Neighborhood Advocacy
2023–2025



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The City of St. Louis is awash in approximately 24,000 vacant parcels – 9,000 buildings and 15,000 vacant lots. Roughly 75% of these vacancies are situated in the region's poorest urban neighborhoods. The links between vacant properties and deleterious effects for neighboring residents have been well-documented: vacant properties increase opportunities for crime, make residents feel less safe, and negatively impact the health of neighbors. Conversely, rehabilitation of vacant property presents opportunities for improving economic conditions and community health in low-income neighborhoods by creating affordable housing, stimulating private investment, and increasing quality of life for residents.

In 2018, with support from the City of St. Louis, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri created *Neighborhood Advocacy* to represent urban neighborhoods to use Missouri laws to acquire vacant and abandoned property for redevelopment in partnership with local developers. Using this model, we empower residents to transform their own communities by reducing abandoned property and creating new units of safe and affordable housing. Since its inception, *Neighborhood Advocacy* has represented over three dozen neighborhoods to acquire and redevelop vacant and abandoned properties. As of 2025, hundreds of cases have been opened on behalf of neighborhood clients, resulting in the revitalization of 727 formerly vacant housing units across the city and millions of dollars of private investment into formerly vacant units.

This book spotlights a few of the many success stories that would not have been possible but for the work of *Neighborhood Advocacy*.

Neighborhood Advocacy *in numbers*



1,104
Cases



300+
Problem Property Cases

$25,537,278
in Private Investment



$99,754
Average Investment per Unit

600+
Individual Clients served

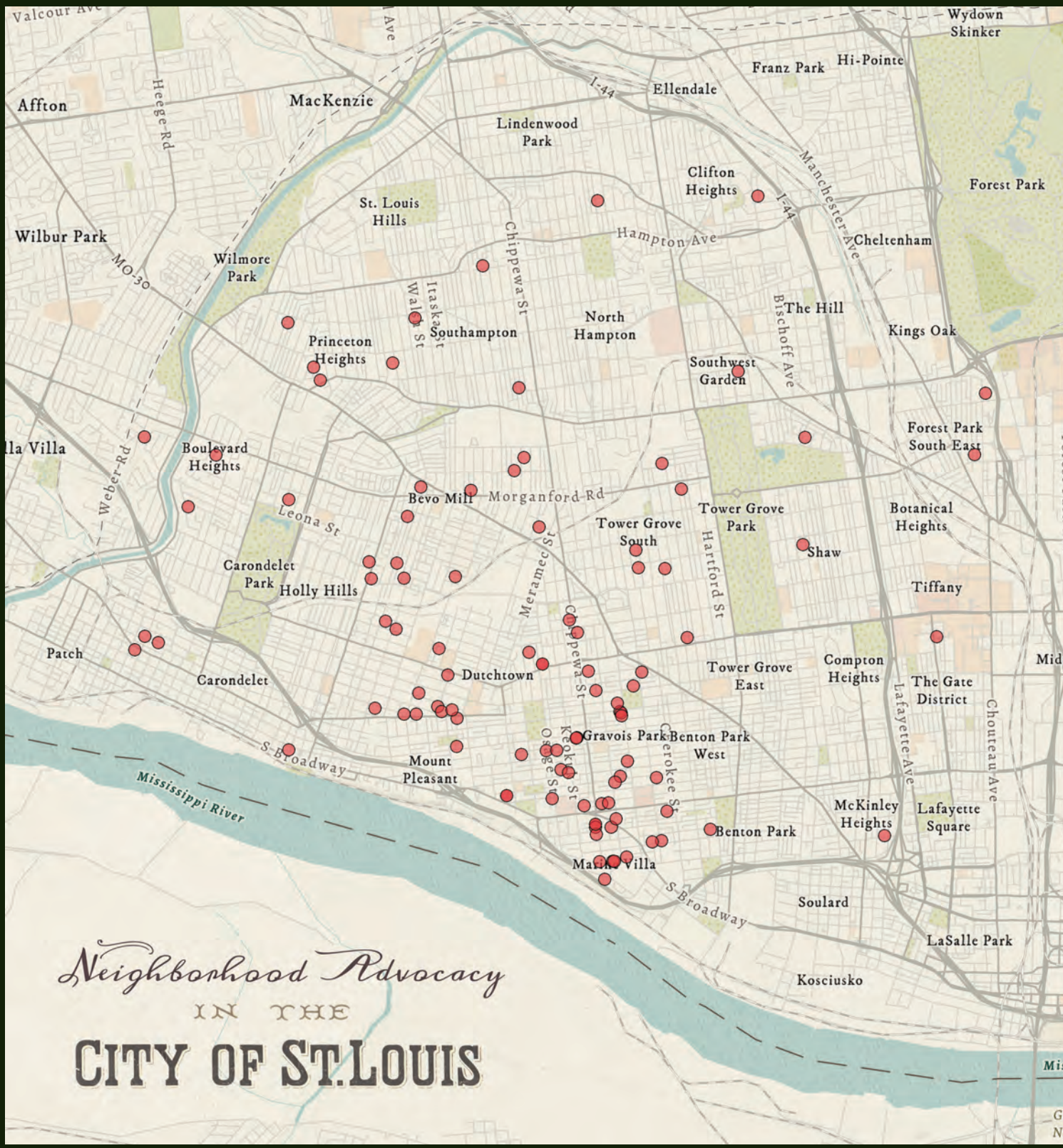
38
Neighborhoods served

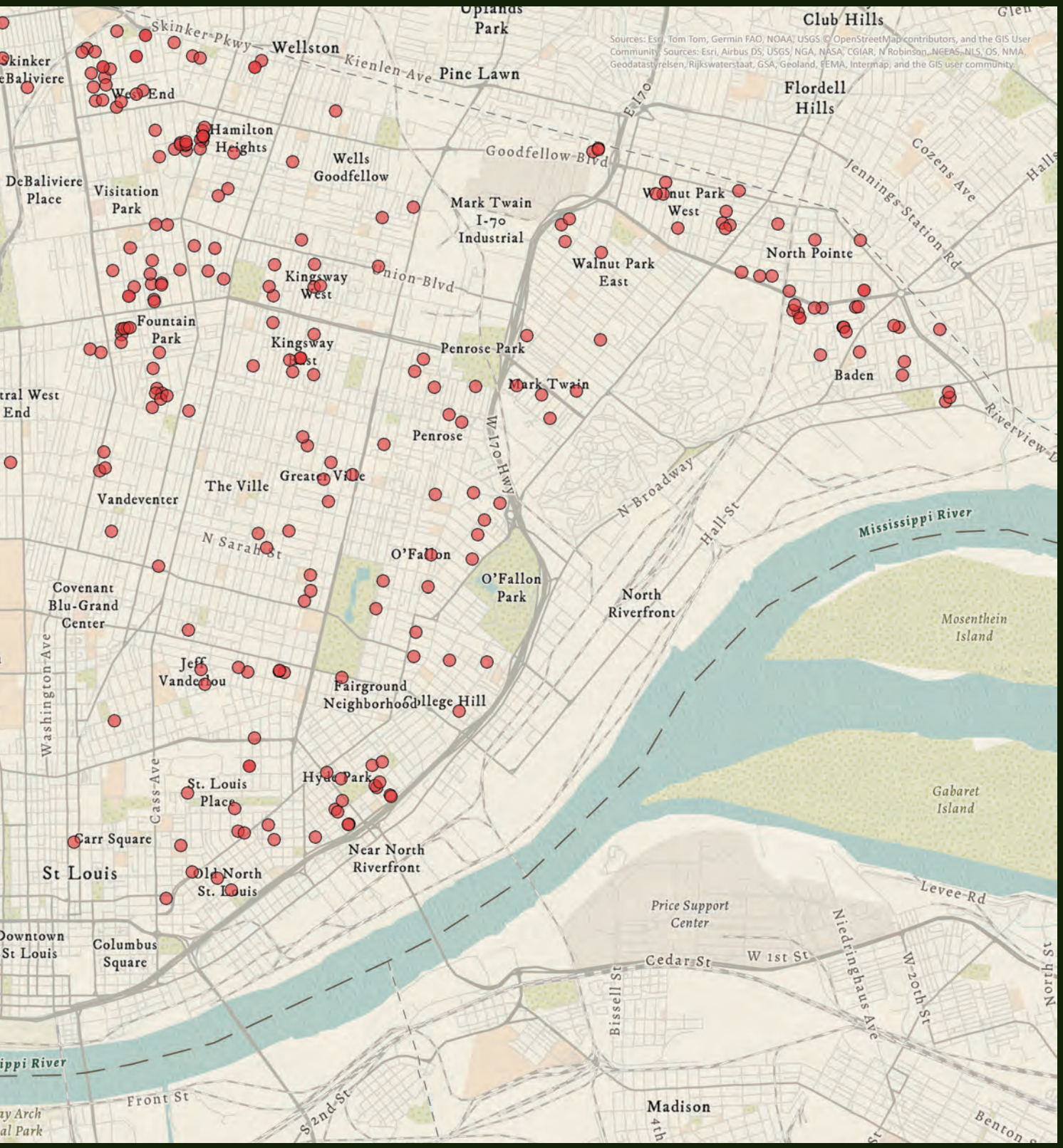
21 Law Firms participating

257
Volunteer Lawyers and Law Students

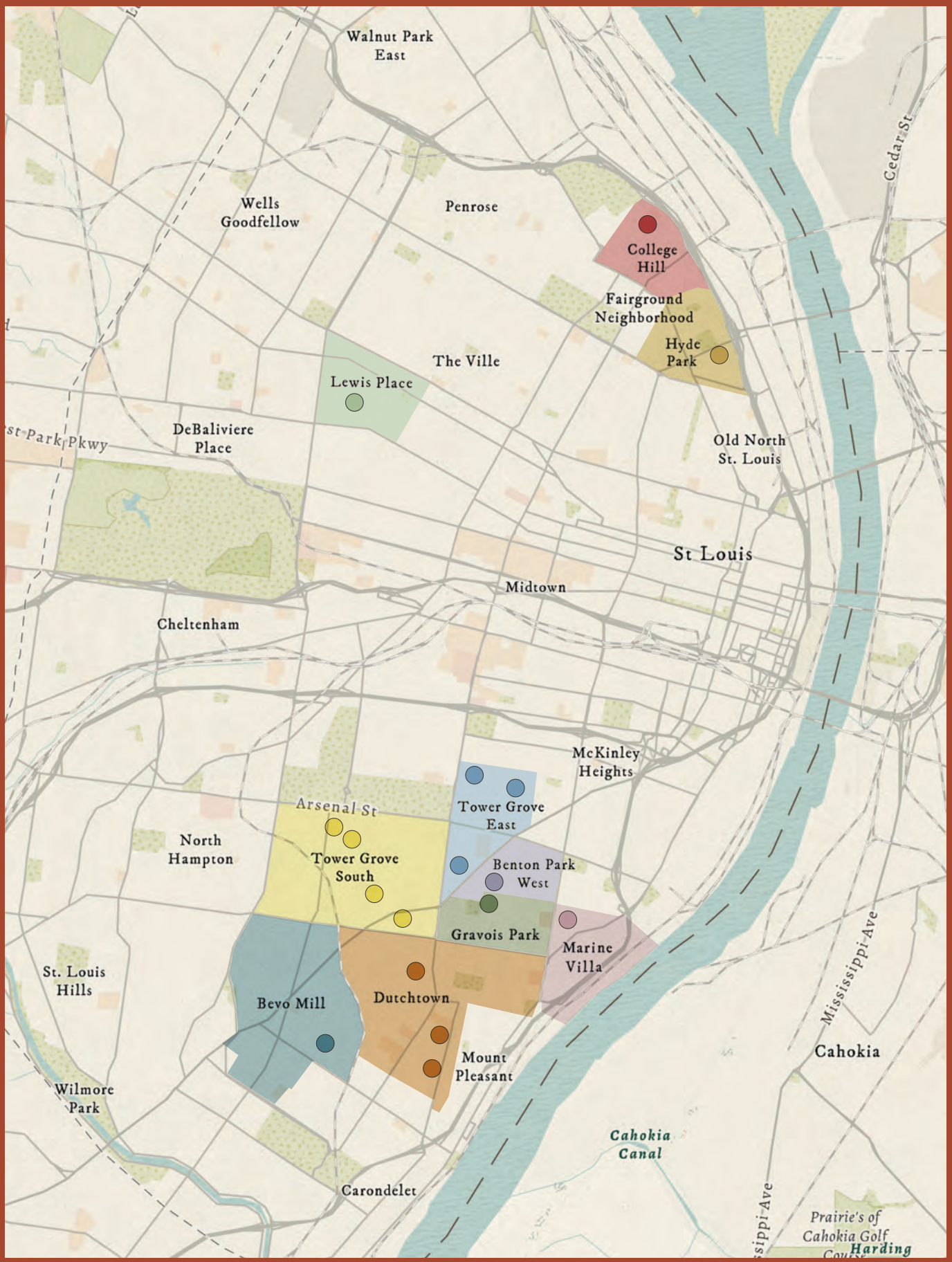
dedicating **15,515**
hours of Pro Bono Service

valued at
$6,206,100


Neighborhood Advocacy
IN THE
CITY OF ST. LOUIS
Affton
MacKenzie
Wilbur Park
Wilmore Park
St. Louis Hills
Lindenwood Park
Ellendale
Franz Park
Hi-Pointe
Wydown Skinker
Clifton Heights
Forest Park
Cheltenham
Hampton Ave
Chippewa St
Southampton
North Hampton
Princeton Heights
The Hill
Kings Oak
Southwest Garden
Forest Park South East
Boulevard Heights
Bevo Mill
Morganford Rd
Tower Grove South
Tower Grove Park
Botanical Heights
Shaw
Tiffany
Carondelet Park
Holly Hills
Carondelet
Patch
Dutchtown
Tower Grove East
Compton Heights
The Gate District
Gravois Park
Benton Park West
Mount Pleasant
Benton Park
McKinley Heights
Lafayette Square
Soulard
LaSalle Park
Kosciusko
Mississippi River
S Broadway
I-44
Hampton Ave
Morganford Rd
Leona St
Weber Rd
Heege Rd
MO-30
Manchester Ave
Bischoff Ave
Hartford St
Meramec St
Chippewa St
Cherokee St
Lafayette Ave
Chouteau Ave



Neighborhood Advocacy has represented clients in over 38 City neighborhoods and taken on over 1,100 cases to combat vacancy and redress abandonment across our city. These cases are represented by the highlighted markers on this map.


Walnut Park East
Wells Goodfellow
Penrose
Cedar St
College Hill
Fairground Neighborhood
Hyde Park
The Ville
Lewis Place
DeBaliviere Place
Old North St. Louis
St Louis
Midtown
Cheltenham
McKinley Heights
Arsenal St
Tower Grove East
North Hampton
Tower Grove South
Benton Park West
Gravois Park
Marine Villa
St. Louis Hills
Bevo Mill
Dutchtown
Mount Pleasant
Mississippi Ave
Cahokia
Wilmore Park
Cahokia Canal
Carondelet
Prairie's of Cahokia Golf
Harding

Properties

COLLEGE HILL
- **1500–1502 LINTON**

HYDE PARK
- **1522 & 1524 MALLINCKRODT**

LEWIS PLACE
- **4602 LEWIS PLACE**

BENTON PARK WEST
- **3320, 3322, 3324 & 3326 MICHIGAN**

TOWER GROVE EAST
- **3114 & 3116 SIDNEY**
- **3461 UTAH**
- **3543 VICTOR**

TOWER GROVE SOUTH
- **3623 HYDRAULIC**
- **4063 POTOMAC**
- **4236 HUMPHREY**
- **4259 WYOMING**

GRAVOIS PARK
- **3144 POTOMAC**

MARINE VILLA
- **3425 INDIANA**

BEVO MILL
- **3971 SCHILLER**

DUTCHTOWN
- **4705 VIRGINIA**
- **3660 LIERMANN**
- **3416 TAFT**





COLLEGE HILL

1500–1502 Linton

In March of 2022, College Hill Foundation (CHF) engaged *Neighborhood Advocacy* for assistance with abating nuisance conditions at 1500–1502 Linton Avenue—a long-blighted property on a high visibility corridor across from a nationally recognized lavender farm.

Neighborhood Advocacy filed a lawsuit on CHF's behalf in the Circuit Court for the City of St. Louis with the Court finding the property to be abandoned and ultimately transferring it into the hands of those willing to invest and put in the work. What took place as a result was a resurrection. College Hill Foundation lovingly and painstakingly restored the property from the brink of collapse to its current glory. The property has been approved for occupancy and ready for new homeowners.







HYDE PARK

1522 & 1524 Mallinckrodt









"Before I thought we didn't have anybody to go to. When Dream Builders came in and when LSEM came in things began to change and you could see how important it was for developers to work specifically with legal people who knew what they were doing in the courts, etc. Before I would say there was much more abandoned property. Now it's slow—very slow—but very intentional of how we're building block by block and trying to make a difference." — *Community Client*





LEWIS PLACE

4602 Lewis Place







"We think about the future, and not just our neighborhood or the homes around us, but about the entire community, and also look at how other neighborhoods have developed. If somebody else has done it, we should be able to learn something from that and…identify the highest risk, or I would say the most oldest, ugliest buildings, and try to eliminate them… Our legal partners help us look at the ones that were more likely to move forward." — *Community Client*



BENTON PARK WEST

3320, 3322, 3324 & 3326 Michigan







"Getting Legal Services involved...and having those success cases lets people know that this is serious. You just can't hold these properties and keep them in such derelict condition." — *Community Client*



TOWER GROVE EAST

3114 & 3116 Sidney







"[LSEM] has been excellent...and I think this whole approach is that they allow the community members to drive what's going on here but provide the legal expertise that we need to make sure we're, you know, compliant. I find them to be very responsive...and I can actually tell that they expect...to fulfill the desires of the community."
— *Community Client*



TOWER GROVE EAST

3461 Utah







"Legal Services is doing the right thing by building their cases. They're doing all the right things to make it go as fast as it possibly can by being...as open and honest with the people they're working with as possible." — *Community Client*





TOWER GROVE EAST

3543 Victor







"Legal Services were wonderful. They helped us accomplish true generational legacy. Everything was smooth and successful. Thank you!" — *Community Client*



TOWER GROVE SOUTH

3623 Hydraulic









"...It's like a 100% turnaround because, like I said before, we didn't have anything that we knew about that was actively going on for the problem. Legal Services and [our firm] have educated us that there is a process that we can use. — *Community Client*





TOWER GROVE SOUTH

4063 Potomac











"You guys are great. You guys help me so much to have peace of mind. Thank you so much."
— *Community Client*



TOWER GROVE SOUTH

4236 Humphrey







"We want to show that we have brought some homes back to life because the end result is...to put families in the homes." — *Community Client*



TOWER GROVE SOUTH

4259 Wyoming







"My case was handled with excellent care. Thanks!"
— *Community Client*



GRAVOIS PARK

3144 Potomac







"It was a pleasure working with everyone I spoke with... I was very happy with all of the attorneys that I met with. You have a wonderful staff—they all did a wonderful job for me. Thank you." — *Community Client*



MARINE VILLA

3425 Indiana







"With this specific project we were able to take problem properties and help the neighborhood make them into useful redeveloped properties, to make the community better. I feel like just to see the impact has been what makes me the most proud...and to be able to work with the community in a way that gives back to that community. We're not just responding to one case; we're actually helping to create a community that is stronger property by property." — *Pro Bono Lawyer*



BEVO MILL

3971 Schiller



"Our firm's been around for over 100 years. We've always been in the same four blocks of the City of St. Louis and to me, I really look at the City as being the centerpiece of this region—it's the attraction for jobs, for culture, for raising a family. But I also have a view...about justice and fairness. If we really want to call ourselves a community, we have to have equal opportunity systematically spread throughout the entire region; these neighborhoods that have been dispossessed are disadvantaged. It's incumbent upon everybody else to see what we can do to help those areas get back their control over problems that...at first glance seem overwhelming, but when people work together there's no problem that can't be overcome, and I think that *Neighborhood Advocacy* is a great example of how to address some of those systematic problems in a way that is logical. It makes sense. It's being done, I think, in a really smart fashion, but most of all it's meeting the needs of the community."

— Pro Bono Lawyer



DUTCHTOWN

3660 Liermann









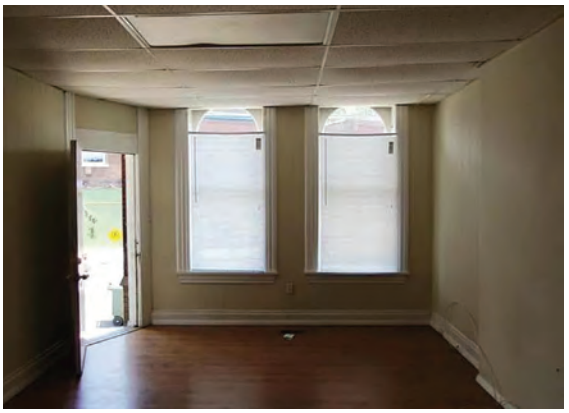
"[Nuisance and vacant housing] is our number one issue and we looked at it as the basis for other things that we don't want to have around the vacant buildings...giving the criminals... somewhere to hang, cause fires, and it's just dangerous. That is our number one priority." — Community Client



DUTCHTOWN

4705 Virginia







"The legal help that Legal Services provided was handled in the most positive, professional and genuine manner in our situation concerning the crucial matter that was at hand. Thanks with high regards!" — *Community Client*



DUTCHTOWN

3416 Taft







"Y'all are awesome." — *Community Client*



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