

Technical Assistance Panel

Florissant Road Corridor

City of Ferguson, Missouri
City of Cool Valley, Missouri



Panel Recommendations
to the Cities of Ferguson
and Cool Valley
November 2012

ULI St. Louis

The mission of ULI St. Louis is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information and experience among local, national and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.

The Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program provides expert, multi-disciplinary advice to public agencies and non-profit organizations facing complex land use

and real estate issues in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Drawing from its extensive membership base, ULI St. Louis conducts TAP programs to offer objective and responsible advice on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide sponsoring organizations a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. ULI St. Louis members from across the region participate as panelists, volunteering their time and expertise to the process.

Contact Us

ULI St. Louis
911 Washington Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63101

(p) 314.210.6547
(f) 314.641.8157
(e) stlouis@uli.org
<http://stlouis.uli.org>



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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Panel's Charge	2
TAP Process	2
Florissant Road Corridor Study Area	3
The Study Area, Strengths	4
The Study Area, Challenges	5
Student and/or Senior Housing	6
Developer's Expectations	7
Incentives	8
Policies & Services	9
Developer's Notes	10
Infrastructure Notes	10
Summary	12
Panel Professional Biographies	13



Introduction

At the invitation of the City of Ferguson, Missouri, working in partnership with the City of Cool Valley, Missouri, ULI St. Louis was asked to form a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to address issues relating to the further development along the Florissant Road Corridor, from Interstate I-70 to Church Street.

The participants in the TAP included elected officials from the City of Ferguson and the City of Cool Valley, as well as administrative and planning professionals from

both cities. With a vested interest in the prosperity of the corridor, the Sponsors share a common vision for the corridor that includes additional commercial activity along the route as well as additional residential units to support the businesses and facilitate growth in the corridor. Pride in 'hometown' was evident and, with good progress to-date, the Sponsors turned to ULI for assistance with guiding their vision forward.

Panel's Charge

The Sponsors turned to the Panel for answers to the following questions:

1. *Can we support new mixed-use, senior housing, and/or student housing on Florissant Road?*
2. *What are developers' expectations regarding lot size, utilities, public transport, etc.?*
3. *What incentives are available and appropriate on a multi-jurisdictional basis on Florissant Road to attract development?*
4. *What policies and services will private developers and the university expect to be in place?*

TAP Process

The Technical Assistance Panel, consisting of six professionals selected from the ULI membership base in St. L, represented the following skills and perspectives: urban planning, architecture and design, real estate development, municipal and real estate law, and institutional real estate development.

At the start of the TAP work day, Panelists and primary stakeholders took a walking tour of the Florissant Road cor-

ridor, led jointly by the Mayors of Cool Valley and Ferguson. The tour, spanning the two miles between the northern edge of the University of Missouri–St. Louis (UMSL) at Interstate I-70 to Church Street in Ferguson, provided the Panel with first-hand pedestrian experience, and allowed officials from both municipalities to educate the Panel on development progress and goals for the corridor.

Following the walking tour, the Panelists reassembled at Ferguson City Hall and conducted meetings with groups of stakeholders, including: representatives from the sponsoring municipalities – the City of Ferguson and the City of Cool Valley; community leaders, city planning officials, and residents; and real estate, economic development, and related professional consultants.

Following the stakeholder meetings, the Panel spent the remainder of the day processing the information and insights gathered from the meetings and reviewing the information and maps provided by the Sponsors. During this work session, drawing on the Panel members' professional expertise, the group further explored the Sponsors' charge and formulated recommendations designed to help attract and facilitate desirable development.

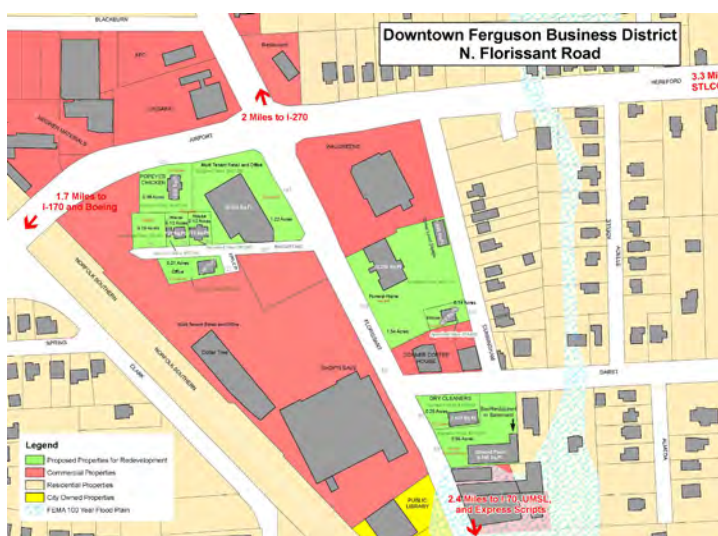


Florissant Road Corridor Study Area

The Florissant Road corridor, running through the cities of Cool Valley and Ferguson, provides a valuable transportation connection to the interstate, the University of Missouri–St. Louis, Lambert-St. Louis International Airport, and several significant employment centers within a mile radius of the study area. Given the prime location of the corridor and the progress made to-date in Ferguson and Cool Valley, including streetscape improvements and new commercial development, the TAP Sponsors are interested in promoting further development along the corridor as it traverses both cities.

In considering further development, however, the Sponsors face several questions that need to be addressed before marketing the area to potential developers. What type of development makes sense given the market and the location of developable sites along the corridor? What should the Sponsors expect to provide in the way of utilities, lot size and services? Additionally, what types of incentives might developers need to make a development viable?

The TAP study area lies within two separate municipalities. The study area also presents two separate development patterns with a ‘gateway’ character near I-70 and a more cohesive ‘downtown’ closer to Church Street. However, the study area is viewed as one street, one corridor, and one business district. The fact that it falls within two municipalities is not readily apparent to a visitor and is of no consequence in a visitor’s decision regarding dining options, shopping destination, or entertainment venue. This lack of division between the two cities could turn into a benefit if the study area were marketed as one district, working to attract both commercial and residential developers.



The Study Area, Strengths

The leadership of both the City of Ferguson and the City of Cool Valley has demonstrated interest in working closely together to promote development and growth in the study area. This valuable partnership and commitment to growth will serve the cities well as they work to achieve that objective.

As mentioned previously, the study area is situated in a part of the St. Louis region that provides good access to a number of key elements including three major highways, the airport, and employment centers such as UMSL, Express Scripts and Emerson, as well as the ability to access major central business districts – Clayton and downtown St. Louis – within a 20-minute drive. With this type of access comes potential for providing commercial services to those traveling through the area. There are also a number of residential opportunities for those wanting to take advantage of location.

The study area is bounded by UMSL on the south. The proximity of a university allows opportunities for surrounding municipalities to provide business and personal services, entertainment and dining options, and residential alternatives for students, faculty, and staff. There are also partnering opportunities with particular schools within the university, such as forming an entrepreneurial program with the schools of business or an early childhood learning center with the school of education. The Sponsors may wish to explore these opportunities further.

Corporate neighbors have also demonstrated a commitment to the area by donating funds for a public plaza and providing opportunities for the municipalities to market residential options to employees of those firms.

The area will also benefit from the Great Rivers Greenway bike trail, planned for the eastern boundary of the study area. The trail will eventually connect the area with other key amenities within the region, particularly Forest Park and downtown.

The study area can also be defined as a bedroom community with an active downtown – an attractive combination. The housing stock consists of stately older homes as well as a number of handsome, modest bungalows, the latter of which provide housing opportunities for young couples, small families, and/or empty nesters.

Finally, the current improvements to the corridor provide great benefit to the study area. Streetscape improvements through Ferguson, the new developments – such as the Ferguson Lofts, the Ferguson Brewery, and the new firehouse – and the replacement of outdated buildings with new stores such as Family Dollar, will further enhance the development story of the study area and promote additional capital investment.



Ferguson Brewery & Marly's Bar & Grill



Possible development site



New Ferguson Fire Station under construction



501 Plaza



Shoulder/sidewalk flanked by Florissant Road and culvert



Vacant retail



Bus stop near public parking lot



Schnuck's Grocery Store

The Study Area, Challenges

Along with the strengths of the study area, Panelists noted several challenges that should be addressed by the Sponsors.

Sponsors indicated a significant recurring issue with flooding at the southern entrance to the corridor. Although current businesses have worked hard to mitigate the interruption to operations when flooding occurs, the flooding will continue to be a deterrent to new investment. Associated with the issue of flooding is the unattractive and difficult to maintain creek that parallels Florissant Road on the west side. The culvert created to contain the portions of creek is inadequate for preventing flooding, is difficult to maintain, and becomes an unattractive nuisance. At the same time, if the creek bed was restored to a more natural state and managed properly, it could become an amenity and attractive water feature throughout the corridor.

There are sections through the corridor that serve pedestrians well. Other sections are in need of significant attention, with sidewalks missing completely, with shoulders existing as sidewalks, and still other sections missing safety signals for crossing, particularly at the interstate.

The Sponsors have given a nod to the prevalence of bicycle use in the community by installing several attractive bicycle racks throughout the corridor. A retail and repair shop is also in place to serve the biking population. Yet, bike lanes do not yet exist on the roadway and should be added.

Along Florissant Road, there is a significant amount of vacant residential property. Since no replacement uses immediately present themselves at these locations, the Sponsors have begun to purchase single family homes fronting Florissant Road and land banking the parcels for future development.

With regard to the older vacant commercial space, attracting new retail users will likely remain a challenge as superior retail opportunities exist in new buildings such as the Ferguson Lofts. By turning some of the vacant retail space into office, public, or even residential uses, however, the Sponsors may create scarcity value for the remaining retail locations – fewer sites with greater value.

Signage on I-70 points to Historic Downtown Ferguson. When driving through or walking along the corridor from the south, however, it is not clear when a visitor has arrived in "Historic Downtown." Several pockets of development are thriving along the corridor, yet as of now, it is difficult to identify a distinct town center for Ferguson. The Sponsors might consider locating additional community services and facilities close to the new fire station as a way to create a more cohesive town center.

Student and/or Senior Housing

The first question posed to the Panel related to whether or not the study area could support student and/or senior housing along Florissant Road.

Student Housing

Given the proximity to UMSL, student housing would appear to be an interesting option. Yet, when the Panel dove deeper into the issue, several factors became apparent that may create a more challenging environment for student housing:

- Bringing students into the area would certainly create a vibrancy in the corridor. At the same time, students are often on the move every few years, or even every few months. Thus student housing would not provide permanency within a residential sector.
- With a residential population of only 2,000 students out of a total 16,800 UMSL students, the university has historically been a 'commuter campus.' Today, UMSL is working diligently to provide on-campus student housing options and does not appear to be interested in partnering with developers to build additional units off-campus.
- The northern edge of the UMSL campus is two miles from Church Street in Ferguson. This distance is too far for students to comfortably walk on a regular basis.
- For student housing to thrive, viable and frequent public transportation options must be readily available. At present, the Metro bus serves Florissant Road on an hourly basis, which would not provide the frequency students desire.

- Any development of this nature would be rather small in mass (70+/- units) to fit in with the existing streetscape. A townhouse or mid-rise development would work well along Florissant Road.
- Again, to complement the existing streetscape, the structure should be built to the street.
- Although traditional "senior housing" has been in demand, it is expensive to build. Today's trends point to a shift to "Universal Design" and multi-generational housing, accommodating all age ranges.
- Transportation is also a factor with senior or universally designed housing. Municipalities should be flexible when considering parking requirements since many seniors do not have multiple automobiles or perhaps no longer drive. Similarly, viable and frequent public transportation options should be readily available close to any new senior housing development.



6 North Sarah, St. Louis, Missouri

Senior Housing

Seniors already living in the study area have expressed an interest in housing options designed for them. A senior housing option, or something designed to provide options for a range of ages including seniors, may present a more promising alternative for new development in the study area.

In exploring this option, several factors should be considered by the Sponsors and potential developers:

- Senior housing would benefit from a location with good pedestrian access and close to the active downtown.

For reference, the Panel suggested the Sponsors look to 6 North Sarah, a McCormack Baron Salazar development in the Central West End (CWE) in St. Louis. This mid-rise development sits on the street, blends in with the existing architecture of the neighborhood, and incorporates universal design throughout.

Developer's Expectations

With regard to attracting potential developers to the study area, the Panel outlined criteria that the Sponsors should consider.

- Targeted site size will vary considerably depending upon the considered use. However, most in-fill projects will require two acre or larger sites, at least 200-feet deep.
- Land use controls, zoning, and permitting uses should be coordinated by the Sponsors along the corridor to ease the development process. Additionally, modifications to the form-based zoning code could be used to guide in-fill.
- The Sponsors should also continue to enforce all codes and work to eliminate undesirable and incompatible uses along the corridor. With regard to properties under municipal ownership, consider should be given to delaying the removal of existing stable and attractive structures until a developer is ready to execute a plan.
- The Sponsors should continue land assembly and land banking. Ferguson has made significant progress in this area and has a map readily accessible that details available parcels. In an ideal scenario, the document would be expanded to include the entire study area. The next step would be the creation of a Master Plan, packaging all potential development sites and documenting the good and the bad from I-70 to Church Street
- The Sponsor might also consider establishing an incentive package for developers including use of tax increment financing (TIF), tax abatement, and community improvement districts (CID). The Sponsors should also be familiar with all potential

and available incentives in the area including New Markets Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

- As mentioned previously, the Sponsors should also take the initiative to encourage more frequent public transportation options to the Florissant Road corridor.

The Panel determined that the study area already possesses good amenities, infrastructure, and municipal support. However, the area could still benefit from an active business association and accompanying branding effort that identifies a unified district within the Florissant Road corridor.

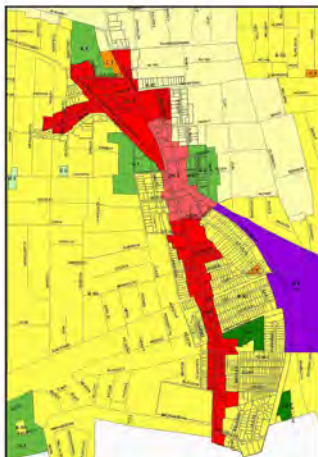
The Sponsors should be proactive about marketing the area. Throughout the interview process, it became clear that many people are unaware of the amenities, the attractive downtown, and culture permeating the Florissant Road corridor. The Sponsors might consider creating a South Florissant Business District or Chamber of Commerce to unite the corridor.

The area also lacks a brand. Branding could play an important supportive role in attracting development to the area. Businesses and developers want effective branding and a consolidated marketing approach – such as that found in South Grand, The Loop, CWE, The Grove, Old Orchard, SoHa – that could support the Sponsors' effort to increase investment in and improve the area.



DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Page 18



Zoning

The Downtown Study Area has seven commercial and residential zoning districts within its boundaries.

- DB-1 DOWNTOWN CORE BUSINESS
- DB-2 DOWNTOWN AREA BUSINESS
- C-4 GENERAL COMMERCIAL
- M-1 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
- R-1D SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE
- R-3 MULTIFAMILY RESIDENCE
- R-4 PLANNED RESIDENCE

However, the DB-1 and DB-2 zoning districts control much of the retail and personal service uses vital to the economic health of Downtown Ferguson. The DB-1 district regulations are geared toward the more traditionally developed part of downtown, where retail uses are encouraged on the ground floor and the parking requirements are more relaxed. Because of the perceived over-saturation of certain categories of uses found in downtown today, the City recently amended both downtown zoning district ordinances to ensure that an adequate balance of goods and services are available. The City Council hopes to foster more retail, restaurant, office and residential uses through amendments and enhancements to the zoning ordinance that are recommended in the Downtown Strategic Development Plan.

A Page from Ferguson's Downtown Strategic Development Plan

Incentives

The Sponsors also asked the Panel to make recommendations as to potential incentives that might be available and appropriate on a multi-jurisdictional basis to attract development to Florissant Road.

Currently, the City of Ferguson makes use of a TIF district in the downtown area that generates \$500,000 annually. The Sponsors should investigate the possibility of raising additional capital by expanding the boundaries of the existing TIF to encompass additional sites.

In addition to the TIF district, the Sponsors might also consider forming a Community Improvement District (CID). The CID would overlay the TIF and in addition to providing funding for the TIF, provide opportunities for promotions, events, and community-wide improvement activities that could draw additional business, visitors, and residents to the area.

Within the corridor, there are a number of older buildings that may be eligible for state Historic Tax Credits, particularly those directly south of the train tracks. The Sponsors should investigate this option further and advise small developers on accessing the program.

In addition to the more traditional financial incentives noted above, the Sponsors should consider their current and future efforts to make parcels development-ready as an incentive to development. The process of land assembly, cleaning properties of environmental problems, and generally preparing vacant parcels results in an

attractive opportunity for developers looking for potential sites with few barriers to entry.

During the stakeholder interviews, one business owner in particular mentioned how easy it was to work with the City of Ferguson during the renovation and opening of their business. The city made accommodations and assisted the business owners in their quest to expand their building and open their new establishment on time. The Sponsors could leverage this willingness to accommodate and assist in specific instances in order to attract development. At a time when cities are adopting additional ordinances and layering requirements, an easy or streamlined approval process is a marketable incentive to development.

Ultimately, there could be a substantial benefit to City of Ferguson and the City of Cool Valley if there is a more formal consolidation of services between the cities or possibly even a formal merger of municipalities. As mentioned previously, visitors to the area do not know, nor do they particularly care, if they are in Cool Valley or Ferguson. By combining resources, sharing services, and cooperating more fully along the corridor, all will reap the benefits of a stronger community. This will be a community more readily able to seek and find additional funding, attract development, and ultimately grow into a vibrant residential and commercial district.



The Ferguson Lofts, aided by the current Ferguson TIF



New retail in Ferguson Lofts



New retail in Ferguson Lofts

Policies & Services

With regard to policies and services the Sponsors should be ready and willing to provide in order to attract development, the Panel had the following recommendations.

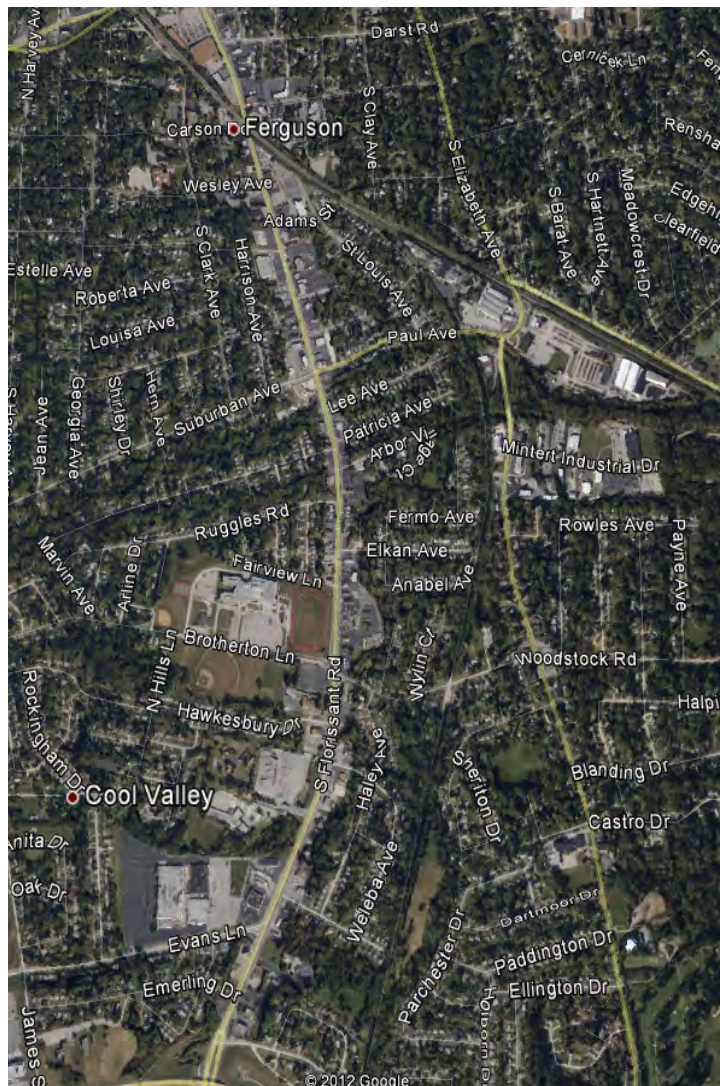
- Identify the area as one cohesive district and brand it as such. With a cohesive branding strategy for the corridor, the Sponsors can begin to market the entire district and its distinctive features. A brand that unites the area will have a much greater impact than if the cities were to pursue individual brands separately.
- Every action and improvement to the Florissant Road corridor should involve a coordinated effort, shared resources, and result in shared benefit. Disjointed efforts and marked divisions between the two municipalities will only serve to diminish resources and dilute the impact of the final product.
- The municipalities could also benefit from sharing and/or combining municipal and administrative services and resources. By pooling resources, one police department, planning department, and building division could easily serve the area physically contained within both cities.
- As noted previously, there are a number of attractive historic buildings along the corridor. The Sponsors could leverage the historic nature of these buildings and create a more expansive historic district.
- The existing housing stock within the study area is an added benefit to further development. By pushing occupancy and improvements to the current mix of housing, from starter homes and bungalows to the larger, more stately homes, the Sponsors could create demand for housing and perhaps draw additional residential, particularly multi-family, development in the area.

Again, in a “Perfect World Scenario,” the two cities would agree to merge and thus benefit from the economies of scale relative to the combination of resources and municipal services. The united municipality would then truly exist as the combined force, district, and brand it is marketing. As one municipality with greater financial resources, a larger residential community, and stronger commercial presence, the impact of any effort to attract new development would be greater and enjoy a better chance at success.

If a merger is simply not possible, then both municipalities need to work together to ensure that any improvement, development or change to Florissant Road is addressed and completed via a coordinated effort. Both must work together to brand the segment of the road running through the municipalities and make that segment the united public front.



Attractive streetscape improvements adjacent to Florissant Road



Aerial of the study area

Development Notes

In addition to addressing the questions posed to the Panel by TAP Sponsors, the Panel made note of certain development matters that the Sponsors should consider addressing.

- As development occurs and opportunities arise, the Sponsors should work to keep the unified goals for development along the corridor in mind.
- It will also be important for the Sponsors to understand the target market for development. Who are you trying to attract? What are residents leaving the area to purchase? How are you trying to attract your target development to the corridor?
- Although the floodplain lies within the Cool Valley city limits, it affects the entire corridor as Cool Valley is the gateway, the entrance to the corridor. The municipalities should join forces to address the flooding problem and together seek assistance from local, regional, and national resources.
- Although the corridor benefits greatly from the presence of a Schnucks grocery store, the store site sits apart and is very detached from Florissant Road. By cleaning up the culvert in front and opening the sight lines, the store might enjoy better visibility and appear to be less of an afterthought.

The Panel also noted several items by their absence in the study area.

- It is not clear where residents in the corridor receive medical services since doctors' offices or care centers were not evident. One Panelist noted that establishing something like Casa de Salud in the corridor, which provides free health

care services to the immigrant community, might address part of this need for medical service.

- Given the significant immigrant population attending the Catholic Church in the study area, a grocery store catering to those parishioners might be considered. Opening the door to this type of use may serve as a catalyst for additional commercial uses and residential growth as the immigrant population may wish to locate near such a basic service. Even an influx of 30-50 households could make a big impact on the area, and support and build on the businesses already in place. This could then become a move-up community for those who have established themselves and are ready to become homeowners and move out of rental housing elsewhere.

The Sponsors have made significant progress utilizing some vacant property along Florissant Road. By demolishing under or non-performing buildings, Ferguson was able to assemble the land required to build a new and attractive fire station. Located in close proximity to the police station, this segment now has the beginning of a town center feel. The Panel encouraged the Sponsor to likewise look at other uses for vacant retail sections, particularly uses that have the potential to create jobs.

Lastly, an opportunity may exist in providing additional support to new businesses entering the market. Whether the Sponsors provide assistance directly or seek support from the business school at UMSL, new businesses face a difficult time upon launch and could benefit from increased support from the municipality or a nearby university.

Infrastructure Notes

Throughout the evaluation of the study area, the Panel noted several infrastructure matters that could benefit from the attention of the Sponsors as well as other matters that could provide additional support or opportunity along the corridor.

- As noted previously, there are sidewalks throughout the corridor in need of attention. The Sponsors should work to complete the sidewalks and further separate pedestrians from automobile traffic. Additionally, the Panel noted the lack of pedestrian signals and lighting under the I-70 overpass that are needed to create a more

pedestrian-friendly linkage throughout the corridor.

- The Sponsors should consider incorporating bikes into the corridor in a more thoughtful manner. Bike lanes are missing along Florissant Road, pushing bike riders either onto the roadway with autos or onto the sidewalks with pedestrians. A bike path could also be incorporated into the contemplated new creek alignment. And finally, the Sponsors should work to connect Florissant Road with the new Great Rivers Greenway bike trail planned for the eastern edge of the study area.

- Given the proximity to UMSL and Express Scripts, and the potential markets inherent in both, the Sponsors should consider creating a more inviting linkage to their business district, drawing students, faculty, staff and employees north into the downtown area.
- The Panel also recognized tension between the auto-centric wider lanes and deeper setbacks in place in certain areas and a more pedestrian-oriented design utilized in most new construction along the corridor. By encouraging more pedestrian-oriented design going forward and continuing street improvement projects, the Sponsors should be able to entice developers and encourage people to be out in the community and on the street on a more regular basis.
- The Panel also noted, and confirmed through the interviews, that excess capacity seems to exist on Florissant Road. Given the current wide thoroughfare and light traffic, a reasonable narrowing along certain stretches could make Florissant Road more pedestrian-friendly by slowing traffic. This narrowing would also make room for the missing bike lanes noted above as well as on-street parking to accommodate patrons of the businesses in downtown.
- Ferguson has made great strides in encouraging attractive signage for area businesses. As development progresses, care should be taken to ensure that all commercial signs have accommodating sight lines needed for viewing by passing automobile traffic.
- Maline Creek, which generally runs west to east through the study area, has a tributary that runs from the south, along Florissant Road. Although initial development in the corridor encouraged the channeling the creek into a culvert, the culvert today is difficult to maintain and easily becomes an unattractive feature along Florissant Road. A study is underway to explore means by which the creek bed can be restored to a more natural setting and perhaps be leveraged along the corridor as an amenity and water feature. Panelists were supportive of these efforts and recognized the value in providing a more natural alternative to the current culvert situation.



Pedestrian crossing along Florissant Road, under the I-70 overpass



Florissant Road demonstrating excess traffic capacity



Pedestrian walkway between Florissant Road and the creek bed



View east on Bernhardt Avenue from Florissant Road – the potential connection to the Great Rivers Greenway bike trail

Summary

The Panel offered the following key points to the Sponsors in the evaluation of development potential along the Florissant Road corridor.

As a united corridor, the Sponsors should work together to create linkage between UMSL and Express Scripts on the south and the business district to the north. This link, via street improvements, businesses, and infrastructure will support the Sponsors' goal of enhancing the positive perception of the area as a thriving downtown and business district. Improved linkages will also draw traffic north from the highway as visitors, students, and employees explore the corridor in search of business services, dining options and entertainment opportunities.

It is critical to improve the north-south link as the gateway, the front door to the corridor. Exiting off I-70, drivers are not aware of the charming historic downtown just one mile away. Students at UMSL may leave school at the end of the day and enter the highway, completely unaware of the amenities that await beyond the gas station and McDonald's restaurant. Flooding, a continual concern at the gateway, does nothing to assist in this area and should be addressed jointly by the Sponsors.

In the spirit of coordination and collaboration, the Sponsors should coordinate efforts to address planning and land assembly efforts along the corridor. Additionally, and this supports the idea of raising the visibility of the corridor and gateway, the Sponsors should consider

implementing a single marketing and branding strategy to provide a clear focus on the many assets of the larger study area. In addition to drawing visitors to the area, a coordinated and well-planned marketing and branding strategy will support efforts to attract developers to the area by demonstrating that the municipalities are serious about development and supportive of further growth.

To assist with these endeavors, the Sponsors may want to consider the creation of an area-wide CID, an expanded TIF, a Transportation Development District, and/or a Chapter 353 Urban Redevelopment Corporation to provide funding for infrastructure enhancements, incentives, land assemblage, and corridor management.

Finally, serious consideration should be given to the suggestion to merge the City of Ferguson with the City of Cool Valley, or at least consolidating planning functions in the Florissant Road Corridor. Although home-town pride was evident throughout the interviews, the potential benefits available to both municipalities through merger – shared, increased, and improved resources; greater reach; and increased financing potential – suggests that the idea is sufficiently compelling to possibly tip the scales in this direction.



Panel Professional Biographies

Craig Biesterfeld, Husch Blackwell LLP. A Partner with Husch Blackwell, Craig offers extensive experience in commercial real estate and development law, including issues related to acquisition, leasing and development, zoning and land use regulation and government regulation and permitting. He has assisted clients in the use of numerous economic development programs such as tax increment financing (TIF), special business districts (SBD) and community improvement districts (CID). In the wireless telecommunications industry, he represents national carriers and tower companies in developing wireless communications towers and related infrastructure. Craig also represents cities and other local governmental entities and is a long-time city attorney for a St. Louis area municipality.

Sarah Coffin, Saint Louis University. Sarah is an associate professor of urban planning at Saint Louis University in the Center for Sustainability where she directs the masters in Urban Planning and Real Estate Development Program. Additionally she is a faculty associate in the Masters of Sustainability program. She teaches graduate-level courses that include the Planning Studio, Environmental Planning, The Metropolis, and Planning the Metropolis. Her current research focuses on the role that evidence plays in driving policy decisions and how science informs the policy debate. Specifically, she is interested in understanding at what level do policy makers understand the drivers of land use change in urban areas and how that impacts local industrial land use decisions. Additionally, her work has considered ways that the green collar jobs sector might support sustainable economic development strategies in weak market, former industrial cities. Additionally, she is interested in understanding the impacts of brownfields on weak market economies and how common development tools like tax increment financing and tax credits might be further exacerbating the spatial inequalities in these post-industrial regions. Sarah holds a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology, a Master's degree in Urban Planning, Design, and Development from Cleveland State University, and a Bachelor of Science degree from Lake Erie College and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

William Kuehling, Polsinelli Shughart PC, TAP Chair. Bill's practice embraces real estate development, land use and municipal law. Public and private entities, developers, nonprofit corporations and individuals are among his clients. Bill has extensive experience in development, and in particular governmental incentives to development including tax increment financing, tax abatement, community improvement districts and transportation development districts. Clients with distinctive needs seek Bill's assistance with controversial land use and zoning issues, including obtaining use permits over extensive public opposition, and building permits in historic districts. His experience also includes acquisition and sales involving governmental entities and real estate tax appeals.

Sam Koplar, Koplar Properties. Sam is a principal at Koplar Properties, a family owned real estate firm in St. Louis. Sam led the redevelopment of Maryland Plaza in the Central West End, a project that included obtaining state and federal historic tax credits, TIF, as well as handling all of the leasing of the retail and office space. In 2012, the firm completed the York House, a luxury apartment building adjacent to Forest Park in the Central West End, utilizing state and federal historic tax credits and HUD insured financing.

Katie Medlin, Development Strategies, Inc. Katie is a senior analyst at Development Strategies in St. Louis, Missouri and works primarily on planning and analyzing real estate developments in St. Louis and around the country. She has been involved with many projects in the area including Ballpark Village and the proposed changes to the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. In addition to real-estate projects, she is working on a team to develop a Sustainability Plan for the City of St. Louis. Prior to her role in real-estate analysis and consulting, Katie worked as an architect at Bond Wolfe in Clayton, Missouri. Katie holds an MBA from Washington University and a Masters of Architecture from Tulane University.

Richard Ward, Ward Development Counsel. Richard's experience includes shaping and advising public/private ventures and partnerships, development partner procurement, site selection and acquisition strategies, structuring incentive agreements between local governments and private investors, and master developer arrangements for complex multi-developer projects. In 1988, Richard founded St. Louis-based Development Strategies, Inc., and was its principal owner and CEO until 2007. As a seasoned consultant in real estate, economic and community development, his past assignments include planning and implementation strategies for diverse real estate development and redevelopment programs (including station area market feasibility and master planning for the original St. Louis MetroLink system and its proposed extension into south St. Louis County) as well as economic development plans and programs. Richard has served on twelve ULI advisory panels throughout the U.S. and Europe and he will have served on two of the three TAPs fielded by ULI in St. Louis. He is a frequent speaker at professional and meetings and conferences and a regular contributor to the publications of a variety of professional organizations. Richard received graduate degrees in business administration and urban design from Washington University and in urban planning from Virginia Tech. He holds professional certifications as an economic developer (CEcD), a real estate counselor (CRE), and an urban planner (AICP), and is a licensed real estate broker in Missouri.

