

# Boarding House District

Excelsior Springs, MO

## Neighborhood Assessment Workbook

*Prepared for*

**The City of Excelsior Springs, Missouri**



*By*



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## Welcome to the Boarding House District Neighborhood Assessment

Thank you for coming to this workshop. While you are waiting for the workshop to start, here are a couple **things you can do to “warm-up”** for today's exercises.

### Neighborhood Context Map

- I. Please mark where you live on the large **“Neighborhood Context”** map in the workshop area. If the location of your home doesn't show on the map, then please mark it on the edge that is closest to your home.
- II. Go ahead and get started by reading this workbook.



**Insert Area Map**

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### **Dear Boarding House District Resident:**

Your neighborhood has been selected to be the focus of a neighborhood preservation planning project. The purpose of this project is to determine the common needs of the neighborhood and how those needs might best be addressed by the neighborhood and the City. These needs, and the strategies to meet them, will be compiled into a neighborhood plan. To be successful, the plan must reflect your opinions and desires. Therefore, we hope that you will complete this workbook and participate in today's workshop. Your presence at this future meeting is important.

If you have questions, please contact:

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- [jblackburn@ci.excelsior-springs.mo.us](mailto:jblackburn@ci.excelsior-springs.mo.us)

### **Neighborhood Preservation Plan Process**

#### **Neighborhood Assessment Workshop**

The Neighborhood Assessment Workshop is an open public meeting in which members of the community identify assets and issues in their neighborhood. This workshop enables members of the community to identify priorities for their neighborhood. The Neighborhood Assessment Workshop is the first of two meetings members of the neighborhood will have the opportunity to participate in developing a Neighborhood Plan for the Boarding House District.

#### **Neighborhood Plan Development**

The objective of the neighborhood planning process is to produce a plan that reflects the neighborhood to the greatest extent possible. If the plan reflects the values and priorities of the entire neighborhood, it will aid efforts toward support and implementation. Later in the process, the neighborhood will receive a draft plan for review and comment. A workshop to discuss the contents of the draft plan will be held later in the process, followed by a final draft of the plan.

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## Purpose Of This Workbook

This Neighborhood Assessment Workbook is designed to help you move through the five steps of this Workshop.

### Neighborhood Assessment Five Steps

- **Step 1**            **My Neighborhood Is...**
- **Step 2**            **If I Could Fix One Thing...**
- **Step 3**            **My Neighborhood Assets Are...**
- **Step 4**            **Where We Go From Here...**
- **Step 5**            **My Neighborhood Capacity Is...**

Over the next three hours, you will be asked to participate in each step. Each step has been designed to gather your ideas. Please use this workbook to record your ideas. Staff will collect this workbook at the end of the session. They want to work with all of your ideas. If you want staff to return your workbook, please write your name on the line provided on the back cover. If you do not want to write your name, then please list the month and date of your birthday. That will give you a means to identify your workbook and retrieve it from us without telling your name. The workbooks will be returned at the next meeting.

Please think about your neighborhood using Steps 1 through 5 of the Neighborhood Assessment Workshop.

City staff is interested in your feedback on this workshop.

### Workshop Ground Rules

As we discuss each of these steps, please be mindful of the following ground rules:

- **Respect others and their ideas**
- **Make short and concise statements**
- **Participate openly: your input and ideas are valuable!**
- **Try to generate as many ideas as you can.**

## Neighborhood Preservation Values & Opportunities

### Why Are Historic Districts Important

A Historic District is a significant concentration of sites, buildings, structures, site, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

Preserving and conserving the buildings, site, and other important resources of a historic district allows the residents to keep the character and the unique qualities that make the neighborhood special. It also protects the integrity of the neighborhood and helps tell the unique heritage of Excelsior Springs.

Preservation of historic structures within the Boarding House Historic District protects the history and unique sense of place of Excelsior Springs. Rehabilitating and restoring the neighborhood promotes community pride, increases property values, helps stabilize and reconnect the neighborhood, promotes economic growth, and encourages investment.

### The Boarding House Neighborhood History

The area and houses that make up the Boarding House Historic District neighborhood represent the early history of Excelsior Springs as the city grew from a small rural community to a regional health and recreational destination. Excelsior Springs has a unique history of providing long- and short-term accommodations for visitors to Excelsior. The buildings that document this sequence of development tell a unique and important story of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century architecture and how the city and the built environment responded to the influx of visitors wanting to experience one of the greatest collections of natural mineral waters in the world. Some buildings were either purpose built as hotels, boarding houses, or apartment buildings, but some were adapted later. However, not all buildings were used for transient visitors; there were seven (7) documented mineral water springs and associated structures at one time in the neighborhood, as well as many single-family homes and a few commercial/religious structures.



Historic postcard view of East Excelsior Street, Excelsior Springs, MO c. 1910, Ancestry.com



## Boarding House “Historic District”

The Boarding House Historic District was established in July 2010 based upon recommendations developed from the 2006 Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan. Surveys of the historic resources in Excelsior Springs have been an ongoing endeavor beginning with the first surveys completed in 1991-1993.

In 2014, Rosin Preservation, LLC and STRATA Architecture + Preservation completed a re-survey of the Boarding House Historic District and prepared design guidelines for the rehabilitation, restoration, and preservation of residential and commercial properties within the neighborhood.

In total, today the Boarding House Historic District includes:

- 114 properties total
  - 69 contributing properties
  - 31 non-contributing properties
  - 14 vacant lots/parking lots
  - 24 properties were known hotels, boarding houses or apartment buildings
  - 7 mineral water springs and associated structures
  - 73 single dwellings
  - 1 religious facility and 1 library





### Step 1: My Neighborhood Is...

In this step, you will help identify the general conditions that currently exist in your neighborhood.

- Please identify **how you “experience”** your neighborhood.
- Consider the things you want to **protect, preserve, or enhance** in your neighborhood.
- Please make sure you're most important points also are drawn on your group's **“Neighborhood”** map.

### Landmarks, Paths, Activity Center, Districts, Edges, and Features

Think about the landmarks, paths, activity centers, things, areas, and places.

- **Landmarks** - significant physical objects, like buildings or signs
- **Paths** - routes people use to get places
- **Activity centers** - gathering places to do some activity(s)
- **Districts** - areas of recognizable character
- **Edges or barriers** - limit/boundary that prevents people from enjoying the neighborhood
- **Features** - things people like and would like to preserve or enhance

These are some of the things I want on my map. This also lists some of the important thoughts I heard from my neighbors.

<b>Landmarks</b>	<b>Paths</b>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
<b>Activity Centers</b>	<b>Districts</b>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
<b>Edges or Barriers</b>	<b>Features</b>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



**Insert Area Map**



### Step 2: If I Could Fix One Thing...

In every neighborhood there are things that need to be changed. These things stop us from enjoying our neighborhood. They keep us from doing other activities that we want to do.

- Please list **the one thing** that is most important to you that **should be changed**.
- Then list **the ideas** that your neighbors have.
- Please make sure your most important points also get drawn on your group's **"Neighborhood"** map.

### Ideas for Change Brainstorming

Please remember that as you and others suggest ideas during "brainstorming," we will note the item and move on. We want to save our discussion time for talking about solutions.

#### If I Could Fix One Thing

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#### List Your Neighbors Ideas for Change

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Please make sure your most important points also get drawn on your group's **"Neighborhood"** map.



## My Neighborhood Assets Are...

### Step 3: My Neighborhood Assets Are...

On this page, please identify assets you think add value to your neighborhood. An asset can be a place, group, organization, equipment, skill, ability, and any other thing that adds value to your neighborhood. Please make sure your most important points also get drawn on your group's **"Neighborhood" map**.

#### **Places, Groups, Resources or Skills**

Use the space below to list other assets in your neighborhood

<b>Groups, Clubs, Organizations</b>	<b>Places, Features, Buildings</b>
<b>Skills, Equipment, Knowledge</b>	<b>Resources, Funding</b>

Please make sure your most important points also get drawn on your group's **"Neighborhood" map**.



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## Decide Who Can Get Things Done

Please look at the specific action items you and your fellow participants just established in the exercise above. Now, decide whom can best get these actions items done by assigning each action item to one of three groups.

Your  
**Action Steps**

Things **We**  
can do

Things we  
can do  
with **a Partner**

Things the  
**City** should Do

## Prioritize Your Ideas

Now, to get a sense of priorities, the group will share their ideas and then prioritize activities through a dot exercise.

Discussion will follow to allow you to see which issues are the most active and for members to have a chance to advocate for a particular issue. No decision will be made during this discussion phase.



### Step 5: My Neighborhood Capacity Is...

Assessing your neighborhood organizational capacity, or “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis”, is a way to analyze and evaluate your current neighborhood organizational situation and environment. It can be used to help your neighborhood identify goals that will give you the most benefit in specific projects or programs. It is a way of matching your neighborhood internal capabilities, resources and liabilities with the external factors you are facing.

#### Strengths

Start by identifying your neighborhood strengths, which represent your internal capabilities and resources. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What skills, talents, or abilities do you possess?
- What resources do you have at your disposal?
- What specialized knowledge/expertise do you have access to?
- What is already working well?

#### Neighborhood Strengths

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

#### Weaknesses

Next, identify your neighborhood weaknesses, which represent your internal liabilities. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What are your main liabilities?
- What skills, talents, or abilities do you lack?
- What resources (money, time, help) do you lack?
- What knowledge do you lack?

#### Neighborhood Weaknesses

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



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## Opportunities

Your strengths and weaknesses give you an idea of your internal capabilities, resources, and liabilities. The next step is to identify your external opportunities for change, growth, and improvement. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What one thing could you do that would significantly improve organization?
- What important goals could you pursue?
- How can you take advantage of your strengths?
- What opportunities would become available if you eliminate some of your weaknesses?

### Neighborhood Opportunities

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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Threats

Now identify your neighborhood threats, which represent external events, environmental factors, or changes that could affect your neighborhood negatively. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What are the serious risks you are facing if you don't change course?
- What obstacles are impeding your progress?
- What factors are affecting you negatively?
- What current changes or circumstance could affect you negatively?

### Neighborhood Threats

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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

