



**City of Leavenworth**  
100 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Leavenworth, Kansas 66048

**CITY COMMISSION STUDY SESSION**  
**COMMISSION CHAMBERS**  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026 6:00 P.M.**

**Welcome to your City Commission Study Session**  
**Please turn off or silence all cell phones during the meeting**  
*Meetings are available for viewing on YouTube*

**STUDY SESSION:**

1. Safe Routes to School Plan Presentation (pg. 02)
2. Opportunity Zone 2.0 Discussion (pg. 24)

**STAFF REPORT**  
**Safe Routes to School Presentation**

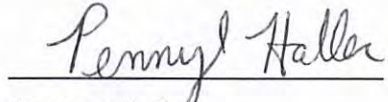
**April 21, 2026**

Prepared By:



Michael Stephan  
Deputy Public Works Director

Reviewed By:



Penny Holler,  
Assistant City Manager

The City of Leavenworth adopted our Vision Zero Action Plan back in 2024. One of the recommendations in this plan was to complete a **Safe Routes to School Action Plan (SRTS)**.

In 2025 the city applied for and received a Safe Routes to School Planning Grant through KDOT. The grant covered 100% of the cost and was managed by KDOT. KDOT contracted with Toole Design, this firm has done several of these SRTS Plans through-out the State. Work on the plan has been underway for the past year.

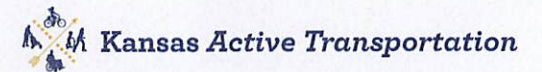
Tonight, to present the plan is Mr. Kevin Kroll, Senior Planner, from Toole Design.



# Leavenworth Safe Routes To School Plan

April 24, 2026

**Kansas**  
Safe Routes to School



# Agenda

- Program Overview
- Project Recap
- Plan Recommendations
- Next Steps



**Slide 2**

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**WP1** Plan Lead - replace photo with one from site visit  
Wendy Phelps, 2024-11-21T23:53:10.401

# Benefits of Safe Routes to School programs



## Save Families Money

Families can reduce car use and gas expenses when students walk, bike, or roll to school.



## Improve Traffic Safety

Street improvements and student education can reduce crashes and make roads safer for walking, biking, and rolling.



## Increase Personal Safety

There is less harassment, bullying, and violence when students walk, bike, or roll together or with adults.



## Improve Air Quality

Less driving leads to cleaner air, which reduces the number of student asthma attacks.



## Increase Academic Performance

Students who are active before school have better focus and concentration in the classroom.



## Make Students Healthier

Walking, biking, and rolling increases students' physical activity and can improve physical and mental health.



## Create Community

Walking, biking, and rolling together fosters stronger friendships and builds social connections for families.



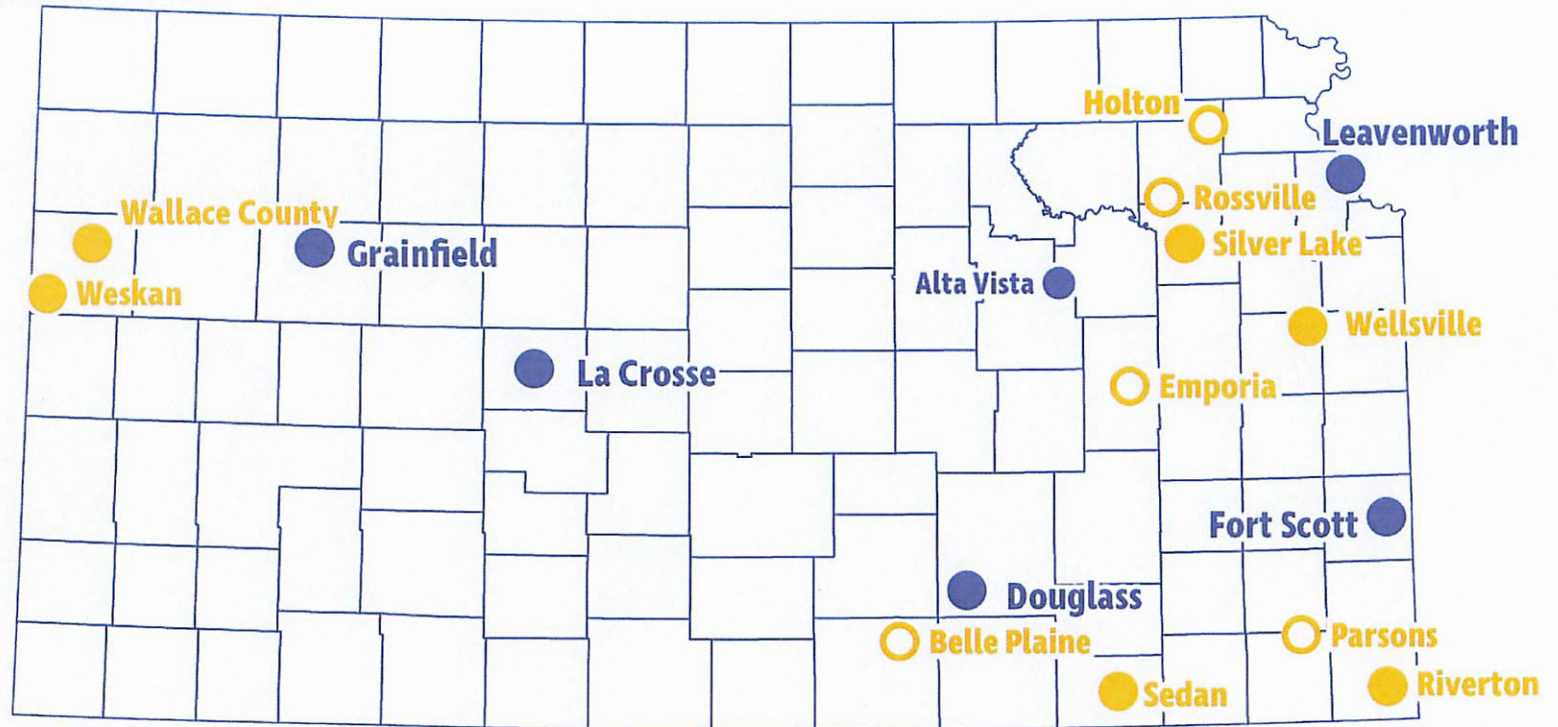
*Kansas Active Transportation*

# CONGRATS!

- 2025-2026 Grant Recipients
- 2024-2025 Grant Recipients
- 2023-2024 Grant Recipients



**Kansas**  
Safe Routes to School



# Leavenworth SRTS Team Members

- Michael Stephan Program Coordinator, Deputy Director of Public Works
- Kellen Adams Superintendent USD 453
- James Vanek Principal, Leavenworth High School
- Scott Kessler Principal, Warren Middle School
- Kristy Tsen Principal, Anthony Elementary School
- Wes Cackler Counselor, David Brewer Elementary
- Kyle Varvel Director of Facilities
- Beth Mattox CFO, USD 453
- Sgt. Brandon Mance Leavenworth Police Dept
- Brendan Sheehan VRU / avid bicyclist
- Brian Faust Public Works Director



# Project Timeline




# The Es of Safe Routes to School



# Engineering Recommendations



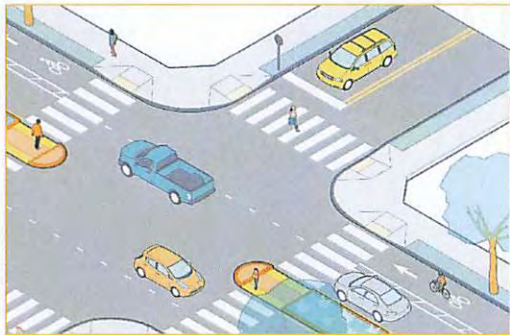
**Kansas**  
Safe Routes to School

 *Kansas Active Transportation*

# Centering Children's Travel Needs

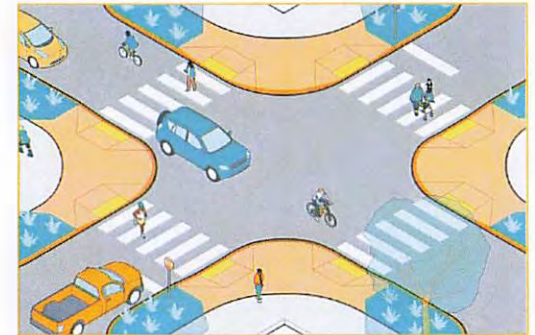
1

Provide dedicated space for walking, biking, and rolling



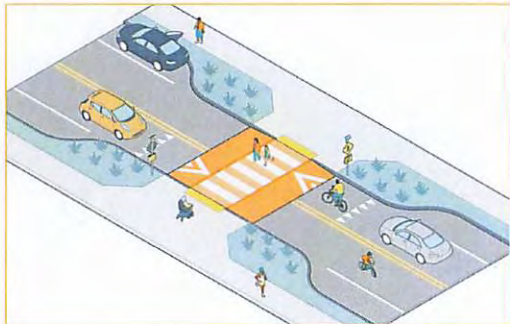
2

Simplify crossings



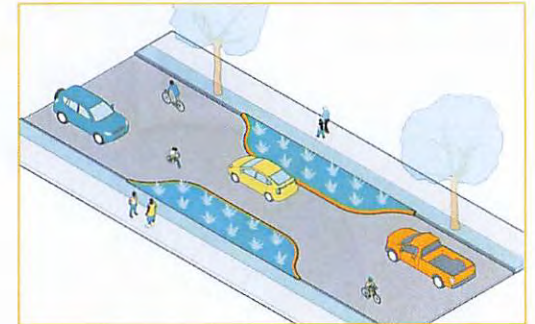
3

Increase visibility

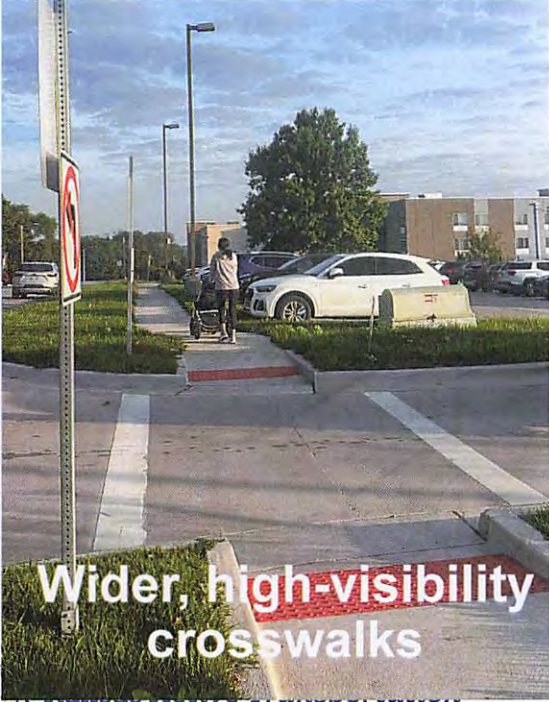


4

Design for safe vehicle speeds



# Common Recommendations



**Slide 10**

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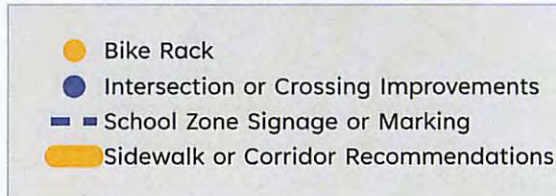
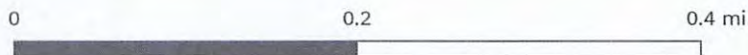
**WP1** Plan Leads - with fewer schools, this slide may not be necessary  
Wendy Phelps, 2025-01-08T20:55:02.852



## Key issues & recommendations

- 14 - Lack of sidewalk (Santa Fe). Add sidewalk
- 11 - Poor sidewalk Conditions, narrow sidewalk, and lack of a buffer from traffic (2<sup>nd</sup> Ave). Reconstruct sidewalk
- 5 - Long crossing of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Install curb extensions to reduce crossing distance and act as a “pinch point” to calm traffic
- 7 & 13 - Difficult to cross 7<sup>th</sup> St to existing sidewalk on west side of road

ANTHONY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



*Kansas Active Transportation*



Leavenworth

### **2nd Avenue & Evergreen Street (Looking North)**

- ① Remark existing crosswalk on west leg
- ② Narrow crossing of 2nd Avenue and improve visibility on Evergreen Street with curb extension(s)
- ③ Install new accessible curb ramps on rebuilt corner(s)

# Program Recommendations



# Kansas

Safe Routes to School



## Slide 13

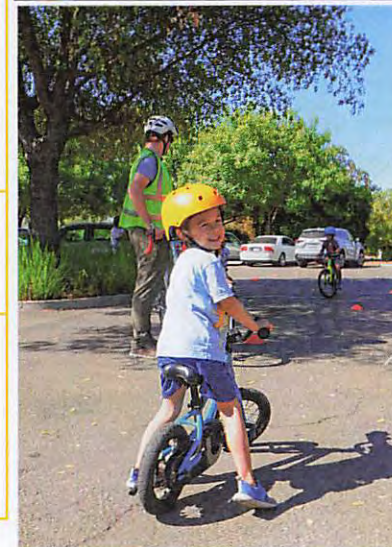
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**SD1** Plan leads - feel free to remove recommendations that you know will not work for your community (i.e., programs dedicated for middle/high schoolers if you do not have a middle or high school in your community)

Sarah Davis, 2026-01-07T22:29:52.127

# Education

<p><b>Provide pedestrian and bicycle safety education to students</b></p>	<p>Students should receive age-appropriate pedestrian and bicycle education that is regularly reinforced (e.g., annually) and provides opportunities for skills practice. School-based education works best when integrated into the PE or Health curriculum.</p>
<p><b>Conduct a bicycle rodeo</b></p>	<p>Bike rodeos teach children skills related to walking and bicycling safely, which can increase their and their parent's confidence for biking or walking to school.</p>
<p><b>Conduct parent and staff safety education campaign</b></p>	<p>Information packets should be prepared and distributed to parents and school staff at the beginning of the school year containing school arrival and dismissal maps, a written description of the rules and procedures for arrival and dismissal, and general safety information. Procedures should emphasize driving safely, being alert for pedestrians and bicyclists, and respecting the school crossing guard/s.</p>
<p><b>Provide walking and bicycling maps</b></p>	<p>Walking and bicycling route maps can show the location of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and estimated walk/bike times.</p>
<p><b>Provide Travel Training for middle and high school students</b></p>	<p>Provide a multimodal-specific curriculum for middle and high school students with material on safe walking, biking, rolling, driving, and transit behaviors.</p>



# Encouragement

## Participate in International Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day

Walk and Bike to School Days encourage families to try out walking in a supportive environment. Consider incorporating competitions between schools in the same area or district wide. Once established, they can lead to monthly walking/bicycling events to maintain momentum and enthusiasm.

## Encourage and support walking school buses and bike trains

Walking school buses and bike trains are groups of children who walk or bicycle to school together with adult supervision. Organize parent or community volunteers to "pick up" students on their walk or bike ride to and from school.

## Establish a frequent walker/bicyclist program

Frequent walker and biker programs provide small rewards or incentives to students who regularly walk and bicycle to school. Frequent walker and biker programs require a system for tracking student trips. For example, students can be assigned a punch card that volunteers or teachers can punch each time a trip is completed.

## Give away bicycle helmets and bike locks

Schools might partner with another community organization to acquire and fit the helmets for students who do not have them. Helmet and bike lock giveaways should be coordinated with bicycle safety education or skills practice and should include instruction on helmet safety.

## Share success stories

Improve awareness of SRTS efforts and build excitement by sharing success stories via local and social media.



# Enforcement

**Establish school drop off and pick up monitors**

This will reinforce school procedures on and around the school campus.

**Establish student safety patrols**

Student safety patrols would provide on going reinforcement of safe pedestrian and bicyclist behavior. Resources are available through AAA School Safety Patrol.

**Support crossing guards**

Establish robust training and procedures for crossing guards to ensure adequate staffing.

**Partner with local law enforcement**

Include law enforcement representatives on advisory committees to help with education and purposeful speed enforcement in school zones.



## Next Steps

- Advisory Team should continue to meet ~4 times a year to coordinate programming and engineering priorities
- Implement plan recommendations
- Seek KDOT and Federal funding opportunities



**THANK YOU!**



**Kansas**  
Safe Routes to School

**STUDY SESSION POLICY REPORT  
OPPORTUNITY ZONE 2.0**

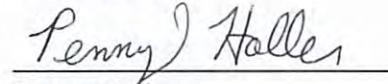
**APRIL 21, 2026**

Prepared By:



Trevor Cook  
Assistant to the City Manager

Reviewed By:



Penny Holler  
Assistant City Manager

**BACKGROUND:**

Opportunity Zones are federally designated census tracts intended to encourage long-term private investment in areas demonstrating economic need. Investments are generally made through Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOFs) and are meant to support projects such as redevelopment, new housing, business growth, and other qualifying improvements that can help strengthen distressed areas over time. Opportunity Zones 2.0 is the next designation cycle, through which states will again nominate eligible tracts, with new federal incentives taking effect in 2027.

Opportunity Zones 2.0 is the result of changes made through the One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act and places the program on a new ten-year designation cycle. Under the updated framework, tracts must qualify on their own rather than through the former contiguous-tract approach, and states remain limited in how many tracts they may nominate during each cycle.

Kansas Commerce states that Kansas had 74 designated Opportunity Zones in the original cycle and is expected to reduce that to 53 in this upcoming cycle. Community proposals are due to Kansas Commerce by June 1, 2026, with the Governors nomination window opening July 1, 2026. The City has three eligible tracts under consideration and must decide how to prioritize them in the request to Commerce. The City's current Opportunity Zone tract has been part of the original program cycle and will remain designated through the end of 2026.

Attached for the Commission's reference is the Kansas Commerce scoring matrix providing additional detail on the State's nomination framework, as well as a snapshot of the three tracts eligible under Opportunity Zones 2.0.

**OVERVIEW:**

Staff believes Census Tract 20103070100 should remain the City's top priority in the submission. It is the City's existing Opportunity Zone tract and presents the strongest overall

renomination case of the three. The tract includes much of the downtown area and reflects the greatest overall need, with the lowest median family income ratio of the three, a record of QOF investment activity, and the strongest multifamily and renter-driven growth pattern in staff's working analysis. The tract also benefits from a strong set of local redevelopment tools and public infrastructure investment, providing the clearest combination of demonstrated need, existing momentum, and realistic development potential.

Staff's proposed second priority is Census Tract 20103070500, generally described as the "4<sup>th</sup> Street area." This tract has the highest poverty rate of the three and presents a strong secondary case from both a need and development standpoint. In addition to its broader reinvestment potential, the tract includes corridor characteristics that support future commercial development, redevelopment, and other private investment activity. Staff believes this tract offers a solid balance of clear economic need and realistic development potential, making it the City's second-priority submission.

Staff's proposed third priority is Census Tract 20103070200, which includes much of the downtown-adjacent residential area to the west of the current tract. This tract remains eligible and still has a reasonable case to make, particularly as a stable neighborhood area with gradual housing diversification. At the same time, it appears less compelling than the other two tracts from a broader Opportunity Zone standpoint. Its distress indicators are less pronounced, and its overall development potential does not rise to the level of the other two.

Taken together, the proposed ranking reflects the City's current Opportunity Zone position, the relative level of need in each tract, and where the City can tell a credible story of investment and potential under the State's framework.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The principal purpose of this item is to obtain Commission feedback on whether staff's proposed priority order reflects the City's preferred strategy before final nomination materials are prepared for submission to Kansas Commerce. Specifically, staff is seeking general consensus on the following preliminary ranking:

1. Census Tract 20103070100
2. Census Tract 20103070500
3. Census Tract 20103070200

If the Commission generally agrees with that order, staff will continue refining tract-specific nomination materials in the format encouraged by Kansas Commerce, with emphasis on the criteria spelled out in the Scoring Matrix from Kansas Commerce.



Thank you for nominating your eligible census tracts for Opportunity Zone 2.0 designation. This program attracted \$100 billion in investments nationally since 2018, and your work is an important component in raising the standard of living of Kansans in your community and surrounding areas. Your eligibility already validates the need for OZ 2.0 designation, and your nomination should focus on how you intend to make the most of such a designation, not on need.

You may nominate any eligible census tract under your management or governance. Multiple tract nominations made by you should be ranked by priority when submitted to Commerce before June 1, 2026. If you have a tract that is being re-nominated, know that progress must be reported within the tract or it faces a steep slope to continue with a federal OZ designation.

Nominations should:

- Be concise and descriptive. Target a 3-page limit for each census tract nomination.
- Use hyperlinked files (maps etc.) to detail activities and infrastructure within the tract.
- Minimize the inclusion of activity outside of the census tract.
- Refrain from clustering nominations or making them inter-dependent.
- Be investor focused. Explain how risks are mitigated and gains can be maximized.

The following is an illustration of how nominations should flow, and how they will be evaluated.

<b>1-Paragraph executive summary</b>	<b>recommended</b>
<b>Existing Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) Investments</b> A current census tract being renominated with verifiable activity by one or more Qualified Opportunity Funds. Details of project type including – but not limited to – new multifamily housing, substantially improved buildings, new enterprise, food desert grocery, mixed use, drug recovery or mental health services. Must fully detail the project and the QOF for eligible points.	<b>up to 20 pts</b>
<b>Defined and funded marketing plan</b> The OZ 2.0 tracts will become official on January 1, 2027. Explain how you intend to provide sustained marketing of an OZ 2.0 tract between today and December 31, 2031. Which personnel will be involved? Is an agency helping or volunteering? How does social media play a role? Has a budget been proposed (or approved)? This is a vital function to investor success in the tract, and you are encouraged to take the space needed here to be descriptive.	<b>up to 20 pts</b>
<b>Proposed and scoped OZ 2.0 eligible project with viable fit for investment</b> If you have a pre-defined project or community need for a QOF investor to consider, describe it concisely here. Two sentences on the nature of the investment and how it serves the community. One sentence on the size of the investment. One sentence describing the available infrastructure that reasonably assures success. Challenge a local realtor to help you with this section. Optional: itemize follow-on investments enabled by the initial one.	<b>up to 15 pts</b>





**Proposed and scoped OZ 2.0 eligible project with viable fit for investment** **up to 15 pts**

If you have a pre-defined project or community need for a QOF investor to consider, describe it concisely here. Two sentences on the nature of the investment and how it serves the community. One sentence on the size of the investment. One sentence describing the available infrastructure that reasonably assures success. Challenge a local realtor to help you with this section. Optional: itemize follow-on investments enabled by the initial one.

**State of Kansas awarded grants since 2018** **up to 10 pts**

Describe the efforts made within the census tract to make it more investable. Include awards received from housing-related grant sources, community development block grants, Main Street, and all others provided by any state agency or department.

**Infrastructure Improvements since 2018** **up to 10 pts**

Describe the infrastructure improvements and enhancements that occurred within the census tract. Focus on aspects that make QOF investment more likely including roadways, electrical infrastructure, water systems, natural gas service, broadband, and childcare availability. Hyperlinked access to your before-and-after maps is especially helpful. Grants made by any state agency are also of interest here.

**Small Business starts since 2018** **up to 10 pts**

Have there been any new business starts within the census tract whether or not the investor was a QOF? Are there adjoining industries or businesses that would be attracted or enabled by their presence? Be specific and realistic.

**Kansas Certified Site** **up to 10 pts**

Are there development sites within the census tract that are currently a Kansas Certified Site, or have any been submitted to Commerce as of the date of your nomination? Provide details here.

**Labor Shed & Housing Status** **up to 5 pts**

Data on the census tract for both housing availability (or shortage) and population trends within the census tract. Changes within the tract since 2018 are of special interest to the evaluation process.

**Bonus Enhancements** **up to 10 pts**

Please indicate whether any zoning changes have been made in preparation for desirable investment activity. Have any other official designations been made by local government since 2018 to promote growth in the tract? Are there local incentives provided to further enhance the OZ 2.0 program?

**Disclosures:** **(0 pts)**

*You are on your honor in this section and this section is not necessary if it does not apply to the tract being nominated.*

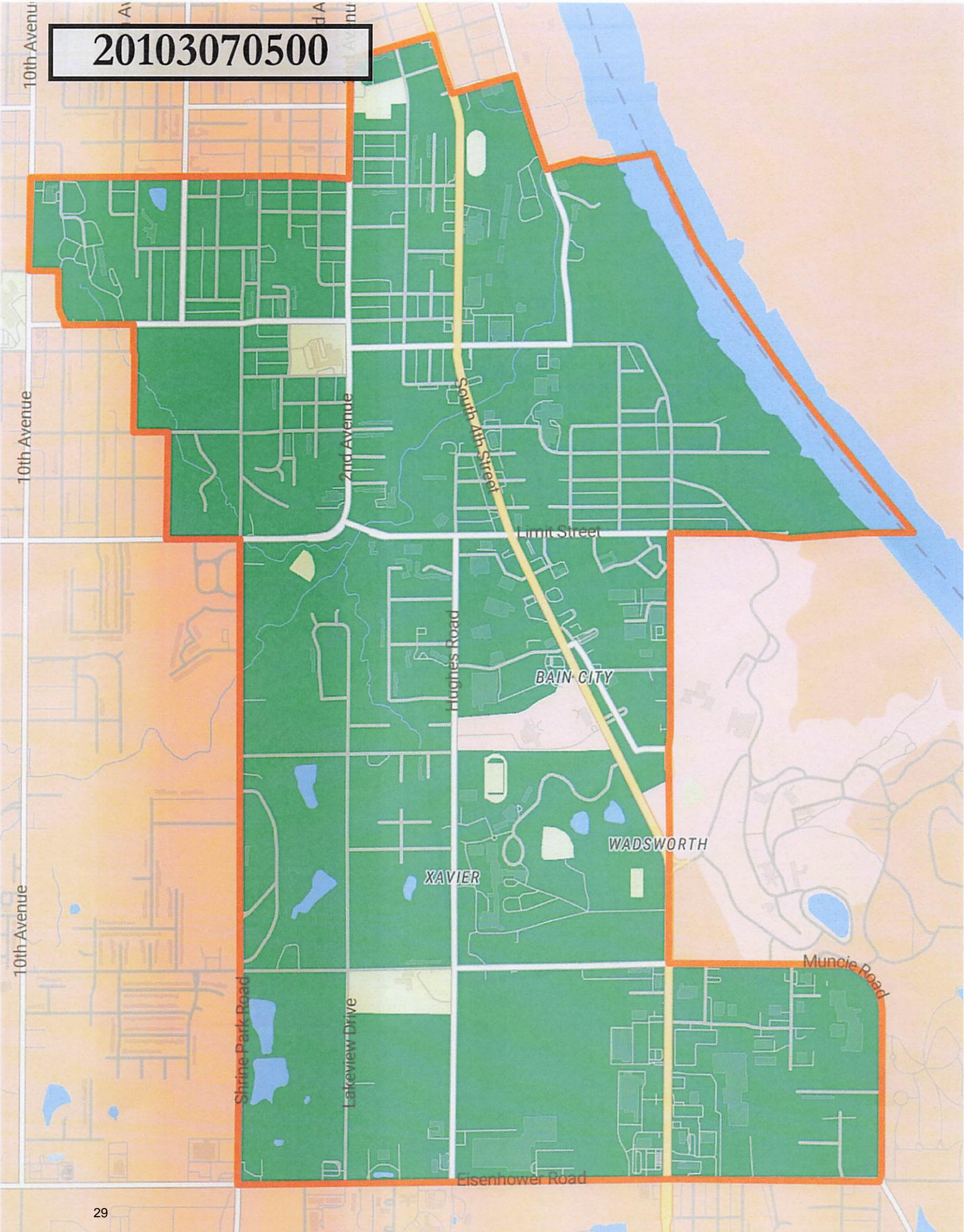
If applicable, please describe any investor-backed projects that were not approved in a public vote and could have reasonably had a QOF involved. New investors will be doing their homework and will want background on this topic. Deficient permit applications or design compliance are not the concern. Please explain and provide assurances if able.



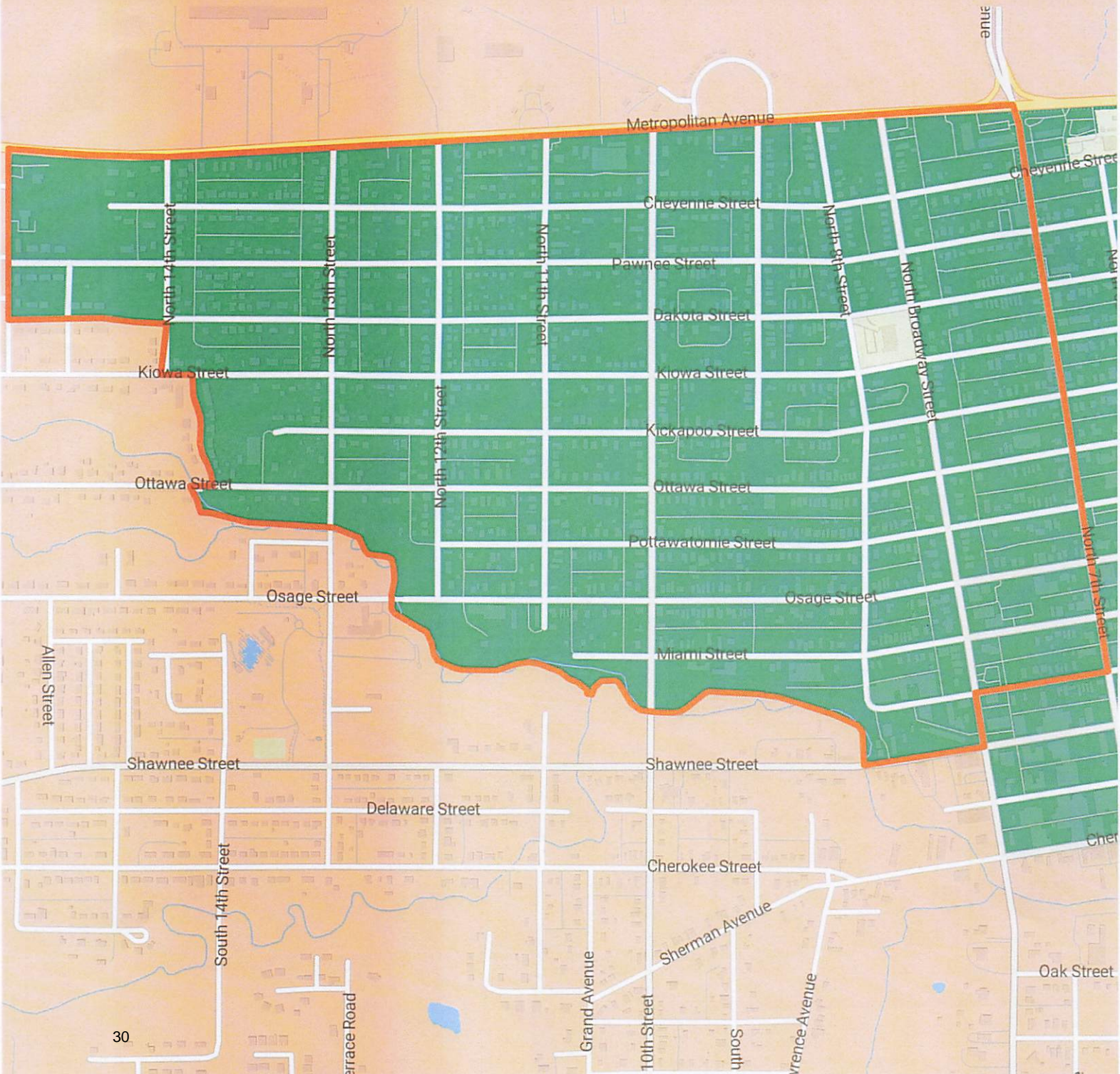
20103070100

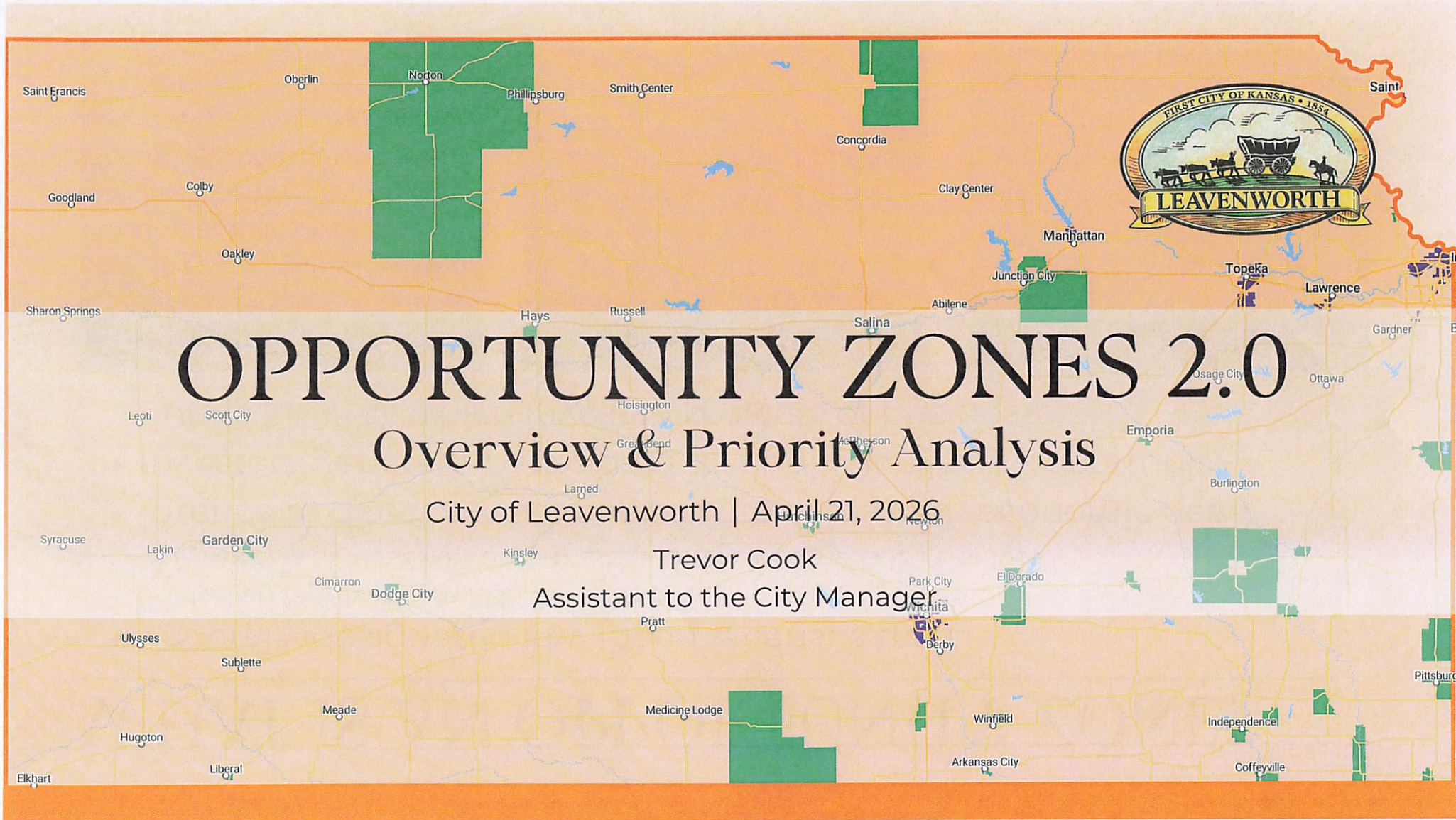


20103070500



20103070200





# WHAT IS AN OPPORTUNITY ZONE?

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- Federally designated low-income census tract
  - Median family income is 70% or less
  - Poverty is at least 20% and median family income is 125% or less
- Intends to direct private capital into areas with economic need
- Investors generally participate through Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOF's), which invest in projects or businesses

## What the Investor Gets

A federal tax incentive tied to eligible capital gains invested through a QOF. Under the updated framework, the OZ incentive is permanent, with new designation rounds every ten years.

## What the City Gets

Another tool to compete for private investment in targeted areas, especially for redevelopment, commercial activity, housing, and business growth.

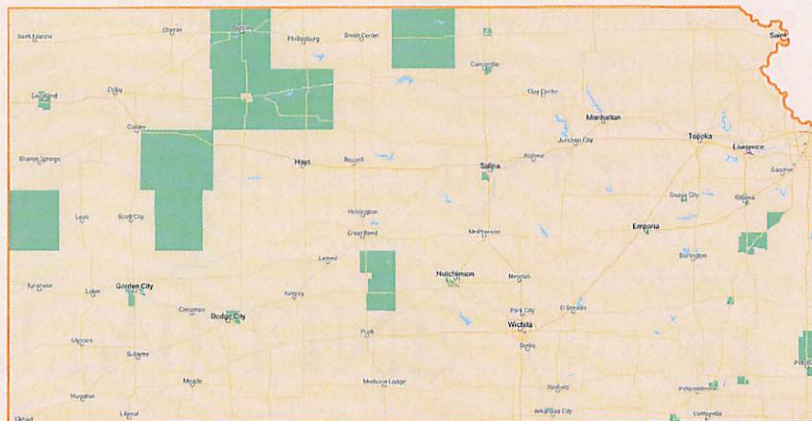
## What it Costs the City

The tax incentive itself is federal; the City is not funding the benefit. The local role is more about positioning the tract, marketing it well, and pairing the designation with local readiness, infrastructure, zoning, or other tools.

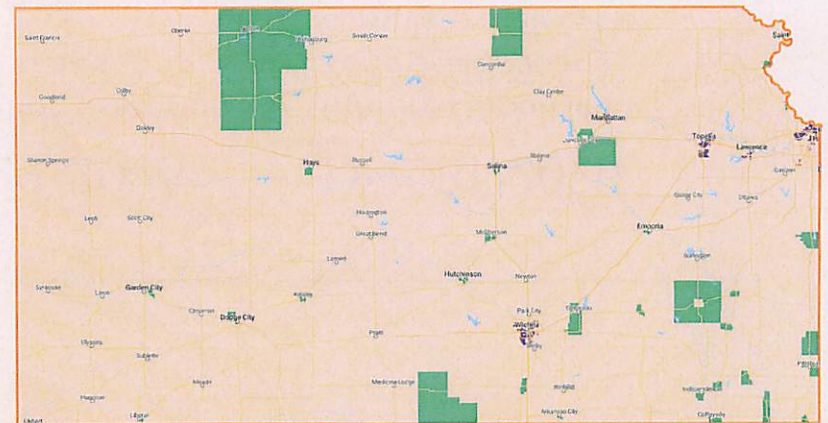
# WHAT CHANGED WITH OZ 2.0?

- Program is now permanent; designation cycle every 10 years
- Smaller and more competitive designations
- Enhanced tax benefits for rural OZs:
  - Population <50,000; contiguous and adjacent to a city with >50,000
  - Lower substantial improvement threshold: 100% → 50%

2017:  
74 Designations Statewide



2027:  
53 Designations Statewide



# TIMELINE

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**Feb. 2026**

Census Data is released and the U.S. Treasury certifies eligible Opportunity Zone tracts

**July 1, 2026**

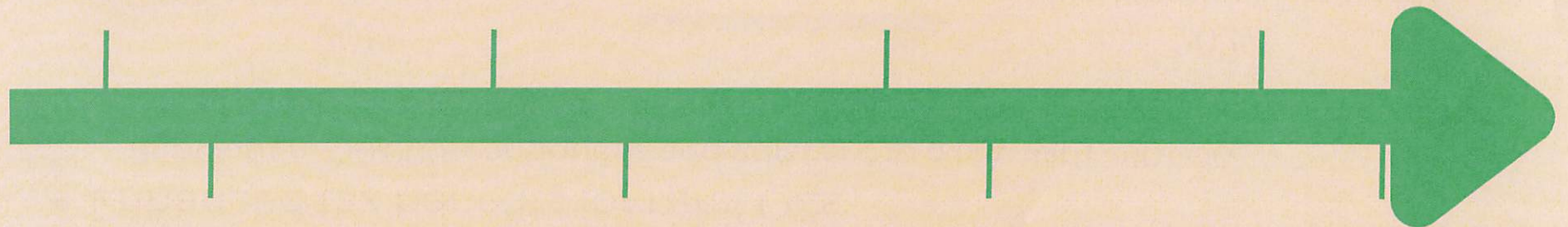
Nomination window opens for governors to submit qualified tracts to U.S. Treasury

**Oct. 29, 2026**

Nomination extension window closes

**Dec. 31, 2026**

Current Opportunity Zone designations complete their cycle



**June 1, 2026**

Nomination deadline for community proposals to be received by Kansas Commerce

**Sept. 29, 2026**

Nomination deadline for governors to submit their tract selections

**Nov. 2026**

U.S. Treasury certifies OZs for 2027-2036

**Jan. 1, 2027**

Certified Opportunity Zone designations take effect; designation last through Dec. 31, 2036

# SCORING CRITERIA

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- **Verified QOF activity** in an existing tract
- **A realistic project concept** with a viable fit for investment
- **A defined marketing plan** for how the tract will be promoted
- **Infrastructure and site readiness** that make investment more feasible
- **Evidence of momentum**, such as business starts, grants, and/or housing trends
- **Local support tools**, such as zoning, incentives, or other development designations

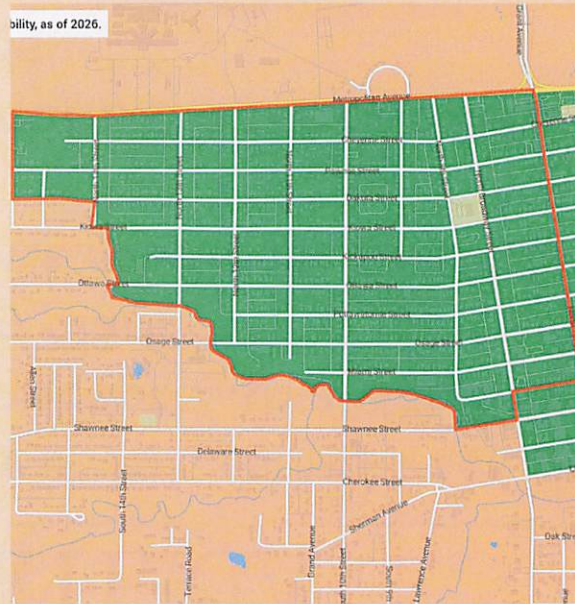
# LEAVENWORTH'S 3 ELIGIBLE TRACTS

20103070100

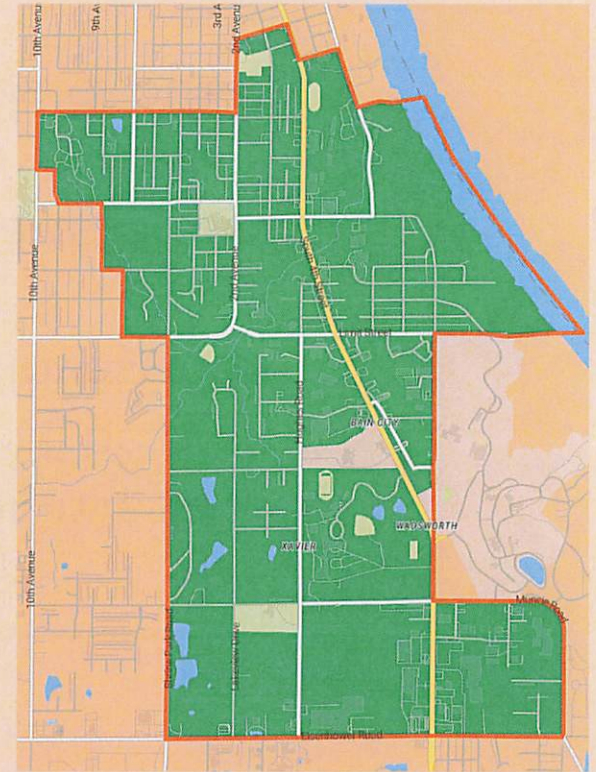


20103070200

ability, as of 2026.



20103070500



# PRIORITY 1 | TRACT 20103070100



- Includes most of downtown and reflects the greatest overall need
- Current tract with proof of QOF activity
- Lowest median family income ratio of the three
- Strong case for local redevelopment tools/incentives offered + public infrastructure investment
- Clearest combination of demonstrated need, existing momentum, and development potential

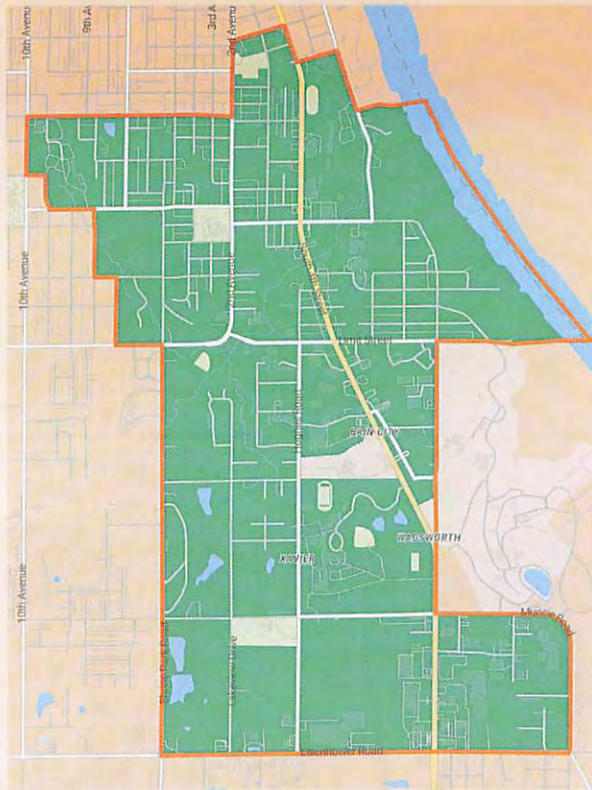
## Quick Read

MFI Ratio  
**40.60%**  
Lowest of the three

Poverty Rate  
**19.08%**  
Significant income distress

Program Status  
**Existing Tract**  
Remains designated - 2026

# PRIORITY 2 | TRACT 20103070500



- Highest poverty rate of the three eligible tracts
- Location and corridor character suggest meaningful potential for commercial reinvestment and future private development
- Clear economic need with realistic development potential
- Strongest secondary case given current interest of many potential upcoming redevelopment projects

## Quick Read

MFI Ratio

**65.47%**

Lower-income relative to metro

Poverty Rate

**26.33%**

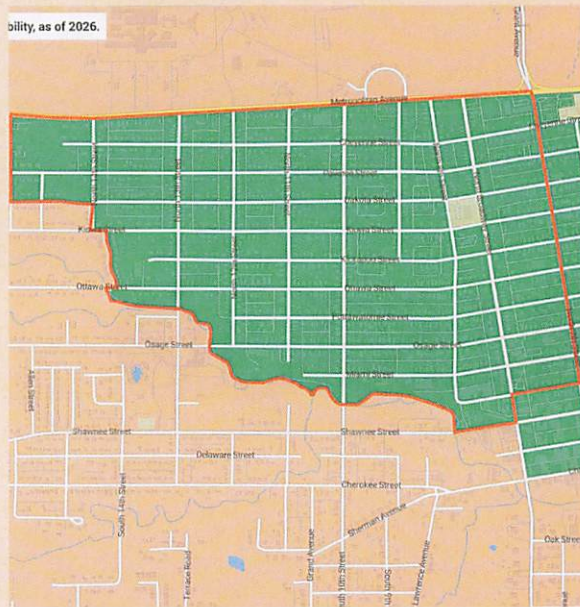
Highest of the three

Development Angle

**4<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor**

Commercial + Redevelopment

# PRIORITY 3 | TRACT 20103070200



- Eligible and potentially still worth advancing as a third submission
- Includes much of the downtown-adjacent residential area
- Distress indicators are less pronounced than first two tracts
- Development story is steadier and more incremental
  - Makes the tract less competitive relative to 70100 and 70500

## Quick Read

MFI Ratio  
**65.21%**  
Higher than 70100

Poverty Rate  
**12.83%**  
Lowest of the three

Development Angle  
**Residential Stability**  
Incremental neighborhood Story



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?