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**URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE**

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816-231-0822 (Office) • 816-231-0855 (fax) • www.uni-kc.org
In September 2011, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce announced the Urban Neighborhood Initiative (UNI) as one of its “Big 5” goals for the Kansas City region. As a joint effort of the KC Chamber and United Way of Greater Kansas City, Terry Dunn, then CEO of JE Dunn and currently Chair of the Chamber, and Brent Stewart, CEO of United Way, were named Champions of the UNI effort.

Fast forward to today, and the Urban Neighborhood Initiative is now a separate 501(c)3 organization led by Executive Director Dianne Cleaver, governed by a Board of Directors representing a variety of constituencies, and advised by UNI neighborhood partners.
“Partners Growing Kansas City’s Core” - that’s the vision behind the Urban Neighborhood Initiative (UNI) – a unique partnership of business, neighborhoods, community organizations, clergy, and the philanthropic community determined to revitalize the center of our metropolitan area.

2014 has been a significant year for UNI, as our partnership moves forward from planning to initiation/action.

As you’ll see in the pages that follow, UNI has accomplished much in our three areas of focus – prosperity, health and safety, and education. We also plan to make a major announcement soon regarding our biggest project yet – Purpose Built Communities.

None of this could have occurred without the vision of our committed board, the skilled leadership of Dianne Cleaver, our neighborhood partners (who understand better than anyone what activities will create the biggest impact), and our generous funders.

Our mission is long term, and so is our commitment. The challenges we’re taking on are decades-long in the making. We know that there is no quick fix, no short-term solution.

The careful planning and relationship-building of UNI’s first three years is about to pay off. We expect to see immediate dividends under the leadership of 2015 UNI Chair and Champion Terry Bassham, Chair-Elect of the KC Chamber and Chairman, President and CEO, KCP&L. And we pledge to hold ourselves accountable to all our constituencies in a transparent manner deserving of the trust placed in us.

We will be seeking additional resources in 2015 as these projects ramp up and begin to make a real difference in the urban heart of Greater Kansas City.

Thank you for your interest in the Urban Neighborhood Initiative. With your help, your passion, and your continued involvement in our important mission, we can – and will – make our community a greater place to live for every Kansas Citian.

Mark Jorgenson  
2013-2014 UNI Chair & Big 5 Champion  
President & CEO – Kansas City Market, U.S. Bank
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
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<td><strong>Mark Jorgenson</strong></td>
<td>UNI Board Chair, U.S. Bank</td>
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<td><strong>John Bluford</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Terry Bassham</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Art Chaudry</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Gwen Grant</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Jim Heeter</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Deputy Chief Randy Hopkins</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mayor Sly James</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mark Larrabee</strong></td>
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<td><strong>David Lockton</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Bridget McCandless, MD</strong></td>
<td>Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City</td>
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<td><strong>Chancellor Leo Morton</strong></td>
<td>University of Missouri-Kansas City</td>
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<td><strong>Roshann Parris</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ralph Reid</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Steve Roling</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Charlie Shields</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Brent Stewart</strong></td>
<td>United Way of Greater Kansas City</td>
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<td><strong>Rev. Eric Williams</strong></td>
<td>Calvary Temple Baptist Church</td>
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Long before the Urban Neighborhood Initiative was even an idea, neighborhood organizations were already hard at work, intent on improving and revitalizing the communities in which they live. Our neighborhood partners have been and are essential to UNI’s success.

Our partners are building community gardens, orchards, and playgrounds, and working on streetscapes, new curbs, and sidewalks. They’re working with the police to decrease crime and close drug houses. They’re developing block leader programs and hosting clean-up and dumpster days.

It is a privilege to work with them.

**Neighborhood Organizations**

49/63 Coalition – TROOSTWOOD  
Troost Avenue to The Paseo  
49th Street to Rockhurst Road/52nd Street  
President – Les Cline (49/63)  
Wanda Taylor (Troostwood)

BEACON HILL McFEDERS  
Troost Avenue to The Paseo  
22nd Street to 31st Street  
President – Dee Evans

BLUE HILLS  
The Paseo to Prospect Avenue  
47th Street to 63rd Street  
President – Paul Tancredi

BOSTON HEIGHTS & MOUNT HOPE  
The Paseo to Woodland Avenue  
27th Street to 35th Street  
President – Esther Kershaw

CENTER CITY  
Troost Avenue to The Paseo  
31st Street to Armour Boulevard  
President – Eddie Tapper

IVANHOE  
The Paseo to Prospect Avenue  
31st Street to Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard  
President – Dennis Robinson  
Executive Director – Margaret May

MANHEIM  
Troost Avenue to The Paseo  
39th Street to Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard  
President – Seft Hunter

SQUIER PARK  
Troost Avenue to The Paseo  
Armour Boulevard to 39th Street  
President – Jonathan Bish

WENDELL PHILLIPS  
The Paseo to Prospect Ave  
18th Street to 27th Street  
President – John James

**Community Service Agencies**

BLUE HILLS COMMUNITY SERVICES  
5008 Prospect Avenue KCMO  
Executive Director – Joanne Bussinger

NHS (Neighborhood Homes Solutions)  
616 E 63rd Street, 2nd floor KCMO  
President – Andy Bias
Dear Friends;

• A hiring fair for neighborhood residents.
• Plans for a new, high-quality charter elementary school and mixed-use housing.

Those are just a few of the accomplishments of the Urban Neighborhood Initiative during 2014. You’ll find more details in the following pages.

The foundation of all that UNI does is our partnership with the neighborhoods, a collaboration that is essential. UNI is a young organization – barely three years old – while neighborhood residents and leaders have worked long and hard for many years to improve their communities. Their efforts include everything from building new playgrounds and community gardens to neighborhood cleanups, crime watches, and housing development. UNI’s role is to add to that good work, building on and expanding the neighborhoods’ capacity for growth and revitalization.

We recognize that there are no short-term solutions, no quick fix to the challenges faced by our neighborhoods. Success requires long-term collaboration, commitment, and hard work. To date I’ve been inspired by the work being done by our neighborhood partners and moved and gratified by the interest of others throughout the Kansas City community in supporting this work. We believe we’re on our way.

The amazing Helen Keller said it well, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

Thank you for your support of the Urban Neighborhood Initiative.

Dianne Cleaver
Executive Director
The effort to revitalize Kansas City’s urban core is built on three pillars: health and safety, education, and prosperity. Working with partners from business, government, and community organizations, UNI is able to address these areas of priority.

**Prosperity**

**Committee Chair:**
Jim Heeter, President & CEO,
Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

The effort to revitalize Kansas City’s urban core is built on three pillars: health and safety, education, and prosperity. Working with partners from business, government, and community organizations, UNI is able to address these areas of priority.

**Among the accomplishments of the UNI Prosperity Committee in 2014:**

- **Bancroft Project Phase 2:** UNI raised $100,000 to support completion of the feasibility study and implementation plan for Phase 2 of the Bancroft Project in Historic Manheim Park. A total of 50 new, mixed-income, single-family homes will be built, with groundbreaking planned for the second quarter of 2015.

  **Phase 1** of the project turned the deserted, century-old Bancroft School into 50 affordable, energy efficient apartments. The new complex serves young people transitioning out of foster care, seniors, and families in need.

  **Partners:** Leading implementation of this plan are Actor Brad Pitt’s Make It Right Foundation, the Manheim Neighborhood Association, Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), Dalmark Development Group of Lee’s Summit, and BNIM Architects.

- **Jobs:** UNI held its second annual Hiring Fair in late 2014, bringing together 29 area employers with more than 500 career-seekers. The event included computer access and technical assistance, giving participants the option to apply for jobs online.

  **Partners:** Urban League of Greater Kansas City and Housing Authority of Greater Kansas City

- **Access:** It is estimated that only 25% of urban core residents have internet access in their homes. In an effort to bridge the digital divide—the gap between demographic segments with and without access to technology, creating barriers to education and employment, among other things—UNI raised funds for an engineering and feasibility study for a community owned wireless network to increase access for UNI residents. Subsequent to that study UNI received funding to help build one of the “towers” needed to relay the signal in the UNI.

  UNI has received a grant from the William T. Kemper Foundation to fund and implement a wireless Internet pilot. The program will establish a community owned network in a 12 block area of the UNI (in the Center City Neighborhood). Neighborhood residents will be trained to assist in installation and maintenance of the network.”
While the work of our neighborhood partners has helped reduce crime, the successful redevelopment and revitalization of the urban core requires more. UNI neighborhoods continue to struggle with both violent crimes—homicide and assault—and property crimes—burglary, theft, and vandalism.

Meanwhile, more than 126,000 Jackson County residents are food insecure, with a disproportionate number located in the central city. Food deserts offer little access to fresh, healthy foods. Residents’ only choices are low-nutrient, high-fat foods, resulting in higher rates of diabetes and obesity.

Among the accomplishments of the Health & Safety Committee in 2014:

- **Safe Communities Pilot Initiative**: This initiative combines police resources and neighborhood engagement in an effort to reduce crime and violence. The pilot area is in the Manheim Neighborhood and was chosen based on crime data.

  The Kansas City Police Department will concentrate resources in the designated area. UNI and neighborhood leaders, meanwhile, are focusing on increased community engagement, organizing and empowerment.

  KCPD has met with Manheim community members to provide education and strengthen relationships. Environmental Safety Assessment training has been provided to resident as well as Mental Health First Aid training. (This groundbreaking education program helps the public identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders.)

  **Partners**: Historic Manheim Neighborhood Association and Kansas City Missouri Police Department

- **Collective Impact**: UNI entered into a $100,000 contract with the City of Kansas City, Missouri to implement a collective impact strategy to deal with the large number of vacant houses in the area.

  UNI will facilitate an ongoing process that brings neighborhood residents and all identified key players together to set collective goals, measurements, strategies, and mutually agreed upon roles. The goal is to transform vacant properties into new or rehabbed homes or other beneficial land uses, such as gardens or parks, on the currently vacant or abandoned lots within the UNI area.

  The University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) will assist with identifying these vacant properties and their ownership in order to accelerate the process of reclaiming and repurposing land use in 2015.

  **Partners**: City of KCMO, UMKC, neighborhood organizations, community development corporations, private developers, financial institutions and a host of others working to address this issue.

- **New grocery story**: UNI secured a $250,000 grant from the U.S. Bank Foundation to support Truman Medical Centers’ effort to establish a new, health focused grocery store at 27th & Troost.

  **Partners**: Hospital Hill Economic Development Corporation and City of KCMO
Education
Committee Chair:
Mayor Sly James
City of Kansas City, Missouri

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” – Nelson Mandela.

No single issue impacts the health and vitality of our regional community and our regional workforce more than education.

A 2013 survey by The Kansas City Star found one out of three children in Greater Kansas City weren’t ready for their first day of kindergarten. Early childhood education is critical – research shows that 90 percent of brain growth occurs by the age of six, and that getting children off to the right start pays off, reducing juvenile delinquency, addictions, school dropout rates, learning disabilities, obesity, and other problems.

The accomplishments of the Education Committee in 2014 include:

• **Success by 6 Center**: UNI secured a $250,000 five year grant from the Burns & McDonnell Foundation for the establishment of the first Success by 6 Center in the UNI area, located at Faxon Elementary School.

  A successful education initiative of United Way, the center will provide educational training and support along with a lending library of educational toys, books, and other materials for parents, teachers, and caregivers.

  **Partners**: United Way of Greater Kansas City, Burns & McDonnell Foundation, Kansas City Public Schools, Faxon Elementary School, Parents As Teachers.

• **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**: The Burns & McDonnell grant is also funding the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, a program brought to our community by the Women’s Leadership Council of United Way, to UNI residents and their children. The library provides children with carefully selected, age appropriate books every month from birth until their fifth birthday.

  Currently, approximately 600 children in the Greater KC area are enrolled. The UNI is working in partnership with its neighborhoods and through its Success By 6 Center and other community organizations in hopes of enrolling an additional 700 UNI area children

  **Partners**: Burns & McDonnell Foundation, the Women’s Leadership Council of United Way of Greater Kansas City, and neighborhood organizations.

• **Turn the Page in UNI Area Schools**: UNI was able to secure funds to help support placement of Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) workers in two schools serving UNI students. The workers recruit and coordinate reading coaches for students and work to increase parent engagement and access to summer learning opportunities.

  **Partners**: Mayor James’ Turn the Page KC initiative and Faxon and King Elementary Schools
High quality education. Mixed income housing. Health and wellness services.

Those are the three elements behind UNI’s plan to revitalize a section of Kansas City’s center city.

The concept is based on the success and counsel of the Atlanta-based organization Purpose Built Communities (PBC).

PBC started in the 1990’s as an effort to transform a poverty-ridden Atlanta neighborhood, East Lake Meadows. The group began with the establishment of an academically-rigorous charter elementary school, followed by mixed income housing in the surrounding neighborhood. Neighborhood and community services were brought into a centralized location.

That once-grim Atlanta neighborhood now boasts a high-performing charter school, YMCA, mixed-income housing, and a strong sense of community. These statistics tell the story:

- Violent crime in East Lake Meadows has decreased by 90 percent.
- Employment of low-income adults has increased from 13.5 to 70 percent.
- The charter school is the best performing school in the district, with 99 percent of third through fifth grade students now meeting or exceeding state reading requirements.

UNI’s Purpose Built Communities Task Force, led by Terry Bassham, has been quietly working with PBC these past two years to implement their model in Kansas City. PBC is also at work in a number of other communities across the nation. Their services are free.

In 2014, UNI’s Purpose Built Community Committee took the following steps:

- **New charter school:** UNI took its first public step in August 2014 when Executive Director Dianne Cleaver briefed the board of Kansas City Public Schools on plans to create a new, high-performance charter school with the KCPS district as its sponsor. The new school would be in partnership with KCPS, but with an independent board responsible for setting standards and hiring faculty.

  The KCPS School Board gave approval to move forward with developing the plan. UNI is now working with KCPS administration to finalize a charter application to be presented to the school board and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Plans are for the charter school to open in the fall of 2016.

  Partners: Purpose Built Communities, Kansas City Public Schools

- **New mixed-income housing:** After a great deal of study, a tentative location for new housing has been identified. Preliminary discussions are underway with property owners.
Dear Fellow Kansas Citians:

As you can see from this first community report to Kansas City, 2014 has been a great year for our Urban Neighborhood Initiative and our partners. Impressive advances in health and safety, educational opportunities and mixed-income housing have been made in our chosen urban core district along Troost Avenue.

When the KC Chamber first announced its Big 5 goals for Kansas City in 2011, we knew full well the goal of revitalizing the center city would represent a long-term commitment. Admittedly, much work remains, but we believe we are taking positive steps toward achieving our vision through a unique partnership of business, neighborhoods, community organizations, clergy and our philanthropic community.

None of this could have been accomplished without the initial financial investment, leadership and commitment by Kansas City’s business and civic community. We operate on a very lean budget with only three staff to support program initiatives. We are fortunate to have donated office space and furniture as well as refurbished computers. United Way of Greater Kansas City serves as our fiduciary agent as an in-kind service. We also have in-kind contributions in areas such as legal and communication services. Other items include business essentials like telephones, Internet services, insurance, audit services, basic office supplies and equipment.

As we move into our fourth year of UNI operations, we need to raise $500,000 this year and in the years to follow. That total includes $300,000 for operating cost and $200,000 to support our programmatic efforts.

We hope Kansas City’s broader community – its citizens as well as the business community – will join us in this important effort.

Please consider a financial gift to the Urban Neighborhood Initiative, Inc., and help us continue our good work and steady progress in revitalizing urban Kansas City. It is a goal worthy of your support.

Again, thank you for your support in the past, and in the future, as we strive together to grow the center of our regional community.

Sincerely,

Terry Dunn, Chair, UNI Resource Development Committee
Chair, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

Terry Bassham, 2015 Chair, Urban Neighborhood Initiative
Chair-Elect, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
Urban Neighborhood Initiative

Base Map
May 2012
DONATE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Want to do something meaningful to make a difference in Kansas City’s urban core? Maybe your company or place of worship want to collect donations or support neighborhood clean ups or community gardening efforts.

We’d also be happy to come share our story with your organization. Just contact our office at 816-231-0822 or info@uni-kc.org to learn about the opportunities that are available.