ADAMS COUNTY COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

IDENTIFY AND MAP

NEIGHBORHOODS REPORT

ADAMS COUNTY
COLORADO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

IDENTIFICATION AND MAPPING OF NEIGHBORHOODS

BACKGROUND ANDINTRODUCTION

In August 2003, Adams County engaged the services of Corona Research, Inc. to conduct a Community Needs Assessment. The purpose of the Community Needs Assessment was to gather information from Adams County residents about their needs and priorities in order to target resources more responsively to meet those needs. The Needs Assessment consisted of several research tools and other components that provide current information on community conditions, gaps in services, and priority needs.

This section of the Community Needs Assessment report documents efforts to map neighborhood boundaries and assets available within Adams County through the use of two research methods: focus groups with Adams County residents and mapping of community assets.

METHODOLOGY

DEFINING NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES IN ADAMS COUNTY

A primary objective of the Community Needs Assessment was to understand how residents define their neighborhoods. An effort was made to identify pre-existing neighborhoods in Adams County. It was determined that a standard definition of neighborhood didn't exist in the county, as compared to the City and County of Denver, which has neighborhoods with specific names and defined geographic boundaries. Given the task of identifying the needs of low- to moderate-income households through this study, the Adams County Office of Community Development identified 11 geographic areas of interest across the county, representing both incorporated and unincorporated Adams County. The areas comprised various communities of interest, including several low-income and poverty areas, as defined by the 2000 Census.

Focus groups, which could target specific geographic areas within Adams County, were selected for use in identifying neighborhood boundaries. While focus groups couldn't allow for definition of all the neighborhoods in Adams County, the 13 groups did provide a mechanism through which the County could learn more from residents in specific neighborhoods – the same areas that could be the focus of grass-roots community development efforts and allocation of federal grant dollars. During the focus groups, participants were asked to draw their neighborhood boundaries on a map, and to indicate their home with a star. A review of the maps created in the 13 focus groups reveals a variety of neighborhood definitions, as presented in the next section. More specific information about the findings from this exercise can be found in the Focus Group Report.

IDENTIFYING ASSETS IN ADAMS COUNTY

The task of identifying assets for this needs assessment fell to the Asset and Neighborhood Mapping Sub-Committee of the Project Advisory Committee. Members of the Sub-Committee built a shared understanding of the terms "assets" and "neighborhoods". The discussions centered around what constituted an asset, whether existing data was available and up-to-date, and the identification of data sources, be they specific individuals, resource directories or databases. These discussions led to the identification of categories and subcategories of assets of interest to the

project, as well as a refinement and simplification of the group's understanding of the term "asset". It was recognized that there are physical assets, such as school buildings, as well as resources housed within those assets, such as after-school programs, meal programs and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults. This distinction between resources and assets led the group to agree that what was needed in the asset mapping task was the identification of physical assets. A resource list could then be added to the asset map, should the County and its residents find that the information to be useful.

The initial list of assets was refined during the research process, and 13 categories were identified. (See Appendix A for a complete list of assets in each category.) These 13 categories encompass the nine needs categories covered during the primary research in this assessment and as well as additional areas of interest to the client.

- Cultural – including museums
- Economic Development – including the county economic development office
- Education – including public schools
- Employment – Including county One Stop Centers
- Faith-Based – including churches
- Health – including hospitals and clinics
- Housing – including Adams County public housing and affordable housing
- Neighborhoods – including mobile home residents associations
- Nutrition – including food banks
- Public Facilities – including libraries, recreation centers and town halls
- Public Safety – including fire and police departments
- Public Services – including water treatment
- Social Service – including nonprofit and community-based organizations, such as the YMCA and Senior Hub

Early in the data collection process, an effort was made to obtain data from the GIS offices of Adams County's municipalities. Data available directly from local GIS departments was found to be very limited, and some data was provided in a format that was not compatible with the Archview Software used by the County and the consultant. The research team then turned to the Adams County GIS Department for assistance. The Adams County Planning Department, the Adams County Office of Community Development, the Adams County GIS Department and Corona Research made independent efforts to obtain asset data in each of the 13 categories listed above. These efforts led to the creation of a database of 613 assets that were collated and sorted by Corona Research and the Adams County GIS Department.

The reader should note that, while the asset list is a good starting point, it is not inclusive of all assets, due to the research team's ability to identify and geo-code every asset. This will likely be an ongoing challenge, but should not detract from the use of this asset data in community development efforts.

Key findings for the definition of neighborhood boundaries and identification of neighborhood assets are presented below.

Perceived Neighborhoods Ranged from Small to Very Large in Size. Focus group participants indicated that their neighborhoods varied from small (1-2 square blocks) to very large (500+ square blocks). In general, Spanish-speaking focus group participants who defined their neighborhood as relatively large, tended to define larger neighborhoods than their English-speaking counterparts in Aurora and Commerce City, and denoted some of the largest neighborhood sizes at 500+ square blocks in Commerce City/Derby and Perl Mack. There may be underlying cultural issues that influence these definitions that would be worthy of further exploration by the County.

Awareness of Assets Varied by Neighborhood. While some focus groups were able to identify a relatively large number and variety of assets in their neighborhoods, others identified only a few. Overall, residents were generally unfamiliar with some of the assets in their neighborhoods. The most commonly identified assets were Public/Social Services and the least commonly identified were Economic Development and Employment assets. Interestingly, Spanish-speaking focus group participants in Aurora and Commerce City were generally less aware of local assets than their English-speaking neighborhoods. This may reveal underlying issues with lack of culturally appropriate service delivery or bilingual communications.

Assets Can Be Leveraged for Community Development. The availability of neighborhood assets was mixed across the county. While some neighborhoods were relatively asset rich, with eight of the thirteen assets identified on the asset maps of the area, others appeared to have only three or four of the asset categories in the immediate vicinity. The asset categories that were least available overall were Cultural, Economic Development and Employment. A review of the asset maps, in combination with a review of the detailed focus group findings, will help identify the assets that can be leveraged as part of a community development effort and those that need to be strengthened.

DEFINITON OF NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

The neighborhood boundaries identified by participants in each focus group were reviewed and categorized by approximate size, as presented in the table below. The perceived neighborhood size varies within and across geographic areas. While some individuals noted that their neighborhoods were very small – in some cases including only the square block on which their home is located – others consider their neighborhoods to be quite large. Overall, the focus groups revealed that neighborhood size is based, in part, on relationships with other people in the area. This finding is explored in more detail in the Community Needs Assessment Focus Group Report.

FOCUS GROUP	DEFINITION OF NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES
Aurora (English)	Neighborhood size was relatively small Smallest = 4 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 48 square blocks (approx.) All were considerably smaller than the geographic area of interest at approximately 32 blocks east/west and 8 blocks north/south
Aurora (Spanish)	Neighborhood size ranged from small to large Smallest = 2 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 100 square blocks (approx.) The largest neighborhood appeared to include approximately 75% of the geographic area of interest
Brighton	Neighborhood size was relatively small Smallest = 3 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 42 square blocks (approx.) All were considerably smaller than the geographic area of interest at approximately 20 blocks east/west and 17 blocks north/south
Commerce City /Derby (English)	Neighborhood size ranged from small to moderate Smallest = 10 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 80 square blocks (approx.) All were considerably smaller than the geographic area of interest at approximately 17 blocks east/west and 40 blocks north/south
Commerce City /Derby (Spanish)	Neighborhood size ranged from small to very large Smallest = 6 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 600 square blocks (approx.) The two largest neighborhoods appeared to include almost 100% of the area of interest
Eastern Plains	Neighborhood size ranged from small to large Smallest = 1 square block (approx.), Largest = 140 square blocks (approx.) The largest neighborhood included Bennett, Strasburg and the surrounding rural area
Federal Heights and Mobile Home Communities	Neighborhood size ranged from small to large Smallest = 1 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 140 square blocks (approx.) All were considerably smaller than the geographic area of interest at approximately 20 blocks east/west (widest area) and 20 blocks north/south
Federal Hills (Goat Hill)	Neighborhood size was relatively small overall Smallest = 2 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 40 square blocks (approx.) The largest neighborhood included almost all of the geographic area of interest. One other incomplete set of boundaries was larger than the defined area in the north/south boundaries
Hmong	Neighborhood size ranged from small to moderate Smallest = 7 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 70 square blocks (approx.) Neighborhoods were dispersed primarily in Westminster in a 50 block area (north/south)

Notes: Approximate number of square blocks calculated from visual review of maps and actual block size in order to provide relative size. Block sizes vary across geographic areas.

FOCUS GROUP	DEFINITION OF NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES
Northglenn	Neighborhood size ranged from small to large Smallest = 2 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 272 square blocks (approx.) The largest neighborhood extended beyond the geographic area of interest, and the others were considerably smaller than the area of interest.
Perl Mack (Spanish)	Neighborhood size ranged from small to very large Smallest = 1 square block (approx.), Largest = 540 square blocks (approx.) The largest neighborhood extended beyond the geographic area of interest in the east/west direction
Thornton/Welby	Neighborhood size ranged from small to large Smallest = 4 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 230 square blocks (approx.) The largest neighborhood included approximately 75% of the geographic area of interest.
Westminster	Neighborhood size ranged from small to large Smallest = 4 square blocks (approx.), Largest = 180 square blocks (approx.) The largest neighborhood included approximately 65% of the geographic area of interest.

IDENTIFICATION OF ASSETS BY FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

As part of the focus group process, residents were asked to identify assets (i.e. resources) in their immediate neighborhood and to map the locations where possible. Since this task was un-aided, meaning the moderator didn't prompt participants with an initial list, the list indicates those assets that were "top of mind" for participants. For communities in which two focus groups were conducted (Aurora and Commerce City) there is also the opportunity to contrast and compare the assets identified by the two groups.

A review of the focus group findings, as documented in the Focus Group Report, indicates that a variety of assets were identified in each neighborhood or surrounding area. This analysis reveals that the quantity and variety of local assets varies a great deal across neighborhoods. It is interesting to note that Spanish-speaking focus group participants in Aurora and Commerce City identified fewer assets than did their English-speaking neighbors. The number of asset categories identified ranged from a low of three (Nutrition, Public Facilities and Social Services) in the Aurora Spanish-language neighborhoods to maximum of eight in Brighton (Education, Faith-Based, Health, Housing, Nutrition, Public Facilities, Public Safety, and Social Services.) The most commonly identified asset category was Public/Social Services, which was identified in 12 of the 13 focus groups, and the least commonly identified asset categories were Employment and Economic Development at one (1). A table comparing those assets identified in the 13 focus groups is presented in Appendix B.

The asset maps created by the research team were combined with the neighborhood boundaries, as identified by focus group participants, to create composite maps. Those maps are included in Appendix C. Where possible, assets identified in the focus groups were cross-referenced with those identified by the research team. An example of the assets that could be verified is indicated on each map. Overall, residents were unfamiliar with some assets in their neighborhoods. In addition, focus group participants identified some assets outside the neighborhood boundaries.

As noted in the report, "assets" were defined as the physical asset, rather than a specific program, as to not over-represent assets in the community. In addition, information on the range of programs (resources) offered by a particular asset was gathered for this particular task. For example, Senior Hub is included as a social service asset, and not as social service and nutrition assets.

CULTURAL   Museums, Theaters, Community Arts Programs

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT   Economic Development Offices, SBDC

EDUCATION   Migrant Education, Schools, Universities, Preschools, Colleges, Head Start, Adult Education, Trade Schools

EMPLOYMENT   One Stop, CO Department of Employment and Training, Non-profit Based Employment Offices

FAITH-BASED   Churches, Mosques, Temples, Faith-Based Food Programs

HEALTH   Hospitals, Clinics, Public/Nonprofit Dental Facilities, Physical Therapy, Health Centers, Rehabilitation Centers, Mental Health

HOUSING   Adams County Public Housing, Nonprofit Housing Providers, Nursing Homes

NEIGHBORHOODS   Homeowners Associations, Clubhouses, Tenants Association, Neighborhood Networks

NUTRITION   Food Banks

PUBLIC FACILITIES   Libraries, County Fair Grounds, Parks & Recreation Facilities, Town Halls, City Senior Centers, Pools, Community Centers

PUBLIC SERVICES   Public Works, Municipal Services, Wastewater Treatment, Water Tanks, Department of Motor Vehicles

PUBLIC SAFETY   Police Station, Sheriff's Offices, Fire Stations, Police Sub-Stations

SOCIAL SERVICE   Nonprofits, Community-Based Organizations, Social Service Agencies, Senior Centers, Substance Abuse, Counseling

Focus Group	Cultural	Economic Dev.	Education	Employment	Faith-Based	Health	Housing	Neighborhood	Nutrition	Public Facilities	Public Safety	Social Services
Aurora (English)					✔			✔	✔	✔		✔
Aurora (Spanish)									✔	✔		✔
Brighton			✔		✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔
Commerce City/ Derby (English)			✔		✔		✔	✔	✔	✔		✔
Commerce City/ Derby (Spanish)					✔	✔			✔			✔
Eastern Plains		✔			✔			✔	✔	✔		✔
Federal Heights/ Mobile Homes	✔			✔							✔	✔
Federal Hills					✔	✔	✔				✔	✔
Hmong	✔		✔		✔			✔		✔	✔	✔
Northglenn								✔		✔	✔	✔
Perl Mack			✔		✔			✔		✔		✔
Thornton/Welby					✔	✔	✔		✔	✔		
Westminster					✔	✔			✔	✔		✔
Total Number of Focus Groups that Identified the Asset Category	2	1	4	1	10	5	4	6	8	10	5	12

Maps with the neighborhood boundaries and assets identified in the 13 focus groups are included on the following pages.

Aurora Focus Group (English)
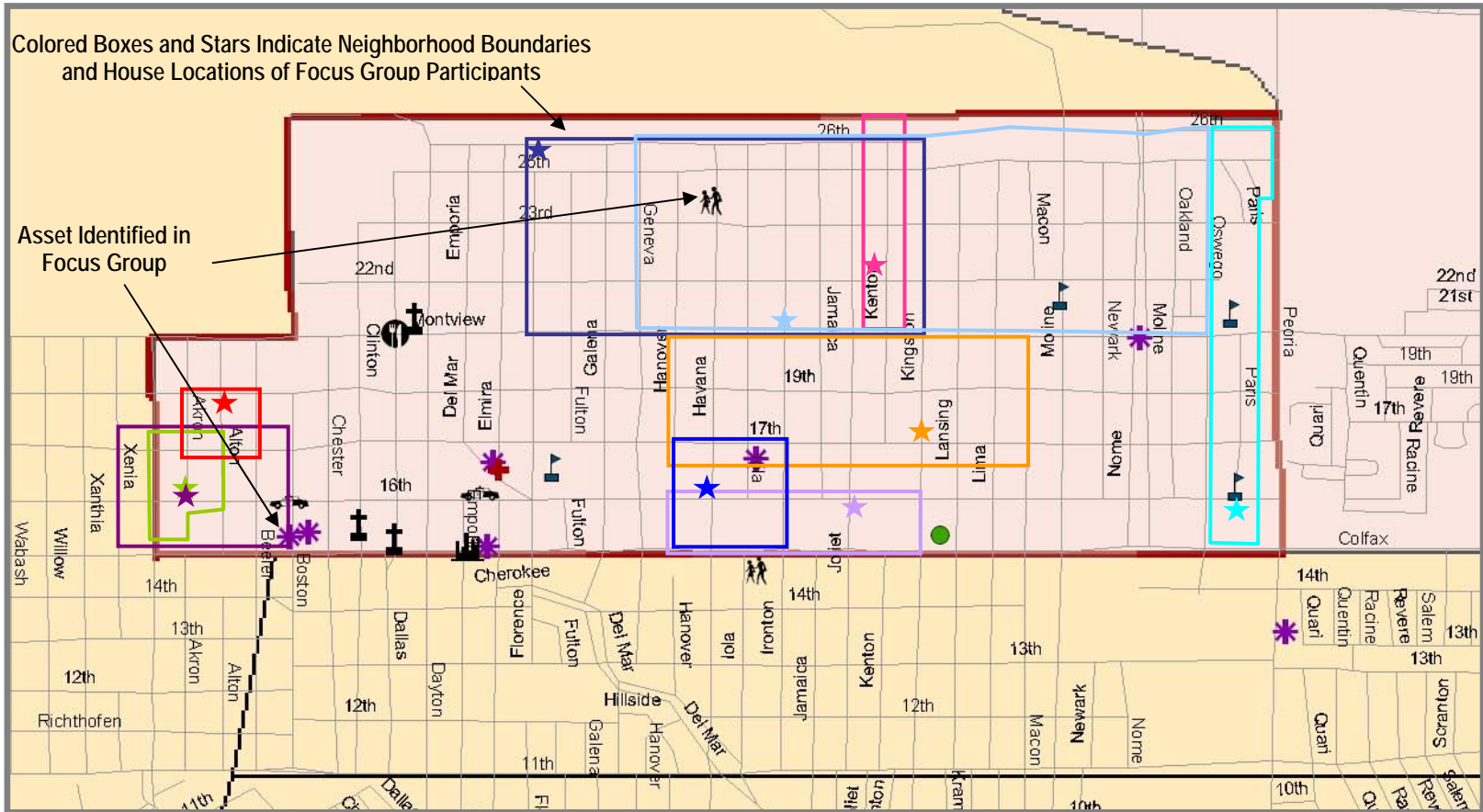
Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries
and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Asset Identified in
Focus Group

26th

26th

25th

23rd

Emporia

Geneva

22nd

Kenton

Jamaica

Macon

Oakland

Paris

22nd
21st

Clinton

Montview

Del Mar

Elmira

Galena

Fulton

Hanover

Havana

19th

Kings

Newark

Nome

Moline

Peoria

Quentin

19th

19th

Akron

Alton

Xenia

Chester

16th

17th

Lansing

Lima

Quari

17th

Racine

Xanthia

Beeler

Boston

Cherokee

Fulton

Florence

Del Mar

Hanover

Iola

Ironton

14th

Jamaica

Kenton

13th

Newark

Nome

14th

Quari

Quentin

Racine

Salem

Scranton

14th

13th

13th

Wabash

Willow

14th

13th

Akron

Alton

12th

Dallas

Dayton

12th

Hillside

Del Mar

12th

Galena

Hanover

Macon

Newark

Nome

12th

13th

Richthofen

11th

Dallas

Joliet

Kenton

Kram

10th

10th

Neighborhood Assets

♦ Cultural	$ Employment	⌂ Housing	Public Facilities	✳ Social Services
Economic Development	✝ Faith-Based	Nutrition	Public Safety	
Education	✚ Health	● Neighborhood	▲ Public Services	

Aurora Focus Group (English)

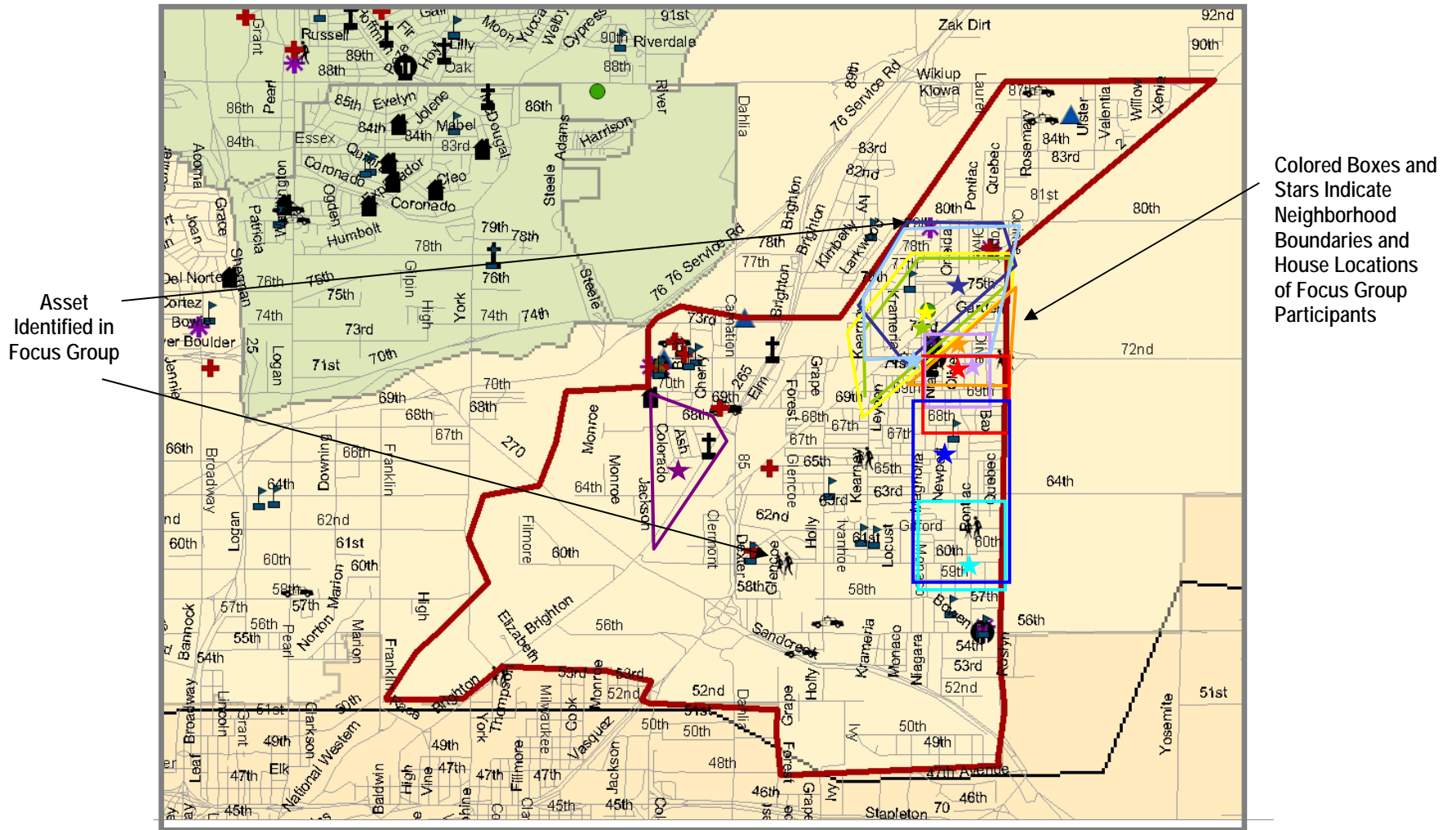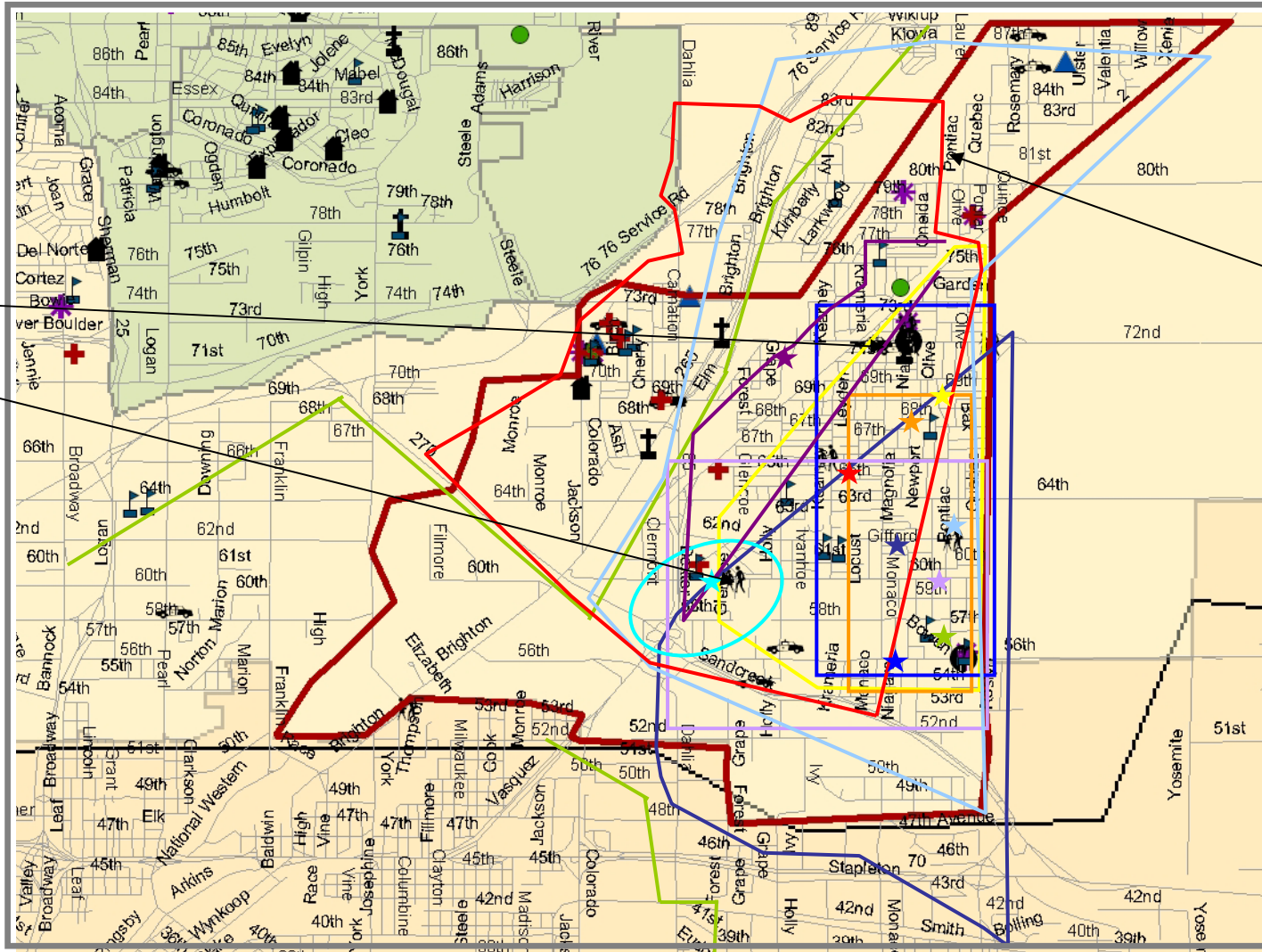Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries
and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Asset Identified in
Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

◆ Cultural	$ Employment	🏠 Housing	🚶 Public Facilities	✳ Social Services
🏭 Economic Development	✝ Faith-Based	🍽 Nutrition	🚓 Public Safety	
⚑ Education	✚ Health	● Neighborhood	▲ Public Services	

Brighton Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries
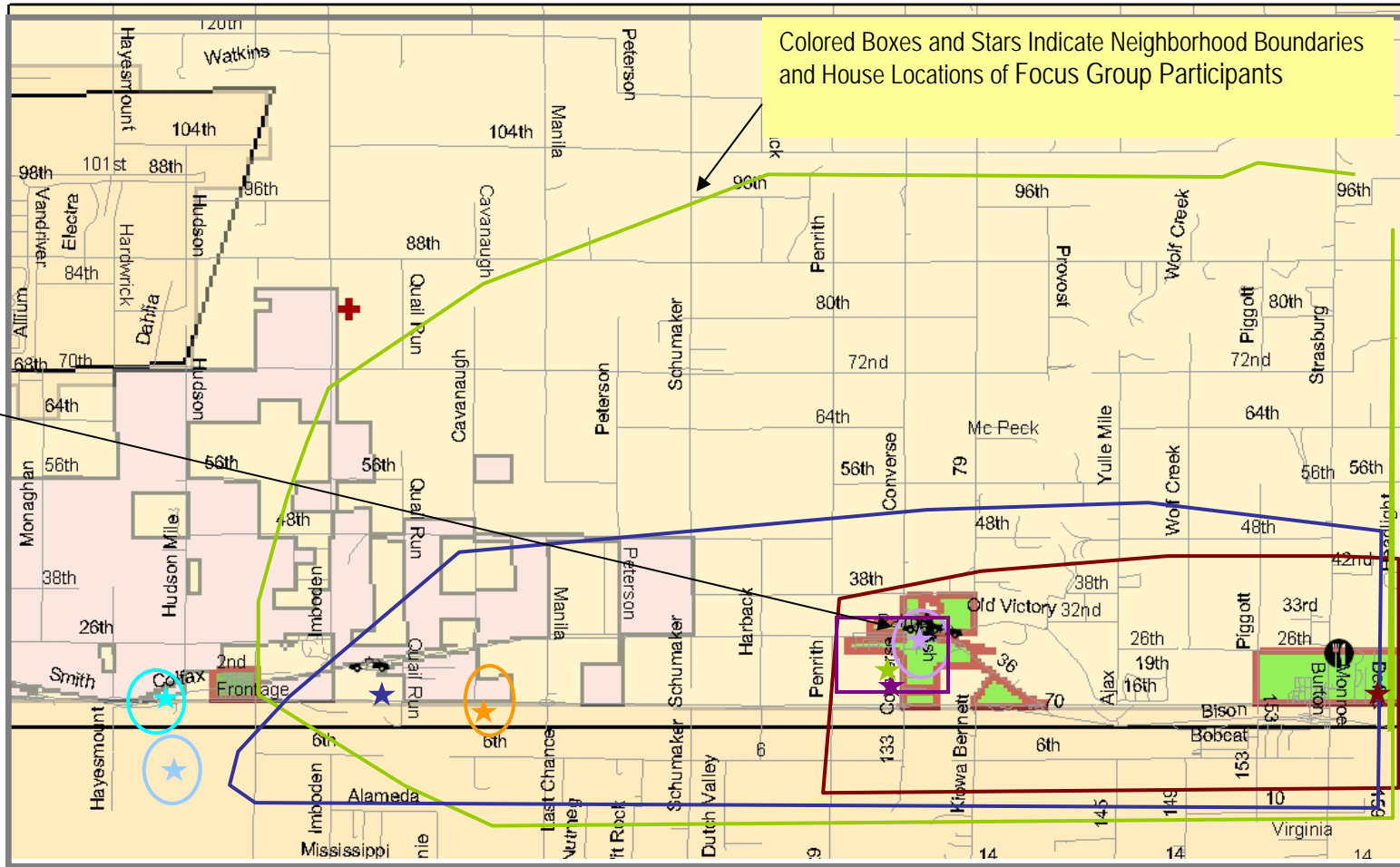and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Asset Identified in
Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

♦	Cultural
🏭	Economic Development
⚑	Education
$	Employment
✝	Faith-Based
✚	Health
🏠	Housing
🍴	Nutrition
●	Neighborhood
🚶	Public Facilities
🚓	Public Safety
▲	Public Services
✳	Social Services

Commerce City/Derby Focus Group (English)

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants
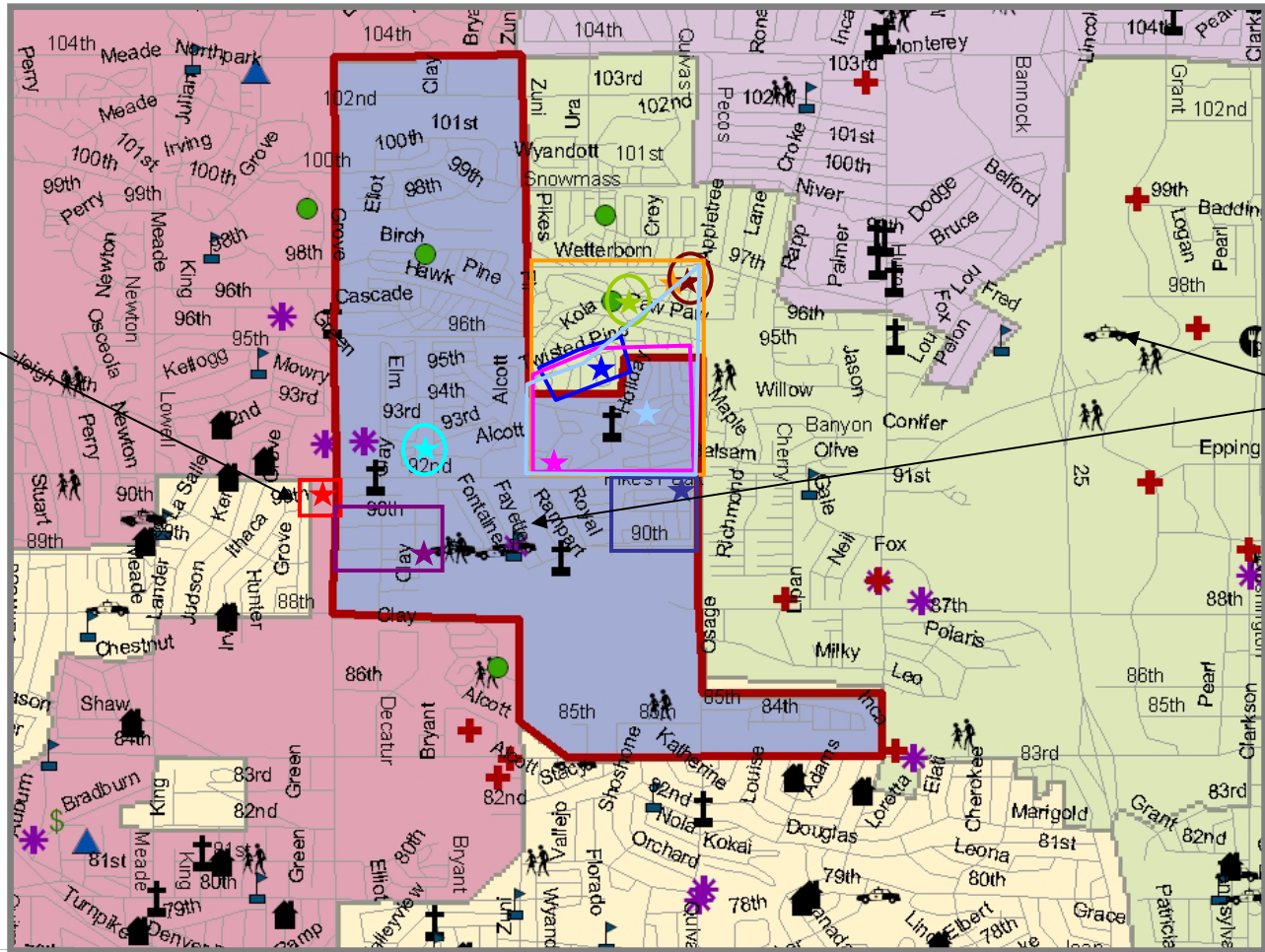
Asset Identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

◆ Cultural	$ Employment	🏠 Housing
Ⓜ Economic Development	✝ Faith-Based	🍴 Nutrition
⚑ Education	✚ Health	● Neighborhood
🚶 Public Facilities	🚓 Public Safety	▲ Public Services
✳ Social Services		

Commerce City/Derby Focus Group (Spanish)

Asset Identified in Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Neighborhood Assets

◆ Cultural	$ Employment	🏠 Housing	🚶 Public Facilities	✳ Social Services
⬛ Economic Development	✝ Faith-Based	🕴 Nutrition	🚔 Public Safety	
🚩 Education	✚ Health	🟢 Neighborhood	🔺 Public Services	

Eastern Plains Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants
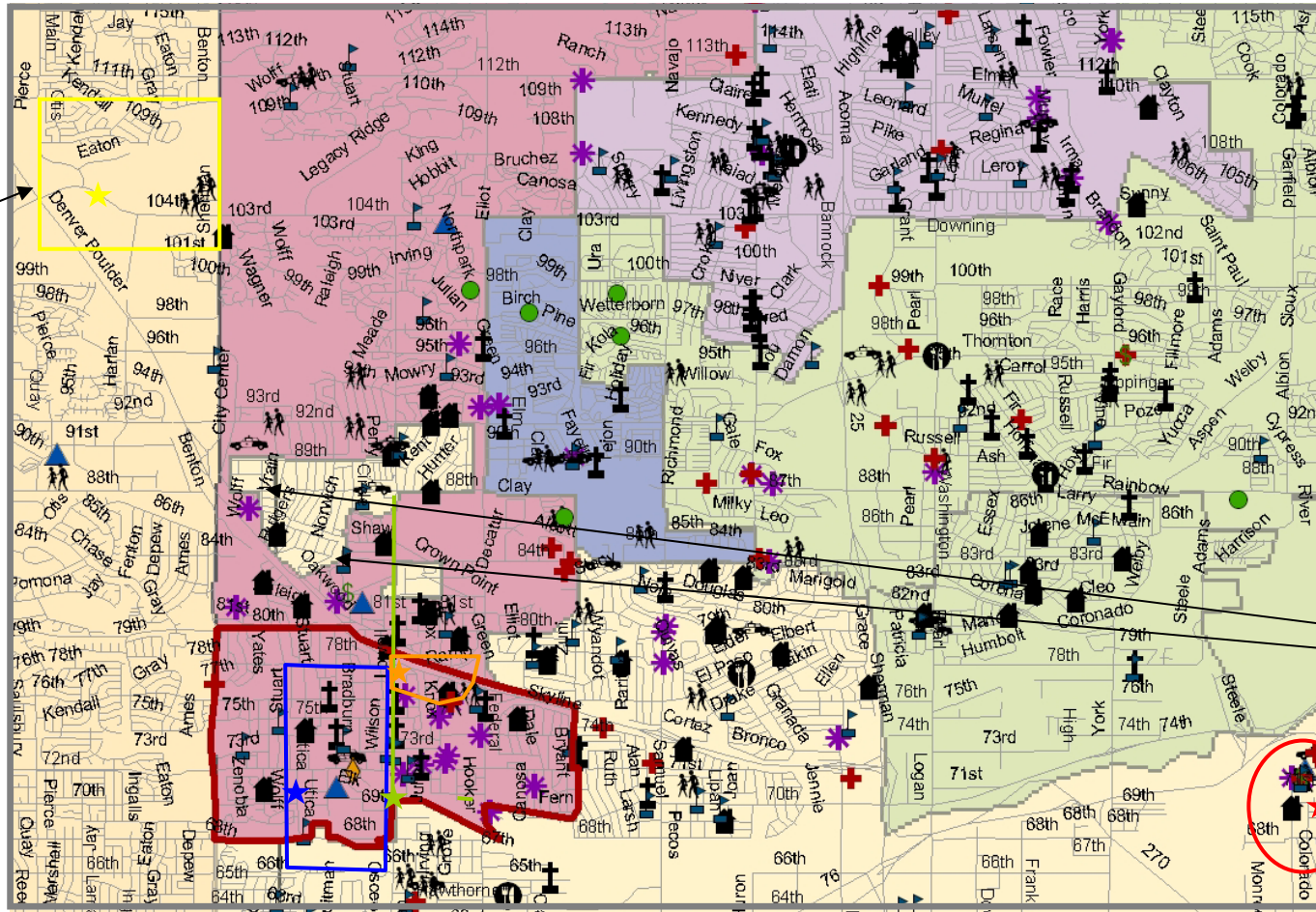
Assets Identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

◆	Cultural	$	Employment	🏠	Housing	🚶	Public Facilities	✳	Social Services
🏭	Economic Development	✝	Faith-Based	🍴	Nutrition	🚓	Public Safety		
⚑	Education	✚	Health	●	Neighborhood	▲	Public Services		

Federal Heights Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Assets Identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset
◆	Cultural	$	Employment	🏠	Housing	🚶	Public Facilities	✳	Social Services
🏛	Economic Development	‡	Faith-Based	🍽	Nutrition	🚓	Public Safety		
🚩	Education	✚	Health	●	Neighborhood	▲	Public Services		

Federal Hills Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants
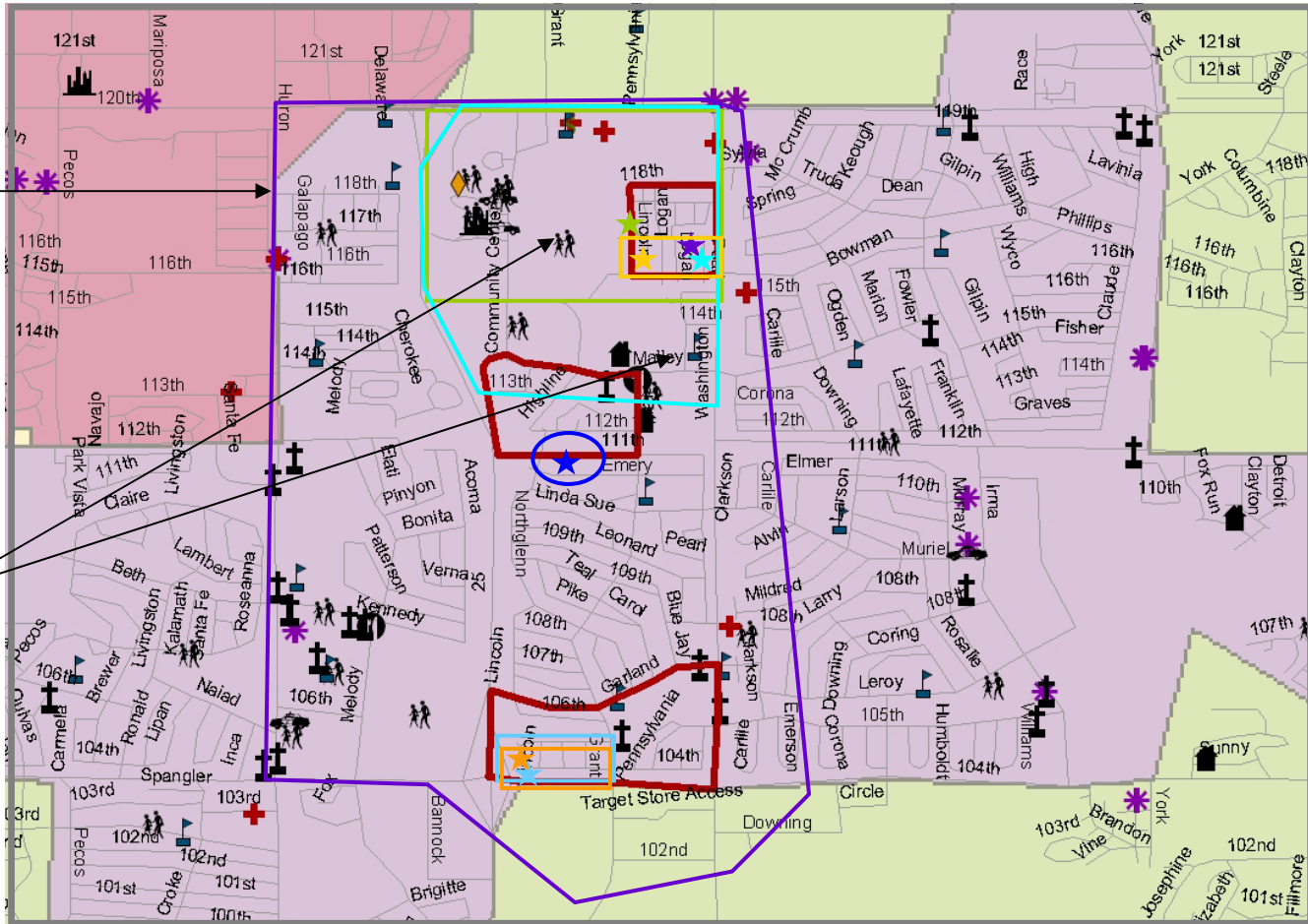
Asset identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

◆	Cultural	$	Employment	🏠	Housing	🚶	Public Facilities	✳	Social Services
🏛	Economic Development	✝	Faith-Based	◐	Nutrition	🚓	Public Safety		
🚩	Education	✚	Health	●	Neighborhood	▲	Public Services		

Hmong Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Assets Identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

♦ Cultural	$ Employment	🏠 Housing	🚶 Public Facilities	✳ Social Services
🏭 Economic Development	✝ Faith-Based	Nutrition	🚓 Public Safety	
🚩 Education	✚ Health	● Neighborhood	🔺 Public Services	

Northglenn Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants
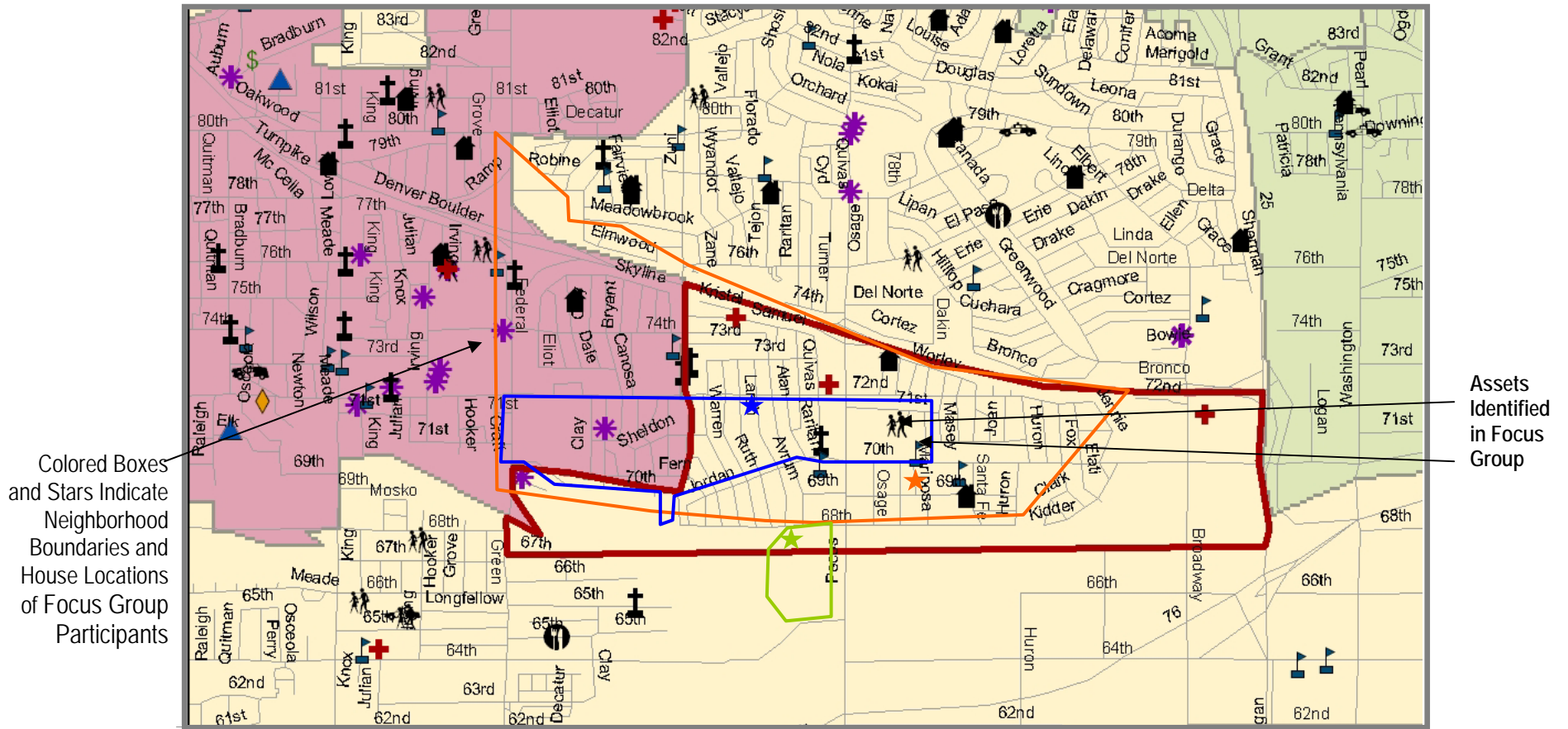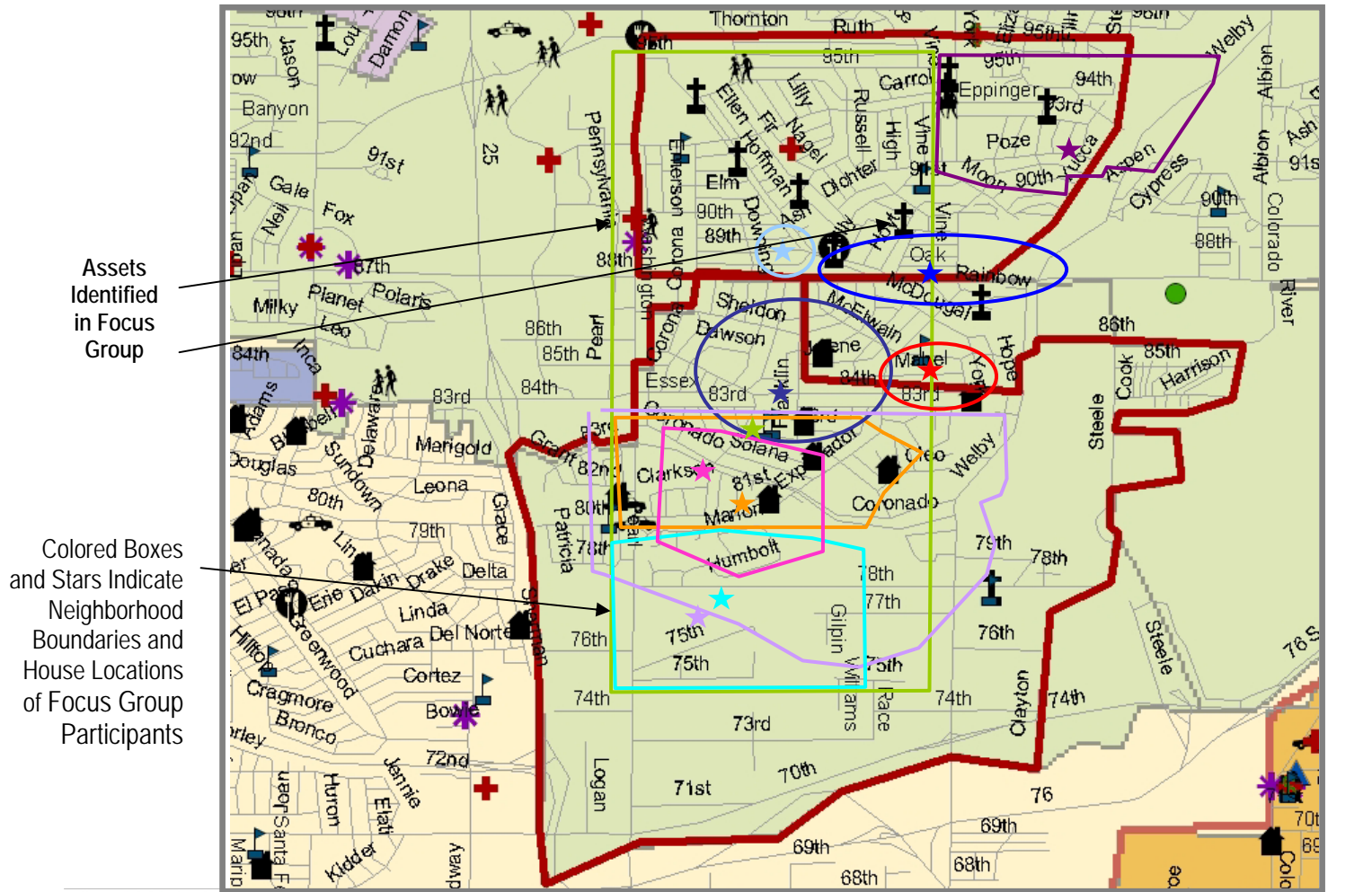
Assets Identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset	Symbol	Asset
◆	Cultural	$	Employment	🏠	Housing	🚶	Public Facilities	✳	Social Services
🏭	Economic Development	✝	Faith-Based	☕	Nutrition	🚓	Public Safety		
🚩	Education	✚	Health	●	Neighborhood	▲	Public Services		

Perl Mack Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Assets Identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

◆ Cultural	$ Employment	Housing
Economic Development	✝ Faith-Based	Nutrition
Education	✚ Health	● Neighborhood

Public Facilities — ✳ Social Services
Public Safety
▲ Public Services

Thornton/Welby Focus Group

Assets Identified in Focus Group

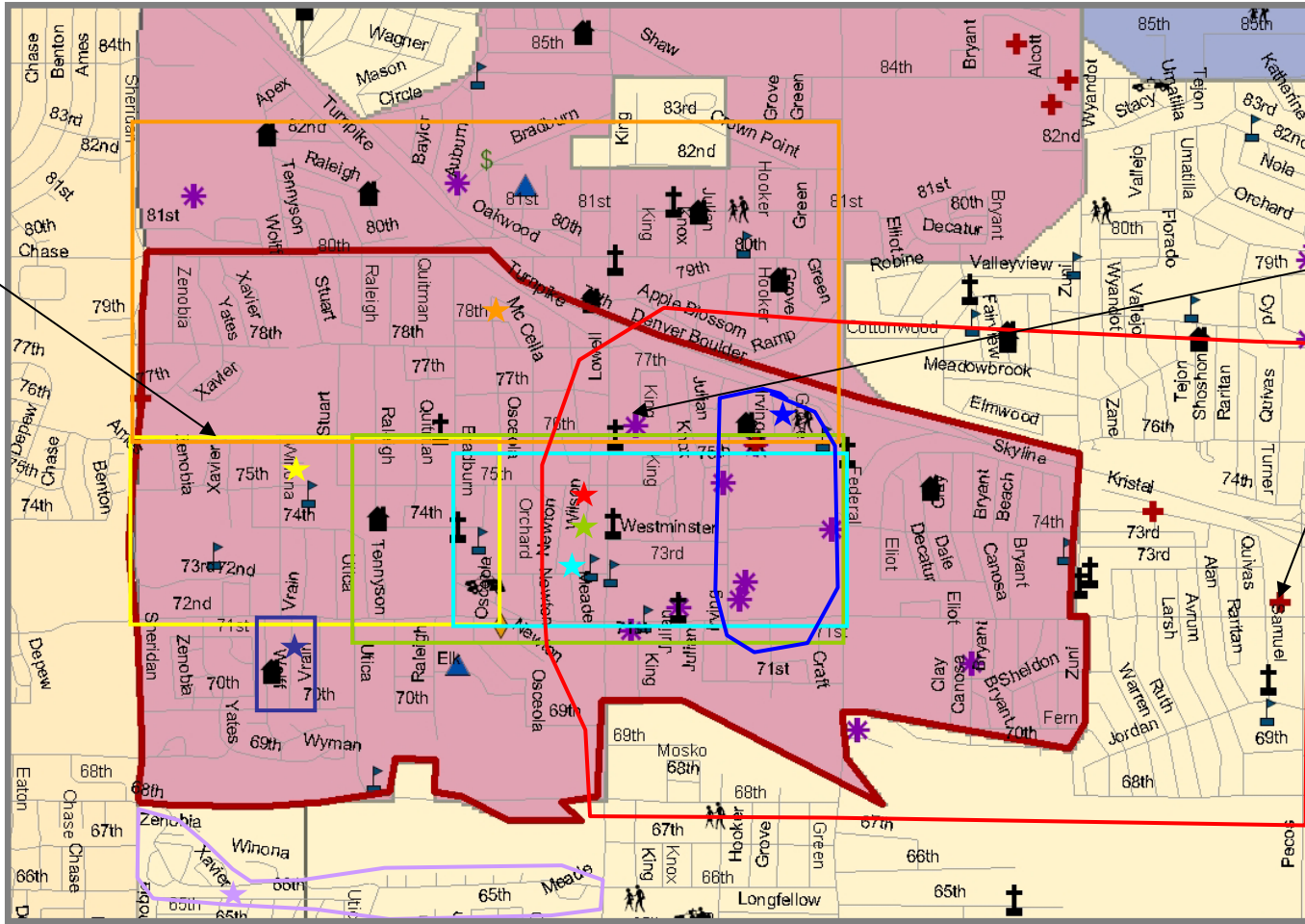Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Neighborhood Assets

◆	Cultural	$	Employment	🏠	Housing	🚶	Public Facilities	✳	Social Services
🏭	Economic Development	✝	Faith-Based	🍴	Nutrition	🚓	Public Safety		
⚑	Education	✚	Health	●	Neighborhood	▲	Public Services		

Westminster Focus Group

Colored Boxes and Stars Indicate Neighborhood Boundaries and House Locations of Focus Group Participants

Assets Identified in Focus Group

Neighborhood Assets

Symbol		Symbol		Symbol		Symbol		Symbol	
◆	Cultural	$	Employment	🏠	Housing	🚶	Public Facilities	✳	Social Services
🏛	Economic Development	✝	Faith-Based	◑	Nutrition	🚓	Public Safety		
🚩	Education	✚	Health	●	Neighborhood	▲	Public Services		