with residents on Withers and Fairlawn to determine highest and best use, as well as the steps to test that use. |
| 27 | Work with Kentucky Utilities and North Limestone property owners to determine if the public space interventions are possible for their spaces, then engage with 700 block of North Limestone residents, business owners and employees about what is needed in those spaces. |
| 28 | Work with STEAM Academy to do engagement and project design for Sixth and North Limestone public space interventions. |

Art, Culture, & Creativity

Art and creativity have not historically had a major place in community development conversations. Until recently, it seems as though art's role in community development conversations was one of beautification, frequently dismissed as an added bonus or frivolity. This has changed in recent years, as the value of art, artists, and the artistic process in community development has become a subject of national conversation. This should not necessarily be surprising; after all, art and creativity is a defining characteristic of what it means to be human.

It is hard to dismiss the important viewpoints that art and artists can bring to conversations about community. Artists have a long history of highlighting and articulating injustices, documenting community struggles, and thinking outside of the box to come up with innovative solutions to long-standing problems. These are all elements that can be essential in guiding community development strategies to be more progressive and inclusive.

The North End is home to some of Lexington's most prominent arts entities. From historic institutional organizations like the Lexington Art League to brand new ventures like The Parachute Factory, the North End of Lexington is one of the city's hubs for cultural expression and production. Despite this, there is significantly more that the North End of Lexington could do to leverage its artists and artistic assets into creating more equitable community development practices.

This section will discuss the role of Public Art in the neighborhood. It will catalog and profile some of the Arts organizations and entities that currently exist within the North End, and their importance to the community. It is recommended that, moving forward, structured conversations be had with arts organizations within the North End to determine their sets of needs, and those conversations be added to this document in the near future. This section will also discuss the increasing national conversation on the relationship between art, artists, and community development, and the controversial roles that artists have played in changing communities. It will give a specific example of the intersection of arts and community development in the North End of Lexington. Finally, it will give a series of recommendations that can help build a more creative approach to equitable community development.



North Lexington Mini Latino Festival
courtesy: Richard Young



Dancing at the North Lexington Mini-Latino Festival
courtesy: Richard Young

Public Art

Over the past few years, Public Art has been getting an increased amount of attention in Lexington. From large-scale installations like Dewitt Godfrey's *Concordia* that highlight our most used cultural public places, to citizen-led projects like Eduardo Kobra's iconic Abraham Lincoln Mural (commissioned as part of Lexington's annual *PRHBTN* street art festival) that bring new attention to spaces, Public Art has the power to animate and transform spaces.

In the Americans for the Arts' 2004 *Monograph*, Jack Becker discusses the varied goals that Public Art can accomplish - including creating civic dialogue and engaging community, attracting attention and economic benefit to places, connecting artists with communities, and enhancing public appreciation of art. While these effects are certainly positive, there are also several implications that complicate their use in communities, especially ones that are demographically in transition.

A white paper published by Stuart Cameron and Jon Coaffee in the *European Journal of Housing Policy* makes the argument that the use of public art and cultural facilities as a public policy strategy can promote the gentrification of transitioning communities, especially when used to make an attempt to visually "transform" poor and working class neighborhoods.

Looking at communities around the US, there are countless examples of neighborhoods and places that have been visually "transformed" through the use of Public Art. These visual transformations can, in the best of cases, empower the residents and tell the narratives of communities, however, they also have the potential to do the opposite. Ken Lum, with the School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania, writes that "it is not always clear in whose interest public art is meant to serve and, in fact, history demonstrates that when poorly planned or when divorced from the social or economic reality of the city or neighborhood in which it resides, public art can be a cause of more public harm than public good."

In the North End, Public Art is one of the most visible factors of community change - specifically along the North Limestone Corridor. Heading out of downtown on North Limestone, you can see many murals and instances of Public Art, simply by driving or walking on the sidewalk. These pieces of Public Art are some of the most visually defining characteristics of the community, and set the tone for cultural and community development practices as the neighborhood sees investment. But does this Public Art reflect the community? Does it reflect its culture and values?



Dewitt Godfrey's Concordia
courtesy: Richard Young



Eduardo Kobra's Lincoln Mural
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

What is Public Art in the North End?

In order to get a better understanding of what community members thought about Public Art in the North End, North Limestone CDC and the University of Kentucky Department of Community and Leadership Development held a series of community walks with neighborhood residents, business owners, and those working in social services. Following these Community Walks, participants were asked to complete a survey on Public Art in the North End.

The consensus among North End respondents seemed to focus on Public Art being a visual medium. This included references to murals, sculptures, as well as landscaping and architecture - with the condition that all of these things would be publicly viewable, though not necessarily publicly owned or on public property. According to a 2016 survey by North Limestone CDC staff, all works of public art in the North End of Lexington are in the visual medium.

Respondents also stated that Public Art should be “free and engaging”, “Art where the public has given input”, and “Visuals that incorporate the entire community population and not just one group of the population”. Many of the respondents to community surveys indicated that public input and appreciation was essential to their definition of Public Art and its success.



Muralist Odeith installing a mural in the North End
courtesy: Richard Young

Ownership & Community Values for Public Art in the North End

According to a survey done by North Limestone CDC staff, a substantial portion of large Public Art installations in the North End are on privately owned property. This is significant, as it has the potential to place control of the Public Art process and subject matter in the hands of private individuals, without any incentive or requirement for public input. With large-scale arts organizations like the Lexington Art League and Living Arts and Science Center in the neighborhood, as well as a significant amount of publicly-owned land (Castlewood Park, Duncan Park, etc.), there are a wealth of public art opportunities in publicly owned spaces.

Considering the amount of murals on private property (which essentially makes them privately-owned), those commissioning new works of Public Art should incentivize them to be installed in publicly owned spaces, and they should be created with sufficient citizen input that they can be reflective of the values and character of the community in which they are created. In order to get a better understanding of the values that North End community members hold in regard to public art, participants were asked several questions as a part of the North End community walks and corresponding survey.

The responses to these questions paint an interesting picture of how North End residents feel about the Public Art that inhabits the community. On the whole, participants seemed supportive of the use of Public Art in the neighborhood - even requesting that more be created. Many named the creativity of the artwork as their most valued aspect of the work, as well as the unique nature of the work or its aesthetics, color, and scale, and the presence it brings to the community.

There was also a sentiment from community members that Public Art in the North End should be more inclusive and representative of the community, particularly people that are currently living in the North End, and the history of the area. Respondents also stated that Public Art in the North End should incorporate mediums other than murals.

“What do you want to see in Public Art?”

- I just want it to stop me and make me think, to slow me down.
- Beauty, Joy, inspiration, (not weird creepy images)
- {That} it shows respect fully {for} how our neighborhoods were developed, maintained, or ignored
- More engagement, a diverse engagement in the selection and creation of that art

A Toolkit for Public Art in the North End

As residents desire more inclusiveness and representation in the neighborhood’s Public Art, the North Limestone Community Development Corporation is developing a simple toolkit for creating new works of Public Art in the North End. It will be available at www.nolicdc.org - and will be free for anyone to use. It is derived from Public Art Forecast’s “The Public Art Toolkit”, a project of the Public Art Review Journal, as well as information gathered from LexArts, the Kentucky Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Art in the North End

Lexington Art League

209 Castlewood Drive

The Lexington Art League is a visual arts organization that is located in the Loudoun House at Castlewood Park.

The Mission of the Lexington Art League is “to challenge, educate, engage, and enhance our community through visual art and the advancement of local artists.”

The Lexington Art League (LAL) is a multi-faceted visual arts organization that operates many programs out of the Loudoun House. LAL is a very community-focused organization which provides several services and benefits to the North End of Lexington at no cost. LAL’s slogan is “**Art for Everyone**” which “reflects the organization’s commitment to providing free, multiple access points for patrons to experience visual art.”

The Loudoun House itself serves as the main space for LAL, hosting multiple exhibitions each year in its several galleries on the main floor. The galleries are **free and open to the public** for access during the workweek, and occasionally on weekends. LAL also hosts a free eight-week summer camp for North End youth, in partnership with LFUCG Parks & Recreation and the Castlewood Community Center, with the goal of providing a “non-traditional visual arts education.” LAL also partners with Common Good to provide further non-traditional arts education to North End children.

The Art League hosts an **Artist Residency Program**, which “cultivates unique, flexible opportunities for regional, national, and international artists to create new work via residencies lasting from one week to several months.” LAL is the first visual arts organization in Kentucky to have a **Community Supported Art (CSA)** program, which is modeled on Community Supported Agriculture programs. The Lexington Art League puts on the annual **Woodland Art Fair** at Woodland Park and hosts an annual **Black Friday Art Sale**, in which all pieces of art are below \$50. LAL also has a Studio Artists program in the Loudoun House.

The Lexington Art League regularly opens up its doors to neighborhood meetings as well. Currently, it hosts Castlewood Neighborhood Association meetings in its Board Room on a monthly basis.



Event at the Lexington Art League
courtesy: Lexington Art League



Living Arts and Science Center
362 N Martin Luther King Boulevard

The Living Arts and Science Center sits on the border of Lexington’s North and East Ends, on Martin Luther King Boulevard. The Living Arts and Science Center “inspires participation in art and science by engaging the community through education, discovery, exploration and creativity.”

The Living Arts and Science Center (LASC) annually conducts over **300 classes and workshops** for children and adults in their space, and hosts field trips for over 7,500 children each year. Their **gallery space** and education rooms host many of these classes in addition to the the handful of gallery exhibits that change throughout the year.

LASC also puts a particular emphasis on **neighborhood and community stewardship**. They frequently host **community meetings** and gatherings. They offer **professional development** and training for teachers, along with free arts and science classes and workshops for many social service and community organizations in the area. They have programming specifically geared to “reduce barriers and make creativity and educational programs accessible to all,” in their various outreach programs.

In 2016, the Living Arts and Science Center opened its brand-new 11,000 sq.ft. expansion which includes a planetarium and a makerspace, as well as a rooftop patio, and is surrounded by a working edible farm, rain gardens, and recycled water features.



The Parachute Factory
720 Bryan Avenue

The Parachute Factory is a recently opened space inside the old parachute factory located at the intersection of North Limestone and the 700 block of Bryan Avenue. It “exists as a non-profit, multi-use space to promote artistic endeavors and community engagement.” They “provide a friendly and inviting exhibition space for artists that not only heralds artistic merit, but also thrives through community outreach.”



Parachute Factory
courtesy: Parachute Factory

Homegrown Press

569 North Limestone Street

Homegrown Press is the studio of John Lackey, a block printer, painter and filmmaker. One of the main stops in the North End of LexArts’ quarterly “Gallery Hop,” Homegrown Press has been in the North End of Lexington since 2010.



Homegrown Press
courtesy: Homegrown Press

Al’s Bar

601 North Limestone

Al’s Bar is a fixture in the North End of Lexington. It is a home and hub for national, regional, and local music on almost every night of the week. It hosts a Cult Film Series on the first Thursday of every month, and also has its own comedy series, highlighting local and regional comedians.

Al’s Bar is also home to the Holler Poets Series, a monthly poetry series started by Eric Scott Sutherland in 2008. Holler Poets has featured a host of Kentucky’s literary talent including National Book Award winner Nikky Finney, Kentucky Poet Laureates Frank X Walker and George Ella Lyon, Silas House, Gurney Norman, and many, many more.



Holler Poets Series at Al’s Bar
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

North Limestone MusicWorks

209 Castlewood Drive

North Limestone MusicWorks is a daily orchestral music education program based in the Loudoun House at Castlewood Park that serves students of Arlington Elementary in the North End. It is the first El Sistema-inspired program in the state of Kentucky, and provides daily, free group musical instruction to over 40 North End children. North Limestone MusicWorks, and the philosophy behind it, will be touched on in depth later in this document.



North Limestone MusicWorks
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

Community Engagements Through the Arts Class - Transylvania University

Community Engagements Through the Arts is an annual class taught by Kremena Todorova and Kurt Gohde, two professors at Transylvania University. Community Engagements Through the Arts (CETA) seeks to build meaningful relationships between Transylvania University students and the community that surrounds the University through community art projects.

CETA regularly invites community leaders from the North and East Ends of Lexington into the classroom (which is often located in one of these neighborhoods) to tell their story of what their places mean to them. The class has partnered on a number of projects with members of the community, including creating superhero capes for neighborhood youth, constructing bird houses to demonstrate the connection between neighbors and what “home” means to them, and many other projects.



CETA's Birdhouses
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

Wild Fig Books + Coffee

726 North Limestone Street

Wild Fig Books is a relatively recent addition to the North End of Lexington. It has quickly become a staple of the community, and an incredibly important business to the neighborhood. Wild Fig, run by two artists, hosts a weekly free storytime for neighborhood youth, regular poetry and literature readings, as well as open mic nights and musical performances. It is also one of the very few locations in the North End where books are available for purchase - and the only one which offers local authors, poetry, graphic novels, and more. Wild Fig has a mix of new and used books, as well as light snacks and coffee.



Wild Fig Books + Coffee
courtesy: Kris Nonn

The Night Market

700 Bryan Avenue

The Night Market is a monthly pop-up open air market put on by the North Limestone CDC. It is free and open to the public, and runs from 6 pm to 10 pm. It primarily serves as a platform for North End businesses, artists, and nonprofits to grow, but it also serves as a way to highlight the creativity in the North End.

To make the Night Market possible, the 700 block of Bryan Avenue is temporarily closed to traffic on the day of the market. The street is lined on both sides by vendor booths, and the street is transformed through lighting, street trees, planters, and temporary art installations. On both ends of the market, there are food vendors from Northside restaurants, food trucks, and individuals aspiring to start new culinary businesses. In the parking lot just off of Bryan Ave, there is a beer draft trailer and biergarten courtesy of Northside brewery West Sixth Brewing, and live music from local and regional bands.



The Night Market
courtesy: Kris Nonn

Further South on North Limestone Street

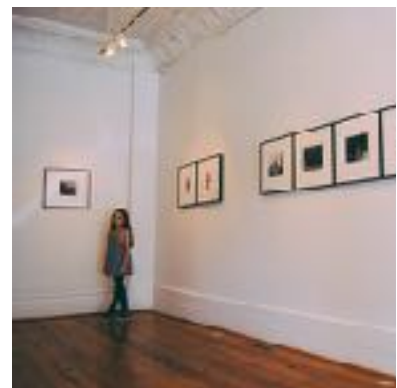
The area just south of the North End, situated along the North Limestone Corridor between Downtown Lexington and the Martin Luther King neighborhood, holds a number of artistic venues. Some would consider this a part of the North Limestone Neighborhood, as the North Limestone Neighborhood Association boundaries do stretch from Downtown to New Circle Road. Given that association, as well as their incredibly close proximity to the North End, a few of these locations are highlighted below.

Institute 193

193 North Limestone Street

Institute 193 is a non-profit organization and gallery spaces that “embraces the notion that groundbreaking contemporary art can and does emerge outside of large metropolitan centers.” It focuses on high-quality and relevant artists from Kentucky and the South, and helps these artists gain broader exposure in the art world and markets.

Institute 193’s gallery space on North Limestone hosts musical performances, film screenings, lectures, and other community-driven events in addition to visual art exhibitions.



Institute 193
courtesy: Institute 193

Third Street Stuff
257 North Limestone Street

Third Street Stuff is a coffee and variety shop located just south of the intersection of 3rd Street and North Limestone Street. It is widely regarded as the main unofficial cultural center of the city, and was described in a 2016 Lexington Herald-Leader article as “a hub for activism.”

Third Street Stuff features art from and by community members, and newspaper articles of local artists and activists are pasted on the walls and countertops.



Third Street Stuff
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning
251 West Second Street

The Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning is a landmark in the literary community of Kentucky. It is a non-profit family learning center for literacy education for individuals of all ages and learning levels that also provides support for writers. According to their website, “the Carnegie Center has long been a haven for writers, and we have built on that tradition to become a home to diverse groups of people who love to read, to discuss, to explore, to play, to create, and to learn.” Heavily rooted in the community, the Carnegie Center has an open-door policy, and draws many from the surrounding neighborhoods for language training, technology literacy education, and many other diverse forms of programming.



Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning
courtesy: Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning

Fusion Gallery
120 West Third Street

Fusion Gallery is a combination computer shop and art gallery that hosts a wide range of events, including kids’ art classes and salsa dancing classes. The gallery features the work of Kentucky artist Enrique Gonzalez.



Fusion Gallery
courtesy: Fusion Gallery

Art, Creativity, and Community Development

In the past decade, there has been a lot of conversation regarding the role of the arts and creativity in community development practices. Given the heavy focus of this cultural plan on the other aspects of culture aside from art and creativity, it would be irresponsible to not discuss two of the largest topics of national discussion at this point of intersection, those being, creative placemaking and art-influenced gentrification. Some see these two topics as one and the same, or at the very least intertwined. Whatever viewpoint one may have, it is undeniable that art and creativity can bring enormous benefits to community development efforts - if done in the right way.

Creative Placemaking

Creative Placemaking is a movement that seeks to place arts and culture at the table in conversations regarding comprehensive community development. The concept emerged from work done by the National Endowment for the Arts that sought to leverage other federal government agencies to provide additional support for the arts and the roles that artists play in communities. The idea was that art and artists are uniquely suited to have a significant impact on a community's sense of place and identity, and that their involvement can bring enormous benefit to community development efforts.

The concept was more clearly articulated through a white paper commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts. In it, the authors Anne Marusken and Anne Gadwa Nicodemus gave a specific definition to the concept:

“In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired.”

Following the release of this white paper, the National Endowment for the Arts created a program to support creative placemaking projects on a national scale. This support was housed in their *Our Town* program. The *Our Town* program, as well as countless philanthropic initiatives, have catapulted creative placemaking into the consciousness of national practitioners. It has shifted the conversation around city design and community development towards one that many agree has a greater potential than traditional community development practices to be adaptive, creative, and dynamic.

Examples of creative placemaking can be found throughout the country, and can be interpreted in many different ways. Whether it be working with cultural organizers to build relationships across rural and urban divides, using action figures to help community members describe power dynamics in their neighborhood, or working with artists to change perceptions about mass transit, art, creativity, and culture can bring new perspectives to community development.

In the National Endowment for the Arts' 2016 book *How to do Creative Placemaking*, countless practitioners from different regions of the US weigh in on their view of creative placemaking. In it, Carlton Turner, from the organization Alternate ROOTS, describes creative placemaking's role:

“we must shift the community development process from only engaging an advisory board or team of artists during the implementation phase to working with the creative community from the very beginning.... One example of this, within Alternate ROOTS, is the work of Clear Creek Collective. As cultural organizers in the mountains of central Kentucky, they use indigenous art, folk songs, and storytelling that is very much connected to the identity of their local culture. Through this approach, they offer an entry point for the community to voice their ideas and thoughts on how development happens.”

Gentrification

Another conversation regarding the intersection of community development and art is that of art and artists being used as a tactic for economic and real estate development. Largely buoyed by renewed interest in urban living among young professionals, one can see correlations between cities known for their arts as well as rapidly increasing property values - like San Francisco's Mission District or Brooklyn.

The foundations of this area of tension can be traced to multiple places, but an obvious one is Richard Florida's book *The Rise of the Creative Class*. In it, Florida articulates that cities should be designed around a new type of consumer - young “creatives” that desire experiences, and want to live in more urban contexts.

While not the sole cause, this has led reorientation of many cities' development strategies to incentivize infill and redevelopment in their urban cores (trends towards environmental sustainability have also heavily contributed, as have other population trends). The relatively low property values of neighborhoods in these urban cores (largely left behind by the mostly white, affluent outmigration of the 20th century) provide opportunities for artists of this younger generation to find cheap space for both living and working. The common belief is that once artists have made the initial investments, real estate developers can swoop in and make investments in property that eventually drive up housing costs

The well-established belief that artists are the “pioneers” of development by being the first people on the ground in neighborhoods that are ripe for economic transformation has been touched on frequently. In a 2013 article, Anne Gadwa Nicodemus, one of the co-authors of the original *Creative Placemaking* white paper, attempts to untangle the culpability of artists in wholesale neighborhood change. In it, she says: “The role of artists as gentrifiers is, unfortunately, deeply entrenched in our collective popular imagination. People intuitively feel artists are attracted to down and out neighborhoods and can invest sweat equity, money, and artist juju into properties.” Nicodemus goes on to articulate that neighborhoods gentrified through the efforts of

artists are often highly visible - while neighborhoods gentrified without the involvement of artists do not necessarily get the same amount of attention or scrutiny.

This conflict has muddied the waters around the intentions behind creative placemaking efforts. Some take a look at the role that artists have played in gentrification and interpret the spread of creative placemaking as a more intentional and focused version of this type of arts-based gentrification. In *How to do Creative Placemaking*, Maria Lopez de Leon (Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures) discusses this tension:

“Fortunately, there exist today many examples of successful creative placemaking models that work with diverse communities...”

For example, in Puerto Rican neighborhoods within New York, Philadelphia, and many other locales, there exists the tradition of the Casitas. These are creative, social hubs for the performance of music, dance, and other expressions that transmit cultural knowledge to the broader city and engage participants not merely as audiences or consumers, but as interpreters of a shared experience. Creative placemaking practitioners are well-placed to strategically focus on the thousands of grassroots arts and cultural organizations like these in neighborhoods across the country, and invest in the growth and stabilization of “already made” creative sites and contribute to their growth and stabilization.

Unfortunately, unhealthy models of creative placemaking also exist in neighborhoods across our country, models that result in gentrification and the eventual displacement of the people who call that place home. This work often results in the disarticulation of a community’s cultural practices and its replacement with a culture driven simply by financial imperatives. An example that comes to mind is the ongoing gentrification of San Francisco’s Mission District, where a predominantly Latino working class is being displaced by skyrocketing rents and increased costs of housing. Many Latino artists and cultural practitioners and organizations, such as Galeria de la Raza and the Mission Cultural Center—who have lived and worked in the Mission District for decades—have been priced out of their homes and work spaces.”

Anne Gadwa Nicodemus also talks about this in a post on *create.equity*, where she explains that given creative placemaking’s focus on cross-sector relationships, power dynamics that are already at play in the greater scheme of things (that mayors and developers have more political and social capital than artists do) could continue to play out, changing the intent behind creative placemaking projects. Specifically, she says that “though creative placemaking initiatives can and often do empower artists, they also run the risk of paying lip

service to artist involvement or worse, even using them for nefarious purposes like the exaggerated ‘shock troops’ of gentrification claim that has caught hold of our collective imagination.”

A white paper funded by the National Endowment for the Arts’ *Our Town* program studying the role of arts and neighborhood change showed that the impact that the arts have on neighborhood change depended on the types of arts activities that were present. Specifically: “We find that different arts activities are associated with different types and levels of neighborhood change. Commercial arts industries show the strongest association with gentrification in rapidly changing areas while the fine arts are associated with stable, slow growth neighborhoods.” It should not be a surprise that communities which contain profit-driven arts sectors are more likely to produce economic conditions for gentrification and its correlated outcomes.

When trying to identify the impact of this creative placemaking/community development/gentrification/art intersection in any given community, it must be approached from a nuanced and context-dependent viewpoint. There are risks of over-simplification in attempting to create a framework to determine in what cases these intersections are “positive” or “negative” for a community. However, there is a thread that can be pulled through many of the examples and discussions brought up in this section which can serve as an overarching tendency. Art and creativity, when focused on processes and non-commercial products, tends to play a positive role in community development efforts, as distinguished from a product-based or commercial role.

El Sistema & Art as a Community Development Process

One clear example of art applied as a process for community development is the El Sistema music education pedagogy.

El Sistema was founded by Dr. Antonio Jose Abreau, an economist in the Venezuelan government. It has become an internationally recognized practice of community, social, and cognitive development through the intensive application of group musical instruction. Since its beginnings in the 1970s, it has received acclaim from across the world, including being awarded the UNESCO International Music Prize, the United Nations International Arts Prize, and has gained recognition as a UNICEF National Ambassador program. Abreau himself was named UNESCO Peace Ambassador.

El Sistema, at its core, is a youth development program that focuses on a mission of social change that is executed through group musical learning. Its unofficial mantra “Tocar y Luchar” roughly translates to “To Play and To Fight.” It uses music to enable all individuals who participate to feel as though they are an asset within their community, and differs from traditional music education in significant ways. Artistically, El Sistema generally is based in orchestral music, but can also include choral and popular music.



North Limestone MusicWorks,
the North End’s El Sistema inspired program
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

El Sistema programs generally are place-based, focusing on a centralized location called a “nucelo,” and it generally focuses on a specific geographic area such as a neighborhood. The location is consistent, close to where participants live, and generally functions as a safe space for learning and camaraderie amongst participants where they are encouraged to explore their potential. Participants usually start at a young age (7 or 8), but can include all ages up through adults.

El Sistema differs from traditional western music education in many ways, including a focus on intensity and group learning.

Participants spend a significant amount of time rehearsing at their nucleo, many hours per day, and almost all days of the week, often up to four hours per day, six days per week. These consistent rehearsals demand a commitment and personal responsibility from participants, and teach a strong work ethic. Through frequent rehearsals and performances, students have many opportunities to excel and to share their accomplishments with their peers, family and community.

In traditional music education, you learn on your own for the privilege of playing with others; in El Sistema, the focus is on learning with others first. This change in approach gives all participants an ownership of the creation process, and gives them responsibility for their own development, as well as the development of the collective. This collective orchestra acts as a model society in which an atmosphere of competition between individuals is replaced by shared struggle and achievement.

From a youth development perspective, El Sistema focuses on access and excellence. There are no restrictions for entry into the programs, which usually cost nothing to the participants. It includes as many children as it can, bringing young people into its community whenever possible, as young as possible, for as long as possible, whatever their background or abilities.

As El Sistema strives single-mindedly toward musical excellence for all students, it also provides intensive training at “Academies” for the most committed and gifted, preparing them for the highest-level national orchestras and cultivating them as leaders in their own communities. In this way and others, the ideals of access and excellence are maintained in a productive balance that maximizes both the fullest success for all and highest accomplishment for some.



NEA Chair Jane Chu observing
North Limestone MusicWorks
courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader



Students from MusicWorks
courtesy: MusicWorks

Family participation is an essential goal of El Sistema. Siblings often go to the same nucleo, parents attend classes with the youngest students, and families form the bulk of the audience at orchestra concerts. Many nucleos also include musical ensembles that involve parents of the participants, and all actively work to involve the community at large it through frequent performances.

Additionally, each nucleo is tied to the many other nucleos that form the El Sistema network. These interdependent relationships are manifested through events such as “seminarios,” which are intensive, project-based musical retreats where orchestras share repertoire, streamline technique, and build personal and institutional relationships. By uniting students and teachers from disparate parts of the country, the nucleo network embodies the El Sistema ideals of sharing and learning.

El Sistema asserts that all human beings have the right to a life of dignity and contribution, and that every child can learn to experience and express music and art deeply, and receive its many benefits.

The North End of Lexington has its own El Sistema program - North Limestone MusicWorks - which operates out of the Loudoun House in Castlewood Park.

MusicWorks draws over 40 students daily from Arlington Elementary and surrounding school districts for 2.5 hours of group musical development. Founded in 2013 by Central Kentucky Youth Orchestras, in a partnership with the North Limestone CDC, MusicWorks has grown from a small group of participants to two performing ensembles that rehearse five days per week from 3:00pm - 5:30pm. The entire program - which is staffed by a program director and two teaching-artists - runs on an annual budget of \$75,000, amounting to an annual investment of roughly \$1,875 per child, since MusicWorks is completely free to participants.

Anna Hess, the program director of MusicWorks, describes that the program has “an ability to create empathy among students,” and gives participants as young as 6 or 7 the ability to be “bold and brave in a safe space, allowing all of the participants to lead.” She also noted that in discussion with the elementary teachers of MusicWorks participants, many teachers noticed significant improvements in the confidence and self-esteem of those that had participated in the program.



MusicWorks Rehearsal
courtesy: MusicWorks



MusicWorks Rehearsal
courtesy: MusicWorks

In many respects, El Sistema is a perfect model for the use of artistic practice and process to achieve community development aims. Its approach to education, youth empowerment, and group health is not motivated by profit, but by community betterment. It strives to achieve the same aims as many social service organizations, but it does so through creativity, self-expression, and group development.

There are also many things that community development practitioners can learn from El Sistema. El Sistema teaches that one never arrives, but is always in a state of becoming—striving to include more, achieve greater excellence, and grow as an ensemble. Flexibility, experimentation, risk-taking, and collective struggle and growth are inherent and desirable aspects of every El Sistema program. All of these principles are principles that should be shared by community development practitioners.



MusicWorks Performance
courtesy: MusicWorks

Recommendations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Create a Public Art toolkit for planning, funding, and public process recommendations to enable more neighborhood residents to take control of Public Art creation. |
| 2 | Create a North End public art advisory committee made up of key stakeholders (residents, business owners, arts organizations, and others) to help connect individuals and organizations wishing to install Public Art with other community members for input and to provide assistance with promotion and education for community-focused Public Art. |
| 3 | Encourage individuals and organizations installing Public Art in the North End to hold at least one (1) community meeting prior to planning a installation to get more input from North End residents and business owners, as guided by the toolkit. |
| 4 | Encourage Public Art installations to be more inclusive of community history, values, and other characteristics valued by North End residents and business owners. |
| 5 | Encourage the creation of Public Art to take place on publicly-owned land such as parks, community centers, and more. |
| 6 | Convene arts entities and individual artists in the North End to determine needs and create strategies to solve those issues. |
| 7 | Support artistic efforts that are non-commercially based that highlight North End culture. |
| 8 | Include artists in conversations around community development processes at all stages - including conception, planning, engagement, and execution. |

LOOKING AHEAD

*Thoughts on how to go about community development,
how to update the North Limestone Cultural Plan, and
how to keep the work moving forward.*

Community Development

Community Development is a broad field that incorporates many different sectors and goals. In order to create a framework for executing the recommendations made in this document, it is necessary to have an understood and accepted idea of what community development is. It is also important to have that idea - and a framework for the execution of these recommendations - rooted in a set of common values and principles of good practice.

This section of the document will establish these things: a clear understanding of community development, a set of common values and principles, as well as a framework for executing the goals indicated in this document.

A Clearer Understanding

The complexities of trying to create an understood and universally accepted definition of community development are nothing new. A UNESCO working paper from 1956 shows the vague and mixed viewpoints that the term can occupy: “The term... has been defined as ‘a generic term used to describe the processes by which local communities can raise their own standards of living...’” This definition is very broad - saying that any activity that communities *self-perform* for their own advancement can be defined as community development.

It hasn’t gotten much clearer with time - the United States Government’s Department of Housing and Urban Development currently defines community development as: “activities (that) build stronger and more resilient communities through an ongoing process of identifying and addressing needs, assets, and priority investments.”

The main issue with using definitions like these as the basis for understanding community development is the vagueness of words like “resilient” and the fuzziness of concepts like “addressing needs.” Whose needs are you addressing? What does resilient mean to your place vs. another? So, instead of trying to come up with a definition of community development itself, perhaps it is better to break down the field into the smaller sectors that make it up.

In 2015, ArtPlace America created a “Community Development Matrix” to “lay out (a) sense of how the community planning and development world self-organizes.” This matrix, displayed to the right, is an excellent snapshot that shows the span of sectors that encompass the field of community development. It is broken down by sector on the vertical axis, and by

| | Civic, Social & Public | Commercial | Government | Marginal | Philanthropy |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|----------|--------------|
| Art, Culture & Place | | | | | |
| Economic Development | | | | | |
| Education & Youth | | | | | |
| Environment & Energy | | | | | |
| Health | | | | | |
| Housing | | | | | |
| Immigration | | | | | |
| Public Safety | | | | | |
| Transportation | | | | | |
| Workforce Development | | | | | |

influence/organization type on the horizontal axis. This is a much simpler way to understand what community development is. It can be any and all of these sectors working in concert to raise the standard of living for any given place.

There are a few important distinctions that can be pulled from this matrix. First, it shows the many different points of intersection that can make up the field, demonstrating that no specific set of sectors or set of organization types have sole ownership of community development. Each of these intersection points need to be at the table in conversations around comprehensive community development.

The matrix also clarifies that **economic development is not in and of itself community development**, it is instead **one aspect** of community development. Far too many economic development projects in Lexington are given the banner of community development, often to the detriment of community perceptions about the field as a whole. It is important to remember that while economic development and growth can be positive things, they are only one object in the overall picture.

Lastly, there are a few things that are clearly missing from the matrix. Two that immediately come to mind are social justice and arts & culture. Their omission from the matrix is intentional. These are not sectors of community development, but are lenses through which all of the work in the field should be seen. ArtPlace addresses this concept in a blog post discussing social justice's omission from the matrix (it was actually removed from the Immigration sector):

“Immigration - Many of you will recall that this sector was previously ‘Immigration & Social Justice.’ For us, immigration refers to both new entrants to a country and new entrants to a community—and encompasses people and organizations focused on the complexity of otherness. We included social justice in the Matrix because it’s an important facet of community undertakings, but as Jamie B. recently said at PolicyLink’s Equity Summit, ‘Every decision is an equity decision.’ Social Justice is a lens that applies to all community planning and development because every decision impacts access and opportunity for at least a subset of community members.”

The concept of whole-field lenses are incredibly important to establishing a set of principles for community development practices in the North End. There are some lenses that should be universal - social & racial equity, authentic culture & creativity, citizen participation and grassroots leadership - but there are also some that are more place-specific to the North End. These lenses, when combined, can create a set of principles that can be commonly understood across all sectors of community development, and can be applied to any aspect of the work.

Principles for Community Development

In 2015, PolicyLink, a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity, released its “Equity Manifesto.” When it was released, the Manifesto was meant to reframe how civic leaders approach the work that they do in their communities to incorporate an understanding of social and racial equity. It addresses the complexity and interconnectedness of working in community, and is a good starting point for creating a set of principles for community development.

PolicyLink - Equity Manifesto

- It begins by joining together, believing in the potency of inclusion, and building from a common bond.
- It embraces complexity as cause for collaboration, accepting that our fates are inextricable.
- It recognizes local leaders as national leaders, nurturing the wisdom and creativity within every community as essential to solving the nation’s problems.
- It demands honesty and forthrightness, calling out racism and oppression, both overt and systemic.
- It strives for the power to realize our goals while summoning the grace to sustain them.
- It requires that we understand the past, without being trapped in it; embrace the present, without being constrained by it; and look to the future, guided by the hopes and courage of those who have fought before and beside us.

This is equity: just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper,

While these are not in and of themselves principles for community development, they are a statement for a way of working. The main issue is that these are very broad and vague notions that provide an equitable framework for growing democracy, but they are not specific enough to be tracked and measured in everyday community development work.

Another great starting place for generating these principles would be a set of principles for community development that already exist, coming from the Community Development Society.

The Community Development Society is an international member-driven organization that provides leadership to professionals and citizens across the spectrum of community development. All members commit to CDS’ *Principles of Good Practice*, which are detailed on the next page.

Community Development Society - Principles of Good Practice

- Promote active and representative participation toward enabling all community members to meaningfully influence the decisions that affect their lives.
- Engage community members in learning about and understanding community issues, and the economic, social, environmental, political, psychological, and other impacts associated with alternative courses of action.
- Incorporate the diverse interests and cultures of the community in the community development process; and disengage from support of any effort that is likely to adversely affect the disadvantaged members of a community.
- Work actively to enhance the leadership capacity of community members, leaders, and groups within the community.

These principles have a similar issue - they are fantastic goals, but are also difficult to track. Principles for community development practice in the North End need to be more responsive to the actual issues that exist in the neighborhood, and the conditions that have created them. They need to be informed by the feelings of North End residents that are a part of this document, as well as the history that led to many of those feelings. They need to respond to what is *happening on the ground now*.

There are five issues with community development in the North End that need to be addressed by these principles.

1. It is a small neighborhood, so it is easy to make assumptions and base decisions on hearsay. These assumptions make it impossible to do *equitable* community development because you are not seeing what is actually true. Hearsay and rumors also undermine good community development practices in the neighborhood - you are not hearing what people *really* have to say.
2. Often times community development is framed by who shows up to the public meeting and who leads it. This is a microcosm of the issues with the overall community development field. Methods of engagement, preferred aesthetics, cultural norms, and so much more tend to follow dominant cultural paradigms, and outliers are expected to conform to that, under the assumption that providing the same thing to everyone is democratic and equal. This is the opposite of equity. Equity is about providing *what is needed*, which differs among all social groups. Public engagement need to be scheduled to fit the needs of the community and need to be led by community members, not experts.
3. Community development has a tendency to be top down. This is natural, as not everyone wakes up everyday thinking about community development practices, and so those that do are naturally more engaged and invested in the work. This leads to a continual aggregation of “community capital” with a few individuals or organizations in a place. Community development in the North End needs to be designed to allow a more equal distribution of “community capital,” allowing more individuals and organizations to self-actualize their vision for the neighborhood.

4. A lot of community development practitioners believe that transplanting practices from other communities can be an effective strategy to replicating successes from other places. Some believe that you can improve a place by bringing in new things, and that a rising tide will lift all boats. While these can sometimes work in a top-down model, they do not work in a bottom-up model. These practices are also not sustainable, as they do not provide new skills or bring validation to current community members.
5. Community Development can be sterile and boring, oftentimes because it lacks what makes us human - culture. This work in the North End needs to - at every turn - reflect and represent the culture that makes the North End unique. There also needs to be a more creative and playful approach to equitable community development, understanding that creativity can be a unifier among cultures.

These issues, combined with the sets of principles outlined by CDS and PolicyLink, lead to a more place-specific understanding of how good community development practices can happen, and create a more North End specific set of principles for Community Development:

Community Development in Lexington's North End should be:

- **Accomplished without Assumptions** - Information, data, facts, and direct conversation should underpin all decisions related to community development work in the North End. All information should be validated, people should be talked with directly, and all information should be seen within the context of the community.
- **Equitable** - Decisions made regarding community development in the North End need to be informed by those that have been historically left out of the conversation, and that might require different techniques and tactics to provide spaces in which all feel comfortable. True community development is messy - many people will disagree, and it is up to those doing the work to balance what the majority wants with what is actually needed.
- **Self-Determinant** - The community itself should set the course for community development in the North End, and should be provided with opportunities to make it happen themselves. It should recognize that individuals in the community have the true expertise, and it should provide them with the tools to self-actuate their own wants and needs whenever possible.
- **Built on Existing Assets** - Community Development in the North End should be built on what is already there, not on bringing in new things. This is not to say that all exterior influences should be barred and the neighborhood should become insular, but more emphasis should be put on finding the hidden assets of the community and providing opportunities for those to grow.
- **Creative** - Creativity and culture are a big part of life in the North End, and that needs to be imbued throughout all sectors of community development in the neighborhood. These aspects bring a humanity to community development that can otherwise be missing, and are essential for good practice.

Continuing the Conversation

As has been mentioned several times in this document, simply creating and publishing this document is not necessarily helpful. The conversation needs to continue beyond the publication date. With that in mind, North Limestone CDC staff have determined several ways to keep the conversation going.

Adding New Sections

There were several aspects of community development in the North End that were not adequately addressed in this document's current form. This does not mean that these issues were deemed less important, but that the North Limestone CDC was funded to examine the areas that were included in the document, and did not have funding to consider those that were omitted.

In order to address this issue, North Limestone CDC staff has created a schedule to add to the document the topics that are missing. It should be up to the organization, and the community that it serves, to self-organize around these topics, and solicit funding if necessary.

Schedule for North Limestone Cultural Plan Additions:

- **Housing** - Summer 2017
- **Community & Social Services** - Winter 2017
- **Transportation** - Summer 2018
- **Education** - Winter 2018
- **Healthcare** - Summer 2019

Each of these additions should be based in community dialogue, as well as research into national best practices and data from the existing conditions of the neighborhood. All forms of engagement should follow the principles set forth in the previous section. It is recommended that the North Limestone CDC forms a small committee for each of these topics that includes a staff person from the CDC, a relevant local expert from the field, and more than three North End residents. These committee structures have the potential to make the process more immersed in the community and could bring more energy to the issues.

Changing the Cultural Plan

While this plan is rooted in community opinions, it needs to have the flexibility to respond to changing opinions and a changing context. As such, the North Limestone CDC should create ways to provide constant input to what already exists in this document, through the engagement methods already used to create this document, as well as other methods.

What follows is a systematic way to provide one annual update per topic that can be compiled and released as an annual “Cultural Plan Update”, as well as a few specific next steps for certain topics. All of these methods for updating the Cultural Plan should be open to radical changes, as the community sees fit.

Updating the Cultural Plan

- **Culture & Assets** - Update in 2017 by conducting an asset inventory of the North End as discussed in the Recommendations. Annually updated through a community forum and two “radical walks.”
- **Services** - Update in 2017 by completing a study on housing issues in the North End to add to the Cultural Plan, as well as continuing to host community meetings about services that are needed in the neighborhood. Annually updated through Fall 2019 according to the schedule in the previous section.
- **Businesses** - Update in 2017 by encouraging businesses to reestablish the North Limestone Business Association, making sure to include residents so that the efforts of the NLBA are rooted in what the community needs. Annually updated through recommendations from the NLBA and residents.
- **Food Access** - Update in 2017 by working with already existing initiatives to create a framework for accomplishing the recommendations outlined in the Cultural Plan. Annually updated through community conversations and dinners.
- **Public Space** - Update in 2017 by working with residents create a framework, timeline, and system of prioritization for accomplishing recommendations in the Cultural Plan. Annually updated through recorded community conversations with city staff about public space projects.
- **Public Art** - Update in 2017 by designing and launching the North End Public Art Toolkit, as well as facilitating the creation of a neighborhood public arts board. Annually updated through recorded community conversations.
- **Arts & Creativity** - Update in 2017 by convening Arts & Cultural organizations in the North End to determine their sets of needs. Annually updated through the creation of a neighborhood arts & culture board, and recorded community conversations.

Complete Recommendations

Services

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| 1 | Create a working group of residents, business owners, and social service organization representatives for addressing neighborhood services. |
| 2 | Create a North End-specific framework and strategy to assist it in becoming a “complete neighborhood”. |
| 3 | Complete studies of Housing, Community & Social Services, Education, Healthcare, and Transportation in the North End; Add these studies to the North Limestone Cultural Plan. |
| 4 | Build better connections between already existing services and residents in the North End; ensure these services have adequate multilingual access. |

Businesses

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| 1 | Provide support for existing businesses through support grants, promotion, and any other means feasible. |
| 2 | Encourage new and existing businesses to hire residents from the North End. |
| 3 | Utilize granting resources and funds to create a venture capital and micro-granting fund for new businesses. |
| 4 | Incentivize the creation of minority-owned businesses within the neighborhood through specific programs. |
| 5 | Create subscription-based services to provide regular support to new businesses, as well as existing business that offer significant social and community benefits. |
| 6 | Facilitate the reorganization of the North Limestone Business Association. |
| 7 | Provide connections between North End residents wanting to start businesses and financial and educational resources. |
| 8 | Profile, document, and share stories of successful businesses within the North End. |
| 9 | Address infrastructure issues within the neighborhood to create a more pedestrian and mass-transit-friendly environment. |
| 10 | Help develop business plans for the most requested business types within the North End. |
| 11 | Work with new businesses to make programs and changes that allow all North End residents feel more welcome. |
| 12 | Work with businesses on creating price structures to ensure that businesses can be accessible to all North End residents, regardless of socio-economic status. |

Food Access

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| 1 | Provide support for grassroots, neighborhood-based alternative economic programs like Fresh Stop Market to expand their services. |
| 2 | Continue the community conversations / dinners regarding needs for improving access to fresh and healthy foods. |
| 3 | Determine methods to increase locations with affordable, fresh, and healthy food options, as well as examine methods to increase transportation access to locations that already have these options. |
| 4 | Encourage neighborhood restaurants to put low-cost healthy food options on their menus, and create and carry affordable, pre-prepared “fresh-to-go” meals. |
| 5 | Create incentives for new and existing businesses to hire long-term and low-income neighborhood residents. |
| 6 | Encourage policies to better allow food to be grown in front-yards and allow the sale of produce from community gardens. |

Public Space

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| Castlewood Park | |
| 1 | Improve Pedestrian Access to Castlewood Park - particularly access across Bryan Avenue, and the intersections at Bryan Avenue/Castlewood Drive/Maple Street. |
| 2 | Encourage the installation of more seating, benches, trash cans, and lighting. |
| 3 | Work with other organizations to help program more outdoor events and family-friendly gatherings in the Park. |
| 4 | Work with neighborhood organizations to plant more trees in Castlewood Park. |
| 5 | Ensure all trees in Castlewood Park are properly mulched and maintained. |
| Duncan Park | |
| 6 | Work with LFUCG Division of Parks & Recreation to reinstall benches, tables, trash cans, update the water fountains, and install new lighting throughout the park. |
| 7 | Work with LFUCG Division of Parks & Recreation to create a feasibility plan for installing brick-and-mortar bathroom facilities. |
| 8 | Work with the Nest and area arts organizations to help program the North Limestone side of the park to make it more accessible and inviting. |
| 9 | Work with Martin Luther King Neighborhood Association to encourage more programming and events in the park on a more consistent basis. |
| 10 | Advocate for funding to provide better maintenance of Duncan Park basketball courts. |

| Streets and Sidewalks | |
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| 11 | Create a full survey of streets, sidewalks, and intersections that are in need of repair, ranked in priority order of need. |
| 12 | Advocate for further reductions in speed limits in the North End. |
| 13 | Advocate for turning North Limestone into a completely two-way street to reduce the speed of traffic and allow greater ease of transportation. |
| 14 | Advocate for the installation of new public trash cans on streets throughout the North End. |
| 15 | Advocate for street reconfiguration to include separated bike lanes and high-quality sidewalks, planted buffers and street trees where space allows. |
| 16 | Partner with LFUCG to enhance / supplement / advertise the Sidewalk Reconstruction Assistance program. |
| Community Gardens | |
| 17 | Advocate for the creation of a new type of Code of Ordinance which allows for greater usage of Community Gardens, to be applied to a wide range of zoning classifications. |
| 18 | Work with Seedleaf and other Community Gardening organizations to complete any necessary repairs or expansions in infrastructure for Community Gardens in the North End. |
| 19 | Determine, advocate for, and secure dedicated funding streams for Community Garden maintenance and operation. |
| Other Public Spaces | |
| 20 | Work with LFUCG Division of Parks and Recreation to provide more lighting in Brucetown Park. |
| 21 | Work with the residents of Brucetown neighborhood to determine further needs and issues with Brucetown Park. |
| 22 | Work with developers and private property owners to encourage any new Privately Owned Public Space to comply with the principles of the NYC Division of Planning's POPS guidelines. |
| Opportunities for Improved Public Spaces | |
| 23 | Determine, advocate for, and secure funding streams for public space interventions in the North End of Lexington. |
| 24 | Work with Bryan Ave. residents, business owners, and employees as well as the LFUCG Division of Planning to determine the potential of creating public space interventions on and along Bryan Avenue. |
| 25 | Evaluate the Castlewood Street Soccer Court Pilot Project to determine if future a permanent facility for street soccer is required and assess the demand for tennis courts in the park. |

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| 26 | Discuss the opportunity of a public space intervention with the property owner of the North Broadway parking lot; if successful, work with residents on Withers and Fairlawn to determine highest and best use, as well as the steps to test that use. |
| 27 | Work with Kentucky Utilities and North Limestone property owners to determine if the public space interventions are possible for their spaces, then engage with 700 block of North Limestone residents, business owners and employees about what is needed in those spaces. |
| 28 | Work with STEAM Academy to do engagement and project design for Sixth and North Limestone public space interventions. |

Art, Culture, & Creativity

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| 1 | Create a Public Art toolkit for planning, funding, and public process recommendations to enable more neighborhood residents to take control of Public Art creation. |
| 2 | Create a North End public art advisory committee made up of key stakeholders (residents, business owners, arts organizations, and others) to help connect individuals and organizations wishing to install Public Art with other community members for input and to provide assistance with promotion and education for community-focused Public Art. |
| 3 | Encourage individuals and organizations installing Public Art in the North End to hold at least one (1) community meeting prior to planning a installation to get more input from North End residents and business owners, as guided by the toolkit. |
| 4 | Encourage Public Art installations to be more inclusive of community history, values, and other characteristics valued by North End residents and business owners. |
| 5 | Encourage the creation of Public Art to take place on publicly-owned land such as parks, community centers, and more. |
| 6 | Convene arts entities and individual artists in the North End to determine needs and create strategies to solve those issues. |
| 7 | Support artistic efforts that are non-commercially based that highlight North End culture. |
| 8 | Include artists in conversations around community development processes at all stages - including conception, planning, engagement, and execution. |

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