

*“The Schnitzelburg neighborhood is located in the South Central downtown vicinity. The boundaries for Schnitzelburg are generally Goss Avenue on the north, over to Poplar Level on the east, Clarks Lane to the south and Shelby Street to the west. Surrounding neighborhoods are Shelby Park, St. Joseph Area and Germantown.”*

*- Neighborhood Assessment Project Report, The Center for Neighborhoods*

The first senior center opened 59 years ago in New York City under city sponsorship. Called the “William Hodson Community Center”, it marked the beginning of the senior center movement. By the late 1940s, there were senior centers in San Francisco and Philadelphia, and by 1961, approximately 218 senior centers had opened nationwide. There are now some 15,000 centers across the country, serving close to 10 million older adults annually. (Source: US Administration on Aging)

The concept for a Schnitzelburg Neighborhood Senior Center (to be referenced as the Senior Center) was born out of the Neighborhood Assessment Project performed by The Center for Neighborhoods in 2005 in coordination with the Metro Department of Neighborhoods and Councilman Jim King, District 10. The report, through its survey results show a major concern from residents of Schnitzelburg about lack of resources available to the aging population in the neighborhood, and a want for a central location for meetings to be held along with a signature neighborhood focal point. Further, in the action matrix of the report, the neighborhood makes a plea for a community center and requests help from Councilman King and the Department of Planning and Design Services for direction toward this end. The Senior Center is a concept, when further explained, that will meet all of the above recommendations and goals established by the community.

Several planning meetings have been held with interested parties in the neighborhood. Included in these meetings have been representatives of the Mayors Office, Councilman King’s office, the Schnitzelburg Area Community Council (SACC), Ministries United of South Central Louisville (MUSCL), and St. Elizabeth’s Catholic Parish. Through these meetings a suggested mission statement has been established for the Senior Center. It is as follows:

“To seek to meet basic human needs of senior adults living in our immediate area by offering services, providing opportunities and making activities available which would improve their lives mentally, physically, economically, socially and spiritually thereby enhancing their feelings of well being, maintaining their sense of self worth and meeting one of their greatest needs – that of the community.”

It is our hope that the Senior Center will provide opportunities for senior individuals to enjoy recreation, conversation and activities designed to help them maintain an independent lifestyle. The center will provide individualized programs to meet each person's needs, preferences and pace. Every program at the center will emphasize socialization and friendship.