



# WeMake UCITY



Resilient. Livable. Prosperous.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**JANUARY 2024**

Approved by City Council on January 8, 2024

Adopted by Plan Commission on January 24, 2024



# ADOPTION RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION #PC-2023-01

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY PLAN COMMISSION  
APPROVING THE 2023 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of University City Plan Commission ("Plan Commission"), pursuant to Section 62 of the Charter of the City of University City, "shall have the authority to prepare and submit to the council for its approval a master plan for the physical development of the city...and shall recommend such modifications of said plan, from time to time, as it deems in the city's interest"; and

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission may also be authorized by Section 89.340 of the Missouri Revised Statutes to "make and adopt a city plan for the physical development of the municipality"; and

WHEREAS, a master plan (comprehensive plan) is an official policy guide for future development and redevelopment of a city; and

WHEREAS, the current comprehensive plan for the City of University City, Missouri ("City") was adopted in 2005 and thereafter amended, most recently in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the comprehensive plan is an official policy guide for future development and redevelopment of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to retaining and enhancing the resilience, livability, and prosperity of its community, and has sought to create a vision of the community through the development of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Comprehensive Plan, with accompanying maps, charts, and descriptive and explanatory matter, shows the Plan Commission's recommendations for the physical development and uses of land; and

WHEREAS, due notice of a public hearing on the 2023 Comprehensive Plan to be held by the Plan Commission in the Heman Park Community Center at 6:30 p.m. on September 27, 2023, was duly published in the St. Louis Countian, a newspaper of general circulation within said City on September 11, 2023; and

WHEREAS, said public hearing was held at the time and place specified in said notice, and all suggestions or objections concerning the 2023 Comprehensive Plan were duly heard and considered by the Plan Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission, at a meeting on December 27, 2023, unanimously recommended to the City Council of University City ("City Council") that it approve the 2023 Comprehensive Plan, including all revisions to the draft document through that date; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, at its meeting on January 8, 2024, unanimously approved the 2023 Comprehensive Plan after making a minor revision; and

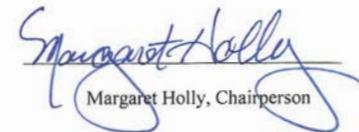
WHEREAS, the Plan Commission desires to approve and adopt the 2023 Comprehensive Plan as revised by the City Council on January 8, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLAN COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

The City of University City Plan Commission hereby approves and adopts the 2023 Comprehensive Plan as revised by the City Council of University City on January 8, 2024.

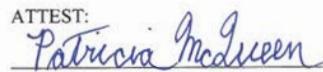
This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Plan Commission.

Adopted this 24<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2024.



Margaret Holly, Chairperson

ATTEST:



Patricia McQueen, Vice Chair

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The City would like to thank the following individuals for their commitment and dedication in assisting with the development of the We Make U City Comprehensive Plan. Sharing your knowledge, thoughts, and ideas rendered an invaluable service to your community.

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## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee includes members of the Plan Commission in addition to the following individuals:

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Special thanks to the many community members who contributed their time and ideas to the planning process.

# A LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

The University City Plan Commission is pleased to present this comprehensive plan to guide the long-term future of University City. It is grounded in considerable data and analysis conducted since the last comprehensive plan was adopted; it is informed by the perspectives of hundreds of community members who dedicated their time and attention to this important work.

Since its incorporation in 1906, University City has grown and changed and been influenced by the greater St. Louis region. This plan is intended to address major community challenges that have come from our history, including the following, which have emerged from the community as top priorities.

First, the city continues to reflect the historic discriminatory practices in housing and real estate. University City is home to just over three miles of the “Delmar Divide,” describing an east-west street, Delmar Blvd, that creates a socioeconomic and racial dividing line through the St. Louis region. On each side of this divide there are contrasting cultural practices, socioeconomic levels, and public policies.<sup>1</sup> To many in University City, Olive Boulevard symbolizes this division today.

Notably, University City has sought to address this history such as through the establishment of the University City Residential Service. However, the legacy of this history is still seen in the city today, with significant differences in racial populations from north to south. This history has created significant barriers to upward economic mobility. The comprehensive plan is designed to continue the work of reversing the impacts of this history.

Second, flooding from the River Des Peres and Engelholm Creek directly impacts the residents who live in the vicinity and City resources. Over the decades, University City permitted residential and commercial development in these areas, with three unintended consequences: 1) people and businesses moved into close proximity to areas subject to flash flooding; 2) homes, buildings, parking lots, driveways, etc. replaced green space that previously absorbed stormwater; and 3) neighboring communities downstream have been impacted by development in the floodplain. Properties along the River Des Peres and its tributaries tend to have lower assessed values, meaning that those least able to afford to deal with flood damage are most likely to have it. (A map showing this is included in chapter 3 of this plan.)

This plan recognizes the complex relationship between these major driving forces in how University City has developed and intends to address them directly, holistically, and urgently. Our city—our community—has said that our citizens are ready to do that work to build a stronger U City.

Sincerely,



Charles Gascon  
Comprehensive Plan Chair



Margaret Holly  
Plan Commission Chair

1. In St. Louis, Delmar Boulevard is the line that divides a city by race and perspective. Washington Post, Chico Harlan, August 22, 2014.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

***We Make U City is a community-driven process to update the comprehensive plan for University City and set the long-term direction for the city's development in the coming decades.***

This plan serves as a guide for decision makers and the community. It was created with the insight of the many individuals who dedicated time and energy to the process. It was also developed in consideration of many plans and studies that provided a valuable foundation, including the University Community Vision 2040<sup>1</sup> process that served as a launchpad for the planning work. It is both comprehensive—taking a long-term view of a broad range of topics—and strategic—serving as an action plan to move the community forward. It is focused on recommendations that will address some of the city's greatest challenges, including historic inequities and environmental impacts that continue to affect the city today. At the same time, it recognizes the tremendous assets that the city has to build upon—a diverse population, a variety of housing types to meet a range of needs and preferences, an eclectic mix of retail, a rich historic fabric, and more—and represents a commitment to celebrate and capitalize upon them.



## CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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## 1.1 FOUNDATION

***We Make U City is motivated by the desire for long-term stewardship of the city's many assets, while recognizing opportunities to improve quality of life for all community members.***

### WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan is a public policy document. It sets forth a long-range vision for physical development, housing, economic development, transportation, community facilities, and related topics. It also:

- » Serves as a strategic guide to manage change;
- » Balances the perspectives of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders;
- » Is a foundation for regulatory updates, particularly municipal code updates; and
- » Is a marketing tool for the city to clearly convey the community's values and priorities.

The plan includes specific actions (policies, programs, and projects) and identifies timing and responsibilities for undertaking those actions. It also contains map-based recommendations that indicate the City's intent for where and how it will use land resources. It is important to consider that many of the plan's actions and its land use recommendations impact the City fiscally and must be considered in light of those impacts. Some actions and land use recommendations may be determined on a case-by-case basis not to be prudent based on an analysis of the impact on City finances.

The term "City" is used to refer to the governing entity of University City.

The term "city" is used to describe the physical, geographical space of University City.

### WHAT WORK HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE?

Since the publication of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and its 2009 update,<sup>2</sup> much work has been done by University City boards, commissions, task forces, and advisory committees. In addition, standards at the federal, state and county level have been changed/updated. Work conducted by City staff and volunteers as well as professionals and volunteers across Missouri and the US is reflected in the new plan. For example, University City established a Task Force on Storm Water Issues in 2017.<sup>3</sup> On receiving its final report, City Council made the Task Force a Commission in 2020. The University City-Washington University Advisory Committee was authorized in 2014,<sup>4</sup> issuing its final report to City Council on July 30, 2015.<sup>5</sup> A Mayor's Task Force on Walk & Bike-ability worked jointly with Trailnet to present a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, adopted by University City City Council on October 14, 2013.<sup>6</sup> These are examples of the passionate engagement of University City citizen volunteers in planning the future of the city which continues daily. Reviews of and updates to these documents should be an integral part of the implementation of this plan.

Following are brief summaries of some of the key plans and studies that have informed this plan.

#### 2005 Comprehensive Plan

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan was an update to the 1999 Plan. The 2005 plan centered around expanding on and creating goals for three key ideas of the 1999 Plan: growth management, community quality, and city government. The plan also identified new issues including infill development, light rail, and mixed-use development, and created strategic community priorities to guide the implementation of the new plan.



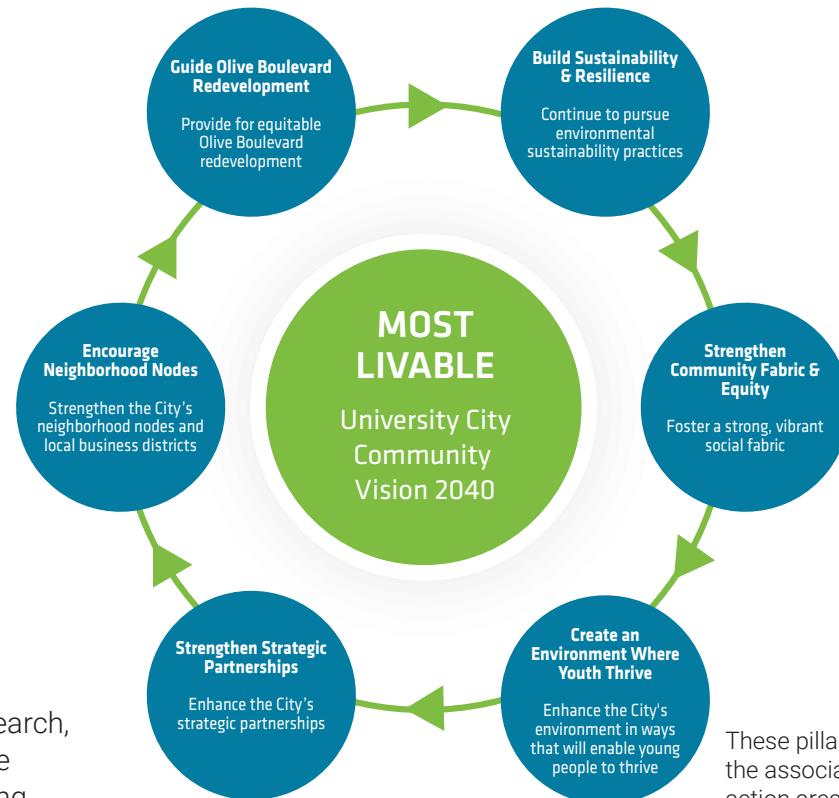
## Community Vision 2040 (2022)

Community Vision 2040 was the first step in creating the We Make U City comprehensive plan. Community members were asked to consider possible actions and their impacts using a scenario-planning process to determine the generally preferred future of University City. The plan breaks the general community vision into six strategic pillars: building sustainability & resilience, strengthening community fabric & equity, creating an environment where youth thrive, strengthening strategic partnerships, encouraging neighborhood nodes, and guiding Olive Boulevard redevelopment.

The University City Comprehensive Plan represents two years of research, community input, visioning, and analysis. The process began with the question, "What kind of a community do we want to be?" This visioning process<sup>5</sup> included significant opportunities for community engagement. Two vision statements emerged from that work:

### Intentional Equity

Intentional action builds more equity within the community, with social and commercial infrastructure distributed in new ways. A stronger partnership between the City and school system is developed, with a focus on innovative, adaptive education strategies that aim to boost the school system performance to meet the needs of all children. Housing affordability and ownership is addressed by embracing innovative investments and solutions. New approaches to community engagement deepen resident participation.



These pillars and the associated key action areas became the guidance for the development of this Comprehensive Plan.

### Creative Development

New creative efforts spur development in the Loop and Olive Boulevard; and offer unique forward-looking economic models. Strong partnerships are developed with Washington University which help solve challenges and create mutual benefit. New workplace and workforce models trigger new business activity. Walkability and local 'commercial and retail nodes' become a stronger feature in neighborhoods.

## North Central Neighborhood Plan (2002)

To achieve the goals set by the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, University City conducted in depth analyses of individual neighborhoods throughout the city. The North Central Neighborhood Plan identified six main concerns of neighborhood residents: street maintenance, noise, land use on Olive Boulevard, litter/dumping, traffic, and property maintenance.

## Northeast Neighborhood Plan (2002)

Created in response to the 1999 Comprehensive plan, the Northeast plan residents focused on five main concerns: investment, housing stock, public infrastructure, neighborhood character and aesthetic, and public safety.

## Northwest Neighborhood Plan (2004)

This in-depth analysis also built upon the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. Major priorities identified by residents were divided into seven focus areas: housing, neighborhood appearance/aesthetics, public facilities/service, public health, noise/nuisance, public safety, and communication.

## Centennial Greenway Plan (2006)

The Centennial Greenway Plan is a regional plan that aims to coordinate the network of parks in and around St Louis. The Greenway passes through University City, and the Plan highlights Delmar Boulevard and the Loop as critical components of the Greenway, as the Loop is a frequent destination for users of the Greenway.

## Parks Master Plan (2008)

This plan involved a comprehensive review of existing parks, national standards for parks, and evaluating each park against those standards. University City residents were also asked about their visitation habits and opinions on possible park improvements in order to determine goal areas and priorities.

### *Urban Forestry Operations Review and Strategic Plan*

University City, Missouri  
April, 2009



## Urban Forestry Strategic Plan (2009)

This plan involved a comprehensive review of all existing City policies and plans relating to urban forestry and created a vision, goals, and recommendations for how to best manage University City's urban forest. This plan expands upon the work and vision of the City's Annual Community Forestry Plan.

## Sustainability Strategic Plan (2011)

Created by the University City Green Practices Commission, this plan aims to establish goals and actions to help incorporate sustainability into City practices and programs. These goals are separated into seven categories: ecosystems/habitat, water/stormwater, air quality/transportation, water/resource conservation, land use/open space/parks, energy, and green buildings.

## Delmar Loop Area Retail Plan & Development Strategy (2011)

This plan, funded by Washington University, and in collaboration with University City staff and business associations, details strategies to reinvigorate the Loop and its surrounding area following a decline in popularity in the late 2000s. Planned interventions included increased residential development, dense mixed-use development, and nodes of transit-oriented development.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2013)

The University City Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan outlines capital improvement projects, policies, and initiatives to expand access to safe walking and biking routes. The plan was intended to help create an "equity of mobility" within University City by providing universally-accessible transportation alternatives.

## Olive Boulevard Design Guidelines (2009)

The Olive Boulevard Design Guidelines are intended to encourage economic development, preserve historic buildings, and create meaningful improvements to the corridor. The guidelines provide a framework for streetscape design, building types, signage, and landscaping, among other things.

## Sustainable Development Guidelines (2019)

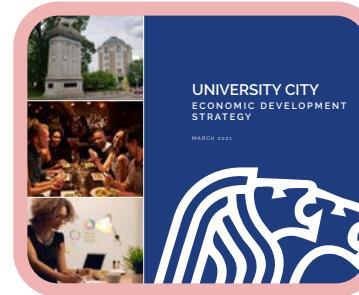
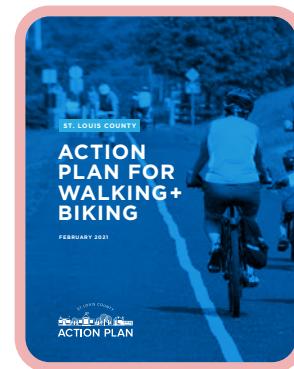
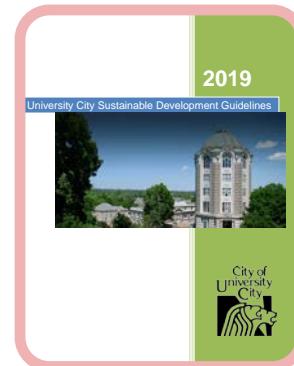
These guidelines include a complete list of sustainable development and building practices, broken down into what the City recommends, what it incentivizes, and what it requires. The guidelines are provided to developers, and are continually updated to include new ways to incorporate sustainable practices that do not hinder development.

## St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking (2021)

Following the passing of the St. Louis County Complete Streets Ordinance, the County created an action plan to help realize the goals of the Ordinance. The Action Plan was designed to guide decisions about infrastructure, programs, and policies related to active transportation options like walking or biking.

## STL 2030 Jobs Plan (2021)

This plan is an economic development plan for the entire St. Louis metropolitan area, created by Greater St. Louis, Inc. It focuses on inclusive growth and the creation of quality jobs in the region as tools to reduce racial and spatial disparities in income, health and wealth.



## Economic Development Strategy (2021)

This plan aims to create a long-term strategy for economic growth to help University City move forward in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The plan outlines key economic development principles and identifies ten districts with unique commercial identities to help guide where and how development strategies are implemented. This plan initiated work for the comprehensive plan by encouraging place-based growth strategies and identifying priority development areas.

## WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS PLAN?

The We Make U City Comprehensive Plan replaces the policy direction of past comprehensive plans. Beyond serving as an update, this plan is unique for University City in several ways, including that it:

- » Draws from plans and studies that have been conducted since the last plan was adopted relating to a broad range of topics, including physical development, housing, transportation, community amenities and facilities, and more;
- » Takes a character-based approach to planning for future change and development, which emphasizes how the city should evolve to address its look, feel, and built form, rather than only focusing on land use (see more information on the benefits of a character based approach in chapter 4); and
- » Includes an implementation strategy with a structure for monitoring progress and integrating into other City processes and ordinances.

## 1.2 GUIDING IDEAS

***The following guiding ideas for this plan were developed based on the concerns, values, and ideas expressed by the community, and are supported by analysis conducted as a part of the planning process.***

University City has experienced population decline in recent decades. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to recommend specific actions that can be taken to manage a smaller population and make choices that will positively impact the quality of life of all community members.

The city has a wide variety of housing types which are organized into distinctive neighborhoods. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to celebrate what makes these neighborhoods special while addressing the fact that not all community members have historically had access to the same quality of neighborhoods. It also recognizes that existing housing may not match future preferences and demands, especially for young people and older adults.

Historic practices of exclusion based on race have shaped how the St. Louis region—and University City—have developed, including policies that have restricted where people live and the amenities and services to which they have access. This history has led to significant segregation within the city, a pattern which does not promote equity or an inclusive community. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to address these challenges and create a policy guide to help provide freedom of movement (choice in where to live and spend time) to community members. It will help to create broader choices in where residents live and how they access amenities and services they need. This will require making tough choices in the intermediate term.

Major flooding and storm events have impacted the city in recent decades, inundating neighborhoods and destroying property and displacing residents. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to share a vision for the physical environment in flood prone areas and all areas vulnerable to storm damage. This plan recognizes that development should be generally discouraged or significantly adapted in these areas.

While University City was shaped by the streetcar system, over time the automobile has become the dominant form of transportation, which has created barriers for non-car users. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to make it easier and safer for people of all ages to move through the city on foot or by bicycle, transit, or with other mobility devices, and to better connect neighborhoods by sidewalk, pathways, and other safe and comfortable routes. These changes also better support local businesses by creating connection with the neighborhoods and promote a more sustainable city.

University City has a range of amenities and services, including a mix of retail and restaurants in the Loop, along Olive Blvd, and in several other locations. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to “fill in the gaps,” and improve access in parts of the city that are not as well served by the amenities and services, including encouraging a more useful mix in some locations.

University City has many parks and open spaces that are well distributed across the city. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to put forth a long-term strategy for maintenance and to consider how parks and open spaces might better serve the city’s needs.

In part because of the variety of housing stock, residents of University City come from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to continue to “make space for everyone,” and maintain that level of diversity with an eye towards making a stronger community where all citizens feel welcome and valued. This can be done by actions such as creating more housing choice and building social/community infrastructure through gathering places that are welcoming to all.

Climate change will bring more frequent storm events and increased temperatures. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to embrace policies focused on resilience and adaptation and to embrace proactive sustainability practices.

Washington University is a major institution that owns property within University City; the institution will likely continue to purchase property. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to define mutually beneficial and equitable arrangements whereby the University and the City can partner and share the benefits of improvements to the city’s physical environment. For example, a current priority of the University City Board of Education and students is improved infrastructure. Partnership on this issue between Washington University, the City, and the schools would have shared benefits for all entities.

The success of University City Schools is critical to the future of the city’s ability to attract and retain families with children. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity build a framework to coordinate with the schools to strengthen the community and make opportunities for youth a top priority. Quality public education also advances equity in the city and increases home values.

University City government has experienced challenges in recent years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, flooding, and storm damage. The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to build from recent improvements in governance to recommit to transparency, improve cooperation between departments, and create systems that allow community members to continue to be productively and positively engaged in planning and policymaking.

## METRICS FOR EVALUATING SUCCESS

Performance metrics will be important in assessing progress in implementation of the comprehensive plan. Two of the most fundamental metrics that should be used in evaluating this plan are the following:

- » **Demographic differences by census tract.** The diversity of University City is one of its great strengths, including but not limited to ethnic, racial, and income diversity. However, it is an explicit focus of this plan to start to address historic patterns of segregation and to foster a more integrated community where people of different demographics live in proximity to each other and spend time together. For this reason, a decrease in demographic difference by census tract would be an indicator of successful implementation.
- » **Number of community members required to purchase flood insurance.** Currently, there are many community members who live in flood-prone areas of the city. As it is a focus of this plan to both support efforts to minimize the impacts of flooding and reduce the number of people who live in or own property in flood prone areas, a reduction in the number of community members required to purchase flood insurance would be a significant indicator of successful implementation.

In addition to these two core overarching metrics, other metrics associated with certain action items will be developed as part of the implementation strategy for the plan as described in chapter 5, pg. 117.

## 1.3 REGIONAL CONTEXT

*Planning for the future of University City requires an understanding of the broader region, how the city is situated within it, and how the region's evolution over time is reflected in the city's physical environment today.*

### GEOGRAPHIC POSITION

University City is an inner-ring, "streetcar suburb"<sup>7</sup> in St. Louis County, Missouri, and shares its eastern boundary with the City of St. Louis. The distinctive neighborhoods, historic architecture, and integrated parks and open spaces that residents of this bedroom community enjoy today, are products of both local leadership and broader regional forces. In the early 20th century, University City was developed intentionally as a model city, as part of the national City Beautiful movement. A significant influence was the specific vision of Edward Gardner Lewis, who saw an opportunity for "a residential community with comfortable homes for people of an upper-middle-class background."<sup>8</sup>

But it is also a reflection of regional forces, as the demand for new types of communities and an alternative to conventional city living grew, and regional transportation networks made that evolution possible. Similarly, by the middle of the 20th century, local, regional, and national programs and policies led to racial segregation in University City.

Today University City benefits from proximity to major attractions in the area, including Forest Park, Lambert St. Louis International Airport, the Gateway Arch, and riverfront attractions. It is also connected to the region by major roads and highways including I-170, Delmar Boulevard, Forest Park Parkway, Olive Boulevard, and Skinker Boulevard. University City is also fortunate to have two MetroLink stations, connecting the southern portions of the city to other parts of the region with frequent public transportation service.

At six square miles, University City is bordered by several other communities, including St. Louis to the east; Vinita Park; Hanley Hills; Wellston; and Pagedale to the north; Overland and Olivette to the west, and Ladue and Clayton to the south. (See University City Context Map on pg. 9.) Each of these communities has distinctive characteristics and a unique relationship to the city. The city also borders the main campus of Washington University in St. Louis, and the University owns numerous properties in, and therefore has a significant presence in the city. University City's future, therefore, is intrinsically linked to its ability to leverage its position in the region and capitalize upon opportunities to collaborate with its neighbors.



## SEGREGATION

One of the most important factors shaping the St. Louis region, as is the case in many American cities and regions, is a history of racial segregation. The patterns of segregation seen in the region today originated during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as St. Louis grew into an industrial city. With this growth came increased racial and ethnic diversity, as European immigrants and Black Americans migrated to the city for the promise of economic opportunity, and, in the case of Black Americans, freedom from the Jim Crow south. In the early and mid-20th century, white St. Louisans began leaving the city for St. Louis County's growing suburban municipalities. Housing growth in the county was fueled by federally incentivized home ownership programs which largely excluded Black and ethnic communities from home ownership, and therefore, opportunities to build generational wealth. The division established by this program and other racially motivated local and regional practices persist today and are related to other measures of disparity: income, health, education, and more. (See figure on pg. 11.)

University City is one of a few municipalities in the region, other than the City of St. Louis, that contains within its boundaries a clear racial and economic transition from predominantly white communities to predominantly Black communities. The city has an opportunity to be a regional leader in reversing these patterns and the impacts they have imposed on Black and other ethnic and racial minority communities.

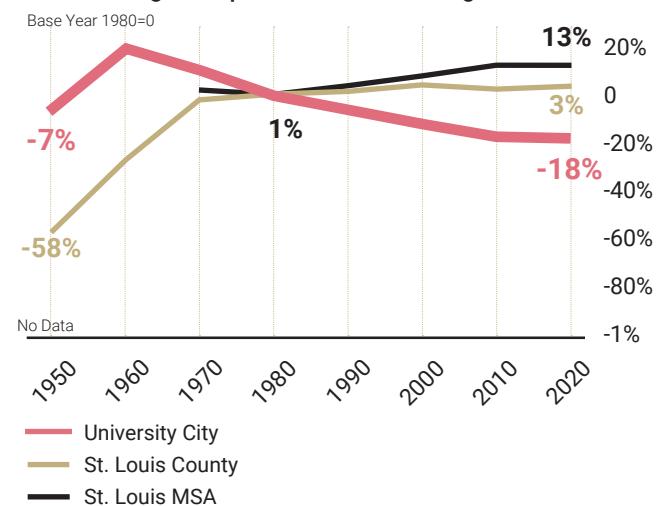
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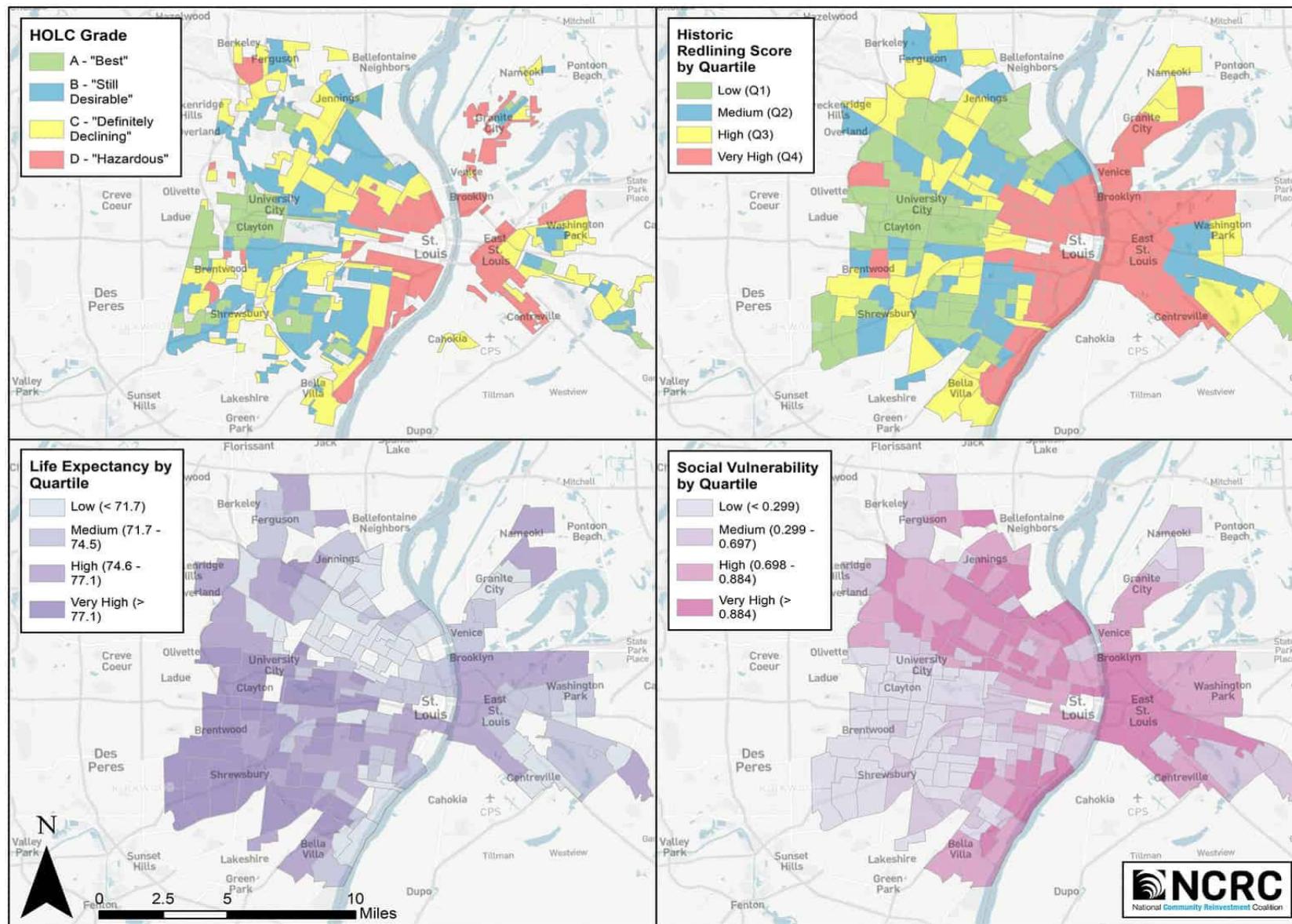
"In drafting an urban renewal proposal in 1962, University City officials candidly feared that redevelopment might bring with it an influx of "lower class transients and Negroes." Once that transition was under way, the City responded with efforts to stem blockbusting (including a ban on "for sale" signs) with its own fair housing ordinance. But such efforts were trumped by realtors who scoffed at "social do-gooders" and continued to steer white clients away from "changing" neighborhoods. In 1970, the Post-Dispatch observed bluntly that University City was "no longer one of the more desirable areas of St. Louis County," citing as its first reason "a great influx of minority groups." In the eyes of local civil rights groups, realtors' "concession" to fair housing amounted to little more than giving up on pockets of the County (especially inner-ring suburbs such as University City) in order to protect the rest." - excerpt from Mapping Decline, by Colin Gordon.<sup>11</sup>

## POPULATION TRENDS

The population in University City has decreased from a historic high of 51,249 in 1960 to 35,065 in 2020.<sup>9</sup> The rate of population decline stabilized over the last decade and the larger metropolitan area has experienced a low-moderate population increase during the same time. However, the St. Louis Metro area population is projected to decline from 2.8 million in 2022 to 2.77 million by 2050.<sup>10</sup> In light of this, it is important that University City focuses improving quality of life for existing residents and embracing strategies to manage a smaller population in a sustainable and equitable way.

St. Louis Region Population Percent Change





HOLC: Home Owner's Loan Corporation

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The St. Louis region has evolved tremendously from its founding as a fur trading post, to industrial powerhouse, to a diverse regional economy, mirroring larger changes in the national economy.

Today, regional economic strengths and priorities for economic development include advanced manufacturing, agricultural technology, mobility and logistics, bioscience and health innovation, financial and business services, and geospatial technology.

University City can play a role in supporting and attracting job growth in these industries by aligning its economic development efforts with the STL 2030 Jobs Plan, created by Greater St. Louis, Inc.

## MOVING FORWARD AS A REGIONAL PARTNER

The comprehensive plan recognizes that regional conditions and trends will continue to impact how the city evolves. Through the plan, it is the hope and expectation that local policies and projects will be coupled with efforts for regional collaboration. These opportunities for collaboration are embedded into many of the plan's actions described in chapter 3.

## ENDNOTES

1. University City Community Vision 2040, July 2022
2. University City Comprehensive Plan, 2005 and 2009 Update
3. University City Council Resolution 2017-10
4. University City Council Resolution 2014-3
5. Report to City Council – Tax-Exempt Property Owned by Washington University: Findings, Facts and Recommendations, University City-Washington University Advisory Committee, July 30, 2015
6. Resolution 2013-17 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan for the City of University City, prepared by Trailnet and H3 Studio, adopted by University City City Council October 14, 2013
7. A streetcar suburb is a residential community named after the streetcars that helped fuel their growth and development in the 19th and early 20th centuries as they reduced travel times from city centers.
8. University City website, [www.icitymo.org/15/History](http://www.icitymo.org/15/History)
9. US Decennial Census, P1; 1950-2020
10. Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060, U.S. Census Bureau, February 2020.
11. Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City (PennPress, 2008), pg. 87-88



## 2. PLAN PROCESS

*The planning effort was designed to ensure that decisions are informed both by technical analysis and the insight of stakeholders and the public.*

The planning process focused on providing clarity about the work to a diverse community, developing widespread awareness of the opportunities to participate, and promoting open, transparent community-focused events and activities with a low barrier to participate. A variety of methods and forums were used, recognizing the fact that not everyone is willing or able to engage in the same ways. Public engagement was conducted concurrently with technical analysis on land use, economic conditions, and other topics so that community input could inform the direction of the analysis and, in turn, the analysis could be shared and help guide the focus of the engagement.

### CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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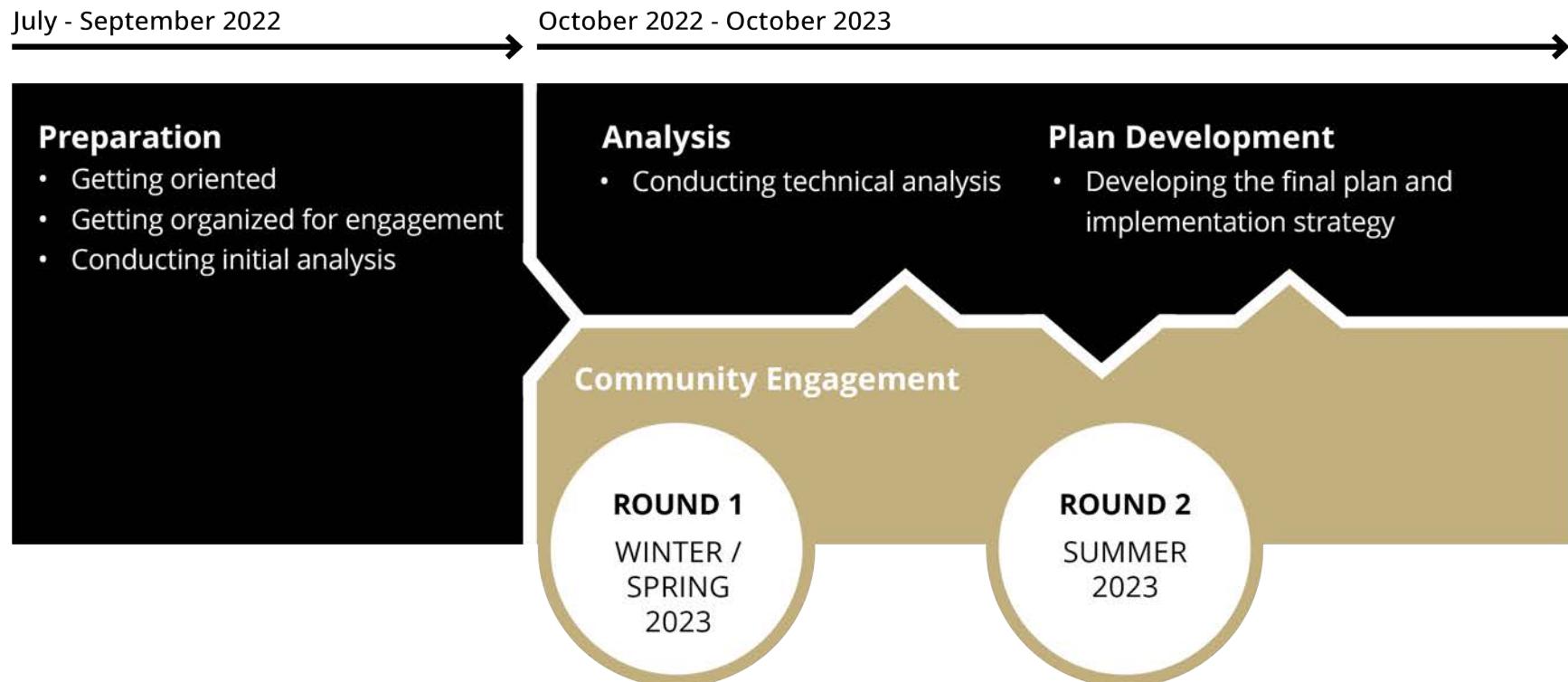
## 2.1 OVERVIEW AND SCHEDULE

*Article VIII, Section 62 and 63 of the University City Charter gives the responsibility of a city master plan to the Plan Commission. This Commission has (authorized by Council) guided major activities through the process. Following the Community Vision 2040<sup>1</sup> process, the comprehensive planning process took place over an approximately 15-month period that began in July 2022 and continued through October 2023 (plan adoption in November 2023). It was shaped by input from the community, a volunteer Advisory Committee, and many stakeholders and community members, as well as City staff and the City Council. It was also informed by recent and current plans and studies as well as original technical analysis.*

The Comprehensive Planning process was authorized by City Council in a special session July 25, 2022.<sup>2</sup>

The Planning process and timeline was presented to City Council in November 2022.<sup>3</sup>

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TIMELINE



## 2.2 WHO WAS INVOLVED

*We Make U City is the community's plan. Throughout the process, community members participated and offered hundreds of ideas that helped to shape the plan's actions. A summary of who was involved in the process is provided below.*

### PLAN COMMISSION

#### Land Use and Development

The citizen-governed Plan Commission is structurally responsible for overseeing the planning process and recommending adoption. Their direction was crucial to the work.

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

#### Process and Topical Expertise

A volunteer Advisory Committee helped guide the plan process, with a focus especially on outreach and engagement. The group was representative of the city's many diverse perspectives. The Advisory Committee consisted of all Plan Commission members and others who were identified as bringing valuable perspective to the process. They worked closely with staff and planning consultant team.

### CITY COUNCIL

#### Advice and Adoption

Comprehensive plans must be formally adopted by the City Council members who have a central role in implementation. City Council also provided key insight during the process into the City's opportunities and needs.

### STAFF

#### Project Management and Local Knowledge

City staff supported and helped to coordinate the work and also provided local knowledge of the City's codes, policies, and programs, and expertise relevant to each element of the plan.

### PUBLIC AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS

#### Targeted Input and Critical Insight

Public involvement was vital to the plan's success. Focus groups, stakeholder interviews, workshops, online tools, in-person events, and paper surveys offered a variety of ways for the community share their thoughts throughout the process.

### CONSULTANTS

#### Process Leadership and Expertise

A consultant team worked closely with the staff, the Plan Commission, and the Advisory Committee to facilitate the process and share experience from other similar communities.

### CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

#### Specific Guidance

Throughout the process City boards and commissions were consulted to provide guidance on key focus areas for the plan and consult on implementation.

## 2.3 TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

*In addition to analyzing public input, this plan draws from existing and original technical analysis to arrive at recommendations.*

### UNDERSTANDING EXISTING CONDITIONS

Careful analysis of relevant existing conditions, including a review of population and demographic data, existing land use, infrastructure, and regional economic trends was conducted as a part of the planning process. This information was shared with the Advisory Committee for review and comment, and the team supplemented and expanded upon the analysis based on their feedback. The original analysis was considered in tandem with the data from other recent plans and studies. Key findings from this analysis associated with each of the plan's goals are included in chapter 3.

### PREPARING THE VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

The vision, goals, objectives, and actions included in this plan were developed through a process of considering first the outcomes of the Community Vision 2040 process and the foundational documents (see chapter 1, pg. 2-5), including the 2021 Economic Development Strategy. Then opportunities were explored and examined relative to key topics such as housing, land use and development, transportation and mobility, the natural environment, and community facilities and services. The focus was on identifying tools, incentives, and strategies that either existed and could be better leveraged or that needed to be created. The planning team began with the broadest aspirations that could be expressed for the plan (vision) and worked through the process to craft specific implementable actions (policies, programs, and projects) that were informed both by the information analyzed and the public input that was collected.

### CREATING THE FUTURE CHARACTER AND LAND USE MAP

The Future Character and Land Use Map and associated character type descriptions will help project the future pattern for physical development in the city between now and 2040. The map was developed using the analysis of both existing conditions and current development trends, alongside comments received from stakeholders and the public. It provides development guidelines and a policy framework for future changes in land use and development.

## 2.4 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

*Ensuring that community members had the opportunity for meaningful participation to shape the plan was a critical part of the planning process. The team utilized the following formats and tools to achieve this.*

### PROJECT WEBSITE

A branded project website, WeMakeUCity.com, served as a hub of information during the process. This was a valuable “onestop” resource for information. Community members could learn about the planning process, register for workshops, sign up for email updates, and participate in online activities.

### OUTREACH AND PUBLICITY

Raising awareness about the planning process was multifaceted in order to ensure that all segments of the population had the chance to get involved. Outreach was spearheaded by Plan Commission and Advisory Committee members, who leveraged their networks and communications channels to spread the word about the planning effort. Flyers/rack cards, the project web page, social media, press releases and other materials were also used to broaden the reach. Publicity was generated through the City’s ROARS newsletter, press releases, community organization email announcements, church bulletins, and other sources. The process had high visibility at community events with interactive displays and activities staffed by volunteers.

### SPECIAL OUTREACH TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND TASK FORCES

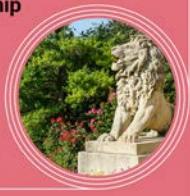
The City’s boards and commissions were consulted at key moments in the process and provided feedback on draft concepts and actions. Ultimately, it is the expectation that this plan’s actions will be embraced by City boards and commissions and integrated into their work. These included:

- » Commission on Senior Issues
- » Park Commission
- » Commission on Storm Water Issues
- » Traffic Commission
- » Green Practices Commission
- » Urban Forestry Commission
- » Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
- » Board of the University City Loop Special Business District
- » Library Board

**We want to hear from you, so we're sweetening the deal!**

Share your thoughts on U City's future and be entered to win a gift card to Jilly's Cupcakes or a Centennial Commons Membership

**WeMake  
UCITY**  
Resilient. Livable. Prosperous.  
Learn more at [WeMakeUCity.com](http://WeMakeUCity.com)



**Picture the Possibilities**

Shape the future of University City!

**WeMake  
UCITY**  
Resilient. Livable. Prosperous.

There are many ways to get involved!  
Visit [WeMakeUCity.com](http://WeMakeUCity.com) for more information.



## SHAPE THE FUTURE (ROUND 1)

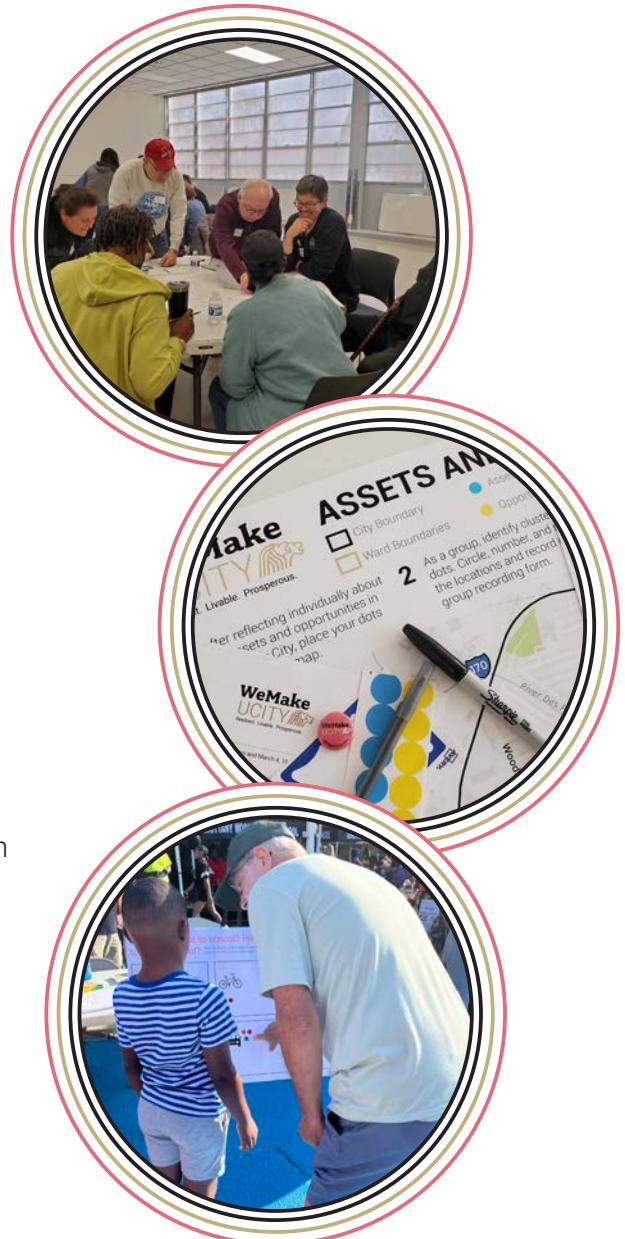
The first round of public engagement, Shape the Future, was designed to advance the work conducted during the Community Vision 2040 process and to develop more specific ideas for the comprehensive plan. This round of engagement was held between mid-January to late-April 2023. Input was gathered in the following ways:

- » In-person workshops – Two workshops were held at which community members were invited to discuss three critical questions and identify assets and opportunities in the city through a mapping activity
- » Surveys – Through online and paper surveys, community members had the opportunity to rate and comment on draft vision, goals, and objectives, as well as share thoughts about assets and opportunities in the city through a mapping activity. Surveys were broadly publicized and made available both on the project website and in paper formats at City Hall, the Public Library, and the University City School District Office. Surveys were also distributed to University City High School students and through applications to SHED's home repair program. An abbreviated survey was distributed city-wide through ROARS.
- » Community events and meetings – Advisory Committee members shared materials, promoted online engagement, and distributed paper surveys at several events in 2023 including:
  - January 21 - Loop Ice Carnival
  - February 5 - One U City Spice + Spark Chili Cook-off
  - March 11 - One U City World Tour.
  - April 29-30 - U City in Bloom Plant Sale
- » Student focus groups – Two focus groups were conducted with University City High School students.

## PICTURE THE POSSIBILITIES (ROUND 2)

The second round of engagement, Picture the Possibilities, was designed to test preliminary direction for the plan, and was conducted in July and August 2023. Input was gathered in the following ways:

- » An in-person open house - The in-person open house included boards requesting feedback on guiding ideas for the plan, draft key actions and a draft Future Character and Land Use Map.
- » Three virtual open houses - Planning team members presented the key actions, allowed for comment, and provided information on how to participate online.
- » Surveys - Community members could comment on the same materials as at the in-person Open House via paper or online surveys, including providing comments on an interactive map. A full set of draft actions was also posted online for comment. Paper surveys were made available at City Hall and the Public Library.
- » Community events and meetings – Three pop-ups at community events in 2023 were held at:
  - July 25 - U City Summer Band
  - August 1 - National Night Out / Back-to-School Rally
  - August 12 - One U City Back-to-School Kickback



## WHAT WE HEARD

Highlights of comments received include the following. More complete summaries can be found in the appendices.

### Round 1 Comments on Goals and Preliminary Objectives

#### Goal A: Preserve & enhance great places.

- » Favor local business and “mom and pop” stores over chain stores
- » Concern about gentrification, particularly along Olive and in the Third Ward
- » Desire to increase home ownership in the Third Ward
- » Desire to see cleaner streets, eliminate litter, and improve facades
- » Desire to maintain diversity of business, particularly in the Loop
- » Need to address flooding

#### Goal B: Advance shared prosperity.

- » Skepticism about the benefits of tax abatements but also recognition of the need for growth
- » Concern about losing diversity of businesses (ethnic diversity, size of business, local business)
- » Need for more specific recommendations
- » Need to improve University City schools
- » Need to address flooding

#### Goal C: Connect community.

- » Greater emphasis should be placed on cycling access, walkability, and transit (improve bike lanes and cross walks)
- » Improve roads (some argue this should come before improving bike lanes or sidewalks)
- » Transit should be practical and useful, not replicating the trolley
- » Some concern generally about any transit and want the City to focus on roads and walking/biking
- » Concern over diversity, including equal services across University City to services and infrastructure

#### Goal D: Leverage assets.

- » Desire for Centennial Commons and the pool to reopen
- » Recognition that trees are a valuable asset beyond just those located in parks
- » Many residents are unfamiliar with Cunningham Industrial Area
- » Desire to see improved park maintenance

#### Goal E: Strengthen livability.

- » Flood mitigation/stormwater management expressed as the top concern by a significant margin. Participants noted the lack of communication by the government in developing and enacting flood mitigation
- » Participants emphasized the need to clean the River Des Peres before another flood
- » Participants noted the need to stop building in flood plains
- » Desire to utilize coordination with other municipalities and generally limit the cost of emergency services
- » Some desire general road improvements

#### Goal F: Improve collaboration.

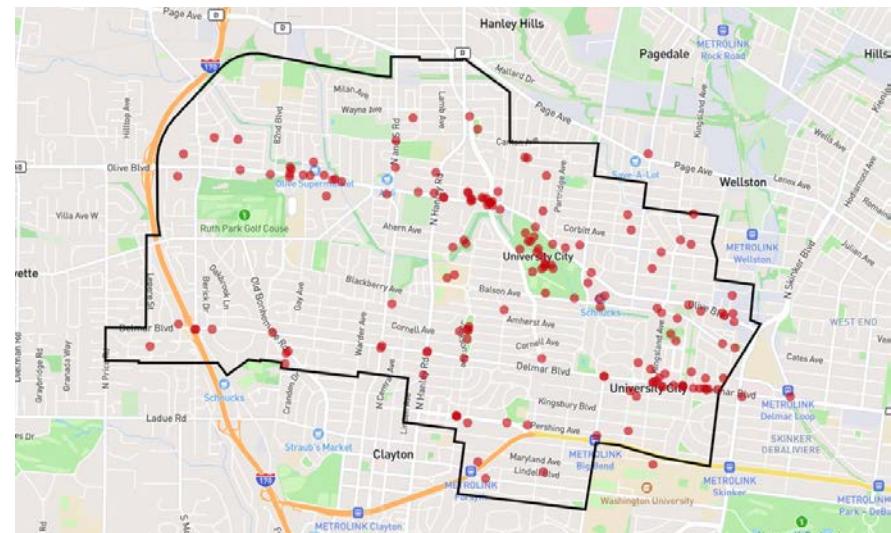
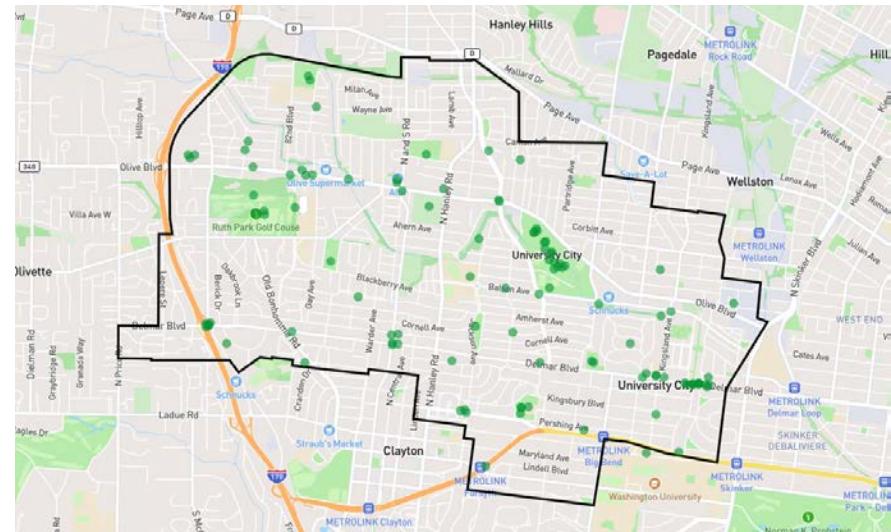
- » Desire to see Washington University contribute more financially to the City and belief that the university has received too many tax breaks
- » Participants would like to see improvements in the school system and in perception of the schools; some note an unfair negative perception of the schools while others say they need dramatic improvement to serve as a draw to the city
- » Participants note that lack of internal government cooperation and communication between the government and citizens
- » Some express concern of crime and the need for crime reduction

## Round 1 Top Identified Assets

- » The Loop: The area is a walkable hub for community that supports diverse local businesses and has desirable character.
- » Heman Park: The park has a recreation facility, swimming pool, community center, multiple fields, and ample greenspace.
- » Existing neighborhood activity centers: There are many walkable nodes of concentrated businesses and services at multiple locations in the community (The Loop, Olive/Midland, Jackson/Pershing, Delmar/North and South, Forsyth/Forest Park Parkway, Delmar/McKnight).
- » Residential character: Participants identified diverse areas in the city with desirable residential character.
- » Other parks: Other parks were identified less often than Heman Park, but were generally recognized as assets in the community.

## Round 1 Top Identified Opportunities

- » The Loop: The area has potential for infill development and more small businesses. Some participants wanted to see more effort taken to fill vacancies. Others noted dissatisfaction with the trolley.
- » Heman Park: Many want improvements to existing facilities, repairs from flooding damage, and improved connectivity to surrounding residential areas.
- » International District on western end of Olive Blvd: Participants recognized this district as an underutilized asset that could support more dense/intense land uses and showcase the unique businesses currently in the district.
- » Central section of Olive Blvd: This section of Olive includes a significant number of vacant parcels and lacks pedestrian and bike infrastructure.
- » Areas impacted by 2022 flooding: Participants want the vacant and condemned properties addressed and want proactive measures taken to prevent further severe flooding.
- » Connectivity by non-motorized transportation: Participants identified many areas in the city where cross-walks, sidewalks, and bicycling infrastructure would improve mobility.
- » Third Ward: Many identified a need to address vacancy, improve housing maintenance, and improve access to services and amenities in the Third Ward.



Data Source: Planning NEXT analysis of public input

## Round 2 Comments on Draft Actions

### **Actions highlighted under Goal A: Preserve & enhance great places.**

- » Higher density housing does not belong in all areas of the city; while large, undeveloped areas can accommodate multifamily residential developments, some single-family neighborhoods cannot.
- » Appropriate zoning is important to provide clarity.
- » Tree planting needs to be strategic so that new trees are planted where they can be of benefit but maintenance can be managed.
- » There is a lack of communication about development projects that are pending and community members don't know how to get information.

### **Actions highlighted under Goal B: Advance shared prosperity.**

- » The International District should be a focus, and the City should consider offering incentives and working to attract businesses there.
- » Design of new development along Olive Blvd. is important, especially to better address flooding in the area and to improve sidewalks and bike lanes.
- » Increasing homeownership in the Third Ward, promoting pride in property ownership, and addressing long-term disparities should be a top priority.
- » Design of new residential should be compatible with existing.
- » Encourage selective increase of density and vertical mix of uses.
- » TIF district funding should focus on top priorities for the community.
- » Do not emphasize ward differences in the plan and in policymaking.

### **Actions highlighted under Goal C: Connect community.**

- » Enhancing opportunities for biking and walking should include improving existing trailways, expanding dedicated bike lanes, and other efforts.
- » Bike lanes may not serve the entire population (e.g. older adults); other improvements, such as access to transit service, are needed.
- » There are many youth programs, but the idea of a civic-focused program and especially a focus on places for youth to spend time, would add value to the city.
- » While Olive Blvd. should be a major focus of the plan, the experience of traversing to and along the Loop also needs attention.

### **Actions highlighted under Goal D: Leverage assets.**

- » Park investments should focus on improvements and upgrades to existing parks, as well as maintenance, operating hours, and programming.
- » More attention to and investment in historic buildings is needed, coupled with a focus on public art.

### **Actions highlighted under Goal E: Strengthen livability.**

- » Flooding can be anticipated to continue and it is absolutely critical that the City focuses on a multifaceted approach to address, including improvements to hard infrastructure, encouraging low impact development, and other measures.
- » Focus on building out existing activity nodes and identifying new nodes, including support for small and local businesses.
- » Sidewalk connections to activity nodes are needed.

### **Actions highlighted under Goal F: Improve collaboration.**

- » The City needs to reset its relationship with Washington University, including around physical development in the Loop and youth education and mentoring.
- » Simplification of boards and commissions, and clearer, more-consistent communication between City entities is desired.

## Round 2 Comments on Future Character and Land Use Map

- » Support for treatment of the River des Peres to capitalize on the river for recreation and manage flooding.
- » Certain neighborhoods are primarily residential and should remain so; do not develop mixed-use nodes in certain areas.
- » Traffic conditions are problematic in some parts of the city where residential is directly adjacent to regional retail (e.g., Markets at Olive).
- » Address litter, poor maintenance, and landscaping along Olive Blvd.
- » Affordable housing options should be increased in certain areas, but high quality materials should be used.
- » Enhance parks and open space.

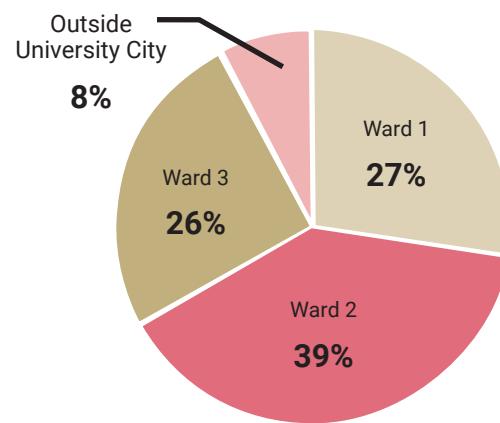


## WHO WE HEARD FROM

Questionnaires were used throughout the process, which asked information from participants about where they lived and their demographic characteristics (age, race, ethnicity, etc.). These results were evaluated and used to determine groups what were underrepresented so that efforts could be made to better target those who were not participating.

- » Over 650 people participated in workshops, open houses, online activities, paper surveys, or focus groups.
- » Based on exit questionnaires, respondents under the age of 18 and over the age of 65 were overrepresented compared to the general population of University City.
- » Of exit questionnaire respondents, Ward 2 is slightly overrepresented (39%) and Wards 1 and 3 are slightly underrepresented, at 27 % and 26%, respectively. (The current population breakdown for the Wards is 35%, 33%, and 31%, respectively.<sup>4</sup>
- » In response to being asked why participants care about the city, 91% indicated they live in the city, 33% indicated their family is in the city, 16% own a business or property in the city, 13% have kids in school in the city, and 14% work in the city.
- » Of those who responded to the survey, word of mouth was the primary way people heard about We Make U City (31%) followed by City communication (23%), other (21%) and social media (19%). Most respondents who indicated "other" as the method for learning about We Make U City heard about the engagement opportunities at a community event.

Percentage of Participants by Ward



## 2.5 PLAN STRUCTURE

*In addition to chapter 1, which presents an introduction to the plan, and chapter 2, which describes the process of developing the plan, chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the plan include the key information to set the long-term direction for the city.*

### CHAPTER 3 - GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

Chapter 3 presents the vision statement and six goals for the plan. Under each goal, major opportunities and challenges are described along with existing conditions relevant to each goal. The goals organize objectives and actions from the technical analysis and public input. All actions work in support of the goals and overall vision statement. Some actions are significant in scale and scope, functioning long-term to stretch the community in terms of its current services, ideas, policies, etc. Other actions are smaller in scope and can be achieved in a shorter time frame with fewer resources. Others represent ongoing work within the city which is essential to continue overall success.

### CHAPTER 4 - CHARACTER AND LAND USE

Chapter 4 provides information related to existing land use, a Framework Map that depicts key ideas that inform future land use, and the Future Character and Land Use Map, including one-page descriptions with images for each character type.

### CHAPTER 5 - IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 5 addresses implementation of the plan, including how to use the plan by integrating the work into City operations, capital improvements, and municipal decision-making. It also includes an implementation matrix that identifies primary responsible entities, additional partners, priorities, and timeframes for completion of each action. This is extremely important information for tracking and evaluating progress on implementation over time.

### STRUCTURE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan includes a vision statement and six goals, which reflect themes from the Community Vision 2040 process and community input. Each goal is supported by several objectives that organize the plan's 112 actions.

#### **Vision**

Captures the broadest aspirations for the City.

#### **Goals**

Intended results expressed in nontechnical terms for the plan's six topic areas. These represent overarching desired outcomes for the plan.

#### **Objectives**

Sub-themes within the goals that serve to organize actions.

#### **Actions**

Projects, policies or programs that are recommendations to be implemented.



## ENDNOTES

1. University City Community Vision 2040, July 2021
2. University City Council Resolution 2022-8
3. University City Council Minutes, November 8, 2022
4. Ward percentages are taken from a 4/11/22 City Council Presentation from a Study Session on Redistricting Text Amendments



### 3. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

*This chapter includes the plan's vision, goals, objectives, and actions, which have been developed based on both technical analysis and community insight.*

The six goals present the highest-level ideas about the future of the city and provide overarching structure. Objectives are identified under each goal and actions are organized under each objective. The actions are intended to be a mechanism to address major challenges in University City: historical inequities, flooding, a shrinking population, aging infrastructure, poor connectivity for those getting around without a car, and more. The goals, objectives, and actions create a pathway to the desired future that the community articulated in the Community Vision 2040,<sup>1</sup> and through the community engagement conducted for this comprehensive plan. Many of these ideas are also built upon work by University City boards, commissions, task forces, advisory committees, residents, and staff.

Some actions impact more than one of the challenges the city faces, while others are aimed at a single challenge. Some actions relate to ongoing initiatives (e.g., the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force). The continuation of these initiatives is important to the success of this plan.

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## VISION

*The vision statement was derived from the Community Vision 2040 process and community input. It is an overarching statement reflecting the highest level of aspiration for the community.*

**University City is a community that moves forward together to advance prosperity, opportunities, and resilience while preserving and enhancing the city's unique character.**

# GOALS

*The goals are intended results expressed in nontechnical terms. They represent overarching desired outcomes of the plan.*

## A. PRESERVE & ENHANCE GREAT PLACES

*Maintain existing character, while encouraging creative development, and building resilient, vibrant places.*

## B. ADVANCE SHARED PROSPERITY

*Support and expand a diverse local economy, quality education, and a strong workforce that improves opportunities for all residents.*

## C. CONNECT COMMUNITY

*Invest in community connection to increase mobility options, improve social cohesion, and encourage civic involvement.*

## D. LEVERAGE ASSETS

*Capitalize on University City's diverse cultural, historical, and physical assets while investing in new amenities.*

## E. STRENGTHEN LIVABILITY

*Enhance neighborhoods as the building block of the community and center of day-to-day life and provide community members with choice in where they live in the city.*

## F. IMPROVE COLLABORATION

*Prioritize commitment to action through responsive governance and strategic partnerships to realize the community's vision.*

# GOAL A: PRESERVE & ENHANCE GREAT PLACES.

*Maintain existing character, while encouraging creative development, and building resilient, vibrant places.*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

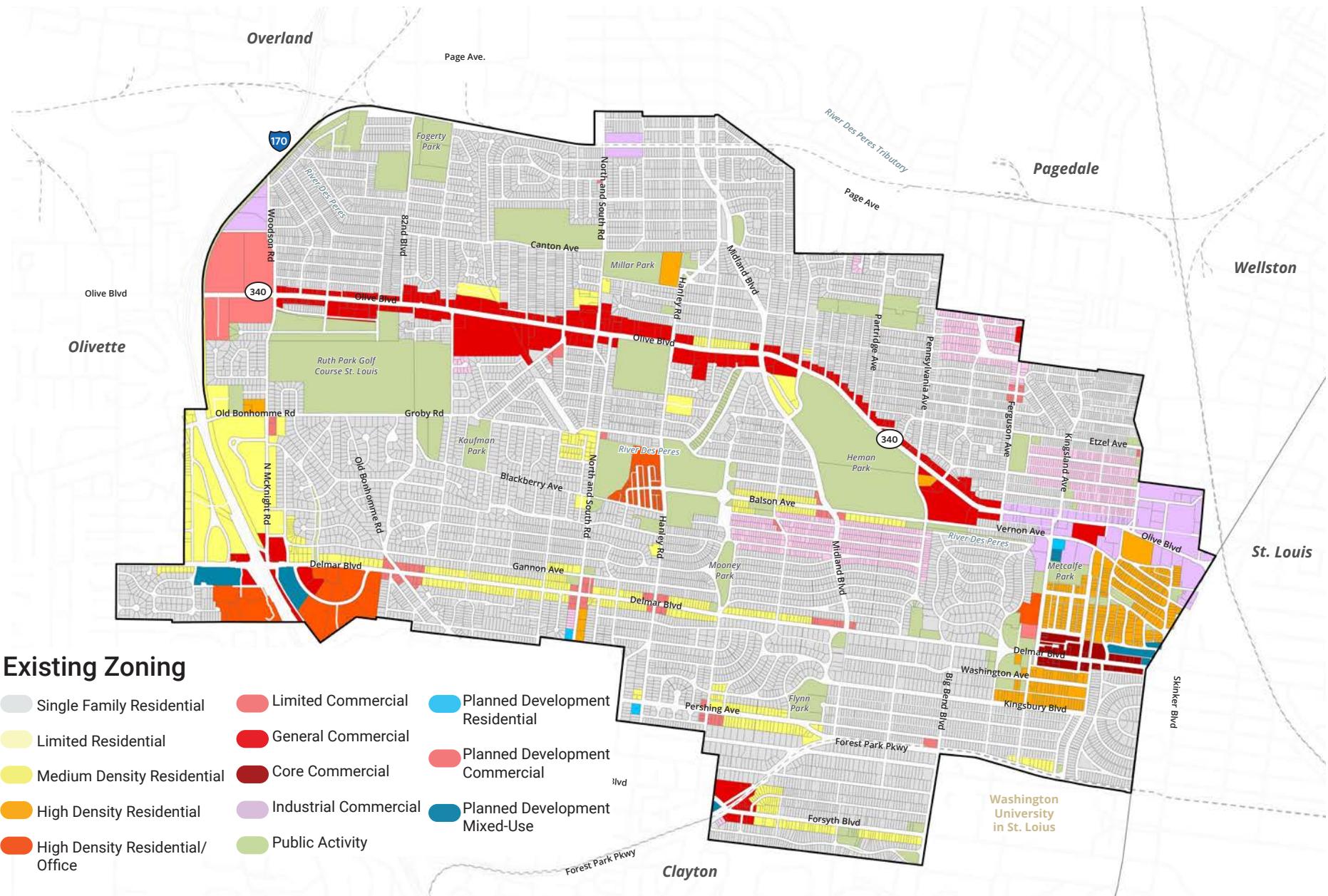
Following is a description of existing conditions that provide important context for Goal A. All maps presented represent the best information available in 2023.

### Code and Regulations

University City has historically been a “bedroom community;” its charter and code are reflective of a suburb inhabited largely by people who commute to another city for work. The code also reflects preference for automobile-based transportation. While the following discussion emphasizes the zoning section of the code, other sections (for example, Traffic, Floodplain Management, Building and Construction) will also need to be revisited in order to achieve the objectives of this plan. For example, the Traffic Code is designed to move automobile traffic smoothly and efficiently. Revisiting this section of the code to consider how to make the community more walkable and how to slow traffic in areas where community members gather is essential.

University City's current zoning allows for different uses in defined districts. Single Family Residential is the most prevalent use (approximately 50% of the city), with some smaller residential areas zoned for Medium and High Density Residential. The main commercially-zoned areas are along Olive Blvd. (General Commercial) and in the Delmar Loop (Core Commercial). There are also several smaller commercial/mixed-use zones integrated into neighborhoods (Limited Commercial). Industrial Commercial is largely limited to the Cunningham Industrial Area. The city also has several areas of Planned Development, which can contain residential, commercial, or mixed uses. Planned Developments are more extensively reviewed by the City and typically allow greater flexibility or additional oversight on larger, more complex, or unique developments.

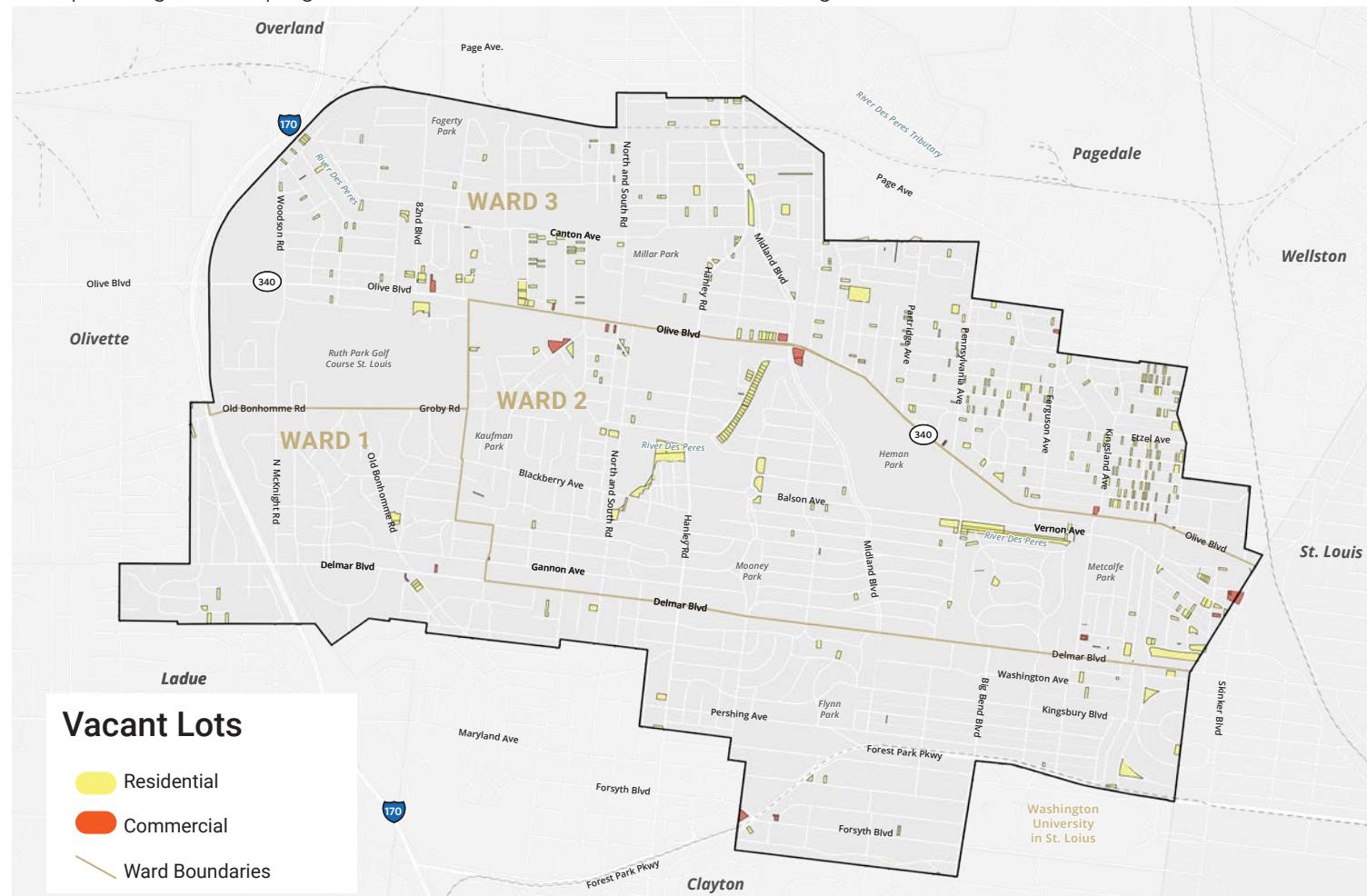
Generally, the existing zoning separates uses, only allowing one category (residential, commercial, etc.) of land use per district. Current zoning regulations in University City also contain standards that limit how tall buildings can be (most of the city's zoning districts currently limit building height to 35 feet), the density of housing allowed on each property, how many parking spaces must be built, and more. While the existing zoning has been effective in many ways, it does not prioritize building form. Decisions regarding new development are based more on whether uses proposed are compatible with existing uses than how it fits with existing community character. This can make it more challenging for the City to influence community character over time than if the zoning code was form-based. (For more information on form-based codes, see chapter 4, pg. 102.) Restrictive zoning practices can also create challenges to achieving the kind of development desired. For example, the large amount of Single Family Residential can drive up housing costs and use-based zoning and parking requirements can have the effect of spreading out buildings to make the city less walkable.



Data Source: University City 2023 GIS data

## Vacancy

There are hundreds of vacant commercial and residential properties in University City. Some areas of the city have higher concentrations of residential vacancy, and there is the most residential vacancy in the Third Ward, followed by the Second Ward, and then the First Ward. When left unaddressed, vacant properties can negatively impact surrounding neighborhoods, depressing property values, causing safety concerns, and reducing the quality of life for residents. Conversely, vacant sites can be proactively managed and designed to help positively contribute to the city, such as by incorporating landscaping and features that can assist with flood mitigation and reduction of stormwater runoff.

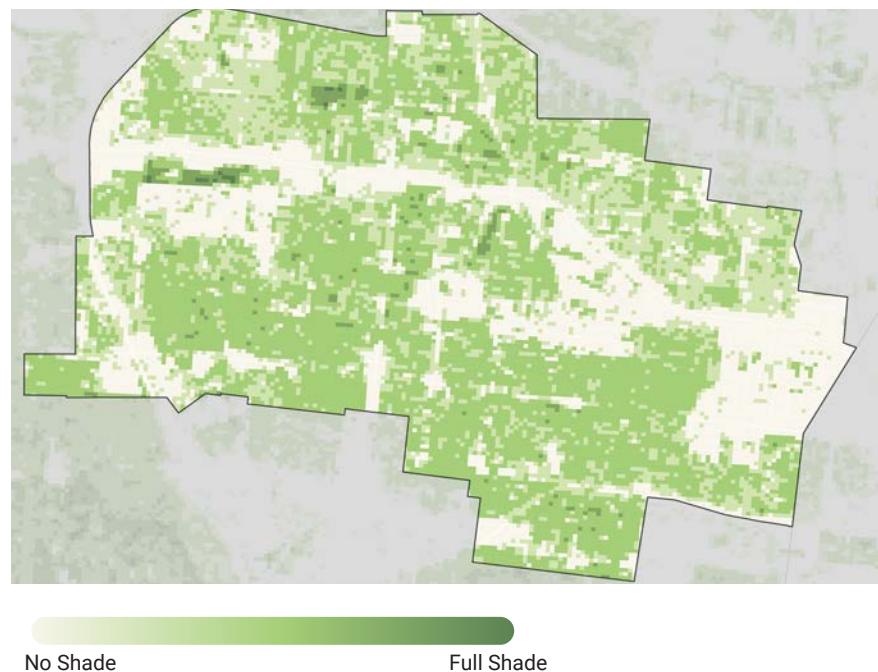


Data Source: 2023, St. Louis County Assessor GIS Data

## Tree Canopy

Data from the US Geological Services (USGS) National Land Cover Database (NLCD) shows the city's existing tree canopy. Parts of University City have many, large trees, which provide shade for a cooling effect, reduce energy use, help address stormwater runoff and erosion, and contribute aesthetic value. Other parts of the city, however, have very few trees. In these locations there is potential to expand the city's tree canopy over time, balancing the benefits of more trees with resource and maintenance considerations. University City has a designation as a "Tree City USA." It is important to address canopy coverage and tree diversity to further develop and maintain this important designation.

### Tree Coverage

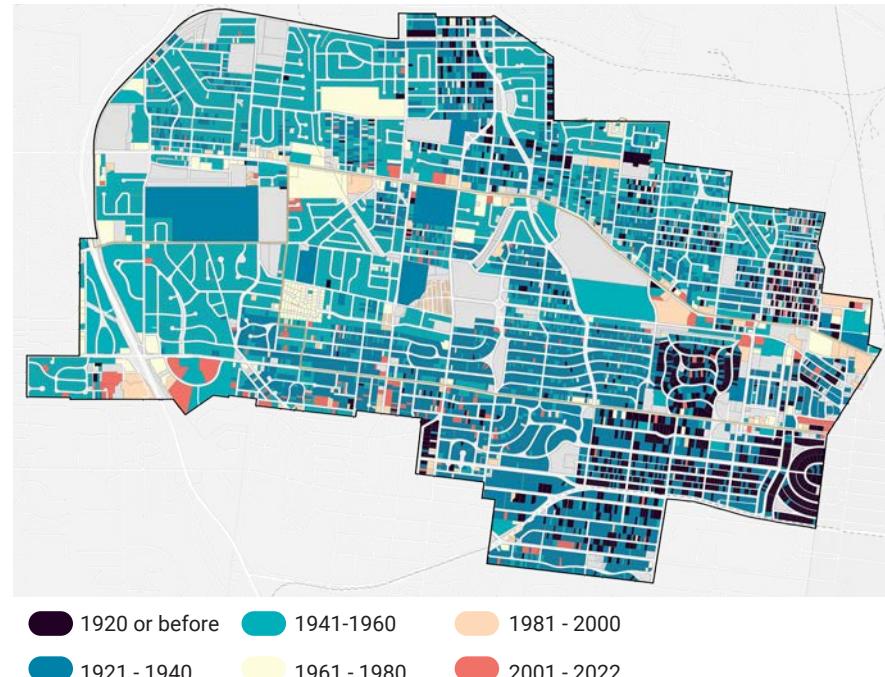


Data Source: 2021, USGS National Land Cover Database

## Property by Year Built

University City was built in phases, with the oldest properties dating from pre-1920, concentrated primarily in the southeast with scattered development in the northern part of the city. Through the mid-20th century, development extended further to the west. By the mid-20th century, much of the city had been developed. During the latter half of the 20th century through today, development has been scattered throughout the city, as it is redevelopment; examples of significant developments are near the I-170 interchanges and along Olive Blvd. Each era of development of the city has contributed to the variation in building styles and character that help to make the physical environment of University City interesting and dynamic.

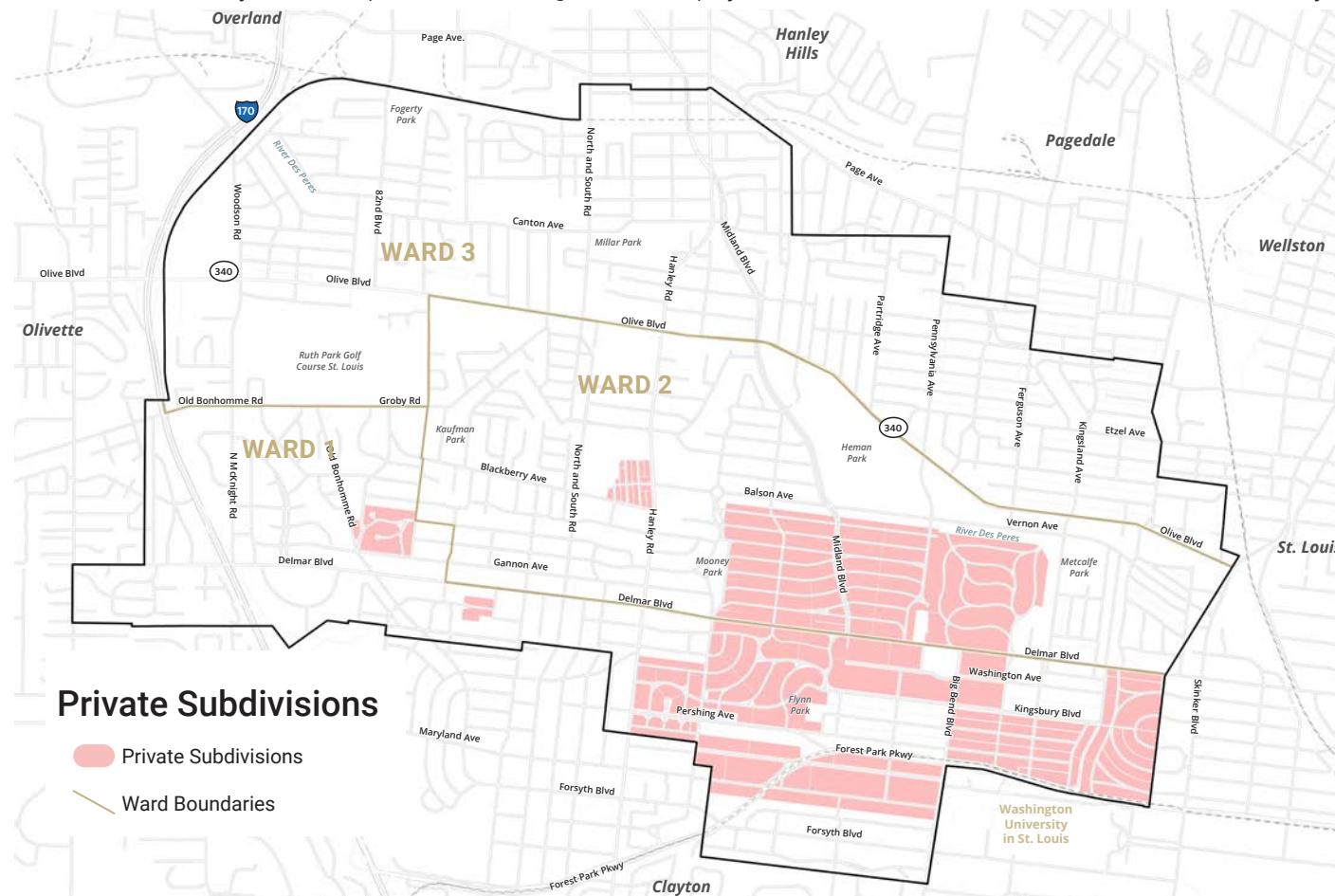
### Property by Year Built



Data Source: 2023, St. Louis County Assessor GIS Data

## Private Subdivisions

University City has thirteen private subdivisions that have impacted the city's development over time and that influence how it operates today. Private subdivisions have additional and often more restrictive rules about what can be built (primarily limited to single-family residential) and character (building materials, height setbacks, and landscaping). Rules set by private subdivisions can also include prohibiting homeowners from renting their homes. Private subdivisions have provided a mechanism through which certain areas have been maintained and managed, which in turn has helped conserve limited resources for the City, generated a sense of belonging to individual neighborhoods, supported property values, and encouraged some community members to remain in the city. At the same time, they can also present challenges to both physical and social cohesion with the rest of the city.



## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### A.1 Use proactive measures to promote development that aligns with the plan.

#### A.1.1 Update the City's codes to support the implementation of this plan.

The City's codes and regulations are the primary means of implementing the recommendations in this plan, including those illustrated on the Future Character and Land Use Map. In particular, updates to the zoning code and subdivision regulations are necessary for this plan to be implemented. The code sections that regulate traffic, floodplain management, historic preservation, urban forestry, building and construction should be reevaluated by the relevant boards, commissions, and staff.

#### EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT ZONING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

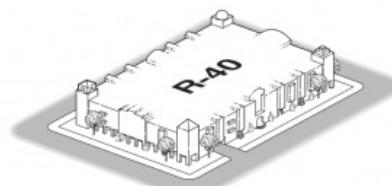
##### Conventional Zoning

Density use, FAR (floor area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, maximum building heights specified



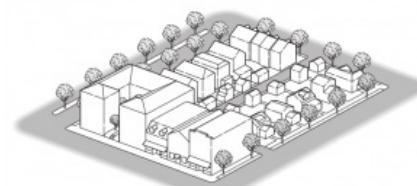
##### Zoning Design Guidelines

Conventional zoning requirements, plus frequency of openings and surface articulation specified



##### Form-Based Codes

Street and building types (or mix of types), build-to lines, number of floors, and percentage of built site frontage specified.



Source: Form-Based Code Institute

More information on form-based codes can be found in chapter 4, pg.102.

**A.1.2 Promote transit oriented development (TOD)<sup>2</sup> near MetroLink stations and major MetroBus routes.**

TOD can be supported by zoning changes, such as zoning overlay districts, which promote intensification of uses around transit nodes. This can benefit community members who do not have cars by concentrating amenities and services in areas that can be accessed by transit and can reduce car travel by making use of transit a more viable choice. This promotes more sustainable development patterns while supporting local businesses and serving as a focal point for investment.

**A.1.3 Regularly update building codes to:**

- i. **Align with most recent International Code Council (ICC)<sup>3</sup> Codes.**
- ii. **Implement universal design in keeping with the city's demographics toward an aging population.**

ICC codes set a standard for building codes that can be adopted by communities to promote health and safety without burdening property owners with unnecessary costs or requiring materials that are challenging to acquire or maintain. Using these standard best practices can help the City by saving resources and energy in making determinations on code requirements.

**A.1.4 Revise the zoning and building codes to remove barriers to green energy and green development (e.g., residential solar panels, electric vehicle charging stations).** The cumulative impact of small changes can help to make University City more sustainable through energy conservation. These changes can also save individual households money. The zoning code should be updated to help make it easier for property owners to integrate improvements that promote green energy.

## TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

Transit Oriented Development is development that creates dense, walkable, and mixed-use spaces near transit. Growth is focused along corridors or in activity centers. This creates "nodes" of walkable development that reduce the need for a vehicle. Growing a community in this manner improves housing options for those who rely on transit and increases the potential pool of transit riders in the future.

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability. The human-centered approach to design that Universal Design supports is user-friendly and convenient, but is also respectful of user dignity, rights, and privacy. Universal Design should incorporate a two-level approach:

- » **User-Aware Design:** pushing the boundaries of 'mainstream' products, services and environments to include as many people as possible.
- » **Customizable Design:** design to minimize the difficulties of adaptation to particular users.

Source: Age-Friendly Summit County, Summit County, OH

**A.1.5 Update the Urban Forestry Strategic Plan and Building and Construction code to include a citywide tree planting plan and replacement standards for tree removal associated with private development.** Some areas in the community lack adequate tree cover (see map on pg. 31). Trees serve many beneficial purposes, including;

- » minimizing the impacts of flooding,
- » improving air and water quality, and
- » and reducing the urban heat island effect.

A citywide tree planting plan could establish replacement requirements when trees are removed, set quantifiable goals for a tree canopy, and outline strategies for removal of dead and hazardous trees with a focus on public safety. To maximize effectiveness, this action will require coordination with private subdivisions to align practices and standards. Regulatory changes should also be made to provide more guidance on street trees required for new developments, for example to focus on trees and planting methods that can withstand storm events. Additionally, the City can incentivize or require the preservation of existing trees (especially large shade trees) in redevelopment projects, or in situations where preservation is not feasible or existing trees are damaged, the City can require replacement. Large shade trees;

- » provide shade for a cooling effect,
- » reduce energy use,
- » help to address stormwater runoff and erosion, and
- » and contribute aesthetic value.

Finally, the plan could include a program where the City (or a community partner) provides trees to property owners at a reduced cost.

**A.2 Ensure that City services (including, but not limited to, public infrastructure, library, schools, and emergency response) meet the City's needs as new development advances in the city.**

**A.2.1 Regularly evaluate the need for new City services and infrastructure (police, fire, library, schools) based on the type and the amount of development taking place and the depreciation of capital over time.** Certain types of development, including large-scale commercial spaces, put greater demands on services. Specifically, as portions of Olive Blvd. and other areas in the city develop, the City should assess the need for a new fire station to ensure adequate protection for the city.

**A.2.2 Utilize impact fees<sup>4</sup> as a supplemental funding source to support infrastructure improvements and public safety.** Cities can impose impact fees on development projects to help offset the cost of providing capital facilities (such as infrastructure improvements) to support new development. This would require careful consideration of fee formulas and the types of development subject to these fees. The impact fees should generate reasonable revenue to support desired development with infrastructure improvements and public safety services, but not unreasonably hinder development potential. Impact fees should be viewed as a supplement to the City's regular capital improvement planning and should not be expected to completely cover the cost of improvements.

**A.2.3 Expand fiber network and cellular reception, prioritizing city facilities such as schools, libraries, and community centers.** Fiber networks are the gold standard in broadband communications infrastructure. Internet connectivity through fiber systems is emerging as an important municipal service. Fast and stable internet access and good cellular reception are needed to support the next generation of connected “smart” devices. This connectivity is often a requirement for businesses seeking a place to locate, and is a social equity issue when some segments of the population have better service than others. Fiber networks can also help a municipality more efficiently provide City services. In addition, the city’s fiber network can support emerging mobility technologies, such as parking location systems, transit routing, and smart signalization.

## A.3 Proactively manage residential, commercial and industrial vacancy.

### A.3.1 Strengthen the City’s existing vacant building registration program.

University City currently has a vacant building registration program. Buildings that become vacant must register with the Department of Planning and Development within 30 days after becoming vacant. This is a method through which the City can proactively track vacant buildings to determine if further action is needed or assistance can be provided. The program could be strengthened to include vacant parcels, focus on clarifying consequences, action taken for continuing to fail to maintain vacant properties (e.g., an escalating fine), and the development and maintenance of a more accurate database of contact information for owners of vacant properties. These program improvements can be especially helpful for maintaining accountability and consequences to motivate non-local property owners.



**A.3.2 Manage vacant parcels through the following:**

- i. **Selling vacant and/or oddly shaped parcels (not suitable for development) to neighboring property owners, such as a “Mow to Own”<sup>5</sup> program.**
- ii. **Prioritizing City control of vacant parcels (those either suitable for development or those identified with potential to alleviate flooding) when possible, such as land banking.**
- iii. **Promoting green reuse strategies for utilizing vacant parcels (regardless of ownership) in partnership with existing organizations and programs, e.g., the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD), Missouri Botanical Garden, U City in Bloom. Coordinate improvements with problems and opportunities identified by stormwater studies.**

Oddly shaped parcels can remain vacant indefinitely because they are not configured in a way that is conducive to development. Programs should be pursued that could allow the parcels to be maintained privately, improving physical appearance and safety in neighborhoods, increasing property values, returning properties to tax rolls, and minimizing expenses for local government.

The City should proactively manage vacant parcels to facilitate maintenance of properties and potential infill or redevelopment. Strategies such as land banking allow the City to hold land for future uses, which could include consolidation of parcels for redevelopment, lot sales to adjacent property owners, adopt-a-lot maintenance programs, or reuse for green space.

Green reuse strategies could support a range of spaces such as community gardens, rain gardens, pollinator gardens, natural plantings areas, low maintenance trailways, or pocket parks. Green reuse strategies can improve stormwater management, protect property values, and enhance neighborhood character, quality of life, and environmental stewardship. The process of designing and/or making physical improvements to such spaces can also be a community-building opportunity, bringing residents from different parts of the city together.

**DEFINING MSD**

Throughout the document, you will see the acronym MSD is used. This stands for the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District. MSD combines 79 regional sewer districts into one district that serves the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County. MSD provides services focused on improving water quality and minimizing wastewater and stormwater issues. They monitor regulatory compliance, create community rainscaping, and perform a program of maintenance and repair. MSD serves 1.3 million people over 520 square miles and 5 major watersheds in the St. Louis region.

## A.4 Create attractive, cohesive, compact, and diverse residential areas throughout the city.

**A.4.1 Encourage residential infill<sup>6</sup> and redevelopment to restore and/or create more vibrant, walkable neighborhoods.** Infill development can play an important role in increasing the variety of housing options and price points in University City, reducing underutilized or vacant land, and providing opportunities for economic growth. This can be achieved in part by identifying elements of the zoning code that may make it challenging for certain types of parcels to be redeveloped. For example, changes could be made to streamline the permitting process, reduce parking requirements that can make housing more expensive, and adopt clear design and form-based standards to reduce the uncertainty builders often face.

The City should support a process for evaluation of infill building to promote architectural harmony with the surrounding buildings' designs, materials, and landscaping in order to maintain a consistent streetscape.

**A.4.2 Promote neighborhood activity nodes in parts of the city where there are currently not many (includes locations along Olive Blvd. that are accessible from the Third Ward).** Some areas of the city, particularly in the Third Ward and western portions of the city, were developed during a later era when neighborhood-commercial areas were not integrated into neighborhoods. For this reason, neighborhood activity nodes (areas with a mix of uses, services, and amenities) with these amenities and services mostly do not exist in these areas. By updating the City's land use policies and making strategic investments in infrastructure, such as improved sidewalks, the City can promote new neighborhood activity nodes. (For more information about neighborhood nodes, see chapter 4, pg. 100.)

### CREATING WALKABLE STREETS

The design of streets has a significant impact on walkability. Key streets should be designed to promote walkability and encourage community life. Walkable, tree-lined streets with comfortable sidewalks and slower-moving vehicles provide a hospitable environment for living, shopping, working, and entertaining. Walkable streets encourage business activity, generate greater tax revenue per acre and offer a higher return on investment than auto-oriented streets.<sup>78</sup> Below are typical street patterns for urban areas based on year built, which might need to be treated differently to improve walkability.

Traditional Grid Design  
(Pre-1900)



Curvilinear Loop Design  
(~1900-1930)



Beginning of Cul-De-Sac  
(~1930-1950)



Conventional Cul-De-Sac  
(Since 1950)



Source: Envision Montgomery 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Montgomery, AL

**A.4.3 Monitor conditions at larger, aging multi-family developments and support redevelopment potential.**

Larger, aging multi-family developments may not always provide quality housing or integrate well into their surroundings. When redevelopment proposals come forward for those properties, University City should work collaboratively with property owners and/or developers to support redevelopment of a product that both improves the housing that is provided and contributes more positively to the public realm through design, materials, reconfiguration of massing (overall scale and form), landscaping, amenities, and/or other features.

**A.4.4 Selectively encourage increased residential density on main connecting streets, including on parcels that were formerly occupied by single-family homes.**

Main connecting streets in the city, especially streets that have vacant parcels and buildings, can support some increased density without significantly impacting their built character. In these locations, housing in the form of duplexes, quadplexes, townhomes, or garden apartment buildings, can be integrated in a way that will help to maintain a consistent streetscape while providing new housing products that can serve different segments of the population. Increased residential density is also appropriate in other locations as identified in the 2021 Economic Development Strategy<sup>9</sup>, such as along the north side of Hemans Park.

**A.5 Remove barriers that limit vibrant commercial and mixed-use districts and support neighborhood-scale commercial uses.****A.5.1 Revise car-oriented standards, such as parking minimums, to encourage alternatives to car-based transportation, especially in higher density, mixed-use areas (e.g., Activity Centers as described in chapter 4, pg. 109).**

Parking minimums in zoning codes require developers to build a certain number of parking spaces based on the size and type of use in the development. Parking requirements can add significant costs to development and often prevent the reuse of existing buildings. The amount of space required to accommodate required parking discourages walkability by spreading buildings farther apart from each other, reduces the economic productivity of land in the city, and contributes to increased stormwater runoff and the urban heat island effect. Reducing parking minimums and requiring shared parking lots where feasible, can encourage more compact, walkable areas, and allow for flexibility in development that can make projects viable that may not be otherwise.

**A.5.2 Revise dimensional regulations (e.g., height, setbacks) and permitted uses in the zoning code to allow more compact development in mixed-use areas (e.g., Activity Centers, as described in chapter 4, pg. 109).**

Revising dimensional requirements in the zoning code in certain locations identified in the Future Character and Land Use Map, like Activity Centers, can help to encourage development on otherwise challenging-to-develop parcels that could support additional density. It can also help to reduce the amount of impervious surface in parts of the city, which is beneficial for managing stormwater.

**A.5.3 Improve the Delmar/I-170 interchange as an opportunity for a community gateway and center of a mixed-use district, including bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.** The Delmar / I-170 interchange is one of the areas in the city that offers the most potential for both supporting a mix of housing types and other amenities and services. Currently, the area is most easily accessed by car, and it is anticipated that car will remain the primary way in which people travel to it. However, in association with the development of the area into a more mature mixed-use area, small-scale improvements can be made to the public realm to improve comfort, safety, and attractiveness for pedestrians and cyclists.

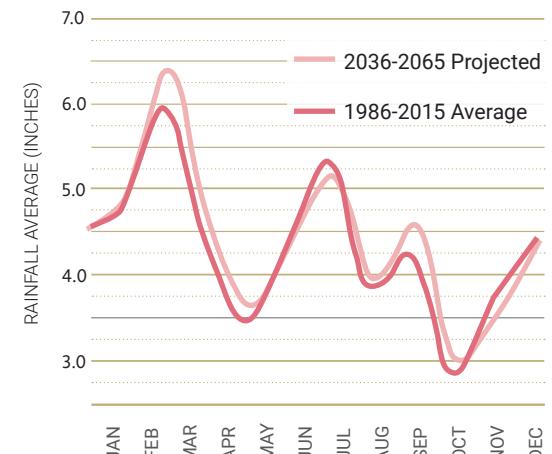
## A.6 Promote sustainable development.

**A.6.1 Conduct a citywide climate resiliency assessment.** Within the timeframe of this plan, University City can expect to experience the impact of climate change, including temperature fluctuations, more frequent and severe storms, and increased flooding. A climate resiliency assessment can help to define the most significant threats to University City along with the potential outcomes. This would involve review of historical information, existing natural and built conditions, and natural event modeling to identify the chief vulnerabilities facing the community today. With that data available, the City can guide policy and project implementation that addresses the critical factors of the assessment and positions University City for long-term resiliency.

### CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCY

Climate change is impacting many parts of the United States, including developed cities like University City. The earth's climate has changed throughout history, cycling through glacial advance and retreat until the abrupt end of the last ice age, marking the beginning of the modern climate era—and of human civilization. Currently, temperatures are rising and rainfall and storm events increasing (see graph below) beyond what can be attributed to normal shifts. Many of the effects are unknown, but some are predictable. This includes the frequency and intensity of flooding, storm events, and extreme heat. These effects will become more acute with time.

National Change In Annual Rainfall (2015 - 2036)



Source: 2017 Climate Research Division at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography

**A.6.2 Continue ensuring compliance with the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and promote other existing programs for construction that meets Energy Star, LEED, or similar energy efficiency standards.** Energy efficient buildings help reduce negative impacts on the natural environment, and can be cost saving for building owners. University City committed to increasing the energy efficiency of buildings throughout the city when it first adopted the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) in 2009. Since then, the City has adopted updates to IECC as they become available. In addition, in 2019, University City adopted Sustainable Development Guidelines, which give developers a comprehensive list of sustainable practices that University City recommends, incentivizes, or requires for development. The 2019 Sustainable Development Guidelines contain sustainability practices that are broader than what IECC regulates, such as water conservation, bicycle and pedestrian access guidelines, electric vehicle charging, and stormwater solutions. Continuing to ensure that development complies with IECC and Sustainable Development Guidelines will move University City forward as a more resilient and environmentally responsible community.

## A.7 Connect residents to the natural environment.

**A.7.1 Strengthen protections for flood-prone areas where appropriate.** Working in close collaboration with the City's Commission on Storm Water Issues and relevant State and Federal entities, including MSD and the Army Corps of Engineers is necessary to restore the original River Des Peres and Engleholm Creek banks in areas where possible and pursue engineering solutions to the city's stormwater management problems.

**A.7.2 Pursue opportunities to expand publicly accessible and connected open spaces which are separate from formal parks.** Strategic connections to the existing greenway system can help link recreational opportunities and economic activity centers by way of low-stress bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The recommendations of the 2021 St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking<sup>10</sup> and the 2013 University City Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan<sup>11</sup> should be implemented as a step toward providing active transportation mobility and creating these crucial links. Connections may take the form of multi-use paths, on-street bicycle facilities, and sidewalk connections depending on feasibility. The design of the system should create a comprehensive network of intersecting pathways that serve short- and medium-distance trips.



# GOAL B: ADVANCE SHARED PROSPERITY.

*Support and expand a diverse local economy, quality education, and a strong workforce that improves opportunities for all residents.*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

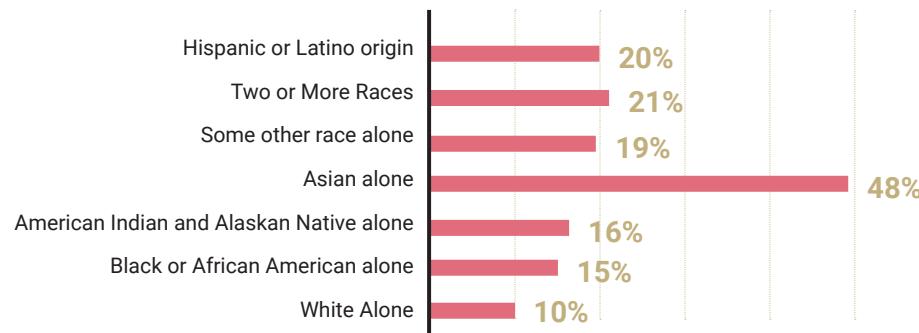
Following is a description of existing conditions that provide important context for Goal B. All maps presented represent the best information available in 2023.

### Household Incomes and poverty rates

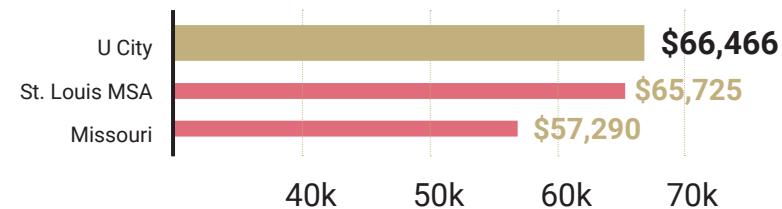
University City has a median household income that is higher than the median household income for the St. Louis MSA and nearly \$10,000 higher than that of the State of Missouri. However, median household income, and other measures of personal prosperity, vary greatly by neighborhood in University City. The city's poverty rate of 13.8% is higher than both the St. Louis MSA and the State of Missouri at 10.6% and 12.1%, respectively, indicating a greater income disparity. Median incomes, home ownership, vehicle access, poverty, and other statistics also vary widely based on factors like age, race, and household type. For example, a smaller percentage of the white population live in poverty than other racial and ethnic groups.

The Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), includes the City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, and the counties of Saint Charles, Jefferson, Franklin, Lincoln and Warren, Calhoun, Macoupin, and the Illinois counties of Madison, Saint Clair, Clinton, Monroe and Jersey.

### Percentage of University City Population in Poverty By Race

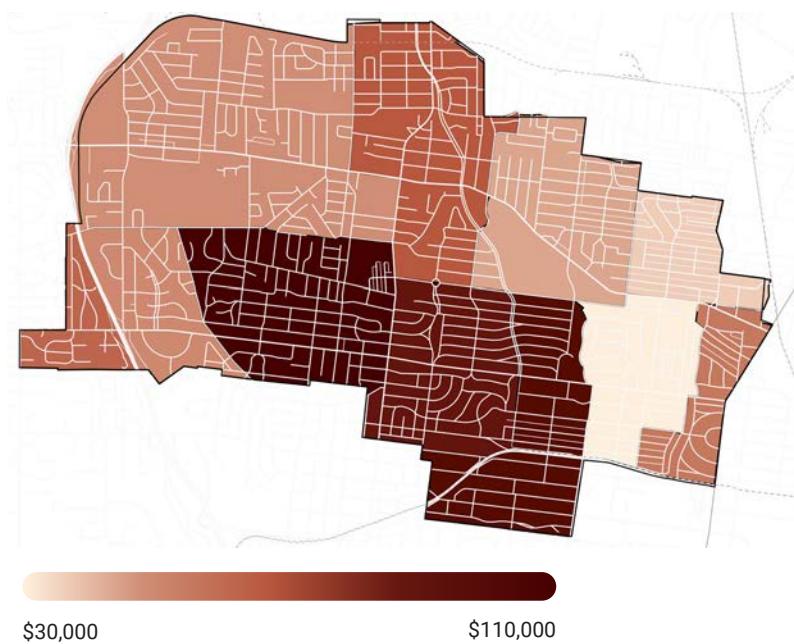


### Median Household Income



Data Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate

### Median Household Income by Census Tract

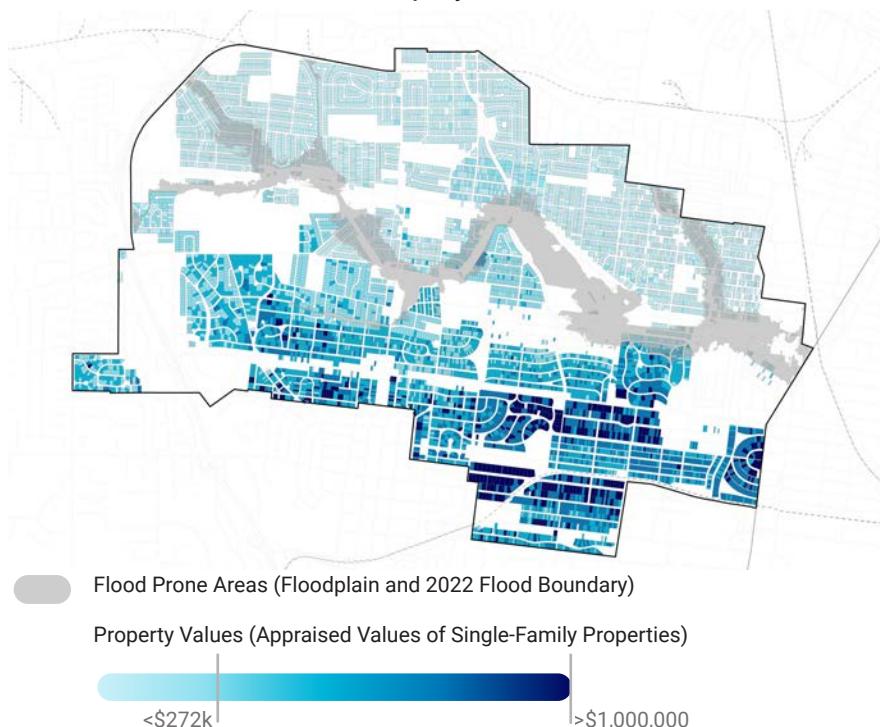


Data Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimate

## Residential Property Values

Property values in University City vary significantly by neighborhood and ward, with the highest property values concentrated in the First Ward. Lower home values are also found in flood prone areas. Property values are not the only possible measurement of disparity, but they are one indicator that aligns with others. This is in no way intended to convey that areas with higher and lower home values should be treated separately or represent conditions that are destined to persist. Rather, many of the actions presented in this plan emphasize the need for citywide strategies to address inequities across the city.

### Flood Prone Areas and Residential Property Values



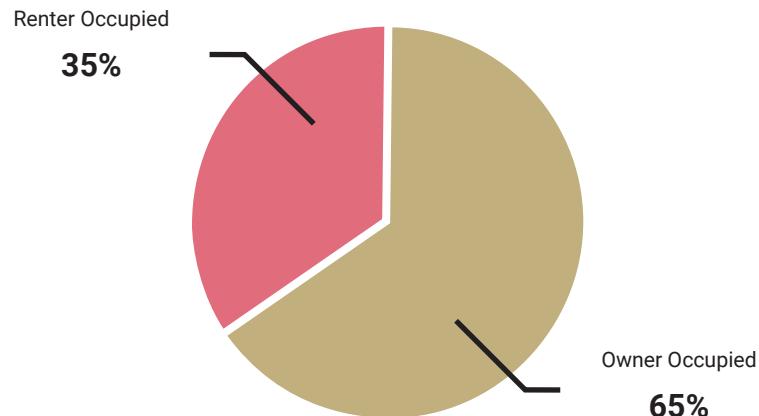
Data Sources

2022 Flood Prone Areas: University City Commission on Stormwater Issues and FEMA 2020, 100-year Floodplain. Property Values: 2022, St. Louis County Assessor's Office

## Homeownership / Rental

Just over 53% of all housing types in University City is owner occupied, while 47% is renter-occupied (of single-family housing, it is 65% and 35%, respectively). This is a much higher percentage of rental housing than in the St. Louis MSA and Missouri, which both have approximately 30% rental housing. Rental housing provides important housing options for a range of community members, including students, young families, individuals living alone, and households for whom ownership is out of reach financially. However, rental housing, especially if owned by individuals or entities that are not local, can be more challenging with respect to maintenance and code compliance. Furthermore, as homeownership provides opportunities for individual wealth creation and supports neighborhood stability, increasing homeownership has the potential to positively impact the city's neighborhoods and its residents.

### Renter vs. Owner Occupied Single-Family Housing in University City

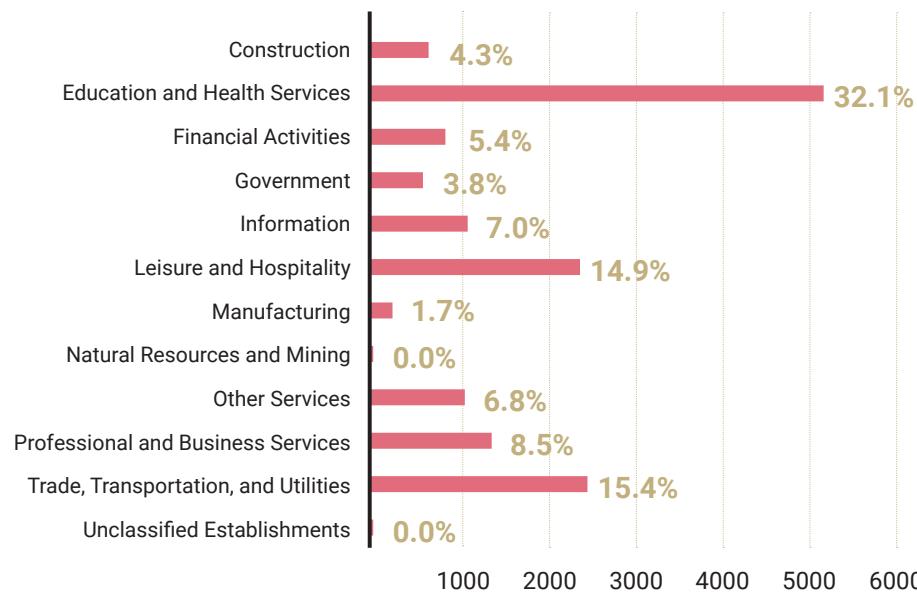


Data Source: 2023 St. Louis County Assessor Data

## Employment by Industry

The assessment and market analysis that was conducted as part of the City's 2021 Economic Development Strategy includes a market and industry cluster analysis. It presented that education and health services are the primary industry category in University City (32.1%), followed by trade, transportation, and utilities (15.4%) and leisure and hospitality (14.9%), respectively. It then used a Location Quotient (LQ) as a tool to analyze local economic strengths and weaknesses. Breaking down these sectors into smaller subsectors, the analysis found that educational and health services is far and away the most significant cluster in University City but is not a major potential growth area, whereas others such as retail trade and professional, scientific, and technical services may be potential growth subsectors.

### Employment by Industry in University City

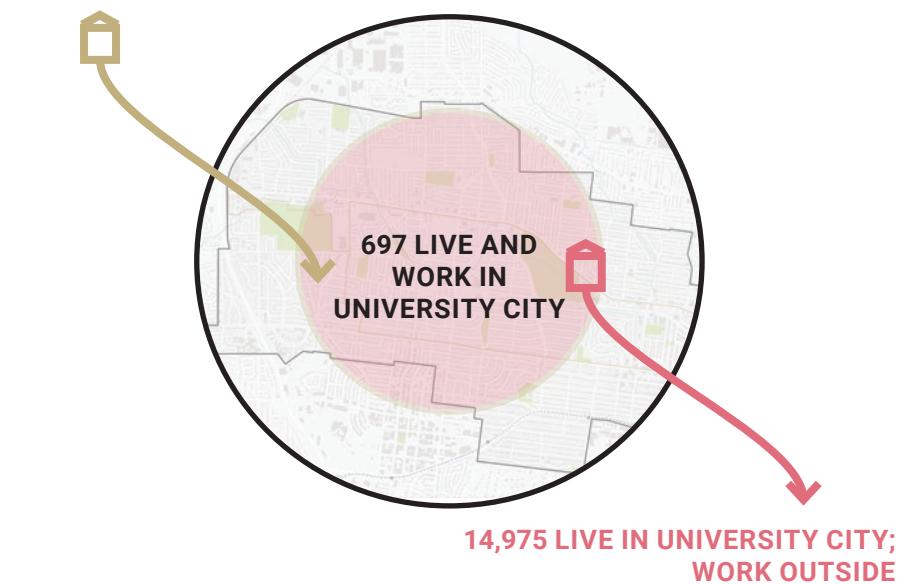


Data Source: University City Economic Development Strategy, 2021

## Worker In-Flow and Out-Flow

Nearly 15,000 people live in University City and work outside of it. Over 8,000 people work in University City but live outside of it, and fewer than 700 both live and work in University City. This is the nature of a "bedroom community." Thirty-five percent (35%) of the out-commuters, commute to the City of St. Louis and Clayton. This means job opportunities for residents are largely met outside of city limits. However, there are still many jobs in the city, as signified by the in-commuting population. As in many "bedroom communities," this means job opportunities for residents. More opportunities for community members to both live and work in the city could have advantages, including reducing reliance on road infrastructure, strengthening resident-business ties, and supporting a higher quality of life due to shorter commuting times.

**8,232 WORK IN UNIVERSITY CITY;  
LIVE OUTSIDE**

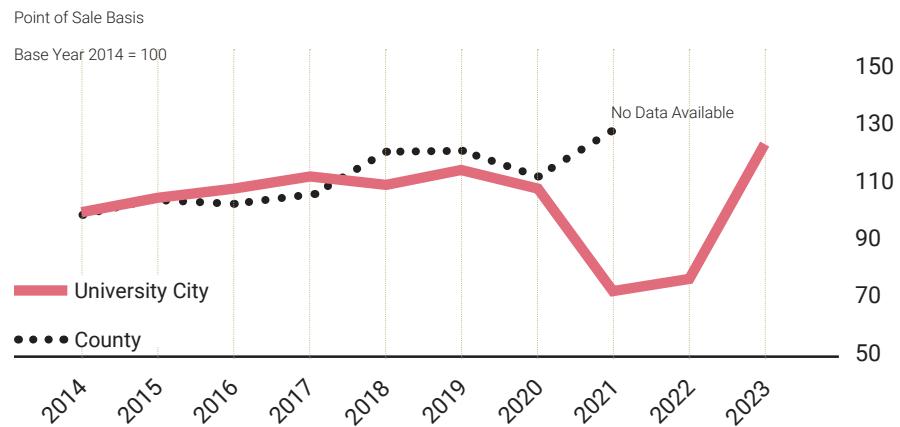


Data Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of OnTheMap.gov

## Retail Performance

Sales tax is an important source of revenue for University City. University City is part of a St. Louis County sales tax distribution system for its core sales tax revenue. This means that the City's sales tax is pooled with other communities and revenues are distributed across communities proportionally by population. University City has been lagging behind the County since 2017 with respect to sales tax. Because of the pooled system for the largest component of sales tax revenue, the City does not necessarily benefit from increased sales tax revenue without an increase in population. However, the City does have a series of special local additions to the core sales tax such as the economic development sales tax. This tax is paid out based on sales within the city. Therefore, from a revenue perspective, driving more development that supports population growth and retail sales is a priority for the City.

### Sales Tax Growth Index

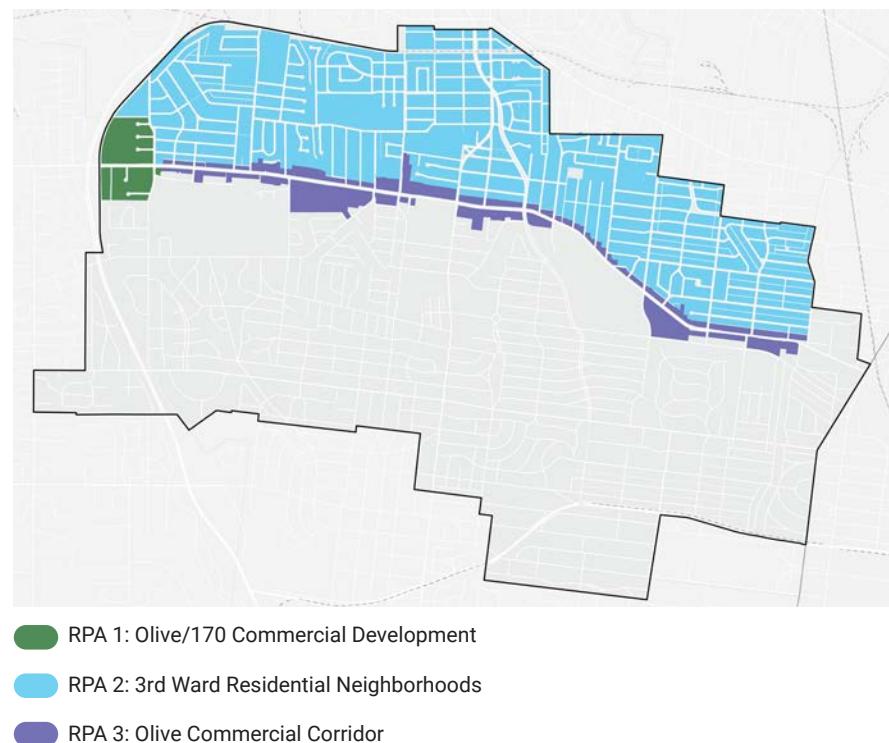


Data Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of 2021 St. Louis County consolidated annual financial reports Revenues by Source; City Budget document EDRST sales tax collections

## TIF Districts

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an economic development tool that can be implemented by municipalities to incentivize development. University City adopted a TIF redevelopment plan that includes three Redevelopment Project Areas (RPAs): Olive/I-170, Third Ward, and Olive Commercial Corridor. The TIF district is set up so that the significant recent development in RPA 1 (Market at Olive), as depicted below, will generate \$15 million that will be targeted to incentivize investment in RPAs 2 and 3. The specifics of the use of those funds were under development at the time of this plan, but support a focus on revitalization of these areas.

### TIF Districts



## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### B.1 Build upon existing development momentum.

#### B.1.1 Focus development attention on the creation of catalyst areas.

There are many areas in University City with potential for revitalization that are in and adjacent to successful neighborhoods, and the City should focus infrastructure investments, incentives, and other programs on these areas. This can help to create catalyst areas, areas that have the potential through transformation to demonstrate that revitalization is possible, thereby inspiring more confidence and investment in surrounding areas. Revitalization is an incremental process that often starts by creating visible examples of successful projects and showcasing how a few strategic investments can lead to change. Demonstrating success is particularly important when promoting new development types, regulatory tools, programs, or funding mechanisms.

#### B.1.2 Identify opportunities to leverage the Market at Olive development for reinvestment along the western portion of Olive Blvd. that aligns with this plan and the Economic Development Strategy (EDS).

The western part of Olive Blvd. extending from the Market at Olive to 82<sup>nd</sup> Street provides opportunity for investment in keeping with the core idea of the EDS for “regional retail to take advantage of its location near the interchange of I-170.” However, due to the shallow lots in this area, accommodation may be needed to encourage development. If zoning changes in this area are pursued prior to a specific development proposal, it is recommended that flexibility is written into the code, such as by allowing development to move forward if it adheres to character standards, to help encourage development that would positively contribute to the area. Shared maintenance agreements and investing in on-street parking should also be considered, as well as utilizing development incentives as described in Action B.4.1.



The Musick neighborhood is an example of a stable, diverse area in University City that could serve as a catalyst for investment in surrounding neighborhoods. This investment could include the development of a neighborhood node near Canton Ave and Midland/Hanley (see action A.4.2 and Future Character and Land Use Map on pg. 105) and infrastructure investments in sidewalks and bicycle access to support the neighborhood node.

**B.1.3 Pursue targeted development strategies for the International District on Olive to align with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy (EDS).** Key locations along Olive Blvd. outside flood-prone areas have the potential for targeted redevelopment. The International District presents an opportunity for development that supports the specific goal in the EDS (3.4) to promote this district. This work should be conducted in collaboration with partners focused on minority and international business development, such as the Asian American Chamber of Commerce of St. Louis. Specifically, increased density should be allowed in this area, parking requirements should be reduced, and vertical mixed-use development (especially residential above commercial) should be encouraged.

**B.1.4 In keeping with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy (EDS), engage regional agencies for investment along Olive Blvd.** The EDS recognizes the importance of connecting with regional economic development resources generally, and with specific focus on Olive Blvd. The EDS includes a goal (3.4) that recommends engagement with organizations focused on promoting economic development across the region, including small business support resources (e.g., the IT Entrepreneur Network (ITEN), the MOSAIC Project, the International Institute, the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, World Trade Center, Arch to Park Collaborative, STLMade, Alliance STL, and the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Accelerator). These entities can also support the place-based strategies identified in the EDS for Olive Blvd., and the realization of the character areas envisioned along certain parts of Olive Blvd. in the Future Character and Land Use Map on pg. 105.



## INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT

A targeted development strategy in the International District on Olive could help to create a mixed-use district such as the one pictured here.

Image: The Grove neighborhood of St. Louis.

**B.1.5 Encourage mixed-use communities where people enjoy easy access to jobs and services in connection with the Future Character and Land Use Map.**

Mixed-use areas in the city, where housing is in proximity to services and retail, parks and open space, recreation, entertainment, schools and civic spaces, and other activities can have many benefits for community members. A mix of uses can promote environmental sustainability by reducing car-dependence and can be especially beneficial for individuals and families that do not own a car. It can also help strengthen community cohesion by bringing people together to interact with their neighbors and promote vibrant, high-quality public spaces. This action will also require coordination with private subdivisions to align practices and standards (Map on pg. 32).

**B.1.6 Facilitate and encourage mixed-use residential development across from Heman Park on the north side of Olive Blvd.** The 2021 Economic Development Strategy established a vision for a mixed-use development containing small retail and restaurant spaces on the ground floor with 3-4 stories of apartments or condominiums above. This type of development would bring high quality housing options with direct access to the amenities of Heman Park. Coordinated with a potential reconfiguration of Olive Blvd., this development could catalyze a more walkable pattern of redevelopment.**MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS**

There are numerous mixed-use development areas in and around University City that can be models for future new development in the city, such as the example above at Delmar & North and South.

## **B.2 Strengthen and support the labor force and entrepreneurship.**

**B.2.1 Partner with national and regional workforce development agencies and the University City School District to implement workforce development strategies.** In alignment with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy (EDS) goal to invest in workforce development (3.2) and the Community Vision 2040 Pillar [create an environment where youth thrive (3)], national, state, and regional partnerships focused on workforce development can align worker skills with sectors that have jobs available. As identified in the EDS and reinforced through the analysis conducted for this plan, there is a special opportunity to focus on health care and senior service businesses as well as manufacturers/distributors.

**B.2.2 Expand support for existing and new small and minority owned businesses in accordance with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy (EDS).** Relevant to the character and land use focus of this plan, the City can identify opportunities to support business clustering where most impactful. The City can support small and minority owned businesses through a range of programs and policies, in alignment with the EDS goals to support minority entrepreneurs (2.2), amplify the voice of local businesses (3.5), and grow the next generation of small business owners (3.6).

**B.2.3 Promote and partner with locally owned, neighborhood retail and local business associations.** The City's newsletter and website can be used to showcase the work of neighborhood retail and business associations, and these entities and the City can jointly organize events and activities.

**B.2.4 Leverage existing programs and funding opportunities (e.g., Build Back Better) to support entrepreneurship and emerging industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing).** Support for entrepreneurship, small businesses, and emerging industries is central to the 2021 Economic Development Strategy. Beyond local associations, the City should remain up to date on other regional, state, and national programs and opportunities that can support local workforce objectives.

## B.3 Foster equitable economic opportunities.

**B.3.1 Develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategy that helps the City evaluate decision-making, policies, and programs.** Diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies can promote and foster a City government that prioritizes equity in all aspects of its internal operations as well as equitable engagement in the work of the City across demographic groups and neighborhoods. This can help create a more level playing field for all who wish to be involved in civic life.

## B.4 Leverage incentives to support desired economic development in key locations.

**B.4.1 Develop a transparent policy for providing municipal incentives that promote the goals of this plan.** The City can incentivize desired development with a number of financial tools or subsidies such as Tax Abatement and TIF. Historically, the City has evaluated the decision to award such incentives for development on a case-by-case basis. Creating a transparent policy for the use of incentives can create more consistency and credibility, while reserving incentives for developments that demonstrate social, economic, and environmental benefits to the community.

**B.4.2 Market development opportunities within the federally designated Opportunity Zone and TIF areas.**

**Opportunity Zone and TIF areas.** The City's Opportunity Zone and TIF areas are designed to help incentivize development while supporting long-term investment to benefit the community. Both tools can only be leveraged with development. The City can take leadership for continued development in these areas by proactively seeking to connect with investors, showcasing the community's assets and successful projects, and helping to make sites development-ready (addressing environmental issues, zoning incompatibilities, infrastructure needs, etc.).

**B.4.3 Focus residential growth around existing neighborhood activity nodes (areas that already include a mix of commercial and/or mixed-use development).**

**Neighborhood activity nodes** are areas with commercial or mixed-use spaces that provide amenities like retail and restaurants within walking and biking distance of residential areas. Some areas of the city have well-established neighborhood activity nodes. Focused growth and development in these areas can provide more opportunities for people to live within a short distance of activity nodes.

**B.4.4 Improve the City's fiscal resilience by diversifying land uses and development.**

**Development.** Different types of development impact the City's revenue. For instance, because University City is a "Type B" city in the St. Louis County sales tax pool, growth in retail development does not necessarily increase the City's share of the County's sales tax. The County redistributes this sales tax revenue by a per capita population calculation, so maintaining or growing the residential population is an important factor in fiscal resilience. To ensure that the City has resilient and sustainable revenue sources to provide quality public services, the City can take steps to diversify development and land uses. This should include encouraging quality residential infill development at a range of price points (affordable, workforce, and market-rate); creating an appealing environment for retail, restaurant, industrial, and office-based businesses to locate; and strengthening existing and funding additional opportunities to create mixed-use areas.



## B.5 Determine the desired character of the Cunningham Industrial Area.

**B.5.1 Develop an area plan for the Cunningham Industrial Area and its surroundings that considers support for its ongoing activity and potential expansion in a way that is compatible with surrounding areas.** The 2021 Economic Development Strategy puts forth a goal of expanding the industrial area as part of its goal to redevelop and reinvest in Olive Blvd. (6.1). The comprehensive plan's Future Character and Land Use Map identifies an Innovation District character type for the area that emphasizes not only the need to support light manufacturing, but an opportunity to provide flexible office space suitable for new technologies or research and development activities. In addition, it acknowledges the need for buffering and encouraging transition areas between light industrial and residential development.

**B.5.2 Develop a strategy to heighten regional awareness about the Cunningham Industrial Area as an economic generator.** The 2021 Economic Development Strategy establishes that marketing for the Cunningham Industrial Area should be targeted for site selectors and manufacturers. As part of this strategy, physical improvements designed to create a greater sense of place and provide amenities within the area are recommended as part of the Innovation District character type. As these improvements are realized, they should be incorporated into a marketing strategy. The added amenity value can serve to create a stronger "brand" for the area, reinforcing it as an attractive place in which to invest and a positive contributor to the local economy.

### FLEXIBLE OFFICE SPACE

Flexible office space includes employment uses, and a mix of retail, service, and other commercial development along major streets and highway corridors. The classification targets existing strip centers, "big-box" stores, drive-thru restaurants, and/or similar auto-oriented commercial uses along major thoroughfares. This approach creates more flexibility, encourages redevelopment or re-use of existing buildings, and combats vacancy through incorporation of office and light industrial uses. Flexible office spaces may involve increasing permitted density and height restrictions with an emphasis on high quality design of buildings, grounds, and landscape. The areas could also include limiting access through consolidated intersections and improving pedestrian connectivity between and across parcels.

### THE CUNNINGHAM INDUSTRIAL AREA

The Cunningham Industrial Area is located at the eastern city limit, near Wellston. It is populated by a variety of manufacturing operations, ranging from parts and tool manufacturing to clothing. Some of the City's largest employers are in the Cunningham Industrial Area.

Source: 2021 Economic Development Strategy

# GOAL C: CONNECT COMMUNITY.

*Invest in community connection to increase mobility options, improve social cohesion, and encourage civic involvement.*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Following is a description of existing conditions that provide important context for Goal C. All maps presented represent best information available in 2023.

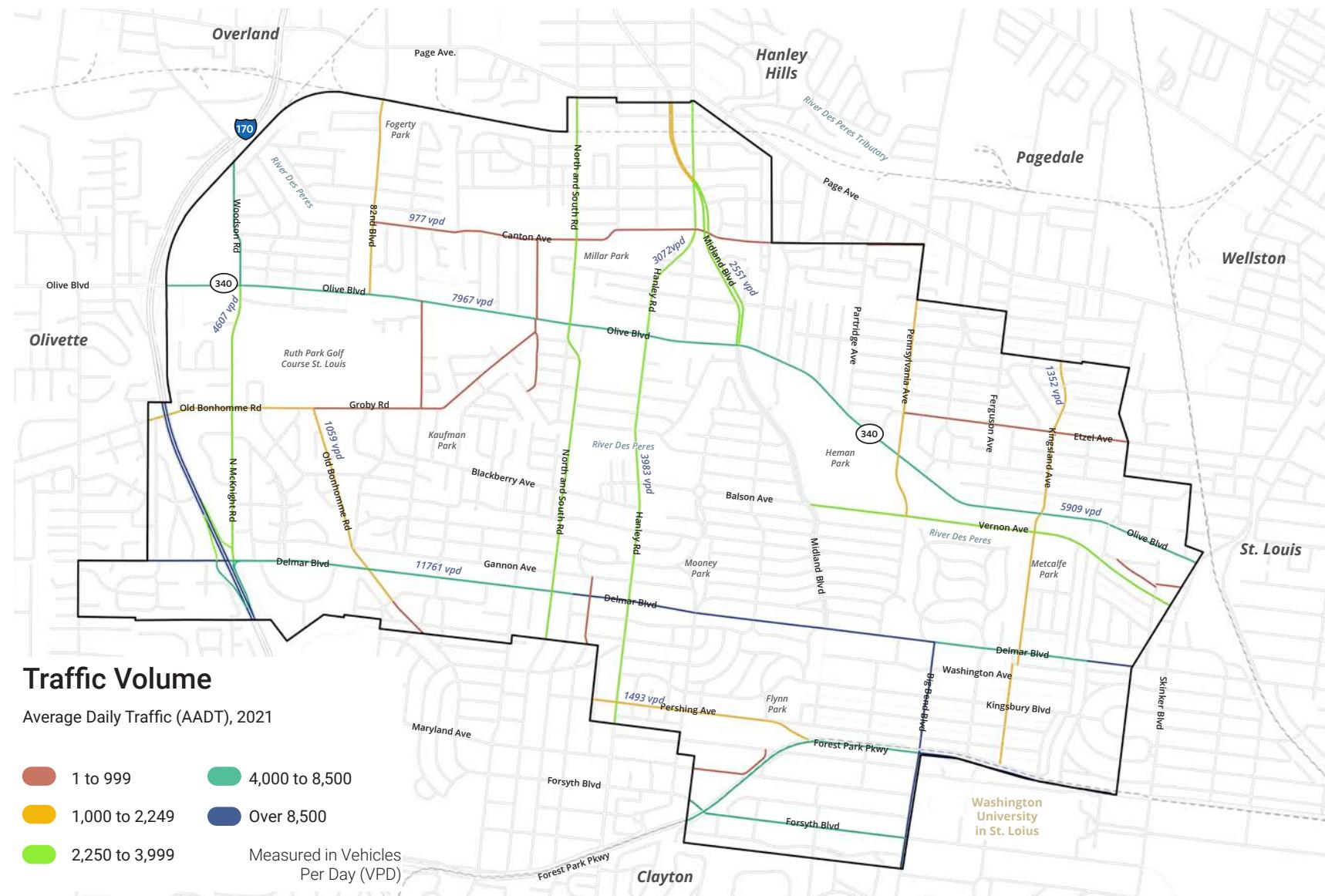
### Traffic Volume

The city has a network of county, city, state, private (subdivision), and unimproved streets. As shown on the map on page 56, traffic volume in University City is highest along I-170, the major east-west corridors with high traffic volumes are Olive Blvd. and Delmar Blvd., and several north-south corridors have similarly high traffic volumes. Current traffic volumes are important to understand because higher volume roadways may have potential to support different kinds of development, including higher density development than exists today. Higher traffic volumes are also often associated with faster speeds and higher accident rates, including increased injuries and fatalities. In University City, 31% of traffic crashes on Olive result in an injury, compared to 19% in the rest of University City.<sup>12</sup> These high traffic volume corridors may therefore also be appropriate locations for changes to the road configuration such as the “road diet” described in the 2021 Economic Development Strategy (EDS), which would include “reducing lanes to create additional space within the street right-of-way for streetscape enhancements, wider sidewalks, bike lanes, or on-street parking” (EDS, pgs. 66-67). The 2021 St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking and the 2013 University City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan also addressed the configuration of Olive Blvd.



Image (bottom):

» Amy Tompkins from  
Habitat for Humanity  
St. Louis



Data Source: Missouri Department of Transportation AADT and University City GIS data

## Active Transportation

This map shows existing active transportation infrastructure (for bicycles and pedestrians) in University City. Sidewalk data is included for private, city-owned roadways (sidewalks for private subdivisions are unavailable). Shared use paths are physically separated paths for pedestrians and bicycles. Physically separated bikeways are separated from vehicular traffic. Visually separated bikeways include conventional bike lanes and buffered bike lanes which do not have a physical buffer from vehicular traffic. Mixed traffic bikeways include calm streets and sharrows where bikeways are marked but share the road with vehicles. This information shows that while certain parts of the city are well-supported by such infrastructure, other areas are lacking it.



## Public Transportation

The map on page 58 shows existing public transportation (MetroLink and MetroBus) routes and stops in and around University City. While the map demonstrates that much of the city is well covered by routes, some areas are not well served. Infrequency of service along many routes further limits the current ability for the community members to utilize public transportation as a viable means of travel. Of the nine bus routes that serve the City, seven of them (1, 2, 33, 47, 91, 97) have an average frequency according to official schedules of generally an hour or more, one route (16) has an average frequency of between 40 minutes to an hour, and one (15) has an average frequency of less than 40 minutes.



Data Source: University City GIS data

## Existing and Planned Bikeway Infrastructure

Identification of existing and planned bikeway infrastructure is important in considering how University City can achieve greater bicycle connectivity and reinforcing amenities with appropriate development that will be compatible with these aims. This map, which draws from the 2021 St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking identifies both existing and proposed connections. Mapping the existing network has been an important starting point in the development of plans for the future, including the 2013 University City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking, which this plan draws from in recommending key corridors for enhancement. (See the Framework Map in chapter 4, pg. 101.)



Data Source: St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking and University City GIS data

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### C.1 Create “equity of mobility” within University City.

#### C.1.1 Implement a street and sidewalk repair and improvement program for city streets.

**city streets.** Some existing sidewalks and some streets in the city's older neighborhoods need repair. A City program should be established to repair existing streets and sidewalks and prioritize new sidewalk connections. Such a repair program could be part of the City's regular capital improvements effort or could be a matching grant program whereby the City shares the cost with adjacent property owners. Sidewalks also should be a standard and sufficient width (minimum of five feet wide).

#### C.1.2 Work with neighborhoods, businesses, and community groups to promote streetscape projects and corridor improvements.

Beyond the Traffic Commission's focus on roadway safety and functionality, the City should directly engage neighborhoods to explore opportunities in the future for updating design standards for aesthetic regulations for streets that could be improved with respect to their overall character. This should include how certain buildings must respond visually to the street, and how landscaping within the right-of-way responds to the building. This information could be used to refine how the zoning code addresses building placement in relation to streets to ensure adequate space is provided for landscaping, pedestrian facilities, and parking, depending on the context of a street.

#### C.1.3 Identify and prioritize low-cost improvements at key locations which are currently unsafe for those getting around without a car.

Infrastructure improvements that are low-cost can also improve connectivity. Maintaining and completing sidewalks, upgrading streetscape facilities such as street lighting, introducing traffic calming measures, and completing crossing improvements can help people to navigate to and through different neighborhoods by foot or bicycle.



#### PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Temporary improvements help test and refine the design of improvements before making costly investments before they are built.

**C.1.4 Complete the Centennial Greenway as a fully contiguous trail through University City.** The Great Rivers Greenway District and the 2021 Saint Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking propose an extension of the Centennial Greenway, which would connect the existing Greenway on the western portion of University City to the Ackert Trail in the Eastern portion of the city, creating a fully contiguous east-west trail through the city. The City should collaborate with these entities to make the Centennial Greenway possible.

## C.2 Encourage walking and biking as legitimate modes of transportation.

**C.2.1 Increase housing supply in locations with potential for good access by biking and walking so those without vehicles can live in areas already served by these modes.** In association with Objective E.2.1, (focused on promoting housing variety and affordability), specifically targeting locations for new housing in locations with good access by biking and walking can help to make that housing a good option for people who do not have access to a car. This advances the core idea put forth in this plan that community members should have choices in where they live in the city.



Images (top to bottom):

- » Natural playground
- » Community garden
- » Natural open space

**C.2.2 Implement the City's Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan and Complete Streets policy to ensure that University City streets are designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all citizens. Special consideration should be made for how citizens access areas of high pedestrian traffic (e.g., schools, parks, multifamily and retiree housing, and neighborhood nodes) (refer to Framework Map, see chapter 4, pg. 101).** University City adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2014. The policy prioritizes space for safe cycling and walking and improved crossing facilities to better accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. The City should review the policy, evaluate its effectiveness and implementation status, and strengthen it by adopting modernized street design standards. The University City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan sought to provide viable transportation options for all residents through a bicycle and pedestrian facility network, implementation guide, and policy, operations, and maintenance recommendations. Implementation has been underway and should be prioritized into the future to facilitate connections between the different neighborhoods of University City. As the character types presented in the Future Character and Land Use Map (see chapter 4, pg. 105) inform potential zoning changes, the bicycle and pedestrian facility network should be referenced and accommodated.

**C.2.3 Prepare for micro-mobility,<sup>13</sup> bikeshare, and other emerging transit modes.** A variety of new mobility modes have arrived in American cities over the last decade. These modes include ride-hailing apps (such as Uber and Lyft) and more recently dockless scooter and bikeshare systems. While each mode has special challenges associated with it, they present unique public-private partnerships that expand transit service and improve first-mile/last-mile mobility. Cities around the country have embraced these services to reduce residents' need for a personal vehicle, enhance the bicycle and pedestrian system, reduce parking needs, and complement existing transit service. Advancing micro-mobility may require code changes.

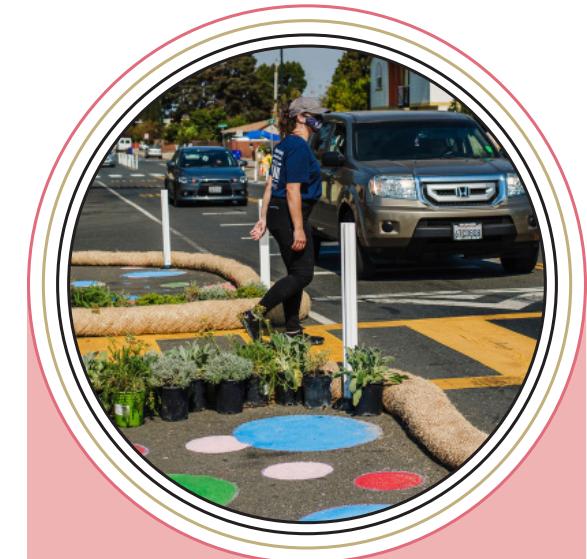
**C.2.4 Promote existing programs to educate people about bicycle safety, bicycle regulations, and maintenance.** Community members will be more interested in and able to use cycling as a mode of transportation in University City if they feel comfortable and safe. While infrastructure is very important to achieving this, education and information can also make a big difference in the choice of cycling as a mode of travel. Trailnet (an organization that promotes walking and biking), NHTSA, and other organizations with a similar focus manage educational programs for drivers and cyclists. University City should connect community members to the programs these organizations offer, such as Confident City Bicycling courses, to help lower the barrier to cycling. This can be accomplished by promoting them in City communications, inviting Trailnet to City-sponsored events, and organizing "Share the Road" campaigns.

**C.2.5 Create demonstration projects and events that showcase small-scale safety improvements.**

**safety improvements.** Demonstration projects can include temporary connections or reconfigurations of roadways to test options for safety improvements. Events (such as conversion of streets to better accommodate pedestrians and cyclists in the short term to accommodate a special activity) can also help to advance thinking about possibilities for longer term improvements. Some cities have pursued regular changes on a schedule (e.g., closing a lane to car traffic every Sunday in the summer) to provide alternative ways of using streets that can both have immediate benefits within the time period in which the changes are implemented and help the City to consider potential long-term changes.

**C.3 Support and coordinate with regional initiatives that improve connectivity, including public transit.<sup>14</sup>****C.3.1 Establish municipal procedures that require better coordination with regional transit authorities.**

**While challenges persist, community members participating in this planning process have expressed a desire for improved public transportation options, including increased hours of operation and geographic coverage. For example, expansion of service stations and increases in frequency will require coordination with the Metropolitan Saint Louis Transit Agency (Metro St. Louis). This plan identifies neighborhood nodes, which are appropriate locations for transit stops. City staff should work with Metro St. Louis to advocate for improved transit service at these neighborhood nodes as defined in the Future Character and Land Use Map. The presence of large universities is an asset in advocating for public transit service and infrastructure improvements. There could be a collaboration opportunity for the City and Washington University to jointly advocate for those improvements.**

**COMPLETE STREETS**

Complete Streets meet the needs of people in all forms of transportation: walking, cycling, driving, and taking transit. Complete Streets aim to create safer interactions for all users, despite age or abilities. In some situations where road traffic is dominated by fast traveling vehicles, traffic calming measures can help to make an area more pedestrian friendly. Examples may include curb bulbs, landscaped medians, on-street parking, or narrowed travel lanes. Complete Streets can provide tangible economic benefits to communities, attracting private investment and development.

Image: Mt. Vernon, OH.

**C.3.2 Coordinate with the county and surrounding jurisdictions to implement the recommendations of the St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking.**

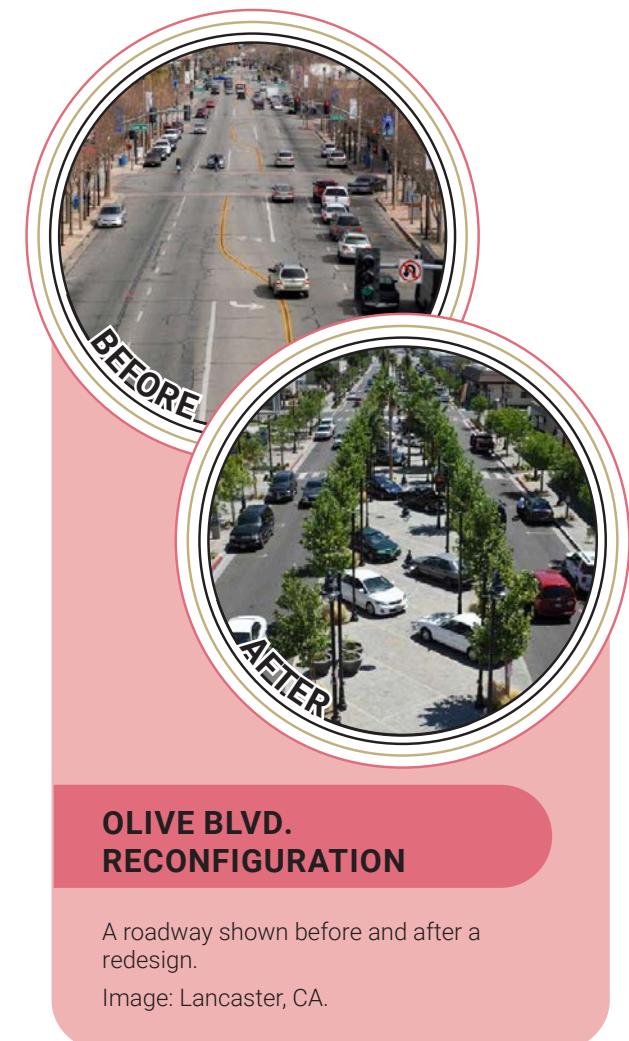
In addition to serving as a plan to promote more connected open space as described in Action A.7.2., the St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking helps to situate recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian improvements for University City in a regional context. This plan should therefore be used as a guide for areas of collaboration with other jurisdictions, for example on how to advance improvements to the pedestrian and cycling networks that cut across jurisdictions.

**C.3.3 Contribute to the planning and engineering of regional road projects.**

Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) road projects are planned and managed by the State for state roads (i.e., Olive Blvd.). These are separate and distinct from City-managed projects for City-owned streets. However, University City should share key concepts as well as roadway-specific ideas from this plan with relevant state officials and advocate for their implementation. Specifically, the City should share where improvements to bicycle and pedestrian safety are desired, where roadway connections can be improved, and/or where roadway design can help to advance the character of the built environment that is presented in this plan through the Future Character and Land Use Map in chapter 4, pg. 105, and the Framework Map, pg. 101.

**C.3.4 Collaborate with MODOT to reconfigure Olive Blvd. to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and an improved environment for businesses in the corridor.**

MODOT is responsible for maintaining a large portion of Olive Blvd. in University City. Reconfiguration of Olive Blvd. would create more room for low stress and protected pedestrian and bicyclist paths, improve the appearance of the streetscape, and could create on-street parking to support the local businesses located on Olive. The available parking for the businesses located on Olive varies widely—some properties have excess parking, and some, particularly those on smaller lots, have very little if any off-street parking spaces. On-street parking could have a positive impact on businesses' ability to serve customers. Streetscape improvements, such as a landscaped buffer between the sidewalk and on-street parking, would also create a more appealing environment for businesses. Finally, stormwater mitigation elements can be designed into a reconfiguration of Olive, helping to address flooding impacts along the corridor.



**C.3.5 Seek alternative funding sources such as grants and public-private partnerships.**

A variety of alternative funding sources exist to fill gaps as transportation needs rise faster than available funding. Public-private partnerships can help augment transit service through micro-mobility, bikeshare, and other services, as discussed Action C.2.3. Required development contributions and impact fees can also assist in implementing improvements. Neighborhoods and business groups can also be great partners to implement lower cost improvements that make streets feel safer, look more attractive, and become more walkable. Plantings, painted crosswalks and intersections, street furniture, and wayfinding traditionally are undertaken by cities, but these improvements can also be completed as public-private partnerships or funded through matching grant programs. Additionally, grant programs can be leveraged for funding specific needs, and partnerships can strengthen the case that can be made for securing grants. Simple improvements can improve property values, increase community pride, and create a sense of community identity.

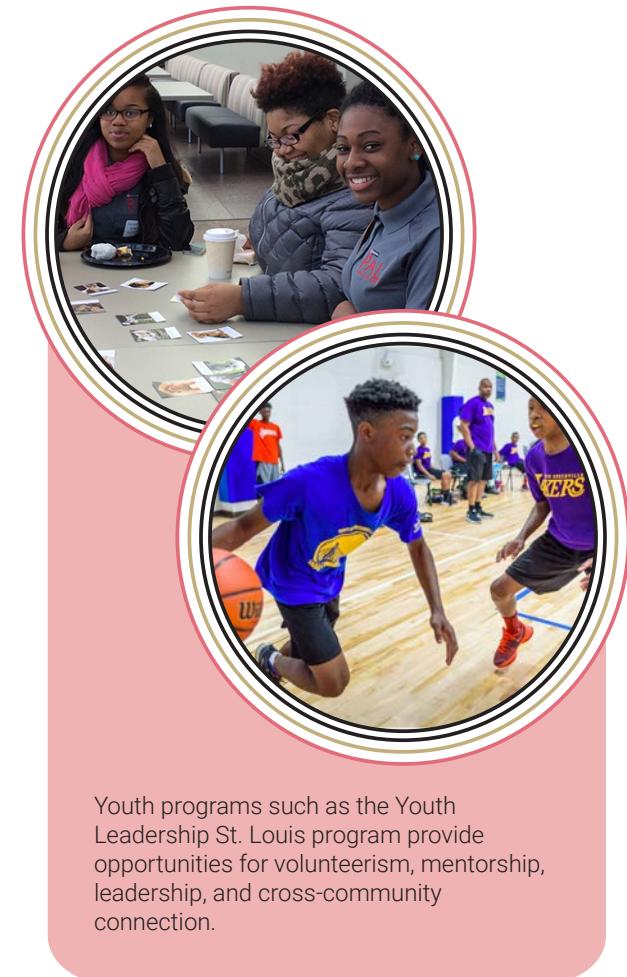
**C.4 Encourage civic participation, mentoring, and volunteerism.****C.4.1 Realign citizen opportunities for government participation and engagement with the priorities of the comprehensive plan.**

Community members in University City have the opportunity for civic activism through a variety of activities, organizations, and boards and commissions. This plan establishes core areas of need for civic engagement in the city, including addressing the impacts of flooding and the impacts of historic segregation. This Action is also closely connected to Goal F, Objective 4, to improve intra-governmental coordination and collaboration and Objective 5, to manage implementation progress for this and other plans. The City should encourage community members who have expressed an interest in this plan to serve on boards and commissions or other volunteer groups. For example, as the City plans for open space and other appropriate uses for flood prone areas, community members can help determine how these spaces will be designed. The City should also reevaluate existing Boards and Commissions and their alignment with the plan and overlapping responsibilities.

**C.4.2 Become a City of Service<sup>15</sup> to improve citizen engagement and action.** As a City of Service, University City would be eligible for resources and information to foster involvement of community members in plan implementation. This will make for a more effective and inclusive process for advancing the plan's actions, while building a civic infrastructure that will strengthen ties across neighborhoods and segments of the population.

**C.4.3 Establish a volunteer Community Leadership or Neighborhood Liaison<sup>16</sup> program.** Engaged residents can benefit local leaders and the community by serving as connection points for information sharing, knowledge, and resource identification. The City should build on existing citizen engagement opportunities such as boards, commissions, police focus groups, etc., by offering a Community Leadership or Neighborhood Liaison program. The program would provide educational sessions on the operations of City departments for interested local leaders. These sessions should cover information such as the basics of City budgets, department responsibilities, who to contact for topics or issues, and available programs or resources for residents. As part of the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force, Community Ambassadors are being identified to assist with engagement. While the Community Ambassador positions are temporary and paid, they could serve as a model for a longer-term, citywide ambassador/liaison program that is volunteer-based or offers a small stipend. These programs could also offer a special opportunity to engage university students living in the city.

**C.4.4 Create a youth involvement initiative to empower University City's youth in conjunction with University City schools, churches, and other community organizations.** A youth involvement initiative, focused on civic engagement, would allow youth from all neighborhoods in the city to interact with and be involved in the community in a variety of ways, and could be connected to opportunities to engage in volunteerism, sports, or arts-related activities. This would provide youth with the opportunity to have a positive impact on the community and create a more unified and connected city.



**C.4.5 Modernize City communication channels, websites, and social media channels to encourage young people to become more civically active.**

Encouraging young people to get involved in civic activities in University City requires utilizing effective channels to reach them. Messages that specifically target young people about getting involved (e.g., serving on boards, commissions, neighborhood/condo association boards) should be developed and utilized through these channels.

**C.4.6 Translate key City resources into other languages.** Community members who primarily speak a language other than English face barriers to participation in civic activities if they cannot easily read and understand important City documents. The City currently offers the ability to translate website text to other languages but should also identify priority documents and translate them for ease of understanding.

## C.5 Celebrate the community's diversity.

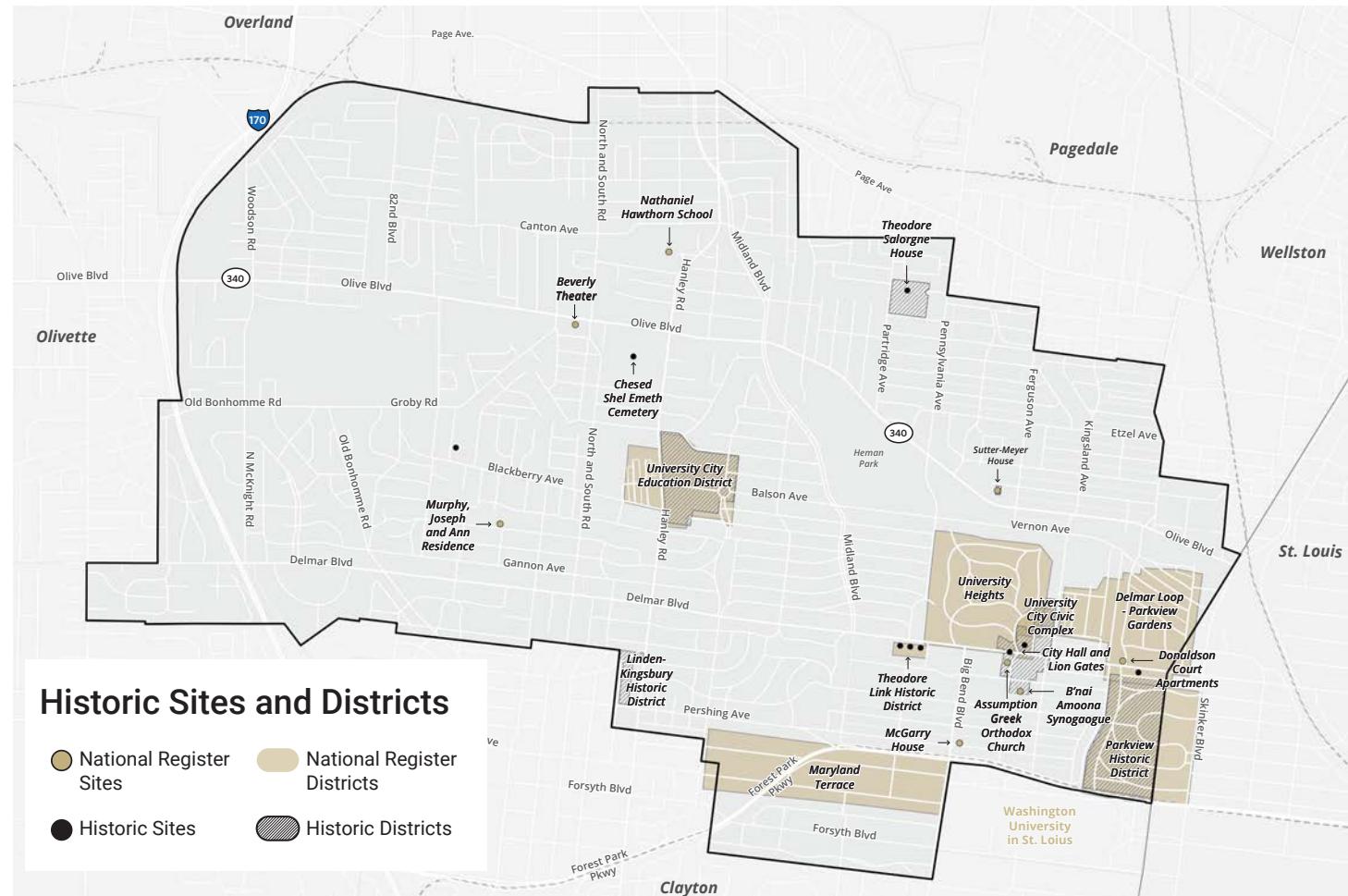
**C.5.1 Support diverse business owners through City promotion and resources in accordance with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy.** In accordance with Action B.2.2., the City should support small and minority owned businesses in accordance with the EDS. This action not only promotes entrepreneurship but helps to celebrate the community's diversity by showcasing these businesses. Promotion can be conducted through websites, social media, and virtual communications, as well as through special partnerships in association with City events and activities.**C.5.2 Support community events that highlight the city's diversity.** The City, in partnership with cultural associations and other organizations, should organize heritage festivals and events designed to bring an appreciation for different cultures and traditions to the community. This may include partnering with other communities or regional organizations. The City should also prioritize themes pertaining to the city's diversity in its own events.

# GOAL D: LEVERAGE ASSETS.

*Capitalize on University City's diverse cultural, historical, and physical assets while investing in new amenities.*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Following is a description of existing conditions that provide important context for Goal D. All maps presented represent best information available in 2023.



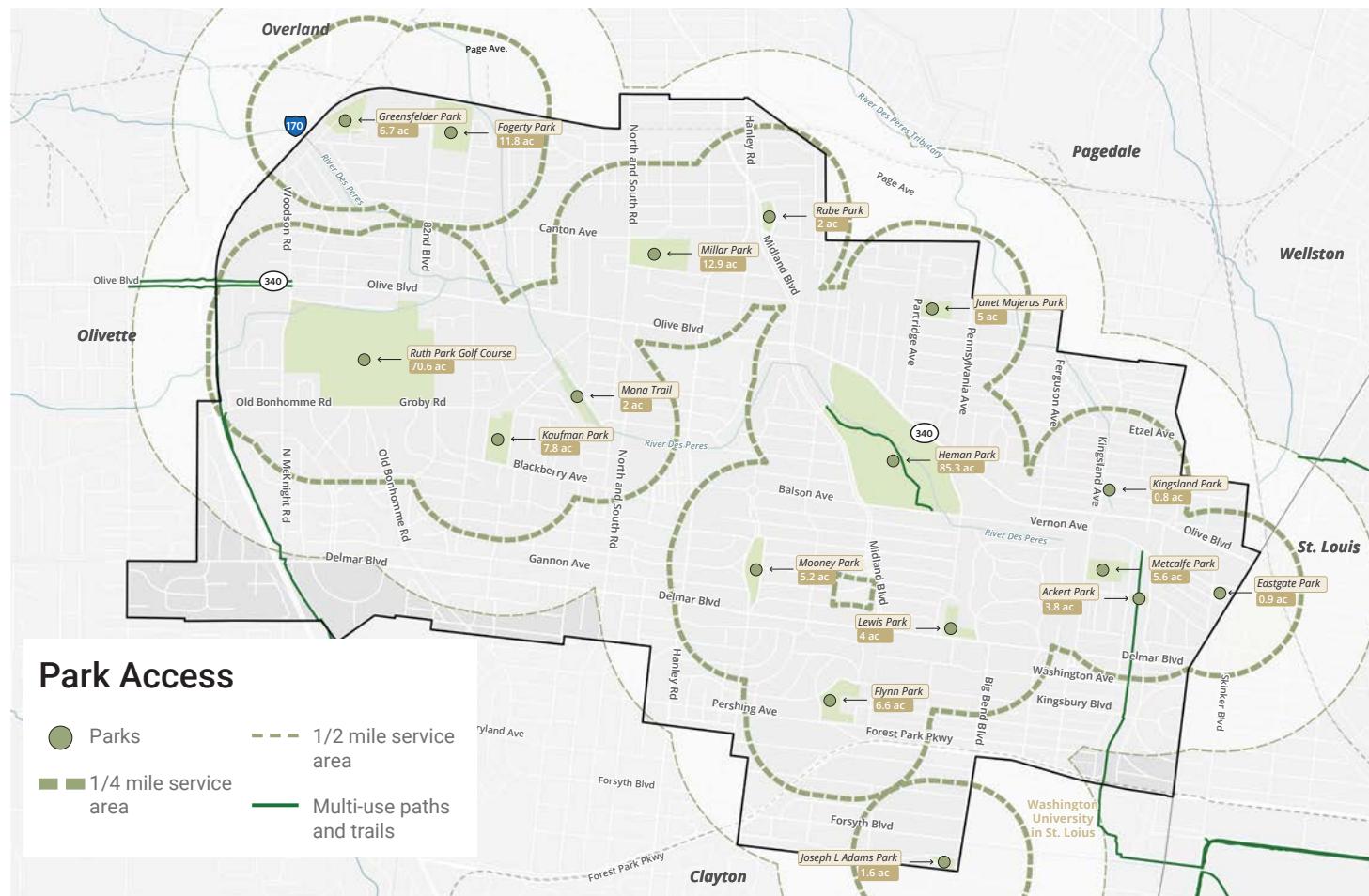
Data Source: University City GIS data

## Historic Sites and Districts

University City has significant and extensive historic cultural assets. Some of the sites and districts on the National Register of Historic Places are also locally recognized. This presents an important opportunity for the City to capitalize on and celebrate historic buildings, while also allowing for sensitive new development. Notably, most recognized districts are in the southeastern portion of the city, but community members have noted a desire to preserve, recognize, and celebrate historic resources in other parts of the city as well.

## Parks and Recreation

University City is well-served by existing parks with respect to access, with a large proportion of city residents living within  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles of a park, not including informal open spaces or open spaces outside of city borders (which are not shown on the map below). The design of parks is based largely (not exclusively) on the concept of manicured, high maintenance spaces, with few "natural" spaces. This means that the quality of parks and specific amenities provided are not consistent throughout the city and maintenance of existing parks is a challenge with limited resources. This should inform consideration of future opportunities because sustaining the quality of parks will require strategic decisions about design and investment.



Data Source: University City GIS data and Planning NEXT analysis

## Community Facilities

University City is served by community facilities that are distributed throughout the city. However, there is significant opportunity for improved connections between these facilities and places to live, work, and recreate. This includes providing safe routes for students to travel between University City schools, residential neighborhoods, parks, and other facilities.



Data Source: University City GIS data and Planning NEXT analysis of Google Maps

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

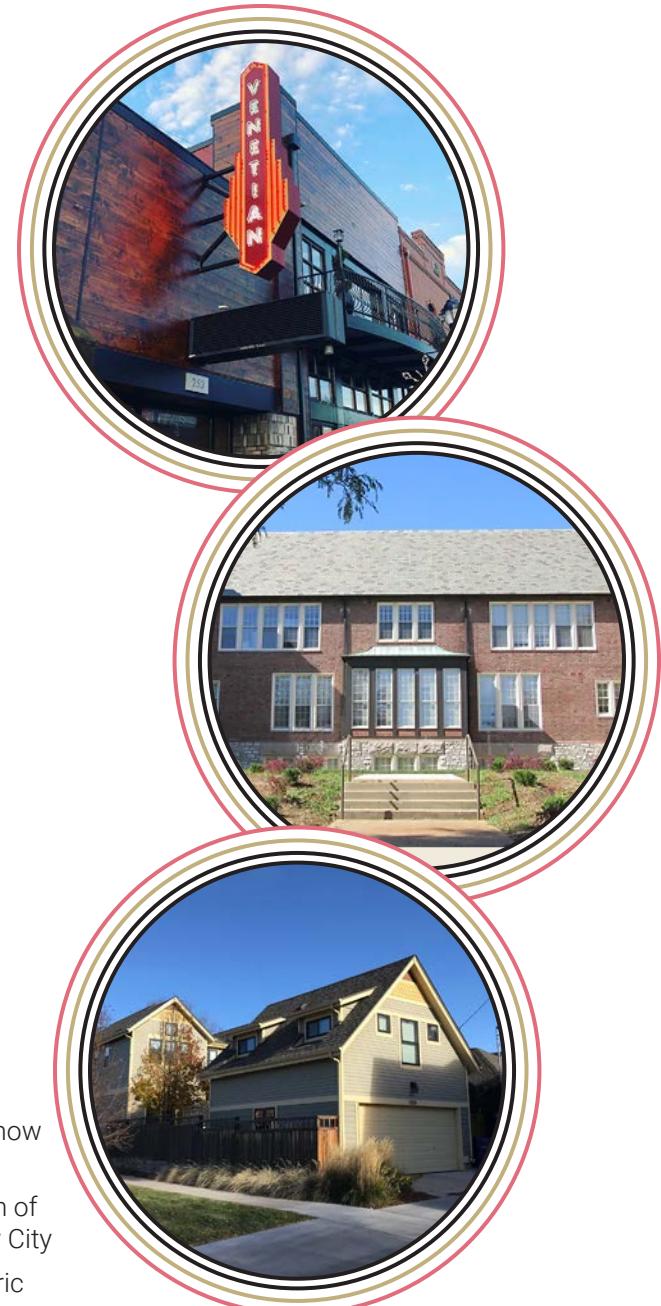
### D.1 Maintain and encourage long-term preservation of historic assets.

#### D.1.1 Modernize and clarify historic preservation objectives and guidelines and utilize form-based standards to encourage the creative reuse of older buildings.

University City is rich in historic assets, with many districts and landmarks that are nationally and locally recognized. Historic design standards that lack clarity can make property owners uncertain of how to maintain historic character and discourage creative uses of properties. Updating historic district standards and establishing form-based standards can allow for new uses that maintain their original character.

#### D.1.2 Create a youth initiative focused on celebrating diversity in the city's history.

Opportunities for youth to learn more about and participate in telling the story of the city's history can foster community pride and belonging and build a lifelong appreciation and understanding of the city. Around the country, historic preservation organizations are focusing on youth involvement in celebrating the diverse history of communities, with many successful models that can provide inspiration. Missouri Preservation, as well as national organizations like the National Trust for Historic Preservation and agencies like the National Park Service, can be helpful partners in developing and securing funding for programs. Existing youth corps organizations have also successfully partnered with local communities on similar programs.



#### Images (top to bottom):

- » Converted theater in Portland, OR, which is now an event venue
- » Hawthorne Schools Apartments: Conversion of historic school into apartments in University City
- » An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in a historic district in Denver, CO

**D.1.3 Create a University City walking tour focused on diversity in the city's history.**

A tour of the city focused on diversity can help instill pride in the community's multifaceted heritage and culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse population. A tour could showcase existing neighborhoods, minority-owned businesses, and cultural assets to people outside of the community, helping to promote University City as an interesting and welcoming place to live, work, or visit. It is imperative that when celebrating the city's diversity, the role that racism played in shaping the city be acknowledged.

**D.2 Enhance the community's parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs of all residents.****D.2.1 Update the University City Parks and Recreation Master Plan to include a maintenance management plan for parks, prioritizing strategic investment in maintenance, programming, and naturalized spaces.**

Improvements to existing public parks may include upgrades to existing park facilities, diversifying programming to suit the needs of more park users, continuing to grow active recreation programming, and incorporating enhanced passive recreation and natural space features. The City's park reservation system should also be modernized.

**D.2.2 Celebrate the city's history and diversity through parks, historic preservation, and public art.**

The City can recognize and call attention to important people, events, or communities connected to its diverse population. This will help to bring to light the unique history and cultural assets of University City. This initiative would allow the City to highlight special places through interpretive signage, murals, art, and other features.

**Images (top to bottom):**

- » A Cultural Wall in Columbus, OH
- » Civil Rights Heritage Trail in Birmingham, AL
- » "Bridging the Gap" mural in Philadelphia, PA



**D.2.3 Consider cross-community partnerships and park programming to encourage participation by community members across racial and ethnic groups.** Many youths in University City participate in sports programming outside of the city. Some community members have expressed concern that as a result participation breaks down across racial lines, with fewer non-minority youth participating in City youth sports programming. By enhancing opportunities for cross-community programming, including but not limited to youth sports, partnering with school sports and activities, and encouraging participation by all segments of the University City population, the community can better connect across racial and ethnic lines.

**D.2.4 Restart and expand parks and recreation programming for seniors and youth.** In an effort to be a community that fosters health and well-being across all age demographics, University City must provide opportunities for parks and recreational programming that appeals to all ages. While funding for programming is limited, programming that targets seniors and youth should be prioritized to address the specific needs of these segments of the population.

**D.2.5 Create Safe Routes to Parks and Safe Routes to Schools plans to improve pedestrian and bicycle access.** The ability for all community members to safely travel to parks by foot or bicycle has a huge impact on park use. National organizations like the National Recreation and Park Association provide ample guidance and resources to communities to create safe routes to parks plans, which can complement other park and trail planning with a specific focus on non-vehicular access. In generating this plan, it will be essential to have participation of and input by community members from the city's full spectrum of demographic groups and all age cohorts.

**D.2.6 Develop youth sports programming that engages high school and university students as mentors and coaches.** Engaging high school and university students as mentors and coaches in youth sports will foster stronger relationships between the City, the school district, and area universities. It will also help provide support to programs that have limited resources.



## D.3 Strengthen support for community and cultural institutions.

**D.3.1 Continue to expand public art in the city.** Public art creates landmarks, builds civic pride, induces tourism, and creates a stronger connection to the community and its citizens. The City's Municipal Commission on Arts and Letters acts in an advisory capacity to the City Council in connection with the artistic, cultural, and scholarly development within the city. The Commission can work with local and regional artists and arts-oriented organizations to expand access to and participation in public art installations and initiatives across the city's neighborhoods, especially in mixed-use areas and activity nodes identified in this plan.

**D.3.2 Create a plan that promotes art and culture in a manner consistent with the comprehensive plan.** Beyond seeking individual opportunities to expand public art, the Municipal Commission on Arts and Letters and appropriate partners should create an art and culture plan for all residents (including those with disabilities) that is coordinated with the specific recommendations in this plan for supporting community gathering at activity nodes and elsewhere. This plan should also consider opportunities described in Action D.2.2. to celebrate the city's history and diversity through parks, historic preservation, and public art. This could include creation of a succinct public art plan that would identify new strategic opportunities, partnerships, and funding mechanisms to advance public art, which would help the City to identify targets and evaluate success.



Public art in University City can help to celebrate what makes the community special, including important people, events, and places.

## D.4 Enhance the experience for visitors to University City.

### D.4.1 Continue to expand and promote the Explore U City website, per the 2021

**Economic Development Strategy.** The Explore U City website showcases neighborhood restaurants, retail, and events to University City residents and others. The recommends numerous ways in which the Explore U City website can be utilized and expanded. As the comprehensive plan is implemented, Explore U City can be leveraged to share information about new opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy all that the city has to offer.

### D.4.2 Implement a signage program to highlight the city and its neighborhoods.

It can be challenging for visitors to know when they have entered University City and, once in the city, what neighborhood they are in. A signage program that highlights the city's neighborhoods should be pursued to help with wayfinding and branding of the distinctive areas that make up the city. The program should involve creating signage designs and standards, a strategy for identifying locations, and the identification of revenue sources to support fabrication, installation, and maintenance.

### D.4.3 Improve gateway locations and neighborhood nodes with landscaping, amenities, signage, public art, or other features.

Gateway locations in the city, as identified in the 2021 Economic Development Strategy can be enhanced to provide welcoming, attractive entry points into the city. This can help to improve perceptions of visitors, make city boundaries clearer, and create a sense of place at these locations.



#### CREATE PLACE

Quality landscaping and amenities in mixed use areas in and around University City demonstrate that such can make a big difference in creating attractive, vibrant places.

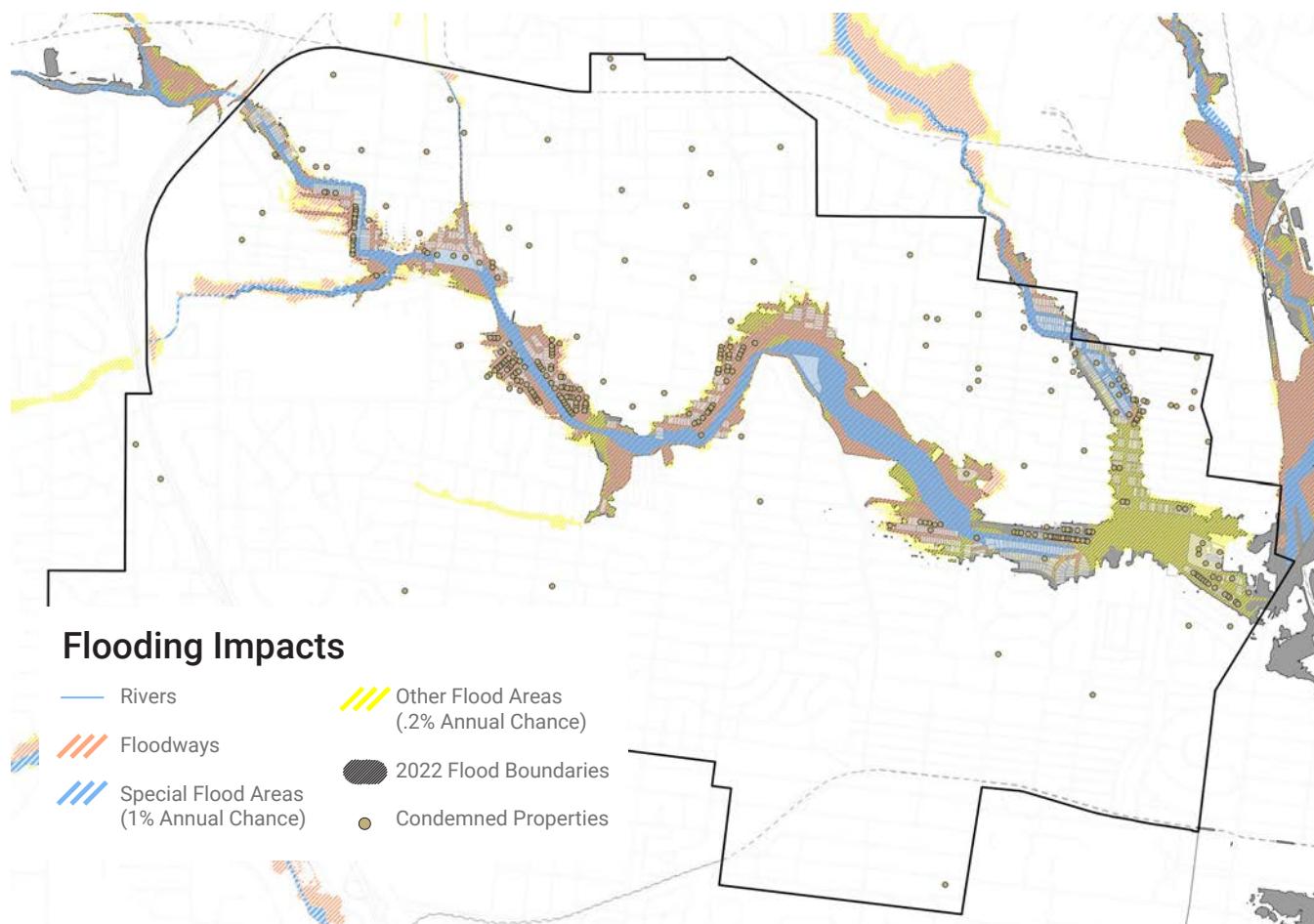
Image shows an activity center in Kirkwood.

# GOAL E: STRENGTHEN LIVABILITY.

*Enhance neighborhoods as the building block of the community and center of day-to-day life and provide community members with choice in where they live in the city.*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Following is a description of existing conditions that provide important context for Goal E. All maps presented represent best information available in 2023.

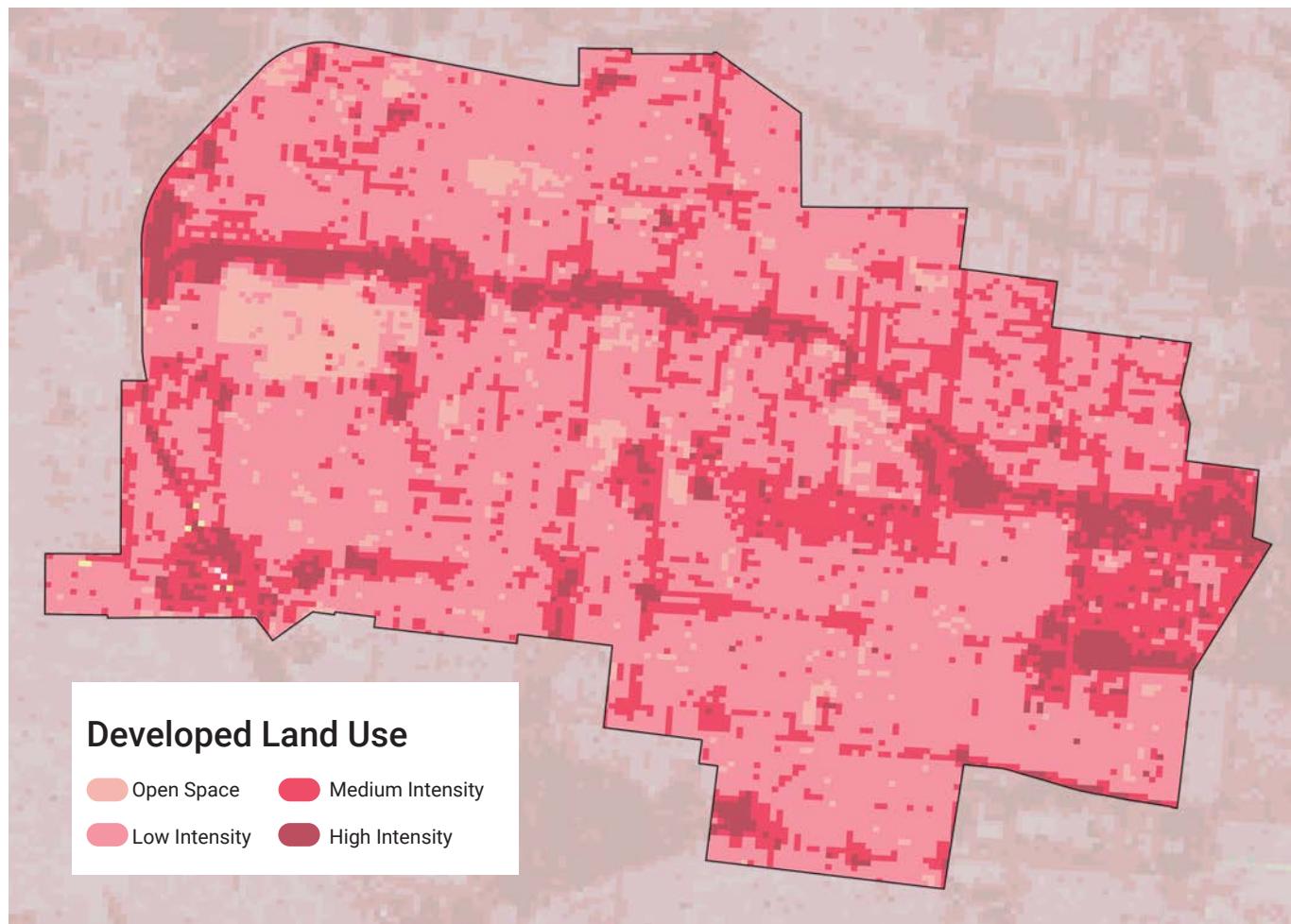


## Flood Prone Areas And Flooding Impacts

Recent flooding in University City has not aligned with FEMA flood zones. In order to anticipate areas that could be vulnerable to flooding in the future, it's important to also look at recent inundation. This map displays the floodway, 100-year flood plain and the 500-year (moderate flood hazard area) as well as the 2022 flood extent and parcels inundated during the 2022 flood. It also shows all properties condemned in University City from January through November 2022, including those condemned due to flooding. Data for flood inundation extent was provided by the University City Commission on Storm Water Issues and may need to be updated after future flooding events. This composite map can serve as a basis for understanding areas in the city where potential flooding impacts should impact or limit future development.

## Land Cover

Land cover data from the US Geological Services (USGS) National Land Cover Database (NLCD) shows that University City has significant areas of medium and high intensity land cover, where there is a high percentage of impermeable surface. This may mean that such areas are more challenged in terms of draining stormwater or handling inundation from flooding events. Notably, many of these areas are the flood prone areas of the city.



### Definitions:

- » **Developed, Open Space.** Areas with a mixture of some constructed materials but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Less than 20% of the total cover includes impervious surfaces.
- » **Developed, Low Intensity.** Areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units. 20-49% of total cover includes impervious surface.
- » **Developed, Medium Intensity.** Areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units. 50-79% of total cover includes impervious surface.
- » **Developed, High Intensity.** Highly developed areas which include apartments, commercial, and industrial development. Impervious surfaces account for 80-100% of the land cover.

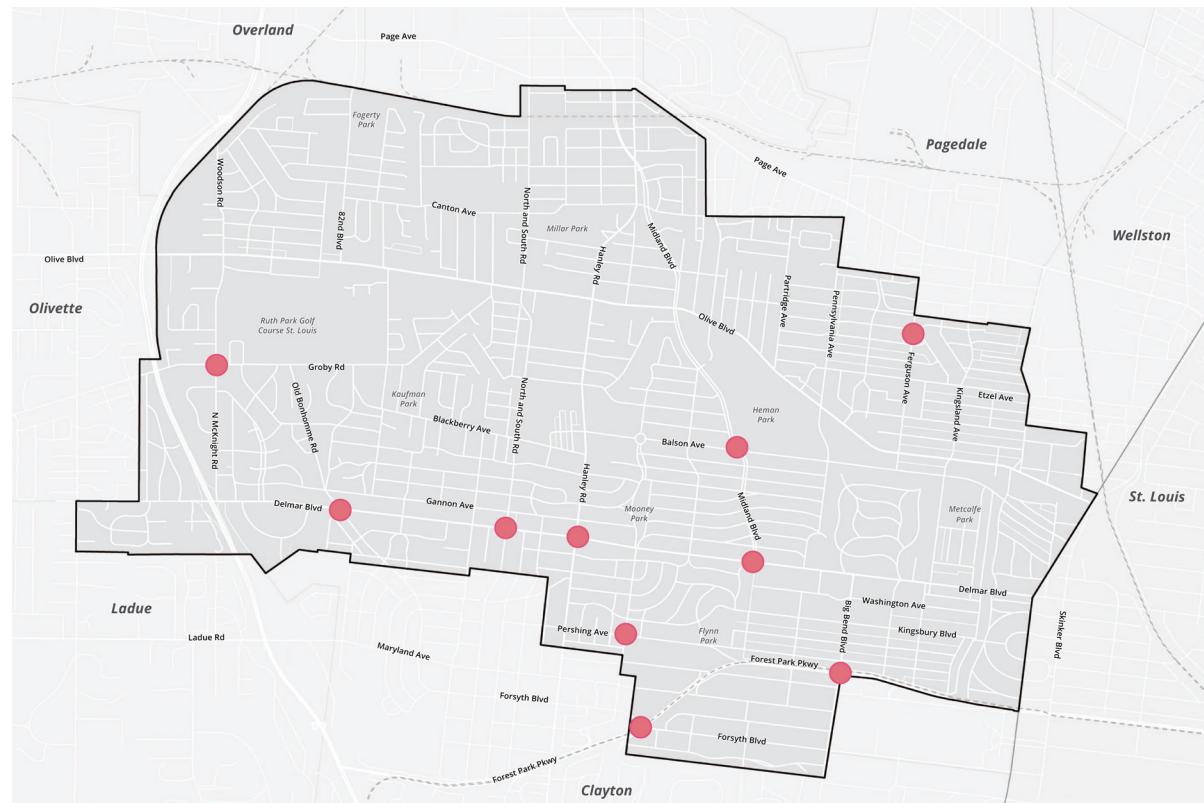
## Existing Maintenance and Property Regulations

University City follows the International Property Maintenance Code (IMPC) 2018 edition, with some minor amendments, which are detailed in chapter 240 of the City's code of ordinances. These regulations are distinct from building codes, which regulate new construction, alterations, additions, etc. Property maintenance regulations help the City ensure that existing homes, buildings, and properties are safe for people to occupy, and when fully effective, these regulations help promote a quality physical environment in which people want to live, work, and visit. The City makes every effort to enforce property maintenance regulations fairly, and to give people adequate time and flexibility in resolving maintenance violations. However, there are always opportunities to improve the communication of violations and offer resources to assist lower-resourced property owners, such as information about existing programs to assist with home repairs, advice for working with contractors, etc.

## Location of Existing Activity Nodes

The city has a number of existing areas where small commercial activity is integrated into residential areas. These "neighborhood nodes" are walkable neighborhood areas that may include a mix of residential and commercial uses, such as shops, restaurants, laundromats, salons, and other services and amenities, that often have offices, apartments, or condos above the ground floor. These existing nodes can be a starting place for considering future opportunities to expand and add to the city's vibrant mix of uses, and provide access for residents to a range of goods and services.

### Existing Activity Nodes



● Existing Activity Nodes

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### **E.1 Protect each neighborhood's distinctive character while supporting compatible new development.**

**E.1.1 Evaluate short-term rental regulations.** In many communities, short-term rentals cause concerns about investor-owned properties that are rented out and result in noise, trash, or other negative impacts on communities. At the same time, short-term rentals can provide property owners with a valued source of income and can attract visitors to the city. Regulating short-term rentals through the City code or another mechanism could help University City to establish under what conditions short-term rentals should be permitted in order to mitigate potential problems. Regulations can take many forms, and the City should look at example ordinances for guidance.

**E.1.2 Implement a Housing and Third Ward Revitalization plan or take such measures as directed by the City Council, which may include recommendations by the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force.** The redevelopment agreement for the Market at Olive includes a TIF District that dedicates \$10 million to the Third Ward neighborhoods, and \$5 million to the Olive corridor. The funds are allocated to housing stock improvements, vacant property acquisitions, homeownership efforts, streetscaping and revitalization efforts on Olive, and other initiatives developed in accordance with the work of the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force. The Task Force's work commenced during the time frame in which this comprehensive plan was being conducted and will be completed after the comprehensive plan is adopted. The Task Force should prioritize recommendations that are consistent with and support the other goals and vision of this plan.

#### **AFFORDABLE VARIETY**

The term "Missing Middle" was coined by Daniel Parolek of Opticos Design. Missing middle housing is "a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood." Many communities throughout the country, including University City, have recognized that providing more missing middle housing can assist in meeting increased housing demand in walkable areas and serves shifting demographics, including both younger and older populations seeking access to amenities and less maintenance responsibility.

**E.1.3 Remove barriers in the zoning code and specify form-based standards for the development of duplexes, triplexes, and other forms of “missing middle”<sup>17</sup> housing.** The City can promote missing middle housing by making these uses permitted uses in the zoning code and by easing requirements for upgrading and renovating existing missing middle housing in the city. Special attention should be made to providing housing options that fit into the city’s existing neighborhoods in form and scale. To ensure these housing options are built equitably, the City should collaborate with private subdivision trustees to align City codes and subdivision indentures. New housing should also integrate universal design standards to accommodate aging-in-place and provide options for people of all physical abilities. These types of housing should especially be encouraged in areas that are well served by transit.

**E.1.4 Strengthen property maintenance enforcement practices and connect residents to home repair assistance resources.** Code compliance for property maintenance can be challenging to enforce due to limited resources and competing priorities. However, the City can strengthen property maintenance enforcement by consistently applying standards, seeking new ways to gather information about property concerns, and holding routine violators accountable. The City has a reporting system that allows residents to report concerns related to property maintenance, code violations, etc., which should be evaluated for effectiveness and opportunities for modernization. The City should connect resident property owners with repair services.



**E.1.5 Investigate establishing and/or supporting (an) existing community development entity(ies) to address housing affordability, vacancy, maintenance, and stability in University City.** A community development entity can help to attract outside funding that can be used to supplement City sources (such as TIF) to support neighborhood reinvestment and revitalization efforts. This entity could take different forms, including a partnership with another community where such an entity already exists, or something new and specific to University City. A primary function of the entity would be to acquire property with an emphasis on housing, rehabilitate or redevelop as necessary, and make available to support single family ownership. This entity would not be managed or controlled by the City. There are also existing community development entities in University City that already do much of this work. The City could find opportunities support and strengthen their efforts.

**E.1.6 Celebrate examples of quality homeowner and neighborhood improvements.** A program should be created to recognize home improvements or maintenance efforts. This will encourage pride in homeownership and one's neighborhood. Initial focus could begin with individual homeowner recognition expanding to larger neighborhood awards. Ancillary activities such as an annual trash clean-up day could be organized. Local leaders could be selected as part of the reviewing committee for awards.

## **E.2 Promote housing variety and affordability to support a range of household types, lifestyles, and demographic group needs that is cost effective and efficient.**

**E.2.1 Facilitate the creation of diverse housing options to serve “workforce housing”<sup>18</sup> needs.** Regulatory incentives such as density bonuses, fee reductions, or expedited review could be used to promote redevelopment of existing residential areas with promise for attainable workforce housing (based on property values, house size, and location). At the same time, one of the most effective strategies for maintaining affordable / attainable housing is to ensure that existing stock remains in good condition. The City and housing advocates should lobby for State and Federal grants for improvements to existing affordable / attainable housing. Incentive programs working with a community development entity as described in Action E.1.5. could also be explored targeting key neighborhoods or areas.

**E.2.2 Develop and plan for allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)<sup>19</sup> in areas designated “Traditional Neighborhood” in this plan.** ADUs provide additional, affordable housing options, helping the City to fulfill an aspiration of being inclusive and non-discriminatory, by allowing people who might otherwise not be able to afford to live in single-family neighborhoods the ability to do so. They are especially attractive to younger residents or older adults who don’t need large living spaces and are not interested in the property maintenance associated with a conventional single-family home. They can also provide a secondary source of income for property owners. Applying universal design standards may make ADUs attractive to all people regardless of age or physical ability.

**E.2.3 Modernize or remove definitions of family or household relationships in the zoning ordinance to reflect changing household composition and lifestyles.** Households in University City take different forms and zoning should be updated to reflect this diversity, including the fact that legally unrelated individuals may function as and consider themselves to be members of the same family. This will help to make for a more inclusive community that provides more housing options for all families, regardless of the legal relationship between family members. Zoning ordinances should be written to address college student housing issues.

### **CREATING AN ATTAINABLE HOUSING STOCK**

According to the Urban Land Institute, attainable housing is defined as non-subsidized, for-sale housing that is affordable to households with incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the area median income. Creating and supporting attainable housing helps to provide more housing options. This could include smaller homes, value housing, missing-middle attached housing, and high-density detached cluster housing. Attainable housing is a broader category conventionally named “affordable” and/or “subsidized housing,” which typically refers to subsidized housing for households with income below a defined threshold. Attainable housing generally refers to housing that is reasonably-priced for lower-to mid-income households that don’t qualify for “affordable housing.”

**E.2.4 Promote homeownership through initiatives such as:**

- i. **Creating pre-approved building plans for certain housing products (e.g., smaller-scale multifamily) to reduce costs and streamline the approval process.**
- ii. **Establishing a public-private workforce housing capital pool (a public-private housing trust fund).**
- iii. **Creating a City-sponsored down payment assistance program.**
- iv. **Adopting a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA).<sup>20</sup>**
- v. **Partnering with entities that can help expand access to credit in historically redlined areas and areas that are still considered “riskier” investments today.**

Homeownership is an important factor in building household wealth and improving neighborhood stability, but homeownership is often out of reach for lower and moderate-income households. Homeownership itself is not the only factor to build housing wealth; lower and moderate-income households need access to quality neighborhoods with good transportation options, access to jobs and amenities, and higher rates of homeownership. The City should explore options to improve credit access, such as partnering with non-profit organizations that offer non-traditional mortgage options and promote existing resources. Additionally, down payments can be challenging for first-time home buyers and can deter people from pursuing homeownership. The City could incentivize homeownership by offering a down payment assistance program. Criteria should be established for reviewing applicants to encourage local homeownership and revitalization in University City with additional resources provided to selected candidates.

**E.2.5 Protect non-homeowner citizens (renters) through such measures as:**

- i. **Improving the rental inspection program to ensure safe, habitable, and fair housing.**
- ii. **Creating a renter protection program.**
- iii. **Exploring a source of income discrimination ordinance.<sup>21</sup>**

Rental inspection programs are important to cities because they require periodic inspections to ensure the tenant is provided with a safe and habitable place to live that meets all city and/or county requirements. University City has a rental property registration program that requires annual inspection. The program should be evaluated to determine opportunities for improvement. Given the increase in rental properties in the city, it is important to ensure the City has the capacity to manage the program effectively.

Assisting residents through a renter protection program can reduce the eviction rate in communities while assisting the low-income population. This protection program can include a series of regulations such as landlord minimum lease terms, minimum notice to vacate requirements, notice of rent increase, and relocation assistance for evicted tenants. The regulations can be adopted through separate ordinances and tailored to address the unique conditions of the rental market. The program would provide levels of protection for the rental community by providing sufficient time to locate housing and could provide potential funding to secure new housing. This would aid the community in lowering the eviction rate by ensuring tenants are provided with the base standards for entering into a rental agreement within the city.

**Images:**

» Amy Tompkins from  
Habitat for Humanity  
St. Louis



## **E.3 Address stormwater management through proactive, regional flood mitigation planning.**

**E.3.1 Implement a Storm Water Master Plan or take such measures as directed by the City Council, which may include recommendations by the Commission on Stormwater Issues, and engage the Plan Commission in updates to the City's Code.** The Commission on Storm Water Issues is in the process of creating a Storm Water Master Plan, which may recommend and prioritize certain stormwater mitigation projects for the City, as well as changes to standards in codes related to site coverage, impervious surface specifications, etc. These code changes may require that future development in the city occur in a resilient manner that avoids worsening the city's flooding challenges. Grants and other funding/bonding will be needed for more buyouts. It will be critical for the Commission on Storm Water Issues to design a Master Plan that is consistent with and supports the other goals and vision of this plan.

**E.3.2 Implement a flood mitigation plan for the River Des Peres and its tributaries or take such measures as directed by the City Council, which may include recommendations by the Commission on Stormwater Issues.** The flood mitigation plan that is currently underway is taking a holistic look at how flooding can be mitigated and may include specific recommendations for action to be taken. Implementation of the plan will require cooperation between the City and State and Federal agencies.

**E.3.3 Expand park coverage and stormwater management through reuse of vacant parcels.** In accordance with Action A.3.2., vacant parcels can be utilized to help with stormwater management through features such as community gardens, rain gardens, pollinator gardens, natural plantings areas, low maintenance trailways, or pocket parks. In combination with other interventions, the aggregate impact will be to reduce flooding during storm events.

**E.3.4 Encourage use of Low Impact Development (LID)<sup>22</sup> strategies on vacant lots, in parks, and within private development, and incorporate LID strategies into the City's capital improvements.** Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management approach modeled after nature. LID addresses stormwater through cost-effective landscape features such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavement. LID can be found in open spaces, streetscapes, rooftops, parking lots, along sidewalks, roadway medians, and other spaces and be incorporated into new construction and retrofits. Stormwater mitigation design is already required for developments greater than one acre in size, per MSD land development regulations. Going forward, University City should consider requiring similar mitigation for developments less than one acre in size when feasible, as the cumulative impact of smaller parcels is greater than large redevelopment sites.

**E.3.5 Incrementally convert high-flood risk areas into open spaces that are designed to accommodate stormwater, provided that maintenance and security can be addressed.** The City should take proactive measures to address areas that have been impacted by flooding in the past and work to mitigate future flood risk to residents and businesses. This can include a variety of measures, such as utilizing open spaces for stormwater management, acquiring properties, and working regionally to address flood management. Mitigation of flooding in University City will require a complex combination of engineering and policy measures (addressing stormwater runoff, etc.) beyond what is included in this action. The flood mitigation plan that is currently underway is examining how flooding can be mitigated and will include specific recommendations for action to be taken.

## ENCOURAGE LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management approach modeled after nature. LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features. LID can be found in open spaces, streetscapes, rooftops, parking lots, sidewalks, medians, and other spaces and be incorporated into new construction and retrofits.



A green roof that limits runoff



A roadway median using LID



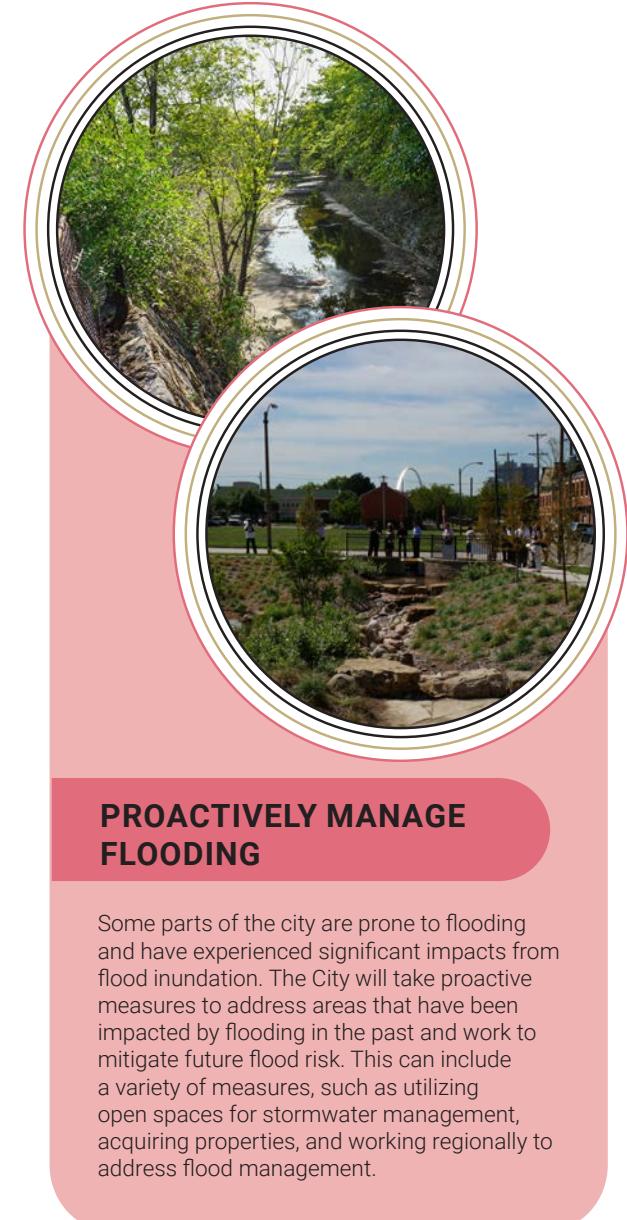
A park using LID features

**E.3.6 Discourage additional new development in flood-prone areas and restrict any new development within the floodplain.** Based on historical data and considering the impact of climate change, University City can expect that property in flood-prone areas will continue to flood. By discouraging new development in flood-prone areas, fewer residents and businesses will be adversely affected when the next major storm event causes significant flooding. Coupled with strategies described in other actions to introduce open space and non-habitable areas and structures, this policy will help to shift development in University City to less vulnerable locations, reducing damage to property and financial loss to property owners, and increasing safety.

**E.3.7 Promote existing partner organizations' native plant guides to encourage use in landscaping on private property.** Supporting native plants is important to provide food sources for native insects and animals, maintain the general functioning of local ecosystems, and sustain the natural heritage of an area. Regional and statewide conservation and gardening organizations keep lists of native plants, which can be publicized through City websites, social media, parks-oriented events, and other activities.

**E.3.8 Improve coordination with MSD on channel maintenance, downspout disconnections, drainage improvements, record keeping, etc.**

**E.3.9 Consider requiring disclosure of flood history for rentals and home purchases, as suggested by SEMA, possibly as part of the occupancy permit.**



Some parts of the city are prone to flooding and have experienced significant impacts from flood inundation. The City will take proactive measures to address areas that have been impacted by flooding in the past and work to mitigate future flood risk. This can include a variety of measures, such as utilizing open spaces for stormwater management, acquiring properties, and working regionally to address flood management.

# GOAL F: IMPROVE COLLABORATION.

*Prioritize commitment to action through responsive governance and strategic partnerships to realize the community's vision.*

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Following is a description of existing conditions that provide important context for Goal F.

### City Boards, Commissions, and Authorities

University City has nine boards, 12 commissions, and two authorities (hence "citizen entities"), which consist of citizen volunteers with interest and/or experience in the topics relevant to the entity they serve on. While citizen entities are not currently active, this is a high number of entities relative to the City's population. In addition to the entities above, the City also organizes task forces for issues or projects with a defined timeframe.

Citizen entities do important work for the city, acting as a voice of the community, making recommendations to the City Council (which is also comprised of elected volunteers), and often expanding the City's capacity in studying issues and providing input for staff direction. According to City policies, citizen entities are expected to communicate and collaborate on a regular basis in areas of shared concern and opportunity. This collaboration has not occurred consistently in recent years. It is also becoming increasingly apparent that the City does not have the staff capacity to support all the existing citizen entities. It is also challenging to find enough residents willing to serve on these entities. The City must find opportunities to improve, promote, and sustain citizen entities as optimal means of engagement between its citizens and their government in the future.

## UNIVERSITY CITY CITIZEN ENTITIES

### Boards

- » Board of Adjustment
- » Board of Appeals
- » Board of Trustees of the Non-Uniformed Employees
- » Board of Trustees of the Police & Firemen's Retirement Fund
- » Civil Service Board
- » Economic Development and Retail Tax Board
- » Infill Review Board
- » Library Board
- » Loop Special Business District Board

### Commissions

- » Commission for Access and Local Original Programming
- » Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters
- » Plan Commission
- » Historic Preservation Commission
- » Park Commission
- » Traffic Commission
- » Green Practices Commission
- » Commission on Senior Issues
- » Commission on Storm Water Issues
- » Tax Increment Financing Commission
- » Urban Forestry Commission
- » Youth Commission

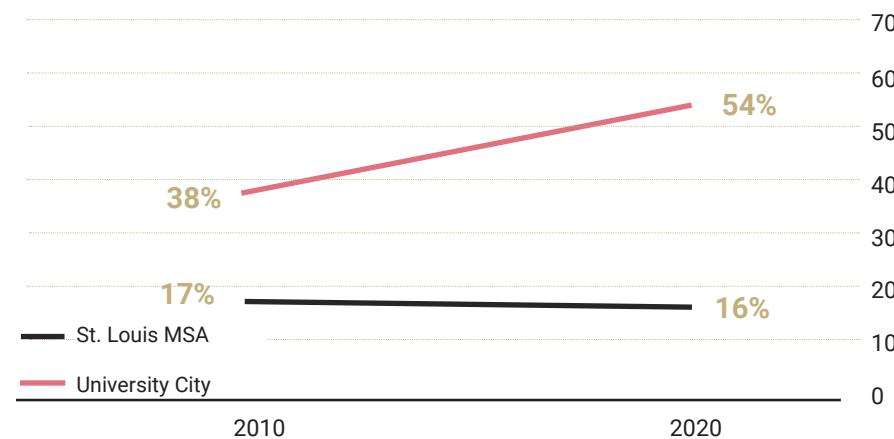
### Authorities

- » Industrial Development Authority
- » Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority

## K-12 Enrollment, public vs. private

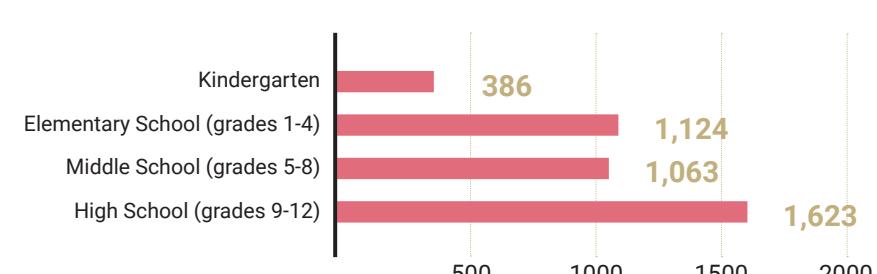
University City has a high K-12 private enrollment (54% in 2020). This is up from 38% in 2010 and is higher than the St. Louis MSA in 2020 (16%). This trend could exacerbate inequalities in the city, and also may contribute to divisions within the community. University City is one of the most segregated communities by race in Missouri, based on the census dissimilarity index.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the fact that many school children with means opt out of University City public schools can have a long term impact on social networks, and socialization across income groups has been demonstrated to be an important factor in supporting economic mobility. While this comprehensive plan does not focus on school quality and choice as a major focus, understanding these dynamics is important in the context of other divisions and disparities within the city.

K-12 Private School Enrollment



Data Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate

K-12 School Enrollment for University City

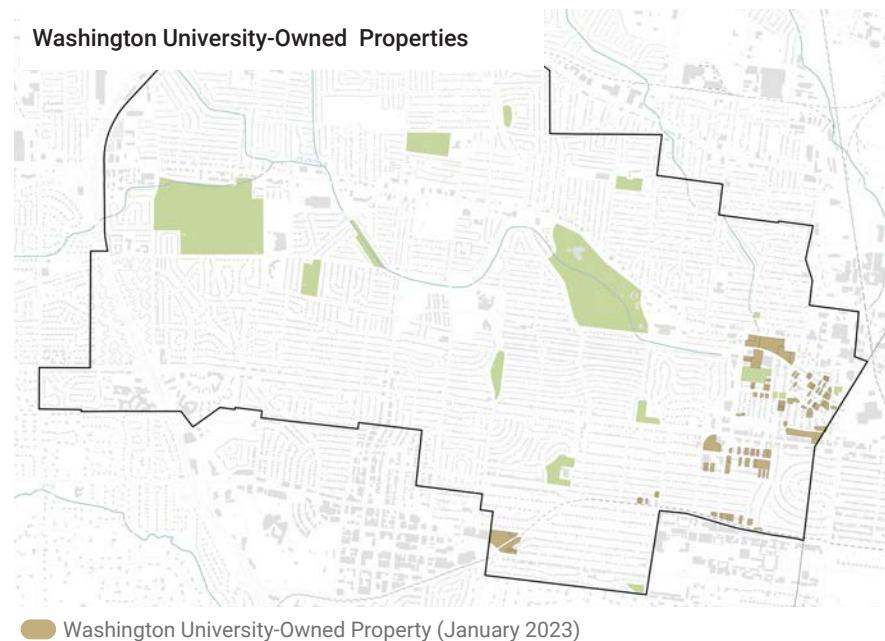


Data Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate

## INSTITUTIONAL PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

A number of institutional, nonprofit, and governmental entities own property in University City. This includes Washington University, as well as other organizations and local governments. Non-profit institutions may choose to make purchased properties tax-exempt by using them for tax-exempt purposes. This results in net reduction of property tax revenue supporting the City and public schools. At the same time, voluntary collaborations and contributions can help to support important City priorities (see, for example, Washington University Collaboration information on this page). Many Washington University staff, employees, and student live in the city. In addition, the presence of institutions can help with job creation, support for local businesses, attraction of local residents, and more. An understanding of this dynamic can help in determining opportunities for future collaboration and potential actions that can be taken to maximize benefits while minimizing negative impacts on the city.

### Washington University-Owned Properties



Data Source: 2023 St. Louis County Assessor Data

## Washington University Collaboration

Washington University in St. Louis has a significant presence in University City, with many faculty, staff, and students living in the community. Most of the university's main campus (Danforth Campus) borders University City to the south and is in unincorporated St. Louis County, but some of the main campus is within municipal boundaries of St. Louis and Clayton. Washington University's North Campus, which mostly houses administrative functions, is in St. Louis, near University City's eastern boundary. Although there is no "campus" in University City, Washington University is a significant landowner: by assessed value, the university is the largest property owner in University City. Despite this, University City property is a relatively small portion of Washington University's total landholdings; the largest share of landholdings are in St. Louis and unincorporated St. Louis County.

Washington University is one of the largest anchor institutions in the St. Louis region, and has a tremendous impact on University City's economy, population, and identity. As a result, many issues and opportunities arise that require clear communication, cooperation, and collaboration, to achieve a mutually beneficial relationship.

University City and Washington University share key values: fostering a diverse and inclusive community, advocating for environmental responsibility, and creating a physical environment that is safe and attractive. Both parties have collaborated in the past to work towards these values, but more work must be done to build trust and partnership.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### F.1 Improve communication and cooperation with adjacent communities.

#### F.1.1 Learn from and adapt successful codes that improve stormwater and flood resilience.

**resilience.** The City should research other communities, especially within the region, that have codes that could be instructive for University City. This assessment of best practices can inform changes the City will make to its zoning and floodplain management codes.

#### F.1.2 Collaborate with neighboring communities to strengthen connections and advance shared development opportunities along borders.

University City is influenced by neighboring communities. In these communities, there have been recent developments and opportunities for further development that could benefit University City residents, particularly along Page Ave, surrounding the MetroLink station in Wellston, with Olivette (I-170 & Olive interchange), and along the border with Clayton. Efforts to improve connectivity, advance development, and develop shared goals for development procedures could be mutually beneficial.

#### F.1.3 Study building code inconsistencies across communities and establish a dialogue about coordinated improvements.

Inconsistencies in building codes across St. Louis County municipalities create inefficiencies that can influence whether housing providers are willing to build or buy properties. By collaborating with other jurisdictions, University City can help to create more uniformity between codes to improve the conditions for housing development. This collaboration should include participation in the Safer + Simpler St. Louis County initiative which seeks to simplify building codes, inspections, and permitting to make doing business easier, facilitate economic development, and improve residents' health and safety.

#### F.1.4 Establish a cross-community crime prevention network.

Crime prevention is best addressed when communities work together as specific issues do not stop at municipal borders. A cross-community crime prevention network can support information-sharing and collaboration to address issues more effectively.

**F.2 Strengthen the partnership with The School District of University City to enhance the reputations of both the City and District.<sup>24</sup>**

**F.2.1 Establish a joint branding strategy for The School District of University City and the City of University City.** Many families choose where to live based on the quality of education available in the local public schools. By promoting both institutions together, the University City Public Schools and the City of University City can create an attractive package for potential new residents. This joint branding strategy will help to attract and retain families, leading to a stronger community.

**F.2.2 Partner with The School District of University City to grow and sustain early childhood education programs and school readiness networks in the city.** Early childhood education is demonstrated to have lifelong benefits relative to academic success. By partnering with The School District of University City, the City can collaborate to identify new opportunities to support programs that will benefit the city's youngest residents.

**F.2.3 Develop mentorship opportunities for students to learn about employment and entrepreneurship opportunities with the City and regional businesses.** To meet growing opportunities for employment in key sectors, mentorship programs should be established to help build appropriate skills, experience, and industry connections. Such efforts can be undertaken through non-profit organizations or business organizations oriented to specific industries. An industry organization can focus its membership on workforce development, marketing, networking, and contract relationships.

**F.2.4 Evaluate asset and infrastructure of the City and The School District of University City to determine where resources can be leveraged by both.** Maintain quality infrastructure (e.g., sports facilities) in The School District of University City that can be utilized by the entire community. Conversely, make City assets available for use by The School District of University City.

### **F.3 Develop additional partnerships with Washington University to address areas of mutual interest.<sup>25</sup>**

**F.3.1 Establish a more deliberate partnership with Washington University focused on strategic, mutually beneficial developments and investments in the Loop.** Washington University has purchased several properties in and around the Loop and has also made investments in the Loop.<sup>26</sup> As a non-profit institution they may choose to make purchased properties tax-exempt by using them for tax-exempt purposes. This change directly results in a net reduction of property tax revenue supporting the City and public schools, absent any additional development. The City and University both want to keep the Loop safe and vibrant.

**F.3.2 Develop a citywide lighting task force focused on safety and invite Washington University to participate.** Lighting in cities can help to promote public safety, add aesthetic value, and can spur private development. A task force focused on lighting can identify potential improvements and strategize about how to fund and implement them.

**F.3.3 Collaborate with Washington University to improve upon their existing “Good Neighbor Initiative”<sup>27</sup> for college students living in University City neighborhoods.**<sup>28</sup> A significant number of college students live in University City neighborhoods, sometimes resulting in conflict between students and other residents. Fostering a sense of belonging, as well as a sense of responsibility to contribute positively to the places where they live, can help to minimize that friction. These initiatives are focused on engaging students in positive conversations with police and local government, providing a chance for civic involvement, and fostering ways for students and other neighbors to get to know each other in ways that can help to build positive relationships.



## F.4 Improve intra-governmental coordination and cooperation.

**F.4.1 Evaluate options for technology platforms to improve collaboration and sharing of information across City departments.** Coordination between City departments can be improved with technology. The City should assess the current use of technology for cross-departmental coordination and research potential technologies that could be utilized to increase efficiency, transparency, and productivity.

**F.4.2 Leverage the expertise in University City's boards, commissions, task forces and authorities through:**

- i. **Conducting a review of all City boards and commissions to ensure adequate, but not duplicative, responsibilities and sufficient staffing capacity.**
- ii. **Developing and implementing formal training programs for board, commission, and council members.**
- iii. **Creating a forum for regular communication among boards and commissions to address long-term issues that impact multiple boards or commissions.**

Boards, commissions, and Council members dedicate time and attention to educating themselves on key issues of importance to the City, and many bring highly relevant expertise. The City should work with boards, commissions, and council members to identify areas where they would benefit from additional training to better fulfill their responsibilities and provide the opportunity to participate in such training. Additionally, boards require support from City staff who are essential in managing their work. The City should evaluate the responsibilities of boards and commissions, including potential overlap between their functions, to ensure all boards and commissions are effective, have a clear purpose, and can be meaningfully supported by City staff.



**F.4.3 Conduct an audit of internal City communications and prepare a strategy for improvements.**

An audit of communications should include methods and efficiency, particularly for departments with corresponding roles. This will help ensure that City departments' communication and initiatives are not hindered by unnecessary or inefficient communication. This will also help identify areas where improvements can be made to streamline and improve the efficiency of communication within the City. A special focus should be on opportunities for the use of technology.

**F.4.4 Explore hiring a grants coordinator.** There are many grant funding opportunities that the City could leverage to expand its capacity, but it is challenging for staff to find time to track and apply for them. A grants coordinator could play a valuable role in identifying and securing grants across departments and professionally administering the documentation requirements of grants, which can be very time consuming.**F.5 Manage implementation progress for recommendations of both previously adopted plans and the comprehensive plan.****F.5.1 Evaluate and report on progress on the comprehensive plan on a regular review schedule (e.g., annually).** Implementation of the comprehensive plan should be assessed at least on an annual basis, by reviewing and evaluating the status of implementation of all actions.**F.5.2 Prepare departmental work programs with references to the comprehensive plan.** Departmental work programs and associated budget requests should demonstrate consistency with the plan.

## ENDNOTES

1. University City Community Vision 2040, July 2022
2. Transit Oriented Development is development that creates dense, walkable, and mixed-use spaces near transit.
3. International Code Council (ICC): A non-profit, non-governmental organization that creates model building codes and standards. Municipalities can adopt model codes as is or make changes as needed to best suit the needs of their communities.
4. Impact fee: A fee levied on the developer or builder of a project by the government as compensation for otherwise unmitigated impacts the project will produce
5. Mow to Own programs allow property owners to acquire properties for a small fee with the commitment to maintain the lot for a certain amount of time (e.g., two years).
6. Infill development is the process of developing vacant or underutilized properties in otherwise developed areas.
7. Economic Value of Walkability ([vtpi.org](http://vtpi.org))
8. [dot-economic-benefits-of-sustainable-streets.pdf](http://dot-economic-benefits-of-sustainable-streets.pdf) (nyc.gov)
9. Economic Development Strategy, March 2021
10. St. Louis County's Action Plan for Walking and Biking, February 2021
11. Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan for the City of University City, prepared by Trailnet and H3 Studio, adopted by University City City Council October 14, 2013
12. State of Missouri STARS reporting, [www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/SAC/stars\\_index.html](http://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/SAC/stars_index.html)
13. Micro mobility: Transportation using lightweight, single-user vehicles, like bikes and scooters.
14. While the Loop Trolley has received a lot of public attention, it is not a major contributor to the transit system due to the very limited area it serves.
15. City of Service: An organization that provides technical assistance and resources to cities looking to engage community volunteers to help identify and solve critical public problems.
16. Neighborhood Liaison: A volunteer who serves as the link between local institutions and members of the community. They assist in communicating the ideas and goals of each group to the other.
17. "Missing middle" housing includes housing that falls between single-family homes and large apartment buildings, such as duplexes, triplexes, courtyard apartments, and townhomes.
18. Workforce housing: Housing targeted for households that earn too much to qualify for traditional affordable housing subsidies, but for whom market rate housing may be out of reach.
19. ADUs are smaller, independent residential dwelling units located on the same lot as stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family units. There are examples of ADUs in University City that exist, despite the zoning ordinance not permitting them.
20. A Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act provides tenants with notice that a landlord is planning to sell their building and provides them with the chance to collectively purchase the building.
21. Source of income discrimination is when landlords refuse to accept tenants regardless of their lawful source of income, which often means denying the opportunity to rent to individuals using tenant-based rental assistance
22. Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management approach modeled after nature. LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavement. LID can be found in open spaces, streetscapes, rooftops, parking lots, sidewalks, medians, and other spaces and be incorporated into new construction and retrofits.
23. Dissimilarity index: [https://www.censusscope.org/about\\_dissimilarity.html](https://www.censusscope.org/about_dissimilarity.html)
24. This objective was articulated by the Second Century Commission and should remain an area of focus for the city.
25. This objective was first articulated by the University City – Washington University Advisory Committee in 2015. These actions build upon the work of that committee.
26. The Delmar Loop Area Retail Plan & Development Strategy Action Plan, prepared for Washington University in Saint Louis by HR&A November 2011.
27. Good Neighbor Initiative: An initiative in many university communities whereby college students get involved in structured programs get to know neighbors, engage in communication with police and representatives from the local government, and/or participate in community service to build positive connections between students and the neighborhoods in which they live.
28. Neighborhood Care & Off-Campus Connect - Students ([wustl.edu](http://wustl.edu)), Washington University's neighborhood care program.



## 4. CHARACTER AND LAND USE

*This chapter provides information related to existing land use and guidance for future physical development. It can also serve as a foundation for changes to the City's zoning code and is intended to reinforce many of the plan's other recommendations.*

During the Community Vision 2040<sup>1</sup> process and early in the process for developing the comprehensive plan, the city's physical built and natural environments were assessed through quantitative analysis, qualitative input from stakeholders and community members, and reviews of numerous past plans and studies. That assessment covered growth history, population and demographic trends, existing use and character, development capacity, natural resources, historic preservation, and more. The character and land use chapter builds upon this work and presents a future character and land use map to guide future decision making.



### CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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## 4.1 EXISTING LAND USE

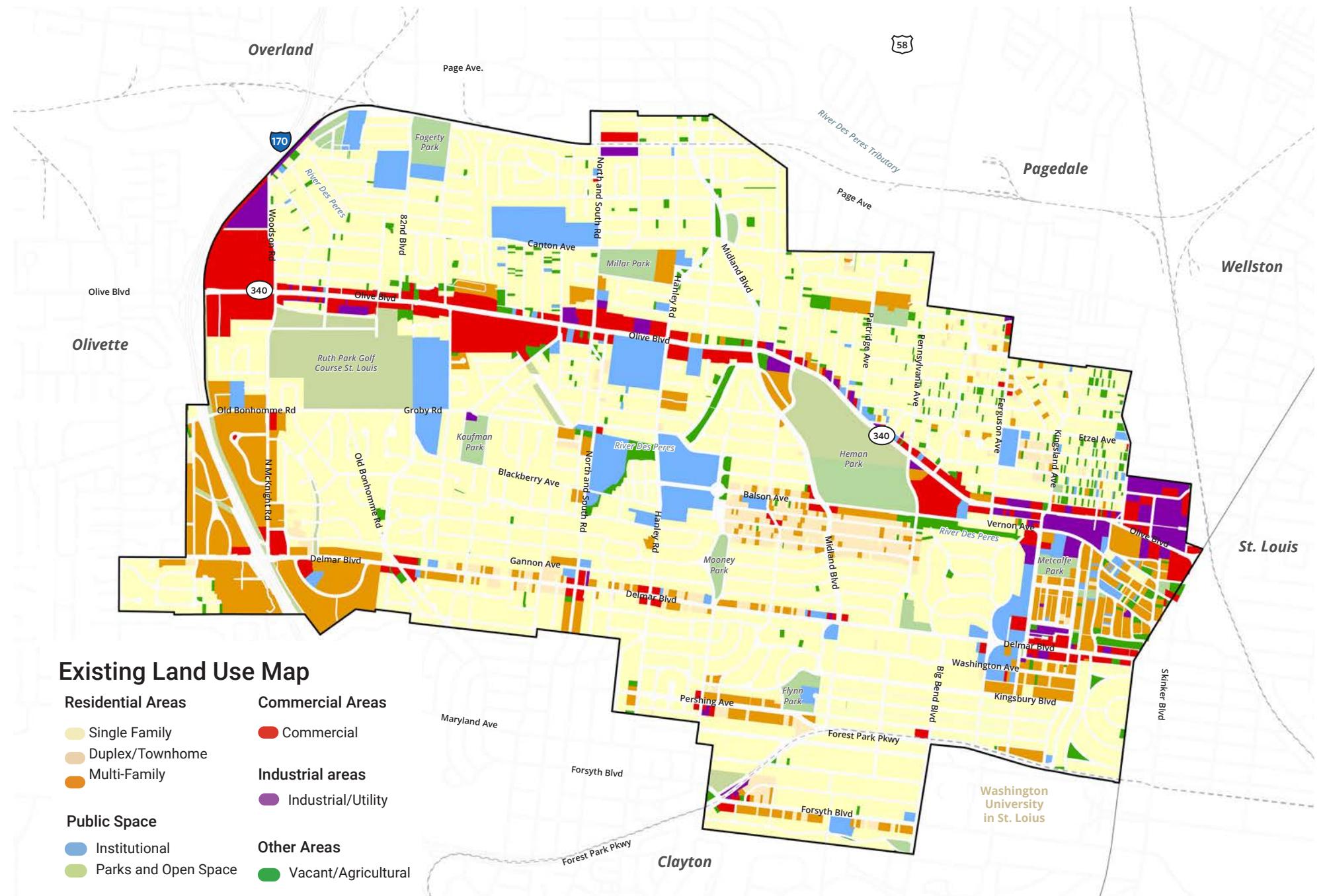
*The Existing Land Use Map depicts current land uses, showing conditions that exist today. There are eight different uses represented on the map that have been developed using GIS data.<sup>2</sup> Land use locations were “ground truthed” via site visits, staff feedback, and use of aerial photography.*

### RECOGNIZING VARIETY IN THE CITY'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT

University City benefits from a remarkable mix of neighborhood types, building forms, and street configurations. This helps to make the City a vibrant community and provides opportunities to meet many needs and preferences and embrace a broad range of income levels, family structures, ages, and lifestyles.

The Existing Land Use Map also shows that in many parts of the city multiple land uses can be found within a relatively small area. This mix of uses provides a strong foundation for supporting interesting, walkable areas with amenities and services in close proximity to residential areas.





## 4.2 FRAMEWORK

*The Framework Map (pg. 101) is a complement to the Future Character and Land Use Map (pg. 105), illustrating where public investment and attention should be prioritized to support existing and possible future activity areas. Activity areas are places that have a mix and concentration of residential, commercial, and public uses. They are either currently or have the potential to be walkable and economically diverse and to improve quality of life by providing safe and convenient access to locally focused shops, recreational opportunities, amenities, and services. Activity areas are connected by enhanced corridors.*

 **ACTIVITY DISTRICTS** are larger scale mixed-use areas which can support redevelopment to create complete neighborhoods. They can serve new residences within the district and existing residences in surrounding neighborhoods. These districts are intended to contain a diverse mix of businesses that could have a regional and/or local draw. They are designed to provide quality residential choices through a range of housing types in a walkable pattern and shall be well-connected to surrounding neighborhoods.

 **NEIGHBORHOOD NODES** are smaller scale mixed-use areas which are primarily neighborhood-serving and provide residents with access to businesses, services, and amenities within a short walk of their home. Neighborhood nodes are intended to include a mix of commercial, civic, institutional, and residential uses. Allowing for increased residential density within a short radius (1/4 mile) of neighborhood nodes is important for supporting existing and future nodes.

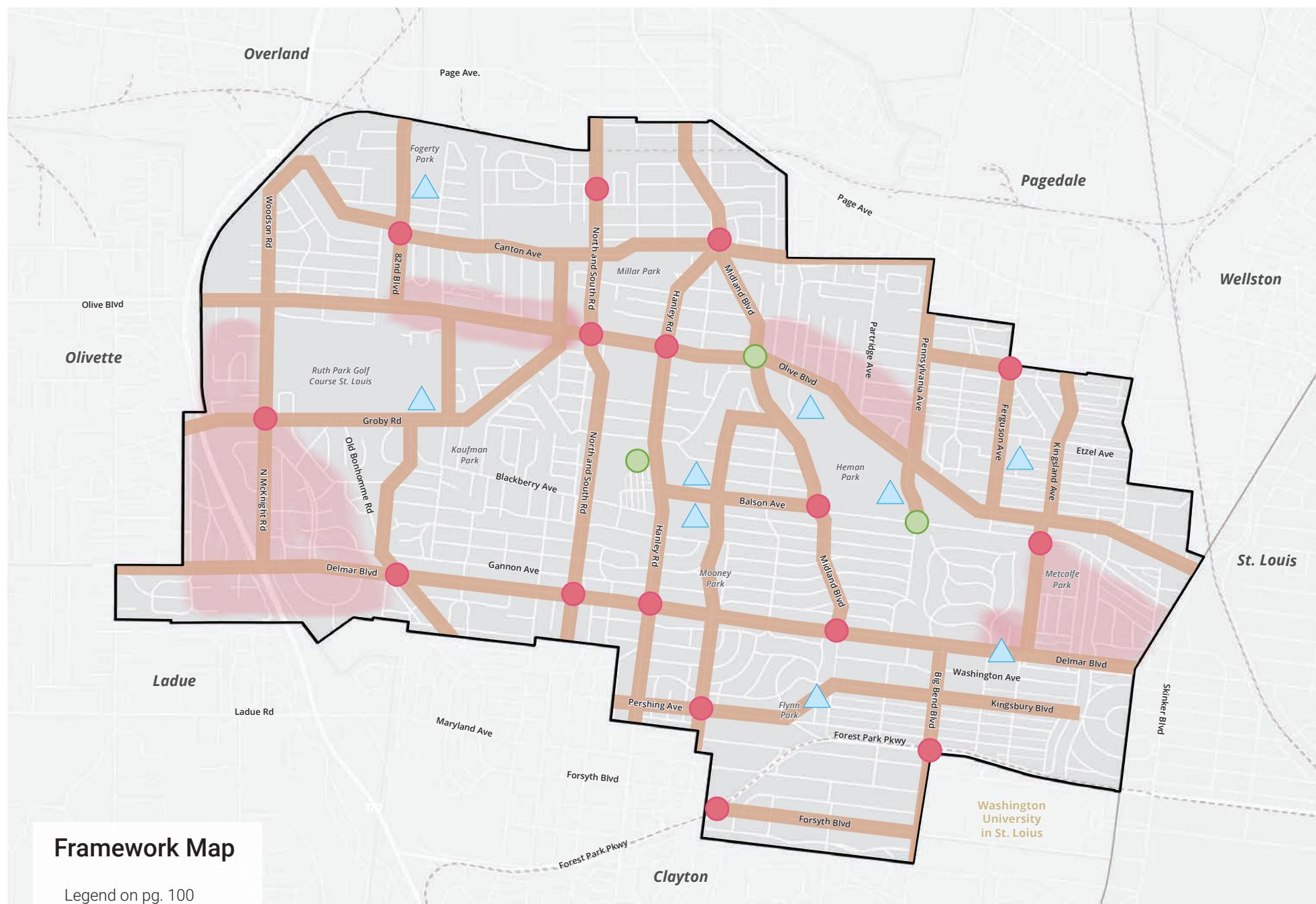
 **CIVIC NODES** are existing areas with civic uses, which include public schools, City Hall, the Public Library, and recreational facilities. Where appropriate, increased residential density and light commercial uses shall be encouraged near civic nodes

 **GREEN SPACE NODES** are natural, outdoor areas where the City should invest in new or expanded parks, open spaces, or other non-built features within key flood-prone areas that can be used as community gathering spaces. Stormwater mitigation shall be a top priority in the design of green space nodes.

 **ENHANCED CORRIDORS** are important connectors along which safety and access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-car modes must be improved. Enhanced corridors connect residents to important places in the community, such as the activity areas described above. Increased residential density may be appropriate along enhanced corridors. Enhancements may include investments in sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle routes, traffic calming, street trees, street lighting, and other public realm enhancements, with a plan to sustain funding to maintain these elements. Some corridors are located on City, some State, and some County roads, each of which have different implications for how enhancements would be implemented.

### CREATION OF THE FRAMEWORK MAP

The Framework Map reflects input received through public engagement for We Make U City and synthesizes that input with recommendations from the following previous plans: Community Vision 2040, 2021 Economic Development Strategy<sup>3</sup>, 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan<sup>4</sup>, and 2021 St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking & Biking.<sup>5</sup> The Framework Map does not replace the recommendations in previous plans; rather, it strategizes previous work to support activity areas. For specific recommendations related to each route, refer to the plans listed above. Finally, the Framework Map is intentionally diagrammatic, and the precise locations of opportunities identified may evolve. Opportunities identified in the Third Ward will be evaluated and refined in the forthcoming Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force plan.



**Framework Map**

Legend on pg. 100

## 4.3 BENEFITS OF A CHARACTER-BASED APPROACH

*This plan takes a character-based approach to shaping the future development of the city. While the Future Character and Land Use Map includes both primary and secondary land uses in each character type, it also shows the built form that is desired in each area.*

There are a number of advantages to this enhanced approach, including the following:

- » It describes an overall intent for each character type, which helps staff, Plan Commission, City Council, developers/builders, and the public understand whether a particular development fits the spirit of the character type;
- » It sets clearer expectations about the physical characteristics of development in an easy-to-understand format which conveys standards for new development that can be used to assess how well a development aligns with community character;
- » It indicates the key infrastructure (such as sidewalks, streetlights, signage and landscaping) that would be beneficial or expected in a particular area; and
- » It establishes a foundation for zoning code updates and other regulations, especially form-based standards.

### FORM BASED CODES AND STANDARDS

University City currently has what is commonly referred to as Euclidean zoning. This means that the zoning code is focused on allowable land uses and generally allows only one category of land use (commercial, residential, industrial) per zoning district. The zoning code also includes dimensional standards such as building height, minimum lot area per dwelling unit, and parking requirements. This type of zoning has served the City well in some ways over the years, but the Plan Commission and Planning and Development staff have recognized that it would be beneficial for the City to consider integrating form-based standards throughout its zoning code or shifting to a form-based code for some parts of the City.

According to the Form-Based Codes Institute, a form-based code is, “a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a walkable public realm by using physical form—rather than separation of uses—as the primary basis and focus for the code and standards.”

Communities do not have to fully convert their code to make it entirely form-based. They may choose to integrate form-based standards in certain locations or under certain conditions.

Several of this plan’s actions recommend consideration of form-based standards. The process for determining if and how this should be done will take place after the plan’s adoption. If this is pursued, the character-based approach to land use presented in this plan will provide a valuable foundation due to its emphasis on built form.

## 4.4 RELATIONSHIP TO ZONING

*The Future Character and Land Use Map depicts appropriate future development patterns throughout the city and which reinforces existing patterns in some areas and supports changes to land use or development patterns in other areas. This element of the University City Comprehensive Plan will be partially implemented through the City's Zoning Ordinance.*

Zoning is a legal tool that regulates land use, including types of structures that may be built, how they are to be built, where they are to be built, and how they may be used. Each property in the city is assigned to a zoning district. There may be more than one appropriate zoning category for a particular land use category.

The Future Character and Land Use Map will be implemented over time through many distinct public and private decisions. For example, property owners seeking to redevelop or change the use of their property often have to seek rezoning. Rezoning decisions will be evaluated with respect to how they conform to the University City Comprehensive Plan. Effectively implementing this land use vision will require updating the City's zoning code and its zoning map to reflect the desired outcomes.

The table below distinguishes between the role of the Future Character and Land Use Map and the zoning code.



### FUTURE CHARACTER AND LAND USE MAP

### ZONING CODE

Describes intended future land use and development characteristics	Defines land uses and development characteristics allowed on a piece of land today
Defines land uses and development characteristics generally (a policy guide)	More specific and detailed than the plan
Future Land Use and Character Map is not parcel specific	Zoning map is parcel specific
Not legally binding, but zoning changes should be "in accordance with" the plan	Zoning codes are local laws that regulate how land is used and developed. Departure from the zoning code requires either a rezoning (legislative process) or a variance (a quasi-judicial process)

## 4.5 FUTURE CHARACTER AND LAND USE

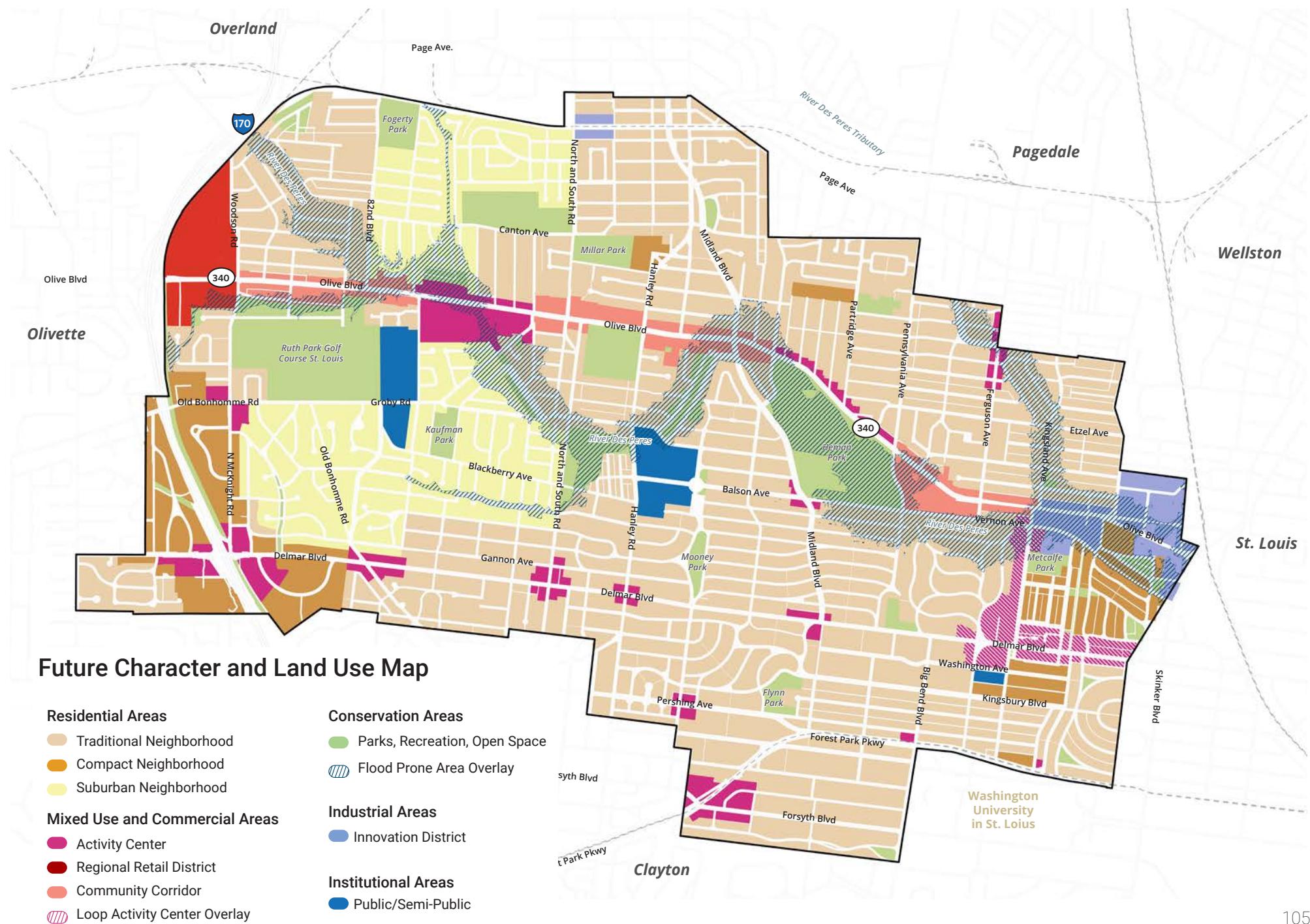
*The Future Character and Land Use Map expresses in more specific terms the City's intent for how University City should use its land resources in the future. For the entire geography of the city, this map identifies a preferred future character type. Each type describes attributes of urban form and function, including the size and type of buildings and their relationship to the street, the surrounding street and block pattern, parking and access, and land uses. Each of the character types is defined starting on page 106.*

### HOW THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP IS USED

The Future Character and Land Use Map is a tool for the City to guide decisions about future land use and development over time. It presents several big ideas to guide future change and development in University City which are interwoven into the character types on the following pages, including:

- » Encouraging more mixed-use activity centers;
- » Improving mobility and connection to amenities, services, and employment;
- » Supporting a variety of housing styles and types;
- » Enhancing quality of place; and
- » Supporting stormwater management practices that enhance community character.

This component of the plan is not a mandate for development and is not legally binding but describes the City's expectations for future development and can help to promote the ideas described above. It can be implemented over time through the City's zoning code and various public and private development decisions.



# TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Traditional Neighborhoods primarily consist of single-family homes and attached residential housing on small and medium size lots. Multi-family and attached homes are typically located along major corridors and near commercial activity nodes. They are some of the City's oldest neighborhoods and can accommodate infill development on vacant lots and at key corridors and intersections. Street patterns are grid-like and promote interconnectivity with sidewalks. Buildings have small to medium setbacks.

## INTENT

- » Allow residential, commercial, and mixed-use infill that complements existing character (building scale, placement, design, etc.) primarily along corridors or activity nodes.
- » Encourage small-scale multi-family housing such as apartment buildings, townhomes, duplexes, and small lot single family residential to support a range of living options, especially around neighborhood nodes and along Enhanced Corridors as presented in the Framework Map in this chapter.
- » Continue historic preservation efforts to maintain the existing neighborhood character.
- » Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- » Maintain and expand public realm features including street trees, lighting, and sidewalks.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Small Lot Single Family Residential
- » Medium Lot Single Family Residential
- » Multi-Family Residential (up to 20 units) where appropriate on major corridors
- » Neighborhood Commercial

- » Attached Residential (townhomes, duplexes, quads, etc. up to four units) where appropriate

## SECONDARY USES

- » Vertical and Horizontal Mixed-Use
- » Civic / Institutional
- » Parks and Open Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	1-3 stories (generally up to 35 feet)
<b>Building Form</b>	Variety of types and sizes as attached or detached buildings linked by a connected street network
<b>Building Setback</b>	Varies; should be consistent within the surrounding context
<b>Open Space</b>	Neighborhood/community parks; pocket parks; private yards; greenways and trails; landscaped medians
<b>Streets</b>	Blocks are small and walkable. Streets generally form a grid pattern within the neighborhood. Neighborhoods with a curvilinear street pattern maintain connectivity. Some neighborhoods have alleys
<b>Parking</b>	On-street and private off-street; may include front-loaded or alley-loaded garages
<b>Mobility</b>	Automobile and transit access with complete sidewalk system. Connection to bicycling infrastructure and recreation trails.

# COMPACT NEIGHBORHOOD

Compact Neighborhoods are areas that primarily consist of multi-family residential, such as small- to medium-sized apartment buildings, large apartment communities, senior or assisted living, and attached residential. Some of these areas can accommodate higher-density housing or infill housing. These residential areas are primarily adjacent to major commercial corridors and activity centers. Small-scale neighborhood-serving commercial and mixed-use activity nodes are located within and adjacent to these areas.

## INTENT

- » Allow residential infill that complements existing character in historic districts.
- » Focus more intense multi-family and missing middle housing development near commercial and activity centers, especially along Enhanced Corridors as presented in the Framework Map in this chapter.
- » Support higher quality building design in terms of architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping.
- » Support nodes of mixed-use, commercial, and civic activity to allow for services and amenities within walking and biking distance, especially around neighborhood nodes and along Enhanced Corridors as presented in the Framework Map in this chapter.
- » Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Multi-Family Residential
- » Attached Residential
- » Specialty Residential (Senior living, live-work communities, etc.)
- » Vertical Mixed-Use

## SECONDARY USES

- » Neighborhood Commercial
- » Civic / Institutional
- » Parks and Open Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	2-10 stories
<b>Building Form</b>	Variety of types from freestanding buildings to attached linked by a connected street network
<b>Building Setback</b>	Varies; should be consistent within the surrounding context
<b>Open Space</b>	Community parks; pocket parks; private yards; landscaped medians; greenways and trails; semi-private open space
<b>Streets</b>	Varies; should be consistent within the surrounding context and promote walkability and connection to transit
<b>Parking</b>	On-street and private off-street in shared parking lots, private driveways, shared garages
<b>Mobility</b>	Automobile and transit access with complete sidewalk system. Connection to bicycling infrastructure and recreation trails.

# SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

Suburban Neighborhoods primarily consist of single-family homes on medium size lots. Multi-family residential, attached residential, and neighborhood commercial spaces are located along major corridors. Street patterns are curvilinear with limited connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods.

## INTENT

- » Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular/pedestrian connectivity.
- » Allow residential infill that complements existing character to support a range of living options, such as attached residential or accessory dwelling units.
- » Encourage neighborhood-scale commercial and horizontal mixed-use along major corridors and activity centers.
- » Maintain and expand public realm features including street trees, lighting, and sidewalks.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Medium Lot Single Family Residential
- » Small Lot Single Family Residential
- » Attached Residential (townhomes, duplexes, quads, etc.)

## SECONDARY USES

- » Small-Scale Multi-Family Residential
- » Neighborhood Commercial
- » Horizontal Mixed-Use
- » Civic / Institutional Space
- » Parks and Open Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	1-2 stories (generally up to 35 feet)
<b>Building Form</b>	A range of housing sizes and styles with similar scale and appearance
<b>Building Setback</b>	20-50 feet (generally consistent within a block)
<b>Open Space</b>	Neighborhood/community parks; pocket parks; private yards; greenways and trails; landscaped medians
<b>Streets</b>	Longer blocks and fewer intersections with more curvilinear street patterns; cul-de-sacs are common. Street connectivity between neighborhoods is limited but should be encouraged going forward.
<b>Parking</b>	Off-street parking; individual drives from street; front-loaded garages
<b>Mobility</b>	Automobile and some transit access with limited sidewalk system; and connection to recreational trails and biking infrastructure

# ACTIVITY CENTER

Activity centers are mixed-use areas that integrate places to live, work, and shop. These areas include a variety of commercial, office, and residential uses, arranged in a compact and walkable pattern. These are located along major corridors and intersections and represent locations for strategic development or redevelopment. They are characterized by vertical mixed-use buildings located close to the street (residential or office uses above ground-floor) retail or horizontal mixed-use (uses are adjacent to one another in a connected development).

## INTENT

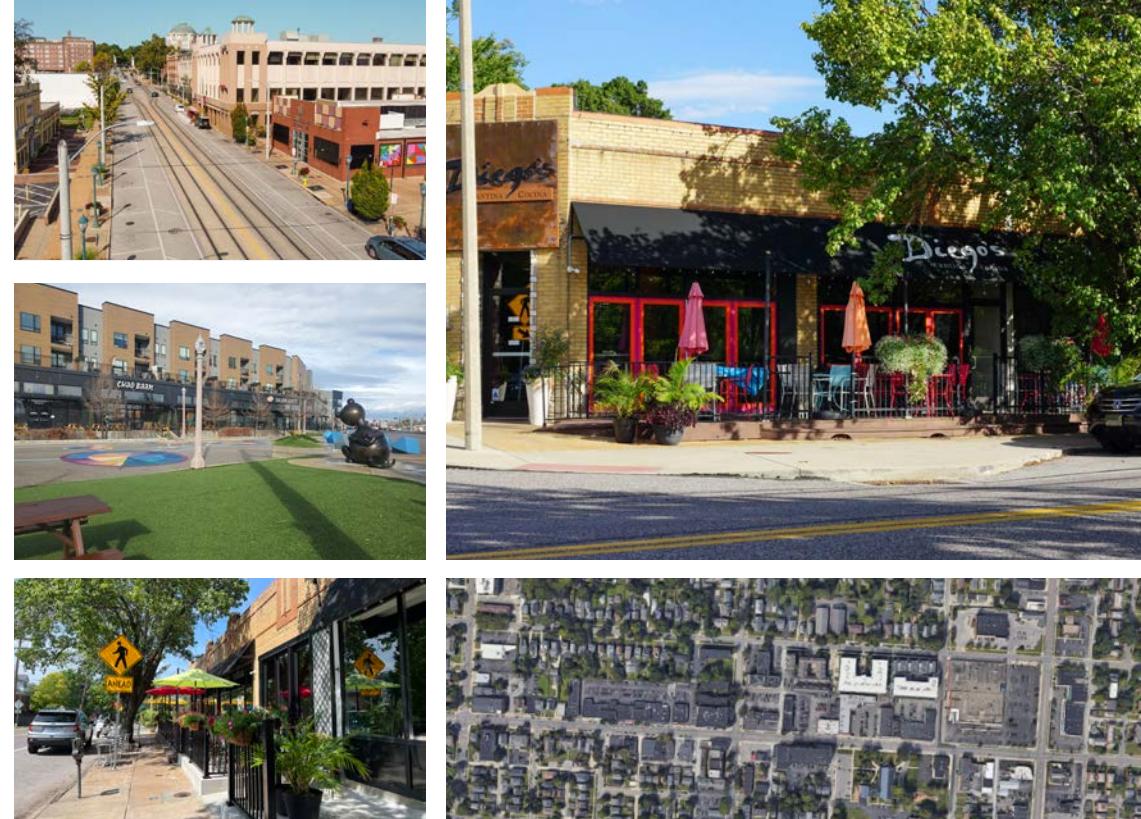
- » Promote infill development or redevelopment to create walkable activity centers that are connected to surrounding development and include a mix of contemporary uses.
- » Support integrated mixed-use development, both horizontal and vertical mixed-use buildings, along commercial corridors to revitalize activity centers.
- » Encourage high quality architecture and materials standards.
- » Integrate public open space and recreation areas such as trails, streetscapes, and greenways.
- » Reduce and consolidate surface parking.
- » Improve pedestrian and multi-modal connectivity.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Vertical Mixed-use
- » Horizontal Mixed-Use
- » Multi-Family Residential
- » Commercial

## SECONDARY USES

- » Civic / Institutional
- » Parks and Open Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	1-5 stories
<b>Building Form</b>	Variety of types from freestanding buildings to attached. Civic uses may have varying building form and placement to accommodate their functions.
<b>Building Setback</b>	0-10 feet (generally consistent within a block). Greater setbacks for civic uses are appropriate.
<b>Open Space</b>	Plazas, pocket parks, formal parks, trails, and greenways. Public realm (space between buildings and streets) acts as open space.
<b>Streets</b>	Gridded street pattern with short, walkable block lengths and wide sidewalks; crosswalks, traffic calming measures, and other streetscape amenities.
<b>Parking</b>	Shared surface parking located behind buildings; on-street parking.
<b>Mobility</b>	Walking, biking, transit, automobile

# REGIONAL RETAIL DISTRICT

The Regional Retail District is a node that provides a destination for the community for commerce and employment with buildings set back farther from the street. The Regional Retail District accommodates community and regional-scale uses and serves as a gateway to the City due to the location along Olive Boulevard and I-170.

## INTENT

- » Accommodate a wide range of commercial/retail uses to serve the community and region.
- » Concentrate future commercial development near major intersections.
- » Encourage new buildings to be located near the primary street with public open space or gathering areas along the streetscape and parking areas located to the rear of the building.
- » Reduce access points into developments and encourage shared access to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- » Reduce and consolidate surface parking and encourage shared parking.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Regional Commercial
- » Community Commercial
- » Horizontal Mixed-Use
- » Vertical Mixed-Use

## SECONDARY USES

- » Office
- » Multi-Family Residential
- » Civic/Institutional
- » Parks and Open Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	1-3 (generally up to 45 feet)
<b>Building Form</b>	Predominantly single-story but commercial buildings may have a 2-story appearance. Includes large footprint buildings and both attached and detached structures.
<b>Building Setback</b>	Varies
<b>Open Space</b>	Passive open space; private landscape areas
<b>Streets</b>	Blocks are long and have few street connections. Sites typically have multiple private access points and some shared access points.
<b>Parking</b>	Private off-street parking in surface parking lots; shared parking lots
<b>Mobility</b>	Automobile, transit, walking, and bicycling

# COMMUNITY CORRIDOR

Community Corridors are smaller-scale commercial developments located along major corridors or as standalone clusters near major intersections. These areas have smaller commercial footprints than Regional Retail Districts and provide necessary services and amenities to nearby neighborhoods. Community Corridors promote connectivity to surrounding residential neighborhoods with prominent pedestrian infrastructure.

## INTENT

- » Emphasize strategic redevelopment opportunities for smaller lots and key intersections.
- » Support local access to goods and services and support small, local businesses.
- » Promote design for various modes of transportation (walk, bicycle, automobile, transit) with connectivity to neighborhoods and employment centers.
- » Reduce access points for individual developments and encourage shared access points to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- » Support quality building design in terms of architecture, materials, and site features like lighting and landscaping.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Community Commercial
- » Neighborhood Commercial
- » Office
- » Civic / Institutional

## SECONDARY USES

- » Multi-family Residential
- » Parks and Open Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	1-2 stories (generally up to 35 feet)
<b>Building Form</b>	Predominantly single story but may have 2-story appearance. Includes large footprint buildings and both attached and freestanding structures.
<b>Building Setback</b>	0-30 feet
<b>Open Space</b>	Increased landscaping and green infrastructure elements per site and integrated into streetscape. Plazas, parks, and trail connections as amenities.
<b>Streets</b>	Small, grid-like blocks with a streetscape designed to encourage pedestrian activity.
<b>Parking</b>	On-street or shared surface parking located to the side or rear of buildings
<b>Mobility</b>	Walking, biking, automobile, and transit

# INNOVATION DISTRICT

The Innovation District includes a collection of modern, low-impact industrial uses such as assembly, warehousing, and distribution, as well as flexible office and industrial space suitable for new technologies or research and development activities. Multi-family and mixed-use development in this district also provide opportunities for live-work communities. This classification allows for a wider range of uses and higher density in the existing Cunningham Industrial Area and adjacent commercial areas.

## INTENT

- » Provide flexible space to support a variety of low-impact but high-value industrial activities.
- » Encourage the transition of existing industrial uses near residential areas to lower intensity uses that are less likely to create negative neighborhood impacts.
- » Provide buffering through landscaping and building placement where flex employment sites are adjacent to residential areas.
- » Encourage the use of higher-quality building materials and landscaping.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Light Industrial
- » Warehousing / Distribution
- » Commercial
- » Office
- » Vertical and Horizontal Mixed-Use
- » Multi-Family Residential

## SECONDARY USES

- » Civic/Institutional
- » Parks and Open Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	1-6 stories (generally up to 75 feet)
<b>Building Form</b>	Medium to large footprint structures offering flexible space to accommodate various users
<b>Building Setback</b>	Varies; should be consistent with the surrounding context
<b>Open Space</b>	Passive preserved land and landscaped setback areas, generally private. Natural buffers between adjacent development. Green infrastructure incorporated into site design
<b>Streets</b>	Street network generally forms a grid pattern along a primary corridor and promotes pedestrian connectivity
<b>Parking</b>	Off-street surface lots and shared parking areas
<b>Mobility</b>	Automobile, transit, walking, and biking

# PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC

Public/Semi-Public spaces are collections of academic or community-focused uses related to each other through purpose, design, and visual association. Public/Semi-Public area designs for buildings and landscaping are contextual within the setting and interconnect with the surrounding community. Parks and open spaces are well-integrated within the site. Public/Semi-Public areas are well-connected to residential neighborhoods.

## INTENT

- » Encourage connectivity between campus areas and adjacent neighborhoods and open spaces.
- » Provide pedestrian and multi-modal connectivity between civic spaces and adjacent land uses.
- » Maintain and expand public realm features including street trees, lighting, and sidewalks.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Civic and Institutional

## SECONDARY USES

- » Parks and Open Space
- » Neighborhood Commercial



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	1-4 stories
<b>Building Form</b>	Large building footprints in a variety of forms; recreation spaces located adjacent to the main building.
<b>Building Setback</b>	Varies.
<b>Open Space</b>	Athletic fields; passive open space; central greens; natural buffers; tree lined streets
<b>Streets</b>	Consistent with surrounding context with pedestrian and multi-modal connections to adjacent uses.
<b>Parking</b>	Shared surface parking located behind or adjacent to buildings; on-street parking
<b>Mobility</b>	Transit, walking, bicycling, and automobile

# PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE

Public and private parks, recreational open space, or undeveloped natural areas that are permanently protected from development by the City, state, county, or some other authority. This classification includes small gardens, community parks, large parks such as the Ruth Park Golf Course and Heman Park, and large cemeteries that function as open space. They are characterized by their incorporation of natural features, landscape and hardscape designs, recreational amenities, and connectivity to the active transportation network. These range in scale, design, and location to support a variety of the community's recreational programming needs.

## INTENT

- » Ensure parks and public recreational amenities are available to all neighborhoods.
- » Conserve environmentally sensitive land.
- » Develop a connected open space system through trail connections.
- » Utilize open space and parks for stormwater management.

## PRIMARY USES

- » Parks and Open Spaces

## SECONDARY USES

- » Civic / Institutional Space



## BUILDING BLOCKS

<b>Height Range</b>	Largely undeveloped with limited buildings at 1-2 stories (generally up to 35 feet)
<b>Building Form</b>	Varies depending on specific park or open space
<b>Building Setback</b>	Varies depending on specific park or open space
<b>Open Space</b>	Neighborhood and community parks, pocket parks, private yards, cemeteries, and greenways.
<b>Streets</b>	Varies depending on specific park or open space
<b>Parking</b>	On-street and off-street parking.
<b>Mobility</b>	Transit, walking, bicycling, and automobile

## FLOOD PRONE AREA OVERLAY

The Flood Prone Area Overlay includes areas of developed and undeveloped land that are within the FEMA designated floodplain or have previously been subject to flooding. While these areas have an underlying character type (e.g., Traditional Neighborhood), they may not be suitable for further development. The Flood Prone Area Overlay will be the focus of policies, programs, and projects by the City to address flooding impacts and reduce future flood risk.

### INTENT

- » Minimize new development in designated areas.
- » Utilize low impact development strategies and green infrastructure to manage stormwater.
- » Consider formal conservation of environmentally sensitive land through various means.

## LOOP ACTIVITY CENTER OVERLAY

### INTENT

- » Promote higher density, infill development and redevelopment to expand the City's primary Activity Center.
- » Buildings up to 10 stories



## Character and Land Use



## ENDNOTES

1. University City Community Vision 2040 Roadmap Report, July 2022
2. Land Use data was obtained from the County Assessor's office.
3. Economic Development Strategy, March 2021
4. Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan for the City of University City, prepared by Trailnet and H3 Studio, adopted by University City City Council October 14, 2013
5. St. Louis County's Action Plan for Walking and Biking, February 2021



## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

*The Comprehensive Plan is a long term policy guide and action agenda for University City. Implementation of this plan will involve City departments, Boards and Commissions, non-profits, businesses, and community members.*

This implementation chapter includes guidance on using and managing the plan and a summary table of its actions that assigns anticipated timing and responsibilities to each. Much care has been given to the plan's actions to develop them in detail. However, the City should also be opportunistic in pursuing other actions that would support its vision and goals. While a formal update to the plan will require a new public process by Council following recommendation from the Plan Commission, implementation of the plan should also be closely monitored on at least an annual basis and the matrix in section 5.3 should be used as a tool for tracking progress and regular reporting on implementation success.

### CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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# HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

*The We Make U City Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used on a daily basis as public and private decisions are made concerning development, redevelopment, capital improvements, economic incentives, and other matters affecting University City. The following is a summary of the implementation strategy and description of how decisions and processes should align with the goals and actions of the plan.*

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The overarching strategy for implementation includes three main areas of focus.

### Monitoring

The plan should be monitored on a regular basis for implementation effectiveness and relevancy, as well as fiscal impact in recognition of the fact that fiscal health is of utmost importance to the City. This review should happen formally no less than once per year. A status report and presentation to Council and relevant Boards and Commissions should accompany this review and the results of the review should be communicated throughout the city so that community members are kept informed.

### Collaborating

A large share of implementation of the plan statutorily falls to the City's Plan Commission. However, it is not intended to be solely implemented by this group. Many actions will require the coordinated efforts of individuals and organizations representing the public, private, and civic sectors of the community. An active citizenry will also help to ensure those actions are included and pursued as part of the public agenda.

### Updating

Future updates to the plan should be scheduled by Council following a formal recommendation from the Plan Commission. The update should be considered at least every five years. In the interim, key milestones may be reached which necessitate an update sooner than a five-year cycle. There may be circumstances that warrant formal amendment of the plan, which would be a less intensive process than a complete update. Amendments to the plan should be made only with careful consideration and compelling justification.

## INTEGRATION INTO CITY OPERATIONS AND PROCESSES

The specific ways in which the plan will be incorporated into City operations and processes include the following.

### Regulatory Updates

Revisions to the City's codes (e.g. zoning, traffic, floodplain management) and other regulations should be made in accordance with the plan. The process for updating the zoning and floodplain management codes will be led by the Plan Commission and will be determined following the adoption of the plan. This will provide the City with the regulatory authority to enforce recommendations in the Future Character and Land Use Map and promote other desired outcomes expressed through the plan's actions. As described in chapter 4, a key consideration will be whether the City would like to integrate form-based standards into its code. Revisions to other sections of City code will be led by relevant boards and commissions (e.g., Traffic).

### Development Approvals

Administrative and legislative approvals for development proposals should be made in accordance with the plan. Decisions by the Plan Commission and reports by Planning & Development staff should reference relevant plan goals, objectives, and actions as well as the Future Character and Land Use Map.

## Capital Improvements

University City's Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) are created every five years and serve as a roadmap for present and future infrastructure needs. The City's CIPs should be consistent with the plan's goals, objectives and actions. On an annual basis it is also appropriate to consider the plan's recommendations as CIP decisions are made. This includes decisions about roads and infrastructure to support mobility, emergency services, public amenities and facilities, parks and trails, equipment and vehicles, and flood management.

## Annual Work Programs

Departments, administrators, and relevant boards and commissions should be cognizant of the goals, objectives, and actions in the plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets. Similarly, it will help in tracking implementation of the plan if Boards and Commissions can report back to the Plan Commission and Planning & Development staff on progress toward implementation for annual tracking. This should be systematized so that check-ins are scheduled for the same time on an annual basis prior to an overarching annual review of implementation progress.

## Private Development Decisions

Property owners and developers should consider the goals, objectives, and actions in the plan in their land planning and investment decisions. Public decision-makers will be using the plan as a guide in their development deliberations such as zoning matters and infrastructure requests. Property owners and developers should be cognizant of and complement the plan's recommendations.

## Economic Incentives

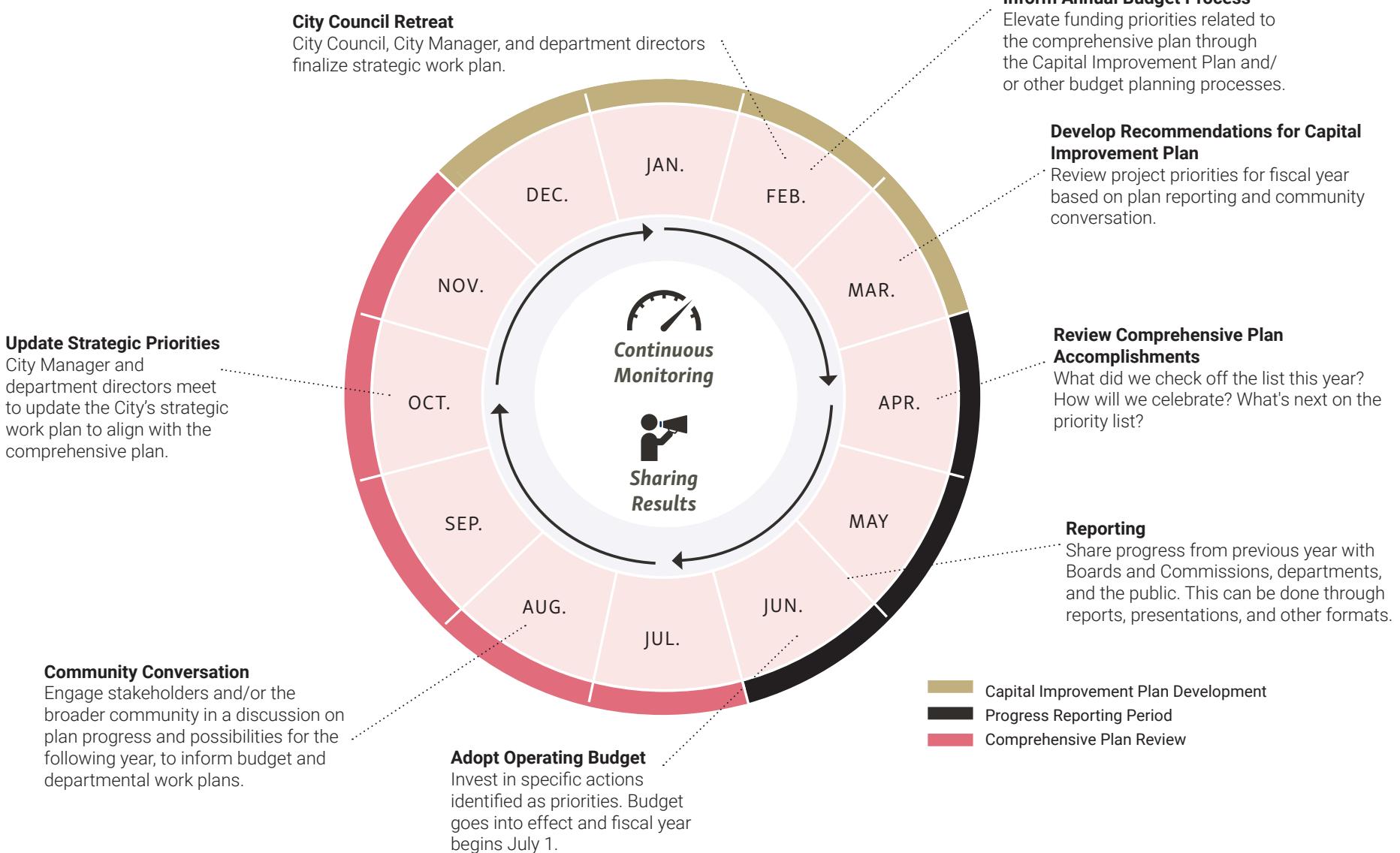
Future economic incentives should be considered and prioritized relative to their consistency with the plan's goals, objectives, and actions. Specifically, the plan recognizes, and reinforces, the role of the existing TIF districts as well as the work of the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force in identifying important investment opportunities. Importantly, as the work of the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force started toward the end of the comprehensive planning process and was not complete at the time of the plan's adoption, some specific actions in this plan may be adjusted to align with the Task Force's analysis and final recommendations.

## Future Partnerships

Formal and informal collaborations with surrounding communities, regional and state agencies and organizations, and institutions, should be informed by the plan's goals, objectives, and actions. Existing partnerships can benefit from deliberate consideration of the actions presented in the plan and purposeful efforts to integrate them into existing work. In some cases, new partnerships may be warranted to implement the plan's actions. Similarly, the City's many private subdivisions should be engaged in discussions regarding ways in which they can voluntarily help implement relevant plan actions within their boundaries.

# PLAN MANAGEMENT

*The comprehensive plan should be fully integrated into yearly planning processes for the City and its departments. The diagram below illustrates how the plan could be integrated into the City's existing annual processes.*



# MATRIX

*The following table includes all actions presented in the previous chapters. The matrix connects each action with a timeframe for completion, a lead coordinator(s) for the effort, supporting departments, boards/commissions, organizations, or partners who may need to be involved. It is anticipated that the implementation steps may change over time based on annual review, new developments, or successes in other areas. Additionally, an interactive, editable version of this plan will be created as a tool to track and monitor implementation of the plan. This version of the plan will include information on costs and funding sources, which will be determined in most cases by the Lead Coordinator. The interactive version will also have the ability to filter and sort actions by lead coordinator, time frame, and possibly other variables.*

## Timeframe Key (Target Dates for Completion)

- » O = Ongoing
- » S = Short term (0-3 years)
- » M = Medium term (4-7 years)
- » L = Long term (8 or more years)

Note: Additional Supporting Entities not listed may include local non-profit associations, developers, and other local businesses.

## GOAL A: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE GREAT PLACES.

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE A.1: USE PROACTIVE MEASURES TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT THAT ALIGNS WITH THE PLAN.</b>				
A.1.1	Update the City's codes to support the implementation of this plan.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	Dept of Public Works, Traffic Commission, Building Commissioner
A.1.2	Promote transit-oriented development (TOD) near MetroLink stations and major MetroBus routes.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	Metro St. Louis, MODOT, St. Louis County Dept of Transportation & Public Works, Citizens for Modern Transit

## Implementation

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
A.1.3	Regularly update building codes to:  i. Align with most recent International Code Council (ICC) Codes.  ii. Implement universal design in keeping with the City's demographics toward an aging population.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Building Commissioner	Plan Commission, Fire Dept
A.1.4	Revise the zoning and building codes to remove barriers to green energy and green development (e.g., residential solar panels, electric vehicle charging stations).	S	Dept of Planning & Development	Plan Commission, Green Practices Commission
A.1.5	Update the Urban Forestry Strategic Plan and Building and Construction code to include a citywide tree planting plan and replacement standards for tree removal associated with private development.	S	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, Urban Forestry Commission	Dept of Public Works, Dept of Planning & Development

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE A.2: ENSURE THAT CITY SERVICES (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, LIBRARY, SCHOOLS, AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE) MEET THE CITY'S NEEDS AS NEW DEVELOPMENT ADVANCES IN THE CITY.</b>				
A.2.1	Regularly evaluate the need for new city services and infrastructure (police, fire, library, schools) based on the type and the amount of development taking place and the depreciation of capital over time.	M	Police Dept, Fire Dept, UC Public Library	City Manager's Office, Library Board, Dept of Planning & Development
A.2.2	Utilize impact fees as a supplemental funding source to support infrastructure improvements and public safety.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, City Manager's Office	Plan Commission, EDRST
A.2.3	Expand fiber network and cellular reception, prioritizing city facilities such as schools, libraries, and community centers.	O	Dept of Public Works	Utility Partners

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE A.3: PROACTIVELY MANAGE RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL VACANCY.</b>				
A.3.1	Strengthen the City's existing vacant building registration program.	S	Dept of Planning & Development	SHED
A.3.2	<p>Manage vacant parcels through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Selling vacant and/or oddly shaped parcels (not suitable for development) to neighboring property owners, such as a "Mow to Own" program.</li> <li>ii. Prioritizing City control of vacant parcels (those either suitable for development or those identified with potential to alleviate flooding) when possible, such as land banking.</li> <li>iii. Promoting green reuse strategies for utilizing vacant parcels (regardless of ownership) in partnership with existing organizations and programs, e.g., the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD), Missouri Botanical Garden, U City in Bloom. Coordinate improvements with problems and opportunities identified by stormwater studies.</li> </ul>	O	Dept of Planning & Development, City Manager's Office	LCRA, St. Louis County Collector of Revenue, Missouri Botanical Garden, Seed St. Louis, MSD, Urban Forestry Commission, U City in Bloom

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE A.4: CREATE ATTRACTIVE, COHESIVE, COMPACT, AND DIVERSE RESIDENTIAL AREAS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.</b>				
A.4.1	Encourage residential infill and redevelopment to restore and/or create more vibrant, walkable neighborhoods.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	Dept of Public Works,

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
A.4.2	Promote neighborhood activity nodes in parts of the city where there are currently not many (includes locations along Olive Blvd. that are accessible from the Third Ward).	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
A.4.3	Monitor conditions at larger, aging multi-family developments and support redevelopment potential.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	
A.4.4	Selectively encourage increased residential density on main connecting streets, including on parcels that were formerly occupied by single-family homes.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE A.5: REMOVE BARRIERS THAT LIMIT VIBRANT COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE DISTRICTS AND SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD-SCALE COMMERCIAL USES.</b>				
A.5.1	Revise car-oriented standards, such as parking minimums, to encourage alternatives to car-based transportation, especially in higher density, mixed-use areas.	S	Plan Commission	Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Public Works, Traffic Commission
A.5.2	Revise dimensional regulations (e.g., height, setbacks) and permitted uses in the zoning code to allow more compact development in mixed-use areas.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	
A.5.3	Improve the Delmar/I-170 interchange as an opportunity for a community gateway and center of a mixed-use district, including bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Public Works	Plan Commission, Traffic Commission

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE A.6: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.</b>				
A.6.1	Conduct a citywide climate resiliency assessment.	S	Green Practices Commission, Commission on Storm Water Issues	Urban Forestry Commission, Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Public Works, Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry
A.6.2	Continue ensuring compliance with the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and promote other existing programs for construction that meets Energy Star, LEED, or similar energy efficiency standards.	O	Dept of Planning & Development	Green Practices Commission

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE A.7: CONNECT RESIDENTS TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.</b>				
A.7.1	Strengthen protections for flood-prone areas where appropriate.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Public Works	Commission on Storm Water Issues, MSD
A.7.2	Pursue opportunities to expand publicly accessible and connected open spaces which are separate from formal parks.	O	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Park Commission, Commission on Storm Water Issues

**GOAL B: ADVANCE SHARED PROSPERITY.**

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE B.1: BUILD UPON EXISTING DEVELOPMENT MOMENTUM.</b>				
B.1.1	Focus development attention on the creation of catalyst areas.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff	Plan Commission, Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
B.1.2	Identify opportunities to leverage the Market at Olive development for reinvestment along the western portion of Olive Blvd that aligns with this plan and the Economic Development Strategy (EDS).	S, O	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff	Plan Commission, Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
B.1.3	Pursue targeted development strategies for the International District on Olive to align with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy (EDS).	S, O	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff	Plan Commission, EDRST
B.1.4	In keeping with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy (EDS), engage regional agencies for investment along Olive Blvd.	S, O	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff, Dept of Public Works	MODOT, MSD, Metro St. Louis, Citizens for Modern Transit, Trailnet
B.1.5	Encourage mixed-use communities where people enjoy easy access to jobs and services in connection with the Future Character and Land Use Map.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	
B.1.6	Facilitate and encourage mixed-use residential development across from Heman Park on the north side of Olive Blvd.	S, M	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff	Plan Commission, Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE B.2: STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT THE LABOR FORCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP.</b>				
B.2.1	Partner with national and regional workforce development agencies and the University City Schools to implement workforce development strategies.	S	Economic Development Staff	Greater St. Louis, UC School District, Area colleges/universities (WUSTL, SLU, UMSL, HSSU, STLCC, SIUE)
B.2.2	Expand support for existing and new small and minority owned businesses in accordance with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy.	O	Economic Development Staff	Chambers of commerce, Local business associations
B.2.3	Promote and partner with locally owned, neighborhood retail and local business associations.	O	Communications Manager, Economic Development Staff	Local business associations and chambers of commerce
B.2.4	Leverage existing programs and funding opportunities (e.g., Build Back Better) to support entrepreneurship and emerging industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing).	S, O	Economic Development Staff, Dept of Planning & Development	EDRST, Industrial Development Authority

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE B.3: FOSTER EQUITABLE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.</b>				
B.3.1	Develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategy that helps the City evaluate decision-making, policies, and programs.	S	Dept of Human Resources, City Manager's Office	

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE B.4: LEVERAGE INCENTIVES TO SUPPORT DESIRED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN KEY LOCATIONS.</b>				
B.4.1	Develop a transparent policy for providing municipal incentives that promote the goals of this plan.	S	City Manager's Office	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff, Plan Commission
B.4.2	Market development opportunities within the federally designated Opportunity Zone and TIF areas.	O	Economic Development Staff	Dept of Planning & Development
B.4.3	Focus residential growth around existing neighborhood activity nodes (areas that already include a mix of commercial and/or mixed-use development).	S, O	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	
B.4.4	Improve the City's fiscal resilience by diversifying land uses and development.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, City Manager's Office	Economic Development Staff, Dept of Finance

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE B.5: DETERMINE THE DESIRED CHARACTER OF THE CUNNINGHAM INDUSTRIAL AREA.</b>				
B.5.1	Develop an area plan for the Cunningham Industrial Area and its surroundings that considers support for its ongoing activity and potential expansion in a way that is compatible with surrounding areas.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff	Plan Commission, Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
B.5.2	Develop a strategy to heighten regional awareness about the Cunningham Industrial Area as an economic generator.	M	Economic Development Staff, Communications Manager	Dept of Planning & Development

**GOAL C: CONNECT COMMUNITY.**

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE C.1: CREATE “EQUITY OF MOBILITY” WITHIN UNIVERSITY CITY.</b>				
C.1.1	Implement a street and sidewalk repair and improvement program for city streets.	S	Dept of Public Works	Dept of Planning & Development, Traffic Commission
C.1.2	Work with neighborhoods, businesses, and community groups to promote streetscape projects and corridor improvements.	O	Dept of Public Works	Forestry Staff, Neighborhood associations, St. Louis County Dept of Transportation & Public Works, Trailnet
C.1.3	Identify and prioritize low-cost improvements at key locations which are currently unsafe for those getting around without a car.	O	Traffic Commission	Dept of Public Works, Dept of Planning & Development
C.1.4	Complete the Centennial Greenway as a fully contiguous trail through University City.	L	Great Rivers Greenway, Dept of Public Works, Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Dept of Planning & Development, LCRA, Traffic Commission, Park Commission, St. Louis County Dept of Transportation

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE C.2: ENCOURAGE WALKING AND BIKING AS LEGITIMATE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.</b>				
C.2.1	Increase housing supply in locations with potential for good access by biking and walking so those without vehicles can live in areas already served by these modes.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	
C.2.2	Implement the City's Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan and Complete Streets policy to ensure that University City streets are designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all citizens. Special consideration should be made for how citizens access areas of high pedestrian traffic (e.g., schools, parks, multifamily and retiree housing, and neighborhood nodes) (refer to Framework Map).	O	Dept of Public Works, Dept of Planning & Development	Dept of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry, Traffic Commission, MODOT, St. Louis County Dept of Transportation & Public Works, Metro St. Louis, Trailnet, Citizens for Modern Transit
C.2.3	Prepare for micro-mobility, bikeshare, and other emerging transit modes.	O	Traffic Commission	Dept of Public Works, Dept of Planning & Development
C.2.4	Promote existing programs to educate people about bicycle safety, bicycle regulations, and maintenance.	O	Dept of Public Works, Communications Manager	Traffic Commission, Park Commission
C.2.5	Create demonstration projects and events that showcase small-scale safety improvements.	O	Dept of Public Works	Communications Manager, Trailnet

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE C.3: SUPPORT AND COORDINATE WITH REGIONAL INITIATIVES THAT IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY, INCLUDING PUBLIC TRANSIT.</b>				
C.3.1	Establish municipal procedures that require better coordination with regional transit authorities.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Public Works	Metro St. Louis, Citizens for Modern Transit

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
C.3.2	Coordinate with the county and surrounding jurisdictions to implement the recommendations of the St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking.	O	Dept of Public Works	Dept of Planning & Development, St. Louis County Dept of Transportation & Public Works
C.3.3	Contribute to the planning and engineering of regional road projects.	O	Dept of Public Works, Dept of Planning & Development	Traffic Commission, Plan Commission
C.3.4	Collaborate with MODOT to reconfigure Olive Blvd. to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and an improved environment for businesses in the corridor.	S	Dept of Planning & Development	MODOT, Dept of Public Works, Economic Development Staff, Traffic Commission, Metro St. Louis, Trailnet, Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
C.3.5	Seek alternative funding sources such as grants and public-private partnerships.	O	Dept of Public Works	Dept of Planning & Development

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE C.4: ENCOURAGE CIVIC PARTICIPATION, MENTORING, AND VOLUNTEERISM.</b>				
C.4.1	Realign citizen opportunities for government participation and engagement with the priorities of the comprehensive plan.	S	City Council	City Manager's Office, Board & Commission Chairs
C.4.2	Become a City of Service to improve citizen engagement and action.	M		Dept of Planning & Development
C.4.3	Establish a volunteer Community Leadership or Neighborhood Liaison program.	M	Dept of Planning & Development, Police Department	City Council, Boards & Commissions, Communications Manager
C.4.4	Create a youth involvement initiative to empower University City's youth in conjunction with University City schools, churches, and other community organizations.	S	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Economic Development Staff, UC School District

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
C.4.5	Modernize City communication channels, websites, and social media channels to encourage young people to become more civically active.	O	Communications Manager	
C.4.6	Translate key City resources into other languages.	S	Communications Manager	Business Associations, Washington University

<b>OBJECTIVE C.5: CELEBRATE THE COMMUNITY'S DIVERSITY.</b>				
Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
C.5.1	Support diverse business owners through City promotion and resources in accordance with the 2021 Economic Development Strategy.	O	Economic Development Staff, Communications Manager	EDRST
C.5.2	Support community events that highlight the city's diversity.	O	Economic Development Staff	EDRST, LSBD

#### GOAL D: LEVERAGE ASSETS.

<b>OBJECTIVE D.1: MAINTAIN AND ENCOURAGE LONG-TERM PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC ASSETS.</b>				
Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
D.1.1	Modernize and clarify historic preservation objectives and guidelines and utilize form-based standards to encourage the creative reuse of older buildings.	S	Historic Preservation Commission, Plan Commission	Dept of Planning & Development
D.1.2	Create a youth initiative focused on celebrating diversity in the city's history.	S	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters, UC School District
D.1.3	Create a University City walking tour focused on diversity in the city's history.	S	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters, UC School District, LSBD, EDRST

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE D.2: ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY'S PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS.</b>				
D.2.1	Update the University City Parks and Recreation Master Plan to include a maintenance management plan for parks, prioritizing strategic investment in maintenance, programming, and naturalized spaces.	S	Park Commission	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, Commission on Storm Water Issues
D.2.2	Celebrate the city's history and diversity through parks, historic preservation, and public art.	O	Park Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, Economic Development Staff
D.2.3	Consider cross-community partnerships and park programming to encourage participation by community members across racial and ethnic groups.	O	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Park Commission, Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters
D.2.4	Restart and expand parks and recreation programming for seniors and youth.	O	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Park Commission, Commission on Senior Issues, UC School District
D.2.5	Create Safe Routes to Parks and Safe Routes to Schools plans to improve pedestrian and bicycle access.	S	Traffic Commission, Park Commission	UC School District, Dept of Public Works, Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry
D.2.6	Develop youth sports programming that engages high school and university students as mentors and coaches.	S	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Park Commission, UC School District, Area colleges/universities (WUSTL, SLU, UMSL, HSSU, STLCC, SIUE)

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE D.3: STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS.</b>				
D.3.1	Continue to expand public art in the city.	O	Economic Development Staff	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters, LSBD
D.3.2	Create a plan that promotes art and culture in a manner consistent with the comprehensive plan.	S	Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters	Economic Development Staff

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE D.4: ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE FOR VISITORS TO UNIVERSITY CITY.</b>				
D.4.1	Continue to expand and promote the Explore U City website, per the 2021 Economic Development Strategy.	O	Communications Manager, Economic Development Staff	LSBD, Business associations
D.4.2	Implement a signage program to highlight the city and its neighborhoods.	M	Economic Development Staff	Dept of Planning & Development, EDRST, Plan Commission, Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force
D.4.3	Improve gateway locations and neighborhood nodes with landscaping, amenities, signage, public art, or other features.	M	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff	Dept of Public Works, Dept of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry, Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters, EDRST

## GOAL E: STRENGTHEN LIVABILITY.

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE E.1: PROTECT EACH NEIGHBORHOOD'S DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER WHILE SUPPORTING COMPATIBLE NEW DEVELOPMENT.</b>				
E.1.1	Evaluate short-term rental regulations.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	Building Commissioner
E.1.2	Implement a Housing and Third Ward Revitalization plan or take such measures as directed by the City Council, which may include recommendations by the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force.	L	Economic Development Staff, Dept of Planning & Development	Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force, Plan Commission, Dept of Public Works
E.1.3	Remove barriers in the zoning code and specify form-based standards for the development of duplexes, triplexes, and other forms of "missing middle" housing.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	Commission on Senior Issues
E.1.4	Strengthen property maintenance enforcement practices and connect residents to home repair assistance resources.	S, O	Dept of Planning & Development	Local organizations that provide home repair resources
E.1.5	Investigate establishing and/or supporting (an) existing community development entity(ies) to address housing affordability, vacancy, maintenance, and stability in University City.	O	Dept of Planning & Development	Communications Manager, Plan Commission
E.1.6	Celebrate examples of quality homeowner and neighborhood improvements.	S, O	Neighborhood Associations	Communications Manager, Dept of Planning & Development

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE E.2: PROMOTE HOUSING VARIETY AND AFFORDABILITY TO SUPPORT A RANGE OF HOUSEHOLD TYPES, LIFESTYLES, AND DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP NEEDS.</b>				
E.2.1	Facilitate the creation of diverse housing options to serve “workforce housing” needs.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff	Plan Commission, City Manager’s Office
E.2.2	Develop and plan for allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in areas designated “Traditional Neighborhood” in this plan.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	Commission on Senior Issues
E.2.3	Modernize or remove definitions of family or household relationships in the zoning ordinance to reflect changing household composition and lifestyles.	S	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission	
E.2.4	Promote homeownership through initiatives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Creating pre-approved building plans for certain housing products (e.g., smaller-scale multifamily) to reduce costs and streamline the approval process.</li> <li>ii. Establishing a public-private workforce housing capital pool (a public-private housing trust fund).</li> <li>iii. Creating a City-sponsored down payment assistance program.</li> <li>iv. Adopting a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA).</li> <li>v. Partnering with entities that can help expand access to credit in historically redlined areas and areas that are still considered “riskier” investments today.</li> </ul>	L M S S S, O	Dept of Planning & Development, Economic Development Staff _____ _____ _____ _____	Housing & Third Ward Revitalization Task Force, Plan Commission, City Manager’s Office, Local lending institutions, Real estate associations

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
E.2.5	<p>Protect non-homeowner citizens (renters) through such measures as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Improving the rental inspection program to ensure safe, habitable, and fair housing.</li> <li>ii. Creating a renter protection program.</li> <li>iii. Exploring a source of income discrimination ordinance.</li> </ul>	L	Dept of Planning & Development	Plan Commission

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE E.3: ADDRESS STORMWATER MANAGEMENT THROUGH PROACTIVE, REGIONAL FLOOD MITIGATION PLANNING.</b>				
E.3.1	Implement a Storm Water Master Plan or take such measures as directed by the City Council, which may include recommendations by the Commission on Stormwater Issues, and engage the Plan Commission in updates to the City's Code.	S, O	Dept of Public Works, Commission on Storm Water Issues	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission
E.3.2	Implement a flood mitigation plan for the River Des Peres and its tributaries or take such measures as directed by the City Council, which may include recommendations by the Commission on Stormwater Issues.	S, O	Dept of Public Works	Commission on Storm Water Issues, MSD
E.3.3	Expand park coverage and stormwater management through reuse of vacant parcels.	O	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Park Commission, Commission on Storm Water Issues, LCRA
E.3.4	Encourage use of Low Impact Development (LID) strategies on vacant lots, in parks, and within private development, and incorporate LID strategies into the City's capital improvements.	O	Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Public Works	Dept of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry, Plan Commission

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
E.3.5	Incrementally convert high-flood risk areas into open spaces that are designed to accommodate stormwater, provided that maintenance and security can be addressed.	L, O	Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry	Commission on Storm Water Issues, Park Commission, Dept of Planning & Development
E.3.6	Discourage additional new development in flood-prone areas and restrict any new development within the floodplain.	O	Dept of Planning & Development	Green Practices Commission
E.3.7	Promote existing partner organizations' native plant guides to encourage use in landscaping on private property.	O	Dept of Planning & Development	Green Practivers, Partner Organizations (Missouri Botanical Garden, Seed St. Louis, STL Vacancy Collaborative)
E.3.8	Improve coordination with MSD on channel maintenance, downspout disconnections, drainage improvements, record keeping, etc.	S, O	Dept of Public Works	Commission on Storm Water Issues
E.3.9	Consider requiring disclosure of flood history for rentals and home purchases, as suggested by SEMA, possibly as part of the occupancy permit.	S	Dept of Planning & Development	City Manager's Office

### GOAL F: IMPROVE COLLABORATION.

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE F.1: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION WITH ADJACENT COMMUNITIES.</b>				
F.1.1	Learn from and adapt successful codes that improve stormwater and flood resilience.	S, O	Dept of Public Works, Commission on Storm Water Issues	Dept of Planning & Development, Plan Commission
F.1.2	Collaborate with neighboring communities to strengthen connections and advance shared development opportunities along borders.	O	City Manager's Office	Economic Development Staff, Dept of Planning & Development

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
F1.3	Study building code inconsistencies across communities and establish a dialogue about coordinated improvements.	S	Dept of Planning & Development	Building Commissioner
F1.4	Establish a cross-community crime prevention network.	M	Police Department	Neighboring municipalities' public safety officials

<b>OBJECTIVE F.2: STRENGTHEN THE PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF UNIVERSITY CITY TO ENHANCE THE REPUTATIONS OF BOTH THE CITY AND DISTRICT.</b>				
Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
F.2.1	Establish a joint branding strategy for The School District of University City and the City of University City.	M	Communications Manager	UC School District
F.2.2	Partner with The School District of University City to grow and sustain early childhood education programs and school readiness networks in the city.	O	Economic Development Staff	UC School District
F.2.3	Develop mentorship opportunities for students to learn about employment and entrepreneurship opportunities with the City and regional businesses.	S, O	Economic Development Staff	UC School District
F.2.4	Evaluate assets and infrastructure of the City and The School District of University City to determine where resources can be leveraged by both.	S, O	Dept of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry	Dept of Public Works, Park Commission, UC School District

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE F.3: DEVELOP ADDITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY TO ADDRESS AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.</b>				
F.3.1	Establish a more deliberate partnership with Washington University focused on strategic, mutually beneficial developments and investments in the Loop.	S, O	City Manager's Office	Economic Development Staff, Dept of Planning & Development
F.3.2	Develop a citywide lighting task force focused on safety and invite Washington University to participate.	S	Dept of Public Works	Dept of Planning & Development, Dept Public Works
F.3.3	Collaborate with Washington University to improve upon their existing "Good Neighbor Initiative" for college students living in University City neighborhoods.	O	Dept of Planning & Development	Plan Commission

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE F.4: IMPROVE INTRA-GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND COOPERATION.</b>				
F.4.1	Evaluate options for technology platforms to improve collaboration and sharing of information across City departments.	S	IT Dept	Dept of Planning & Development, Dept of Public Works, Communications Manager

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
F.4.2	<p>Leverage the expertise in University City's boards, commissions, task forces and authorities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Conducting a review of all City boards and commissions to ensure adequate, but not duplicative, responsibilities and sufficient staffing capacity.</li> <li>ii. Developing and implementing formal training programs for board, commission, and council members.</li> <li>iii. Creating a forum for regular communication among boards and commissions to address long-term issues that impact multiple boards or commissions.</li> </ul>	S	City Clerk	City Manager's Office, City Council, Boards & Commissions, City Staff Liaisons
F.4.3	Conduct an audit of internal City communications and prepare a strategy for improvements.	S	Communications Manager	
F.4.4	Explore hiring a grants coordinator.	S	Dept of Finance, City Manager's Office	

Code	Action	Timeframe	Lead Coordinator	Supporting Entities
<b>OBJECTIVE F.5: MANAGE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOTH PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED PLANS AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.</b>				
F.5.1	Evaluate and report on progress on the comprehensive plan on a regular review schedule (e.g., annually).	S, O	City Manager's Office	All City Departments, Boards & Commissions
F.5.2	Prepare departmental work programs with references to the comprehensive plan.	S, O	City Manager's Office	All City Departments, Boards & Commissions





# APPENDICES

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# APPENDIX A

## GLOSSARY

The following glossary intended to define key terms used and documents referenced in this document.

### **2005 Comprehensive Plan**

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan was an update to the 1999 Plan. The 2005 plan centered around expanding on and creating goals for three key ideas of the 1999 Plan: growth management, community quality, and city government. The plan also identified new issues including infill development, light rail, and mixed-use development, and created strategic community priorities to guide the implementation of the new plan.

### **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).**

Smaller, independent residential dwelling units located on the same lot as stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family units. There are examples of ADUs in University City that exist, despite the zoning ordinance not permitting them.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2013)**

The University City Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan outlines capital improvement projects, policies, and initiatives to expand access to safe walking and biking routes. The plan was intended to help create an “equity of mobility” within University City by providing universally-accessible transportation alternatives.

### **City of Service**

An organization that provides technical assistance and resources to cities looking to engage community volunteers to help identify and solve critical public problems.

### **“City” vs “city”**

The term “City” is used to refer to the governing entity of University City. The term “city” is used to describe the physical, geographical space of University City.

### **Centennial Greenway Plan (2006)**

The Centennial Greenway Plan is a regional plan that aims to coordinate the network of parks in and around St. Louis. The Greenway passes through University City, and the plan highlights Delmar Boulevard and the Loop as critical components of the Greenway, as the Loop is a frequent destination for users of the Greenway.

### **Complete Streets**

An approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enables safe access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

### **Community Benefits Ordinance**

A legally enforceable agreement between a local government and developer to require certain financial contributions for community benefits.

## **Community Vision 2040 (2022)**

Community Vision 2040 was the first step in creating the We Make U City comprehensive plan. Community members were asked to consider possible actions and their impacts using a scenario-planning process to determine the generally preferred future of University City. The plan breaks the general community vision into six strategic pillars: building sustainability & resistance, strengthening community fabric & equity, creating an environment where youth thrive, strengthening strategic partnerships, encouraging neighborhood nodes, and guiding Olive Boulevard redevelopment.

## **Cunningham Industrial Area**

The Cunningham Industrial Area is located at the eastern city limit, near Wellston. It is populated by a variety of manufacturing operations, ranging from parts and tool manufacturing to clothing. Some of the City's largest employers are in the Cunningham Industrial Area.

## **Delmar Divide**

Delmar Boulevard divides populations north and south of the line by racial and socioeconomic inequalities, in income, housing value, employment, education, and more. This historic, deliberate disinvestment created a geography of inequality which is still seen today.

## **Delmar Loop Area Retail Plan & Development Strategy (2011)**

This plan, funded by Washington University, and in collaboration with University City staff and business associations, details strategies to reinvigorate the Loop and its surrounding area following a decline in popularity in the late 2000s. Planned interventions included increased residential development, dense mixed-use development, and nodes of transit-oriented development.

## **Economic Development Strategy (2021)**

This plan aims to create a long-term strategy for economic growth to help University City move forward in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The plan outlines key economic development principles and identifies ten districts with unique commercial identities to help guide where and how development strategies are implemented. This plan initiated work for the comprehensive plan by encouraging place-based growth strategies and identifying priority development areas.

## **Good Neighbor Initiative**

An initiative in many university communities whereby college students get involved in structured programs get to know neighbors, engage in communication with police and representatives from the local government, and/or participate in community service to build positive connections between students and the neighborhoods in which they live.

## **Infill Development**

The process of developing vacant or underutilized properties in otherwise developed areas.

### **International Code Council (ICC)**

A non-profit, non-governmental organization that creates model building codes and standards. Municipalities can adopt model codes as-is or make changes as needed to best suit the needs of their communities.

### **Impact Fee**

A fee levied on the developer or builder of a project by the government as compensation for otherwise unmitigated impacts the project will produce.

### **Location Quotient (LQ)**

A location quotient (LQ) is an analytical statistic that measures a region's industrial specialization relative to a larger geographic unit (usually the nation).

### **Low-Impact Development (LID)**

A stormwater management approach modeled after nature. LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavement. LID can be found in open spaces, streetscapes, rooftops, parking lots, sidewalks, medians, and other spaces and be incorporated into new construction and retrofits.

### **Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)**

A geographical region based on a county or group of counties with a relatively high population density at its core and close economic ties throughout the region.

### **Micro-Mobility**

Transportation using lightweight, single-user vehicles, like bikes and scooters.

### **Mix-Tape Zoning**

Allows for a better mix of land uses along commercial corridors by removing inefficiencies, outdated ordinances, and rigid code interpretations in order to encourage quality place-making.

### **Missing Middle Housing**

Housing that falls between single-family homes and large apartment buildings, such as duplexes, triplexes, courtyard apartments, and townhomes.

### **MODOT**

The Missouri Department of Transportation is a state government organization that is tasked with maintaining state public roadways.

### **Mow to Own**

Programs that allow property owners to acquire properties for a small fee with the commitment to maintain the lot for a certain amount of time (e.g., two years).

### **Neighborhood Liaison**

A volunteer who serves as the link between local institutions and members of the community. They assist in communicating the ideas and goals of each group to the other.

### **North Central Neighborhood Plan (2002)**

To achieve the goals set by the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, University City conducted in depth analyses of individual neighborhoods throughout the city. The North Central Neighborhood Plan identified six main concerns of neighborhood residents: street maintenance, noise, land use on Olive Boulevard, litter/dumping, traffic, and property maintenance.

### **Northeast Neighborhood Plan (2002)**

Created in response to the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, the Northeast plan resident's focused on five main concerns: investment, housing stock, public infrastructure, neighborhood character and aesthetic, and public safety.

### **Northwest Neighborhood Plan (2004)**

This in-depth analysis also built upon the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. Major priorities identified by residents were divided into seven focus areas: housing, neighborhood appearance/aesthetics, public facilities/service, public health, noise/nuisance, public safety, and communication.

### **Olive Boulevard Design Guidelines (2009)**

The Olive Boulevard Design Guidelines are intended to encourage economic development, preserve historic buildings, and create meaningful improvements to the corridor. The guidelines provide a framework for streetscape design, building types, signage, and landscaping, among other things.

### **Parks Master Plan (2008)**

This plan involved a comprehensive review of existing parks, national standards for parks, and evaluating each park against those standards. University City residents were also asked about their visitation habits and opinions on possible park improvements in order to determine goal areas and priorities.

### **Safe Routes to Schools Plan**

A program aimed at increasing safe routes to school by providing high quality pedestrian and bicycle routes.

### **Source of Income Discrimination**

When landlords refuse to accept tenants regardless of their lawful source of income, which often means denying the opportunity to rent to individuals using tenant-based rental assistance

### **St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking (2021)**

Following the passing of the St. Louis County Complete Streets Ordinance, the County created an action plan to help realize the goals of the Ordinance. The Action Plan was designed to guide decisions about infrastructure, programs, and policies related to active transportation options like walking or biking.

### **STL 2030 Jobs Plan (2021)**

This plan is an economic development plan for the entire St. Louis metropolitan area, created by Greater St. Louis, Inc. It focuses on inclusive growth and the creation of quality jobs in the region as tools to reduce racial and spatial disparities in income, health and wealth.

### **Sustainable Development Guidelines (2019)**

These guidelines include a complete list of sustainable development and building practices, broken down into what the City recommends, what it incentivizes, and what it requires. The guidelines are provided to developers, and are continually updated to include new ways to incorporate sustainable practices that do not hinder development.

### **Sustainability Strategic Plan (2011)**

Created by the University City Green Practices Commission, this plan aims to establish goals and actions to help incorporate sustainability into City practices and programs. These goals are separated into seven categories: ecosystems/habitat, water/stormwater, air quality/transportation, water/resource conservation, land use/open space/parks, energy, and green buildings.

### **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA)**

An act that provides tenants with notice that a landlord is planning to sell their building and provides them with the chance to collectively purchase the building.

### **TIF District**

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts are areas within a city that are deemed to be in need of redevelopment. These areas are assigned a portion of increased property taxes in order to develop with in the district.

### **Transit Oriented Development (TOD)**

Development that creates dense, walkable, and mixed-use spaces near transit.

### **Urban Forestry Strategic Plan (2009)**

This plan involved a comprehensive review of all existing City policies and plans relating to urban forestry and created a vision, goals, and recommendations for how to best manage University City's urban forest.

# APPENDIX B

## ROUND 1 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



### Summary Memo

#### Final Results, Round 1 Public Engagement

May 30, 2023

This document summarizes the results of the first round of public engagement for We Make U City, a comprehensive plan update for University City, Missouri. The public engagement has been designed to advance the work conducted for the Community Vision 2040 process. Through the public engagement process, community members were invited to share more specific ideas to inform policies, programs, and projects. This input will be combined with detailed technical analysis to create specific recommendations. This report summarizes engagement that was conducted between mid-January and the end of April 2023. This report does not represent recommendations from the Plan Commission or Planning NEXT. Input has been gathered in the following ways:

- **In-person engagement** – Two workshops were held on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, respectively, at which residents were invited to discuss three critical questions and an assets and opportunities mapping activity.
- **Surveys** – Residents had the opportunity to rate and comment on Vision, Goals, and Actions, as well as share thoughts about assets and opportunities in the City through a mapping activity. Surveys were broadly publicized and are available both online and in paper formats at City, the Public Library, and the University City School District Office. Surveys were also distributed to University City High School Students and through applications SHED's home repair program. An abbreviated survey was distributed City-wide through ROARS.
- **Community events and meetings** – The team shared materials, promoted online engagement, and distributed paper surveys at several events including the Loop Ice Carnival, the One U City Spice + Spark Chili Cookoff, and the One U City World Tour.
- **Student focus groups** – Two focus groups were conducted with University City High School students. Students were asked to participate in a mapping activity and answer two questions about the future of University City.

The memo includes the following components:

1. Purpose
2. Outreach and Publicity
3. Findings
4. Voices to Date
5. Next Steps

### 1. Purpose

University City launched the We Make U City process to update its comprehensive plan in late-Summer 2022. The City's last comprehensive plan was adopted in 2005. One of the key components of the comprehensive planning process is insight from the community. Through the first round of public engagement, multiple opportunities across in-person and online platforms have been provided for individuals interested about the future of the City to help inform the plan. Reaching geographic areas and demographic groups that are normally less likely to engage was also a priority. This round of engagement has been designed to move the planning work from bigger picture ideas from the Community Vision 2040 process to more specific, actionable recommendations and connect more closely to the physical development of the City. A second round of engagement will be held in summer 2023 to gather input on draft recommendations.

### 2. Outreach and Publicity

Extensive outreach and publicity were conducted to spread the word about the opportunities to participate in the first round of engagement. The team capitalized on existing networks through community groups, organizations, religious and faith communities, educational institutions, and local government for outreach. The We Make U City Advisory Committee and City staff played a key role in spreading the word across the community of the importance of this opportunity. Outreach and publicity included the following:

- ROARS City Newsletter (February 2023) – distributed to all addresses in U City
- Staff set up engagement opportunities at events throughout the City: the Loop Ice Carnival, the One U City Spice + Spark Chili Cookoff, the One U City World Tour, and the annual U City in Bloom Annual Plant Sale. Rack cards promoting the online survey, paper survey forms, mapping and comment cards were offered.
- Local media was engaged, including Fox2, which ran a story on the public workshop opportunity.
- 2,500 rack cards advertising ways to get involved were printed for distribution throughout the City
- Emails and announcements were sent out to community members outlining ways to participate and be involved within this round of engagement
- Staff met with community members and promoted the events and online activities
- Social media was utilized through posts that were shared by the City and community organization: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor
- Advisory Committee members directly reached out to their neighbors and networks.
- Rack cards distributed to faith communities, and announcements included in religious bulletins.
- Paper surveys included in SHED's home repair applications sent to 150 residents in the Third Ward
- E-Newsletters: Weekly Community Update ("Between the Lions") and the Explore U City Newsletter
- Posters, flyers, and paper surveys were posted at key locations throughout the City.

### 3. Findings

This section summarizes the input collected to date, including information from in-person workshops, online/paper surveys, and student focus groups.

#### Part 1: Community Comments and Ratings on Vision, Goals, and Objectives

Comments on the Vision, Goals, and Objectives revealed certain key themes and responses:

##### Vision Statement: University City is a community that moves forward together to advance prosperity, opportunities, and resilience while preserving and enhancing the city's unique character.

- Many of the responses were support of the sentiments expressed in the Vision Statement, but many felt that the City does not currently reflect the aspirations expressed in the Vision Statement. Inequity in the City, the Market at Olive development, and the response to flooding were all cited as ways the City does not currently meet this Vision
- Desire to see the Vision become a reality
- Specific actions need to support the Vision Statement
- The Vision Statement is not aspirational enough
- The Vision Statement contains buzzwords that are not defined

##### Goal 1: Preserve and enhance great places.

- Favor local business and "mom and pop" stores over chain stores
- Concern about gentrification, particularly along Olive Boulevard and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward
- Desire to increase home ownership in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward
- Desire to see cleaner streets, eliminate litter, and improve facades
- Desire to maintain diversity of business, particularly in the Loop
- Need to address flooding
- Divided opinion about the Market at Olive development with some believing it is an opportunity for the City and others believing it does not match desired character

##### Goal 2: Advance shared prosperity.

- Skepticism about the benefits of tax abatements, particularly when they benefit chain retail, but also recognition of the need for growth
- Concern about losing diversity of businesses (ethnic diversity, size of business, local business)
- Need for more specific recommendations
- Need to improve University City schools or the reputation of the schools
- Need to address flooding

##### Goal 3: Connect community.

- Greater emphasis should be placed on cycling access, walkability, and transit (improve bike lanes and cross walks)
- Improve roads (some argue this should come before improving bike lanes or sidewalks)
- Transit should be practical and useful, not replicating the trolley
- Some concerned generally about any transit and want the City to focus on roads and walking/biking

- Concern over diversity, including equal services across U City to services and infrastructure

##### Goal 4: Leverage assets.

- Desire for Centennial Commons and the pool to reopen
- Recognition that trees are a valuable asset beyond just those located in parks
- Many residents are unfamiliar with Cunningham Industrial Area
- Desire to see improved park maintenance

##### Goal 5: Strengthen livability.

- Flood mitigation/stormwater management expressed as the top concern by a significant margin
  - Participants noted the lack of communication by the government in developing and enacting flood mitigation
  - Participants emphasized the need to clean the River Des Peres before another flood
  - Participants noted the need to stop building in flood plains
- Desire to utilize coordination with other municipalities and generally limit the cost of emergency services
- Some desire general road improvements

##### Goal 6: Improve collaboration.

- Desire to see Washington University contribute more financially to the City – belief that the university has received too many tax breaks
- Participants would like to see improvements in the school system and in perception of the schools – some note an unfair negative perception of the schools while others say they need dramatic improvement to serve as a draw to the City
- Participants note that lack of internal government cooperation and communication between the government and citizens
- Some express concern of crime and the need for crime reduction

On a 5-point scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5), the Vision statement, Themes, Goals and the majority of Objectives all received an average rating between 4 and 5 (Agree to Strongly Agree) with a few exceptions – Objectives 1.1, 2.5, 2.7, and 4.1, which received average ratings between 3 and 4 (Neutral to Agree). Information on those four objectives is below, including the average rating for each and a summary of key comments, which are shared to provide insight into why on average these ratings are lower. This information will be taken into account in considering adjustments to the objectives and in the development of specific actions.

##### *Objective 1.1 - Promote desirable development through proactive measures such as landbanking (acquiring property and holding it for future use). Average rating: 3.55*

- Sentiments that landbanking sounds like something that will favor more wealthy community members
- Other communities have had controversy over landbanking
- Concerns about who selects the individuals or properties that can acquire property from the land bank, a prolonged timeline for selling land bank properties for development, and what individuals or companies will ultimately purchase landbank properties

- Concern that "holding property for future use" could mean holding it for a very long time and not taking action to promote development

**Objective 2.5 - Capitalize on opportunities for larger-scale commercial uses that have a regional draw.**  
Average rating: 3.44

- Concerns that this means more development like Market at Olive or other "regional draw" developments

**Objective 2.7 - Leverage incentives such as tax abatements to support desired economic development in key locations.** Average rating: 3.38

- There is uncertainty that development that receives tax abatements will have a positive tax impact in the long run
- Concern that this draws University City into an "incentivization trap" that pits communities against each other

**Objective 4.1 - Determine the desired character of the Cunningham Industrial Area that will allow for its ongoing activity and potential expansion in a way that is compatible with surrounding areas.** Average rating: 3.80

- Comments with lower ratings generally were from people who are not familiar with this area or don't know where it is

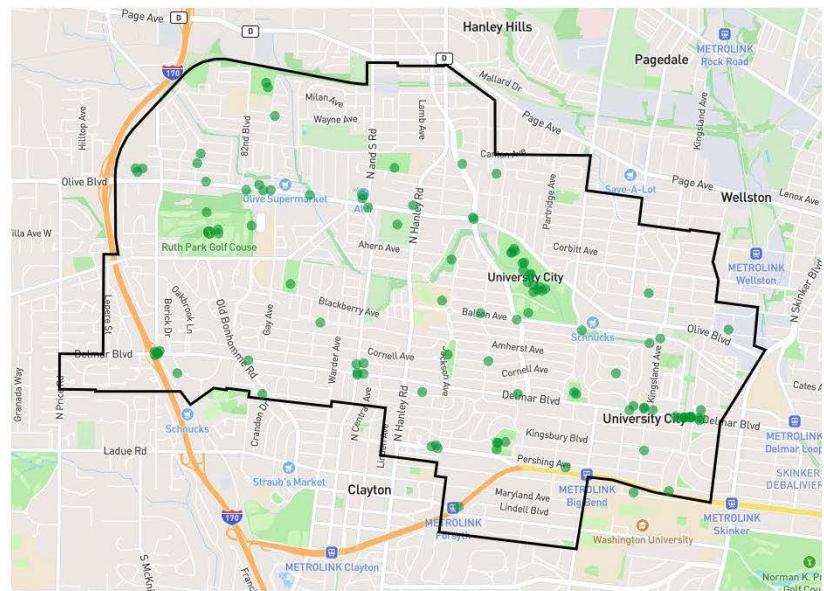
## Part 2: Community Mapping of Assets and Opportunities

Participants were asked to identify assets and opportunities in University City. This exercise was conducted without the constraints of flood plain definition or current zoning restrictions. (Maps below do not represent recommendations from Planning NEXT or the University City Plan Commission.) Assets and opportunities were defined based on key topic areas from the Community Vision 2040. Assets are where the key topic areas are already addressed in the City and opportunities are where the key topic areas could be addressed in the future. The key topic areas include:

- Neighborhood activity centers (areas with concentrated businesses and services)
- Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
- Resilient and sustainable infrastructure
- Recreation and green space
- Housing options and residential character
- Street appeal

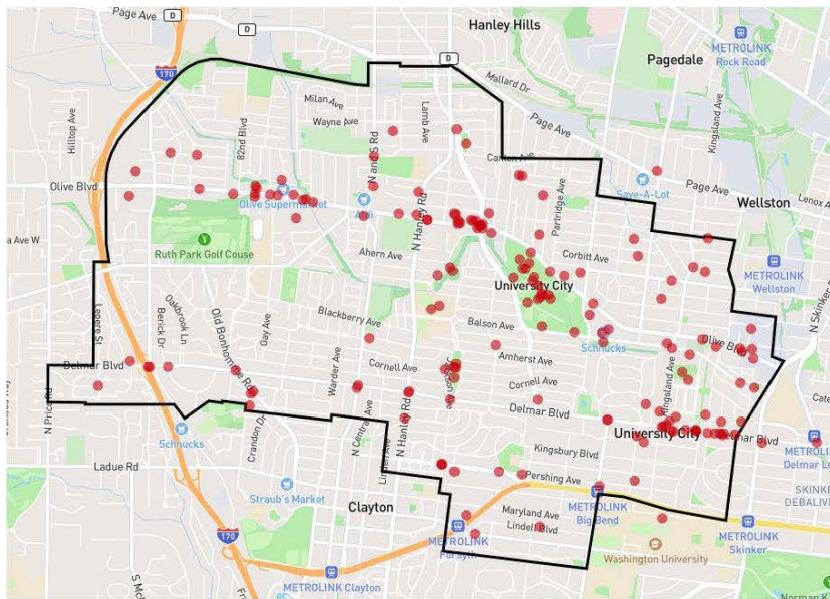
### Top Identified Assets:

- The Loop:* The area is a walkable hub for community that supports diverse local businesses and has desirable character.
- Heman Park:* The park has a recreation facility, swimming pool, community center, multiple fields, and ample greenspace.
- Existing neighborhood activity centers:* There are many walkable nodes of concentrated businesses and services at multiple locations in the community (The Loop, Olive/Hafner, Olive/Midland, Jackson/Pershing, Delmar/North and South, Forsyth/Forest Park Parkway, Delmar/McKnight).
- Residential character:* Participants identified diverse areas in the City with desirable residential character.
- Other parks:* Other parks were identified less often than Heman Park, but were generally recognized as assets in the community.



### Top Identified Opportunities:

- *The Loop*: The area has potential for infill development and more small businesses. Some participants wanted to see more effort taken to fill vacancies. Others noted dissatisfaction with the Trolley.
- *Herman Park*: Many want improvements to existing facilities, repairs from flooding damage, and improved connectivity to surrounding residential areas.
- *International District on western end of Olive Blvd*: Participants recognized this district as an underutilized asset that could support more dense/intense land uses and showcase the unique businesses currently in the district.
- *Central section of Olive Blvd*: This section of Olive includes a significant number of vacant parcels and lacks pedestrian and bike infrastructure.
- *Areas impacted by 2022 flooding*: Participants want the vacant and condemned properties addressed and want proactive measures taken to prevent further severe flooding.
- *Connectivity by non-motorized transportation*: Participants identified many areas in the City where cross-walks, sidewalks, and bicycling infrastructure would improve mobility.
- *Third Ward*: Many identified a need to address vacancy, improve housing maintenance, and improve access to services and amenities in the Third Ward.



### Part 3: Critical Questions

At the workshops held on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, participants were asked several questions, listed below. The critical questions were crafted to help facilitate a discussion on key issues identified by survey respondents regarding the draft Goals and Objectives up to that date.

1. What type of commercial and retail development would you like to see in the City? Where and why?
2. How proactive should the City be in acquiring property, managing land or providing economic incentives for certain kinds of development?
3. What kinds of impacts should be considered in evaluating new development (e.g., budget, environment, social, etc.)?

Key themes from each question are outlined below.

#### What type of commercial and retail development would you like to see in the City? Where and why?

- Participants want a diversity of businesses – want to maintain mom and pop stores but recognize that there can be a benefit to controlled introduction of larger retail
- The loss of international and small businesses on Olive as a result of new development is a concern for some participants
- See the increase in vacancies and homogeneity of restaurants on the Loop as a concern, want to see more small businesses, retail, and entertainment on the Loop and throughout the City
- Desire for walkability and mixed use spaces – many participants noted the desire to have grocery stores and coffee shops within walkable distance in their neighborhood
- Aspiration for improved pedestrian safety and infrastructure to encourage walking including parking in the back of stores to create downtown feel
- Some participants wanted to see greater investment in existing businesses allowing for improved storefront appearance and streetscape improvements
- Desire for maintaining character of neighborhoods and City – “old timey” mid-century feel
- Concern about maintaining affordability of the City - both apartments and housing
- Some participants expressed concern about the use of TIFs

#### How proactive should the City be in acquiring property, managing land or providing economic incentives for certain kinds of development?

- Many participants noted the City should buy land--particularly land in floodplains, vacant properties, and industrial areas along Olive
- Some noted the role the government should play in controlling the cost of property, allowing for affordable housing and utilizing landbanking to create more affordable housing opportunities
- Desire to develop land that combines business and residential, improving walkability
- Tax incentives that support viable businesses, especially small businesses and those “invested in the community,” some skepticism about TIFs
- Participants wanted to see more transparency from the local government, more communication about existing programs, and greater receptiveness from the government to citizen concerns
- Participants said landlords need to be held to high standards and building and maintenance standards need to be enforced

**What kinds of impacts should be considered in evaluating new development (e.g., budget, environment, social, etc.)?**

- Major priority was affordability—creating affordable housing and maintaining affordability/economic accessibility
- Participants concerned with environmental impacts, particularly managing stormwater/flooding with the increase in impermeable surfaces as a result of new development and controlling pollution/litter
- Participants noted the importance of mixed-use spaces
- Participants wanted walkable spaces and infrastructure improvements to sidewalks, connectivity, and control of traffic
- Aesthetically, participants vocalized a desire for new development to match the existing character and architecture of the respective neighborhood
- Some participants noted a desire for diversity of businesses and a focus on jobs that benefit University City residents
- Some participants expressed concern about TIFs
- Some participants expressed concerns about the Washington University's property holdings and the impacts of these properties becoming tax exempt

**Part 4: Student Focus Groups**

Two focus groups of University City High School students were held on April 18 and 19. Students worked in groups to complete the “Community Mapping of Assets and Opportunities” activity, the results of which are incorporated above. Students were also asked to individually answer questions that are more specific to their perspective as teenagers.

1. What would make University City a better place to live today?
2. What would make you want to live in University City as an adult?

The key themes from each question are outlined below.

**What would make University City a better place to live today?**

- Non-motorized transportation: Ability to safely walk, bike, or use transit
- More child and teen-friendly activities and spaces
- Addressing flooding and pollution from the River des Peres
- Improved park spaces and recreation opportunities
- Renovations and improvements to schools
- Addressing crime and poverty

**What would make you want to live in University City as an adult?**

- More amenities (activities, restaurants, shopping, spaces to socialize)
- Improved schools
- Reduced crime and poverty
- Housing options

- An environment that is safe and friendly for raising children
- Some would not want to return to University City

**4. Voices to Date**

The following is a summary of participation in the first round of engagement. Participation included:

- Over 520 people participated in workshops, online activities, paper surveys, or focus groups.
- Based on exit questionnaires, respondents under the age of 18 and over the age of 65 were overrepresented compared to the general population of University City. Participants between the ages of 18-34 were underrepresented.
- Of exit questionnaire respondents, 27% live in Ward 1, 36% live in Ward 2, 28% live in Ward 3, and 9% live outside the City. When removing the responses from those who live outside the City, Ward 2 is slightly overrepresented (40%) and Wards 1 and 3 are slightly underrepresented (both at 30%). (The current population breakdown for the Wards is 35%, 33%, and 31%, respectively. Ward percentages are taken from a 4/11/22 City Council Presentation from a Study Session on Redistricting Text Amendments.)
- In response to being asked why participants care about the City, the majority (91%) indicated they live in the City. 33% indicated their family is in the City, 16% own a business or property in the City, 13% have kids in school in the City, and 14% work in the City.
- Of those who responded to the survey, word of mouth was the primary way people heard about We Make U City (31%) followed by city communication (23%), other (21%) and social media (19%). Most respondents who indicated “other” as the method for learning about We Make U City heard about the engagement opportunities at a community event.

**5. Next Steps**

Following this first round of public engagement, community insight will be analyzed as one source of information to inform the plan's recommendations on a range of topics, including community character and land use, economic development, housing, transportation, environmental resources, and community facilities and services. This input will be combined with other technical analyses performed by the consultant team as well as other analyses accepted by City Council (e.g., Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan). These draft recommendations will then be shared to obtain feedback during the second round of public engagement, which will occur in July and August 2023.

# APPENDIX C

## ROUND 2 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



### Summary Memo

#### Final Results, Round 2 Public Engagement

August 30, 2023

This document summarizes the results of the second round of public engagement for We Make U City, a comprehensive plan update for University City, Missouri. The public engagement has been designed to advance the work conducted for the Community Vision 2040 process and the first round of public engagement conducted in Winter and Spring 2023. Through the public engagement process, community members were invited to review draft plan recommendations and a draft Future Character and Land Use Map. This report summarizes engagement that was conducted between July 19 and August 21, 2023. This report does not represent recommendations from the Plan Commission or Planning NEXT. Input has been gathered in the following ways:

- **In-person Open House** – An Open House was held on July 19 from 3-7 pm, at which community members were invited to drop in at their convenience to view and comment on display boards with draft plan content, including key actions with supporting text, and a draft Future Character and Land Use Map.
- **Virtual Open Houses** – Two virtual Open Houses were hosted live online on three different dates at different times of day: Tuesday, July 25 from 12-1 pm; Wednesday, July 26 from 8-9 am; and Saturday, July 29 from 9-10 am.
- **Surveys** – Residents had the opportunity comment on selected key actions with detailed text as well as a full list of proposed actions for the plan. Surveys were broadly publicized and were available both online and in paper formats at City Hall and the University City Public Library.
- **Community events and meetings** – The team shared materials, promoted online engagement, and distributed paper surveys at several events including the U City Summer Band, National Night Out / Back to School Rally, and the One U City Back-to-School Kickback.
- **Road Show** – The boards and materials from the Open House were placed on display at the Public Library and City Hall.

The memo includes the following components:

1. Purpose
2. Outreach and Publicity
3. Findings
4. Next Steps

### 1. Purpose

University City launched the We Make U City process to update its comprehensive plan in late-Summer 2022. The City's last comprehensive plan was adopted in 2005. One of the key components of the comprehensive planning process is insight from the community. Through the first round of public engagement, multiple opportunities across in-person and online platforms were provided for individuals interested in the future of the City to help inform the plan. Reaching geographic areas and demographic groups that are normally less likely to engage was also a priority. The second round of engagement followed a similar approach, using some of the same methods, with some adjustments, including offering virtual Open House opportunities. This round of engagement was designed to gather more specific feedback on the direction of the plan content.

### 2. Outreach and Publicity

As with the first round of engagement, extensive outreach and publicity were conducted to spread the word about the opportunities to participate in the second round of engagement. The team capitalized on existing networks through community groups, organizations, religious and faith communities, educational institutions, and local government for outreach. The We Make U City Advisory Committee and City staff played a key role in spreading the word across the community of the importance of this opportunity. Outreach and publicity included the following:

- ROARS City Newsletter – distributed to all addresses in U City
- Staff set up engagement opportunities at events throughout the City including the U City Summer Band, National Night Out / Back to School Rally, and the One U City Back-to-School Kickback.
- 1,000 rack cards advertising ways to get involved were printed for distribution throughout the City
- Emails and announcements were sent out to community members outlining ways to participate and be involved within this round of engagement
- Staff met with community members and promoted the events and online activities.
- Social media was utilized through posts that were shared by the City and community organization: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor
- Advisory Committee members directly reached out to their neighbors and networks.
- Rack cards distributed to faith communities, and announcements included in religious bulletins.
- Signs were put up in University City parks.

### 3. Findings

This section summarizes key findings from the second round of engagement. All comments were databased and will be used to inform updates to draft plan contents.

#### Comments on Draft Actions

Following is a summary of comments on the draft actions shared during the second round of engagement.

#### *Actions highlighted under Goal A: Preserve and enhance great places.*

- Higher density housing does not belong in all areas of the City; while large, undeveloped areas can accommodate multifamily residential developments, some single-family neighborhoods cannot.
- Appropriate zoning is important to provide clarity.
- Tree planting needs to be strategic so that new trees are planted where they can be of benefit but maintenance can be managed.
- There is a lack of communication about development projects that are pending and community members don't know how to get information.

#### *Actions highlighted under Goal B: Advance shared prosperity.*

- The International District should be a focus, and the City should consider offering incentives and working to attract businesses there.
- Design of new development along Olive Blvd. is important, especially to better address flooding in the area and to improve sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Increasing homeownership in the Third Ward, promoting pride in property ownership, and addressing long-term disparities should be a top priority.
- Design of new residential should be compatible with existing.
- Encourage selective increase density and vertical mix of uses.
- TIF district funding should focus on top priorities for the community.
- Do not emphasize ward differences in the plan and in policymaking.

#### *Actions highlighted under Goal C: Connect community.*

- Enhancing opportunities for biking and walking should include improving existing trailways, expanding dedicated bike lanes, and other efforts.
- Bike lanes may not serve the entire population (e.g. older adults); other improvements, such as to transit service, are needed.
- There are many youth programs, but the idea of a civic-focused program and especially a focus on places for youth to spend time, would add value to the city.
- While Olive Blvd. should be a major focus of the plan, the experience of traversing to and along the Loop also needs attention.
- Higher density housing does not belong in all areas of the City; while large, undeveloped areas can accommodate multifamily residential developments, some single-family neighborhoods cannot.
- Appropriate zoning is important to provide clarity.
- Tree planting needs to be strategic so that new trees are planted where they can be of benefit but maintenance can be managed.

- There is a lack of communication about development projects that are pending and community members don't know how to get information.

#### *Actions highlighted under Goal D: Leverage assets.*

- Park investments should focus on improvements and upgrades to existing parks, as well as maintenance, operating hours, and programming.
- More attention to and investment in historic buildings is needed, coupled with a focus on public art.

#### *Actions highlighted under Goal E: Strengthen livability.*

- Flooding can be anticipated to continue and it is absolutely critical that the City focuses on a multifaceted approach to address, including improvements to hard infrastructure, encouraging low impact development, and other measures.
- Focus on building out existing activity nodes and identifying new nodes, including support for small and local businesses.
- Sidewalk connections to activity nodes are needed.

#### *Actions highlighted under Goal F: Improve collaboration.*

- The City needs to reset its relationship with Washington University, including around physical development in the Loop and youth education and mentoring.
- Simplification of boards and commissions, and clearer, more-consistent communication between City entities is desired.

#### Comments on Future Character and Land Use Map

- Support for treatment of river to capitalize on the river for recreation and manage flooding.
- Certain neighborhoods are primarily residential and should remain so; do not develop nodes mixed-use nodes in certain areas.
- Traffic conditions are problematic in some parts of the city where residential is directly adjacent to regional retail (e.g., Markets at Olive).
- Address litter, poor maintenance, and landscaping along Olive Blvd.
- Affordable housing options should be increased in certain areas, but high quality materials should be used.
- Enhance parks and open space.

### 4. Next Steps

Participation in round 2 will be documented and summarized in the plan document. Key ideas presented in this memo, as well as other comments from the input collected, will be used to update the draft plan's actions and Future Character and Land Use Map during August and September 2023. Participants will be kept informed regarding the preparation of the draft and final plan documents.



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