



St. Louis

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING DRIVE CULTURAL BOULEVARD PROJECT INITIATIVE



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ON THE COVER: Welcome sign for The Ville
neighborhood at the corner of Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr. Drive and North Sarah Street.



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About ULI St. Louis

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 policymakers dedicated to creating better places. The ULI St. Louis District Council brings together real estate professionals, civic leaders, and the St. Louis community for educational programs, initiatives impacting the St. Louis region, and networking events, all in the pursuit of advancing responsible and equitable land use throughout the region. From conversations with 10 people to programs for 200, ULI has a forum for everyone to share, learn, and connect. ULI St. Louis is run by an 18-person Management Committee and guided by a 12-person Advisory Board, with members of each group contributing their individual time, talent, and expertise to advancing ULI's mission in the St. Louis region.

ULI District Council Leadership

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ULI Advisory Services: National and Global Programs

Since 1947, the ULI Advisory Services program has assembled well over 700 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for complex land use challenges. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services. National and international panelists are specifically recruited to form a panel of independent and objective volunteer ULI member experts with the skills needed to address the identified land use challenge. The program is designed to help break through obstacles, jump-start conversations, and solve tough challenges that need an outside, independent perspective. Three- and five-day engagements are offered to ensure thorough consideration of relevant topics.

An additional national offering is the project analysis session (PAS) offered at ULI's Fall and Spring Meetings, through which specific land use challenges are evaluated by a panel of volunteer experts selected from ULI's membership. This is a conversational format that lends itself to an open exchange of ideas among diverse industry practitioners with distinct points of view. From the streamlined two-hour session to the "deeper dive" eight-hour session, this intimate conversational format encourages creative thinking and problem solving.

Learn more at americas.uli.org/programs/advisory-services.

Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

Urban Land Institute harnesses its members' technical expertise to help communities solve difficult land use, development, and redevelopment challenges. Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs) provide expert, multidisciplinary, unbiased advice to local governments, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations facing complex land use and real estate issues in the St. Louis region. Drawing from our professional membership base, ULI St. Louis offers objective and responsible guidance on various land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The sponsoring organization is responsible for gathering the background information necessary to understand the project and present it to the panel. TAP panelists spend a day interviewing stakeholders, evaluating the challenges, and ultimately arriving at a set of recommendations that the sponsoring organization can use to guide development going forward. As we wrestle with land use decisions today, ULI St. Louis would like to acknowledge that much of St. Louis is located on the traditional and ancestral territory of the Osage Nation, Missouriia, and Illini Confederacy. We thank them for their hospitality and stewardship of this land and hope we can all agree on the importance and genius of our natural environment as we provide guidance on issues around future land use and development.

ULI Advisory Services identify creative, practical solutions for complex land use and development challenges.

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Acknowledgments

ULI St. Louis is grateful to 4theVille for inviting this team to study the economic development, real estate development, and infrastructure improvements and investments that should be considered along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in St. Louis. In particular, we would like to thank Aaron Williams, 4theVille Board Chair, for his leadership, contributions, and support of the information gathering and community engagement critical to the success of this study.



This monument, along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, calls attention to the important historical and cultural contributions of several notable residents who once called The Ville home.

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	9
Introduction and the TAP Process	12
Study Area – Context	15
Real Estate Recommendations	17
Infrastructure Recommendations	24
Next Steps	29
Appendix	30
About the Panel	32



Streetscape improvements, including this small-scale street painting installation and reducing the lanes to one travel lane in each direction, have helped narrow the roadway, yet traffic continues to speed through above posted limits.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent progress in the City of St. Louis's northside neighborhoods, including the community's work to keep the historic Sumner High School open and the St. Louis Development Corporation's focus on economic justice and supporting commercial corridors, prompted The Ville neighborhood's arts and cultural tourism organization, 4theVille, to study how the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive commercial corridor in north St. Louis could transform into a cultural boulevard and more welcoming connector and entrance to Sumner High School and the surrounding neighborhood.

In the spring of 2020, 4theVille launched the Cultural Boulevard Project (CBP) initiative. As a component of the initiative, 4theVille convened a working group of St. Louis professionals whose task it was to study the potential for public infrastructure enhancements along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Drive between North Newstead Street and Vandeventer Avenue (the study area), which falls within The Ville neighborhood to the north and the Vandeventer neighborhood to the south. The goal of the CBP enhancements was to catalyze initiatives in the following focus areas: creative placekeeping and placemaking; economic development; pedestrian safety; public health; and environmental justice. The CBP working group delivered a set of baseline documents and recommendations that served as the informational foundation for a ULI St. Louis technical assistance panel (TAP) convened to study the CBP's sixth focus area – planning and development.

The ULI St. Louis TAP process brings together real estate and land use professionals with expertise to lend to the challenge at hand, and, over the course of two days, the TAP panel toured the study area, interviewed stakeholders, deliberated, and ultimately delivered a set of recommendations that 4theVille can take to the City of St. Louis (the city), the community, and other stakeholders and partners for consideration, further refinement, and deployment.

Goals and Guiding Principles

The TAP panel's recommendations, filtering into the categories of real estate and infrastructure recommendations, were guided by the goals of the CBP initiative, which included devising a campaign to transform MLK and the approach to Sumner High School, use of the [Great Streets Initiative](#) as a model, advocacy for infrastructure enhancements, and pursuit

of a vision that is culturally-rooted and supports prosperity in the Black community. Additionally, the TAP panel detailed a set of guiding principles for their work that centered the recommendations around Black history and Black ownership, community input, including community agreement and accountability, and optimizing the existing cultural anchors in the surrounding area.

Real Estate Recommendations

Identify and Prioritize Focus Areas. Certain key areas should be prioritized and prepared for development, including the Killark Electric property at the east end of the study area, the intersection of MLK and North Sarah Street, and parcels owned by the City of St. Louis Land Redevelopment Authority (LRA) along Evans Avenue and MLK between Whittier Street and Pendleton Avenue. Preparation work on these sites should include clearing any vacant structures that are beyond repair, testing the sites for contaminants, and clearing any potential title matters. Additionally, the LRA lot at the southwest corner of North Sarah Street and MLK presents an opportunity for placemaking, helping to mark the entrance to the neighborhood. The John Marshall School building at the western end of the study area will require greater development attention than many other buildings in the study area but is an important property along the corridor and one that could influence further development and investment along MLK.

Convene and Support a Champion Coalition. The work and improvements recommended by the TAP panel cannot fall under the responsibility of any one organization. Instead a champion coalition, made up of the existing place-based organizations and nonprofit organizations already operating in the surrounding neighborhoods should lead the work. This coalition could assist with property assembly, serve as an

impartial referee across neighborhoods, and assist business owners along the corridor in connecting with resources and funding to support improvements to businesses and buildings along MLK.

Help Orient the St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC) Neighborhood Managers to the Area. A team of neighborhood managers is being deployed across the city, with each manager assigned to a group of specific neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods will be encouraged to turn to the managers for assistance, advice, and connection to additional resources such as the commercial corridor grant program, façade grants, and more. Although the manager(s) assigned to the neighborhoods surrounding this study area might already be familiar with the opportunities, assets, and challenges within this community, the champion coalition could help with orientation by mapping the neighborhood and cataloging assets and projects to help the manager hit the ground running.

Develop a Corridor-focused Community Strategy. A corridor-focused community strategy, led by the champion coalition, will help inform property-assembly strategy, create a list of what neighborhood wants to have happen, establish a foundation for future federal funding, and support corridor branding once established. The corridor-focused strategy can also serve as a more agile and incremental approach to comprehensive planning, which can often be a very slow and inflexible process.

Housing Considerations/Recommendations. Additional single-family housing should be encouraged north of the corridor and multifamily housing south along Evans Avenue. Mixed-use spaces (live/work buildings) should be allowed on the corridor directly. Housing options should span a range of price points, and alley infrastructure may require upgrades to support residential uses on MLK.

Identify New and Existing Funding Sources. Until there is a market strong enough to support more traditional development and financing, public private partnerships will be key. By establishing special taxing districts such as tax increment financing (TIF) or community improvement district (CID), funding for infrastructure improvements can be sourced and managed by those working/leading in the community. SLDC may need to play an early leading role as a tenant and/or investor in certain projects. Local and national funding sources should be explored to support

development along MLK. The champion coalition should work with the city and SLDC to create a funding strategy that leverages local appropriations and funding sources to attract philanthropic dollars and federal funding. National resources, such as New Markets Tax Credits and organizations like the National Trust for Historic Preservation could provide creative means of development support in the area.

Work with Key Partners. The range and scope of the opportunities and associated improvements needed along MLK will require strong public-private partnerships. Organizations such as Greater St. Louis, SLDC, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, the St. Louis Community Development Administration (CDA), Habitat for Neighborhood Business, local universities, and more can all play a role in supporting the work. Additionally, the businesses along the MLK corridor should be convened for this purpose by the Champion Coalition.

Infrastructure Recommendations

In addition to the real estate development recommendations, the TAP panel identified a host of public infrastructure improvements that can play a critical role in the success of this commercial corridor and improve connectivity and safety for the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Improve Pedestrian Safety. Crossing MLK on foot is a dangerous proposition that has been well-documented. This dangerous pedestrian environment creates a barrier accessing the businesses and public transportation assets along the MLK corridor. To improve the pedestrian experience and increase safety in the area, better connections between MLK and transit stops and community amenities should be addressed as soon as possible. Sidewalk improvements should include adjusting tree wells to better accommodate plantings and improving lighting infrastructure to facilitate safer walking conditions.

Conduct a Road Diet. In two to three distinct phases, the public right-of-way along MLK should be redesigned to calm traffic and prioritize pedestrians. Early improvements could include pinned-on medians, bumpouts, and enhanced pedestrian crossings. Later-stage improvements could include roundabouts and possibly chicanes.

Enhance Visual Recognition and Identity. MLK sits between some of the city's most historic Black



The study area is bound by North Newstead Avenue on the west, Aldine Avenue to the north, Vandeventer Avenue to the east, and Evans Avenue to the south.

neighborhoods. Embracing, reflecting, and celebrating the identity of the neighborhoods that MLK bridges will support community pride, help guide visitors as they travel along the corridor, and provide drivers with additional reasons to slow down and enjoy the experience. Placekeeping and placemaking efforts at key intersections along the corridor will serve a dual purpose of enhancing branding and cultural tourism activity already championed by 4theVille and improve public safety measures. These efforts should be included in infrastructure improvement projects.

Support Public Health and Environmental Resilience.

Public health, environmental resilience, and climate justice should be a priority in all development and infrastructure improvements along MLK. Elements such as additional trees, shade structures, and seating opportunities will improve the pedestrian experience, and rain gardens can assist with stormwater management while also helping to cool the environment.

Bridge the Gap. Connecting residents north and south of the corridor should be a goal of any infrastructure improvement along MLK, and crosswalks, clearly visible to drivers and safe for pedestrians, must be a priority for the corridor, again enhancing safety but also connecting neighborhoods to the north and south. Shared parking facilities along MLK can help reduce the impact of overly-abundant parking along MLK. Additionally, supporting improvements to nearby Page Avenue, to facilitate the easier movement of traffic, may help reduce vehicular traffic along MLK and improve safety for nearby residents.

Coordinate and Pursue Funding. Work along the corridor will rely heavily on partnerships that will support a coordinated vision for MLK. Funding may be found in local, state, and national sources and care should be taken to understand funding opportunities as well as any potential leverage for additional or matching funding.

Thoughtful coordination among public and private development partners and related transportation partners will help facilitate efficient delivery of the improvements and minimize construction disruption. Elevating the work of corridor coalition across the surrounding community and with city's leadership will be beneficial, possibly serving as a model for other community-led initiatives around the city.

Next Steps

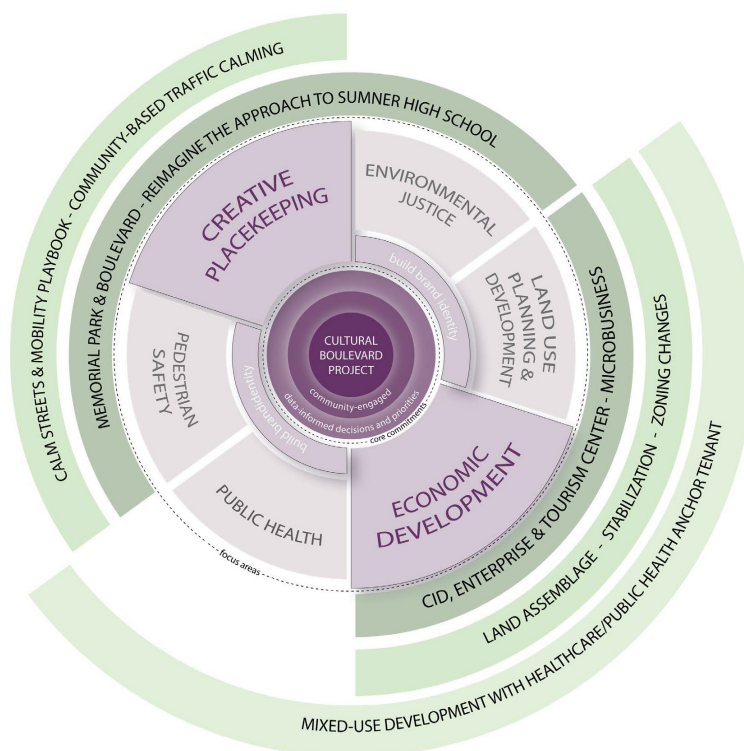
There is no shortage of work to be tackled along this one-mile stretch of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in north St. Louis. Given the range and complexity of real estate and infrastructure improvements suggested by the panel, each of which having the potential to catalyze additional development, careful phasing of improvements will be important. Ongoing engagement with community organizations and stakeholders will be central to the planning and implementation and serve as a foundation for all of the improvements, including the creation of a community-based corridor strategy. The champion coalition will help ensure buy-in across the community, support from residents and business owners who will face inconvenience during construction and renovations, and more sustainable and lasting positive impacts from these catalytic corridor improvements.

INTRODUCTION AND THE TAP PROCESS

North St. Louis, and particularly The Ville neighborhood, is home to a rich cultural, arts, and institutional history. Pieces of that history live on in the residents who still call The Ville home and is celebrated by community-based organizations like 4theVille, whose mission it is to safeguard the legacy of The Ville, catalyze preservation, and inspire reinvigorated community ownership. Supporting the community's efforts and bringing additional expertise and resources to the table, the St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC) has turned more intense focus to North St. Louis neighborhoods, prioritizing work in these areas through its 2022 Economic Justice Action Plan. These resources, combined with a host of other supportive organizations interested in seeing previously under-invested neighborhoods begin to thrive, create a window of opportunity for neighborhoods like The Ville and for organizations like 4thVille to step into the gap and help catalyze planning and investment attention.

In the spring of 2020, 4theVille embarked upon its Cultural Boulevard Project Initiative, bringing professionals and related industry organizations to the planning table to begin to identify and strategize around key areas of focus and improvement for The Ville neighborhood and particularly along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. "The Cultural Boulevard Project is a community organizing, planning

and design initiative to envision and manifest a culturally rooted and vibrant MLK corridor that connects important community landmarks and supports prosperity in the Black Community. The project engages The Ville community to advocate for expansive public infrastructure enhancements that catalyze initiatives in six focus areas: creative placekeeping and placemaking; economic development;



PROJECT COMPONENTS

Memorial Park, Boulevard and Placemarkers

Community Improvement District and Enterprise Center

Calm Streets Playbook/Toolkit

Land Assemblage, Stabilization and Zoning

Mixed-Use Development with Healthcare Anchor

4theVille scope
project components

TAP BRIEFING DOCUMENTS

The Cultural Boulevard Project Initiative identified six core areas of study, each with the potential to positively impact the further health and vitality of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive corridor.

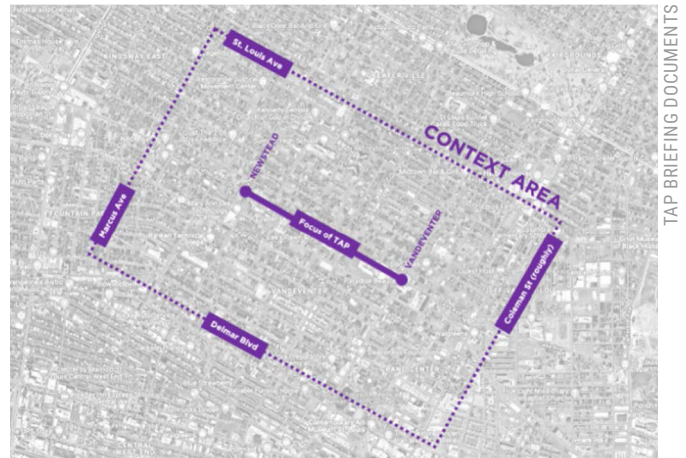
pedestrian safety; public health; environmental justice; and planning and development” (TAP Briefing Documents).

The information gathered during the meetings of the CPB project team laid the foundation and supplied critical information for the ULI technical assistance panel study commissioned by 4theVille. For this TAP, the study area was defined as a one-mile section of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive between North Newstead Avenue and Vandeventer Avenue in North St. Louis. As any discussions and work along this important roadway can and should create ripple effects into the surrounding neighborhoods, the broader context area for the TAP was defined by St. Louis Avenue to the north, Coleman Street to the east, Delmar Boulevard to the south, and Marcus Avenue to the west.

Key Themes

As the TAP panel began its work, the conversations, interviews, and deliberations were guided by the following key themes.

- Identify catalytic projects/sites and, where possible, assembly, use, program, feasibility, and tools needed.
- Identify infrastructure enhancements to MLK and adjacent streets/right of way, including:
 - » Potential for road diet/speed reduction;
 - » Pedestrian and bike facilities (*i.e.*, quality bus stops and multimodal/micro-mobility transportation hubs, activated and programmed public spaces/plazas/parks along corridor);
 - » Connection to other neighborhood assets (*e.g.*, Sumner High School, Ranken Technical College, existing and planned bike networks, and greenway segments); and
 - » Landscape strategies such as street trees, planted buffers to improve pedestrian comfort, street furniture, and placekeeping/placemaking.
- Factor in the SLDC Economic Justice Action Plan and the City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency (PDA) planning process.



The focus of the TAP is the one-mile stretch of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive with the surrounding area noted as context for the study.

- Identify the kind of development pattern the community wants along MLK, *i.e.*, residential, retail, manufacturing, institutional, etc.
- Consider and define any zoning/incentive overlay and taxing district strategy that should be incorporated to attract and then retain investment in the corridor and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Estimate the length of time such a transformation may need and identify what can/should happen in five years, ten years, etc.

The TAP Process

The TAP program provides objective, expert guidance on land use matters through a one or two-day, intensive study. This TAP was informed by a briefing by the leadership team behind 4theVille, a neighborhood walking tour, and interviews with a variety of stakeholders, including city leadership, community leaders, residents, and business owners. Following this intense information-gathering session, the panel held intensive deliberations, ultimately arriving at a set of recommendations that the TAP sponsor, in this case 4theVille, can leverage as it considers future improvements and investments along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and in the surrounding areas.



Stakeholder interviews helped inform the panelists' deliberations.

Insights from Stakeholders

Community Engagement and Resources

- It is important to engage residents and community organizations north and south of MLK
- There are strong community organizations already in place
- Any new efforts should support and leverage the work of existing place-based organizations (4theVille, Northside Community Housing Incorporated, Ville Collaborative, Sumner Advisory Board, Annie Malone, churches, Ranken Technical College, Love the Lou, North Central Steering Committee, etc.)

Public Infrastructure and Transportation

- The intersection of North Sarah Street and MLK is a key intersection
- There are good bus routes and access
- Pedestrian safety on MLK, and the absence of adequate sidewalk infrastructure, are major barriers to accessing MLK, and negatively impacts existing businesses along the corridor
- It is only a ten-minute bike ride to Forest Park and a five-minute bike ride to the Central West End

Capacity

- Residential density and occupancy are needed to support the success of the commercial corridor

- Government interest has not yet created sustained action in the area
- Many past efforts have started well but lacked the needed follow-through; there is a need for sustained capacity for implementation over the long term as well as for land acquisition/holding, pursuing grants, engaging community, etc.

Real Estate/Land Use

- The Killark site is a key property for workforce and economic development
- This area needs more small-scale developers and more support for existing nonprofit developers
- There is a possibility for a unique commercial community land trust
- The Marshall School is a key property along the corridor but will require a heavier redevelopment lift

Economic Development

- The corridor should be recognized as a distinct, community-based cultural tourism destination
- Small businesses require assistance
- There is a need for key services (medical, office, bank, accounting, legal, and pet care to name a few) as well as active retail, dining, and entertainment
- Advanced manufacturing is coming to the area (AMICSTL)

STUDY AREA – CONTEXT

While it is important to understand the physical context of any study area prior to formulating recommendations around infrastructure, economic development, and land use planning, the panel began its study by considering the social and environmental context of this study area.

This is not the first study in this neighborhood, and many residents and business owners have been actively engaged in efforts, individually and collectively, to stabilize The Ville and attract new residents and businesses for many years. Knowing this, and seeking to build on the work to date, the panel outlined a set of guiding principles, filtered through the goals of the MLK Cultural Boulevard Project, to direct the actions of the panel and to serve as a touchstone for work in the community yet to come.

CBP Goals and Vision

The 4theVille Cultural Boulevard Project initiative provided the panel with the following goals and vision for the broader intensive study. These goals launched the panel's conversations with stakeholders and helped shape the TAP recommendations.

- Develop a campaign to transform Dr. Martin Luther King Drive and the approach to Sumner High School.
- Model the recommendations after the East-West Gateway [Great Streets Initiative](#).
- Advocate for infrastructure enhancements to catalyze creative placekeeping/placemaking, economic development, pedestrian safety, public health, environmental justice, and land use planning and development.
- Pursue a vision that is a culturally-rooted, creating a vibrant corridor that connects The Ville's most important landmarks and supports prosperity in the Black community.

Guiding Principles

Black history and Black ownership should serve as a continual driving force in front, behind, and alongside any planning and implementation work in the area.

Community input, agreement, and accountability should inform and guide work along MLK and in the surrounding neighborhoods. Input, agreement, and accountability should be continually sought throughout any planning and implementation process. These are not singular actions taken to check a box.

There are a host of **existing cultural anchors** in the area that should be optimized, including Sumner High School, Tandy Recreation Center, Homer G. Phillips Senior Apartments, Annie Malone, and churches that help anchor the community. Work in the neighborhood should endeavor to give back to these cultural anchors and lift up the work, people, and progress already in place and underway.

Considerations

When considering catalytic economic development and infrastructure improvements along MLK, the panel kept the following attributes front of mind in all discussions and recommendation formulation.

Community access and safety. The neighborhoods in and surrounding the study area are home to a large number of residents who walk to public transit access points. How can improvements enhance the safety of that pedestrian experience? Additionally, how can work in the area improve community access to transportation, services, and more?

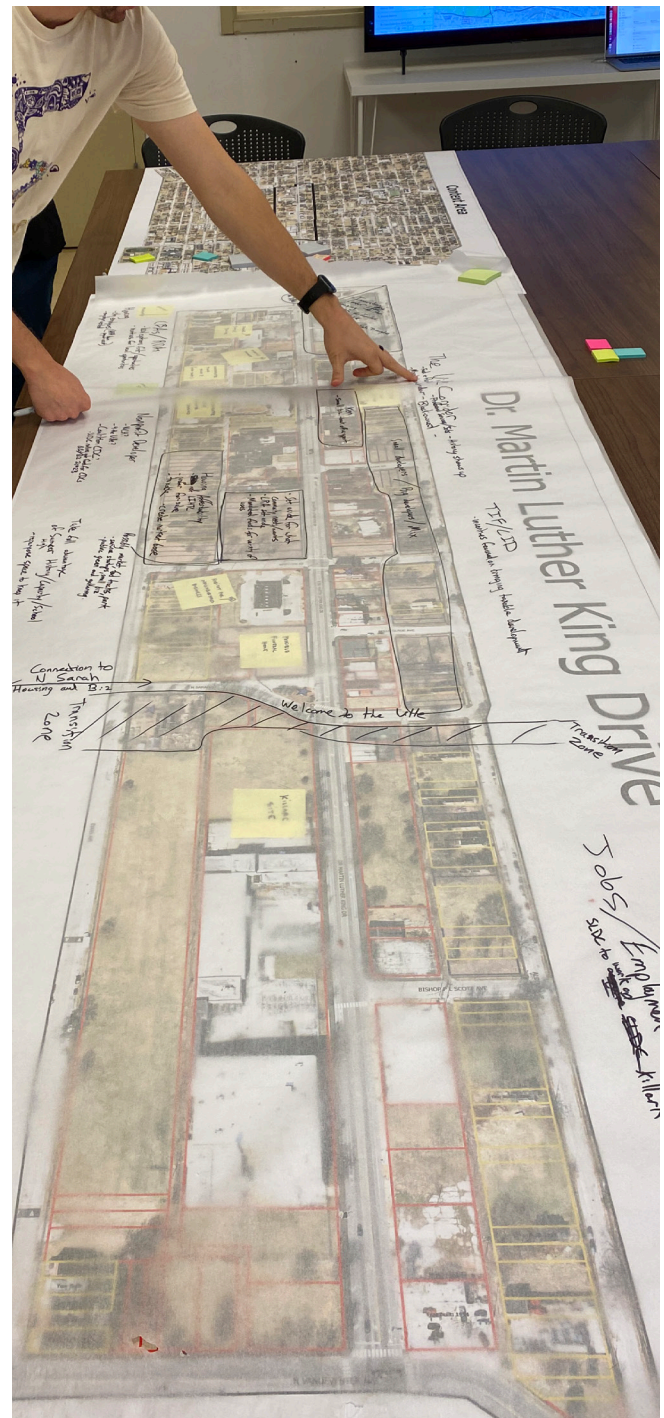
Community coalition and cooperation. A significant percentage of community members are highly engaged and are leaders within the study area. How can the panel's recommendations support this network of community leaders, enhancing their existing coalitions and fostering greater or renewed cooperation among one another and with city agencies supportive of their efforts?

Business support and attraction. MLK was designed to be a commercial corridor, lined by businesses and serving the surrounding neighborhoods and beyond. What steps should be taken today and into the future to support the businesses that currently line MLK and to attract new businesses, particularly those desired by the community?

Cultural connections. The cultural anchors in and around the study area play an important role in the health and stability of the neighborhoods. How can connections between the anchors be strengthened, and how that those anchors build additional connections to cultural institutions, anchors, and opportunities outside of the immediate community?

Partnerships and funding. The scope of the challenges presented to the panel and the opportunities at hand will require partnerships beyond the current residents, businesses, and cultural anchors presently active in the community. How can this study and its ensuing recommendations open the lines of communication between potential partners and/or strengthen existing partnerships? Similarly, what funding sources are available to support any recommendations the panel may bring forth to support economic development and catalytic infrastructure improvements?

With the CBP goals, guiding principles, and considerations on the table, the TAP panel set forth the following recommendations to help the community identify and pursue the partnerships and actions that will help catalyze economic and real estate development along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.



Panelists considered improvements to the commercial corridor that will have lasting positive impacts in the community.

REAL ESTATE RECOMMENDATIONS

The real estate challenges and opportunities along and around MLK in the study area are numerous. Working with community residents, with existing place-based organizations, and with strategic public sector partners, key parcels along the corridor can be effectively positioned for development. With an eye toward equitable economic development measures, SLDC's Economic Justice Action Plan, and taking the surrounding residential neighborhoods into account, the following recommendations will help set a path for the development of the corridor.

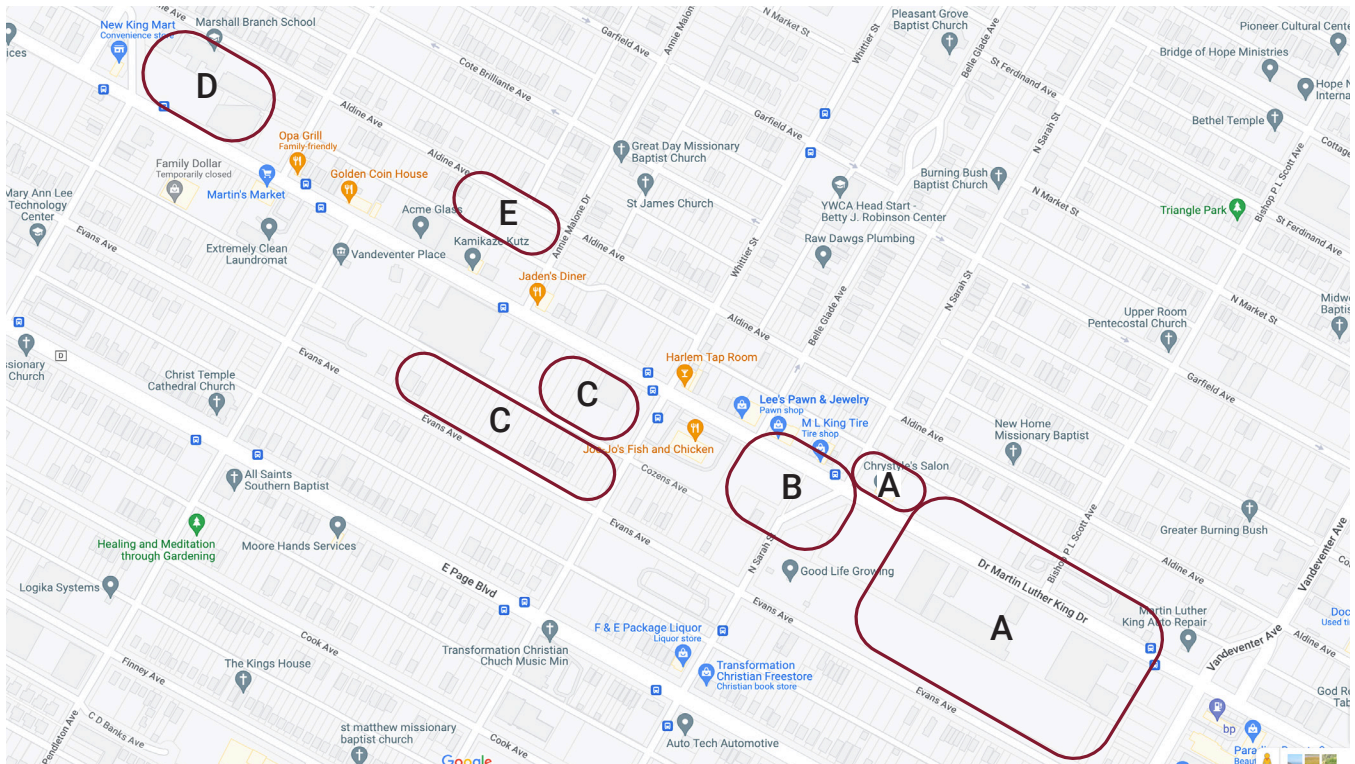
Initial Focus Areas

As it may not be feasible to focus on the entire one-mile stretch of MLK in the subject area at one time, there are areas of initial focus that can create energy and begin to catalyze further development along the corridor.

- **East End of the Study Area.** The Killark Electric parcel at the east end of the study area (largely southwest of the intersection of MLK and Vandeventer) is a significant property in both buildings and land. Ideally, the site would be redeveloped into a new business

use that could provide employment for those in the surrounding neighborhoods and beyond. To the northwest of that same intersection and closer to North Sarah Street, there are existing businesses that should be supported even as the land nearby is developed. This work should be done in connection with the community and with community input. (See map, A parcels)

- **Southwest Corner of North Sarah Street and MLK.** The LRA owns the large parcel at the southwest corner of Sarah and MLK. Given the size and location of





The Killark site, seen on the right in the distance, is an important real estate parcel that warrants careful attention in determining its future use and redevelopment.

this parcel at a key intersection and entrance to The Ville, this area presents an interesting and compelling opportunity for the neighborhood. On the east, a placemaking installation welcoming people to the “cool” section of the corridor (which runs west of North Sarah) would make good urban design sense. Although the lot at the southwest corner of MLK and North Sarah is slated for a funeral home development, placemaking here is important, supporting the community’s identity and signaling arrival in The Ville. (See map, B parcel)

- **Core Residential Opportunities.** The Land Redevelopment Authority owns several vacant parcels on the south side of MLK and along Evans Avenue between Whittier Street and Pendleton Avenue. These parcels and the portion of the Killark site along Evans should be set aside while LRA drafts and issues a request for proposal (RFP) to solicit multifamily housing development. This work should be done in connection with the community and with community input. (See map, C parcels)
- **Corridor-adjacent Lots.** The LRA also owns several lots to the north along Aldine, which, along with other

parcels along Aldine, are well-positioned for additional single-family housing for the neighborhood. (See map, E parcels)

- **John Marshall School Building.** At the western end of the study area, the John Marshall School building sits empty, awaiting a new use. While a more complex redevelopment project than most of the other buildings in the study area, the school building holds great promise for creating impact in the area due to its size, historic architecture, and surrounding contiguous land. The site should also serve as an anchor and western gateway into the corridor, presenting its own opportunities for impactful placemaking. (See map, D parcel)

Although specific sites have not been identified, there are a host of other opportunities for the corridor, including a food market, music hall/venue, and a food truck court. These uses would be welcome additions to neighborhood should a suitable location be found.

In keeping with the current historic district and 2021 Chapter 99 Redevelopment Plan, new development along MLK should complement the existing historic fabric of the corridor, with particular attention to lot line development,



The lot at the southwest corner of the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and North Sarah Street provides an important development opportunity for the neighborhood as this is a busy intersection and considered the entrance to The Ville neighborhood.

the location of parking (behind buildings or in shared lots and/or parking structures), and active and visible ground-floor uses.

A Champion Coalition

There are a number of place-based organizations and other nonprofit organizations well-established in the surrounding neighborhoods, comprised of dedicated volunteers, capable staff, and resident leaders. It does not make sense to add yet another new organization into the mix, but instead priority should be placed on convening a coalition of these existing nonprofit organizations and stakeholders. This convening could help the entire system identify commonalities, alignments, and potential overlap, all of which could lead to a right-sizing of the coalition and associated organizations. Once right-sized, care should be taken to build capacity within, supporting individual capacity building as well as organizational capacity building.

- This champion coalition would be a **place-based** body representing the interests of the surrounding neighborhoods (The Ville, Vandeventer, Greater Ville, and those surrounding neighborhoods with an interest in the health and vitality of MLK).
- The coalition would serve as an **impartial referee** across neighborhoods and organizations, creating an equal playing field for all and combining resources to the benefit of the area.
- While SLDC will largely take the lead in **property assembly and/or holding land** for development, the coalition should help inform SLDC's early efforts, preparing to take the lead once a more formal organizational structure (e.g., CID) is established. For reference, the [Minneapolis Northside Funders Group](#) partners to "bring resources and investments to learn, leverage, influence, and invest in opportunities to advance social, educational, and economic opportunities in North Minneapolis." Some of the Minneapolis group's initial work identified particular investments in targeted areas within the geography of the collective group.
- The coalition could manage future district funding, as in the case of a capitalized TIF district or represented by a CID, and **assist the corridor businesses** by providing a certain degree of infrastructure maintenance, programming support, and public space maintenance. The special taxing district could also provide critical

assistance with the flow of funding supporting the corridor improvements.

SLDC Neighborhood Managers

New in 2022, SLDC has deployed a cadre of Neighborhood Managers across the City of St. Louis. These managers provide critical personal attention and support to neighborhoods and also provide access to additional/different support and skills via the broader team of managers assigned across the city. This system helps ensure that the right skills are at the right place and the right time. It also helps reduce the barriers – perceived or real – to accessing SLDC resources such as the commercial corridor grant program, façade grants, and more.

To assist the neighborhood manager in the study area, helping them get oriented and working as efficiently and quickly as possible, it will be helpful to map the neighborhood, cataloging the assets and projects, and identify community leaders to whom the neighborhood manager can turn to for neighborhood guidance and lived-experience leadership.

The neighborhood manager is encouraged to provide the following assistance to the neighborhood: inventory ownership, use, and vacancy of commercial properties; proactively connect business owners with available small business assistance resources; and actively solicit community input into redevelopment plans and the use of other development incentive tools.

Corridor-focused Community Strategy

Planning for and around MLK should be seen as an opportunity to better support and connect the surrounding neighborhood residents to businesses, to transportation options, and to one another.

A corridor-focused community strategy will support planning and implementation in a variety of ways.

- A corridor-focused strategy is intended and should be designed to be an iterative and agile planning approach that regularly and efficiently seeks clarity

through community guidance. 4theVille is encouraged to continue to facilitate the strategy efforts until the coalition is in place and can take on the responsibility.

- The strategy can help **establish a foundation and platform** for the coalition's pursuit of future federal funding and its collaborative approach may open doors to other funding opportunities.
- It will also **inform strategy** for property assembly for future development, whether via LRA or other nonprofit entity, along and around the corridor, and proactively identify zoning changes and other regulatory tools needed to support desired development.
- A corridor-focused strategy will help inform SLDC's actions and approach to a request for proposal for development (RFP) in the area. A RFP of this nature would include a list of what the community wants to see in the neighborhood – YIMBY, Yes In My Backyard.
- The strategy could help guide and **support ongoing corridor branding** and leverage the branding and visual identity in support of activity and business along the corridor.

Housing Considerations/Recommendations

Housing is a critical element of a successful corridor. Nearby residents support the economic vitality of a commercial corridor, housing along and around the corridor can provide business owners with options to live close to their places of business, and a mix of uses (commercial and residential) can provide stability in commercial areas and additional eyes on the street more hours of the day and night.

- Additional **single-family housing** should be encouraged north of the corridor along Aldine Avenue, and the development of multifamily housing should be encouraged south of the corridor on Evans Avenue.
- A mix of **affordability options** should be pursued across the housing types on both sides of the corridor.
- Along MLK directly, **mixed-use spaces** (buildings with



Businesses along the MLK corridor could benefit from some of the building improvement grant programs offered by the city.

live/work space) should be allowed and encouraged.

- **Alley infrastructure** will likely require upgrades in some areas to support housing needs (e.g., the installation and maintenance of trash and recycling services/receptacles).
- Finally, **LRA can be an effective resource** in this work. It would be helpful to work with LRA to pilot a site assembly strategy and associated RFP for new housing development around the corridor.

New and Existing Funding Sources

Funding for development along MLK in the study area will require public-private partnerships and assistance from public funding sources. While some tools are in place today, a host of additional funding resources should be pursued as soon as possible so those tools and support measures are in place when the needs arise.

The following funding tools would be new for the study area.

- Tools such as **TIF, CID, Transportation Development**

Districts (TDD), and related redevelopment plans can help position a specific geography for additional funding, often via a portion of taxes collected within that same area. These tools will require public sector approvals.

- SLDC and other nonprofits can support new development by entering the development agreement first and **taking a first-loss position**. While this loss-leader approach is somewhat limited, it can help establish a critical baseline market for an area and encourage future market-driven redevelopment.
- There are also **national funding sources** (e.g., National Trust for Historic Preservation) that may be interested in supporting corridor-focused development in historic neighborhoods and in historically under-served areas. Finding and applying for these funds may take time, but the effort can be well worth it. A champion coalition can work with the city and SLDC to establish a funding strategy that leverages local appropriations and funding sources to attract national philanthropic and federal funding.



The TAP panel touring the study area, led by Aaron Williams, Board Chair of 4theVille (foreground).

The following funding sources are already in place in the city and should be explored further as potential resources for development or redevelopment in the study area.

- [Small Business Grant Fund](#) – This is a COVID recovery-focused program that issues \$5,000 grants to small businesses in the City of St. Louis. Additional focus has been placed on businesses in HUD Qualified Census Tracts. (A positive byproduct of this grant program to date has been that the application's licensure requirement has facilitated a number of businesses becoming licensed for the first time.)
- [North St. Louis Commercial Corridor Grant](#) – This program focuses funding on 11 north St. Louis City corridors, and preference is given to owner-occupied businesses. The funding supports business operation stabilization (up to \$50,000), business expansion, and façade and storefront repairs and improvements (\$200,000-500,000). SLDC markets the program through webinars, community meetings, and through partners and contractors who regularly serve these businesses.
- [New Markets Tax Credit](#) – This federal revolving loan fund is filtered through community development entities such as SLDC to support new construction in low-income communities.
- [Prop NS](#) – This City of St. Louis program focuses on the stabilization of vacant LRA-owned residential properties. The funding is intended to serve as a first step “toward subsequent purchase and full rehab by others.”
- [Community Development Administration \(CDA\)](#) – The City of St. Louis CDA provides federal funding to support nonprofit and for-profit developers to “renovate dilapidated/abandoned properties or develop vacant land with an emphasis on safe, decent, and affordable housing primarily for low- and moderate-income persons.”
- [Tax Abatement](#) – SLDC guides the tax abatement process for the city, providing five to ten years of abatement for properties undergoing significant investment via new construction or gut renovation. The city recently established a Chapter 99 tax abatement district for a large geography in North St. Louis, including the study area, that provides additional development incentives.

Partners

The range and scope of the opportunities and associated work posed in these real estate recommendations will require strong partnerships from a variety of sectors. Organizations such as Greater St. Louis, SLDC, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, CDA, the Planning and Urban Design Agency (PDA), Habitat for Neighborhood Business, local universities, and more can all play a role in supporting the work and the businesses along the MLK corridor.

Once identified, it would be beneficial to create a simple ecosystem map of the partnering organizations. This mind map will help partners better understand key strengths of each entity, identify possible areas of where overlap occurs, and begin to align with one another in services and funding pursuits. This alignment on funding will help limit the unfortunate event of multiple St. Louis agencies unknowingly pursuing the same funding, and it will also provide an opportunity for alignment around joint pursuits, which present a stronger case to the funder and might have greater potential for success.

SLDC is a particularly important partner in this work. It is possible to leverage SLDC's funding for building renovations to support businesses along the corridor. Owner-occupied businesses can use the building renovation funding mechanisms to support building improvements, which in turn, supports the health and vitality of the business within.

SLDC's neighborhood managers also provide a compelling partnership opportunity. By collaborating with the neighborhood managers around shared interests, the work along the corridor can potentially leverage additional funding and support the business and economic development goals of multiple organizations.

As 4theVille and its associated partners begin the work of supporting and expanding business activity along the MLK corridor, the following actions will help establish a baseline of current assets, business needs, and expansion opportunities.

- Take the time to inventory the commercial property owners and operators along the corridor.
- Speak with owners and operators to better understand their current and potential future uses and business needs.
- Gauge the owner's or operator's interest in potential business funding and ask if they might need assistance with their application pursuit.

This business assistance audit work might make for an interesting university partnership as business students could gain valuable insights and experience in conducting this type of field work under the guidance of the students' professor and 4theVille and/or SLDC.



EAST-WEST GATEWAY
Council of Governments



City of St. Louis
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

HABITAT FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD
BUSINESS®

Potential partners in this work should include some of St. Louis's key economic and community development organizations.

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Public infrastructure plays a critical role in the success of a commercial corridor, and the strength of that infrastructure and its connections with the surrounding neighborhoods can influence the vitality and success of the community as a whole.

Safety along the corridor is paramount. The MLK Corridor has been recently identified as one of the city's top crash corridors, dangerous for drivers and pedestrians. (2021 Crash Report, Trailnet)

Accessibility is key. Pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks and crosswalks) and road infrastructure have been identified by residents as among the main impediments to accessing businesses on the MLK corridor. (4theVille and Trailnet phone and pop-up survey data)

Business attraction and retention is impacted by the quality of the public infrastructure. Chaotic driving along MLK and vehicle crashes have damaged local business property and make it difficult to attract patrons to the businesses along the corridor.

Place and identity are visible indicators of the health and vitality of environment and can positively or negatively impact the area's ability to attract patrons. Public realm improvements provide an important opportunity to express unique identity and history of a place. Placemaking, using recognizable visible markers and creating a sense of place in an environment, and placekeeping, efforts to amplify or enhance the existing sense of place, can positively impact the experience of visitors, residents, and patrons and attract new people to the corridor.

Connectivity, the ability to move between the neighborhoods and the commercial corridor, plays an important role in stitching together the community and ensuring that current and future residents can access and enjoy all that the corridor has to offer. Connections north and south along the corridor are critical as are the connections to bus networks and to nearby assets like the Brickline Greenway, Hodiament Tracks, Ranken Technical

College campus, Sumner High School, Tandy Recreation Center, and more.

Character and comfort are priorities in a strategy to establish a welcoming commercial district. Healthy street trees, comfortable sidewalk infrastructure, attractive landscaping, public art, and other improvements in the public realm create an inviting district where residents and visitors will want to spend time and can do so in comfort.

Public wifi along the corridor can provide needed digital connectivity for residents and visitors.

Pedestrian Safety

With a significant number of community members walking in the area – to the corridor, to bus stops, and to other neighborhood assets – the pedestrian experience and the pedestrian environment must be improved and made far safer than it is today.

Sidewalks provide a significant number of neighborhood residents with connection to the MLK corridor, to surrounding neighborhoods, and connect children, families, and seniors to services and one another. The sidewalks along the corridor proper are in good condition, yet the connecting network of sidewalks throughout the surrounding neighborhoods are often impassable and push pedestrians out into the street for a far more dangerous, passage.

Attention must also be paid to increasing the safety of the pedestrian crosswalks across MLK. As motorists speed along the corridor, there is little to slow their progress and allow safe pedestrian crossings. Better striping, flashing HAWK signals at crosswalks, or even raised intersections, allowing for at-grade crossing of pedestrians while slowing

traffic, would create a safer pedestrian environment.

Lighting plays an important role in comfort and safety along a commercial corridor. Every effort should be made to continue installation of the pedestrian-scale streetlighting that has begun along the corridor.

Road Treatment

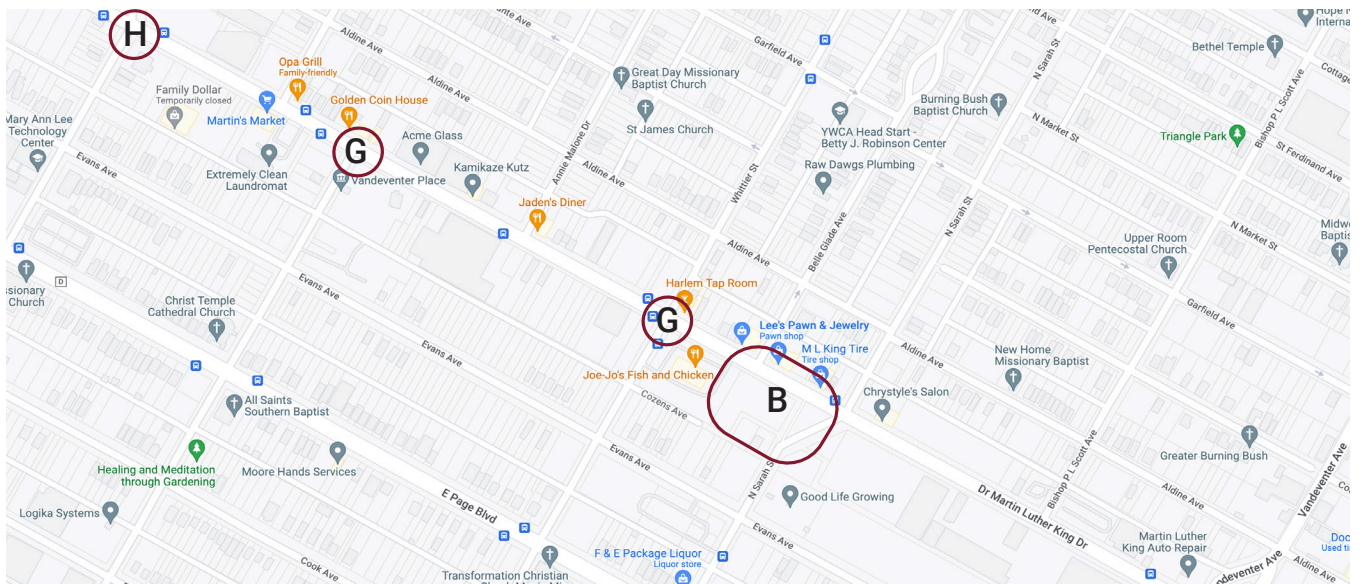
A road diet, streetscape improvements, and possibly roundabouts or chicanes should be pursued. Implemented in two to three distinct phases, the public right-of-way along MLK should be redesigned to calm traffic and prioritize pedestrians. Early improvements could include pinned-on medians, bumpouts, and enhanced pedestrian crossings. Further improvements, addressed in later phases, should include a redesign of the entire corridor right-of-way and potentially the installation of roundabouts and chicanes to further slow traffic.

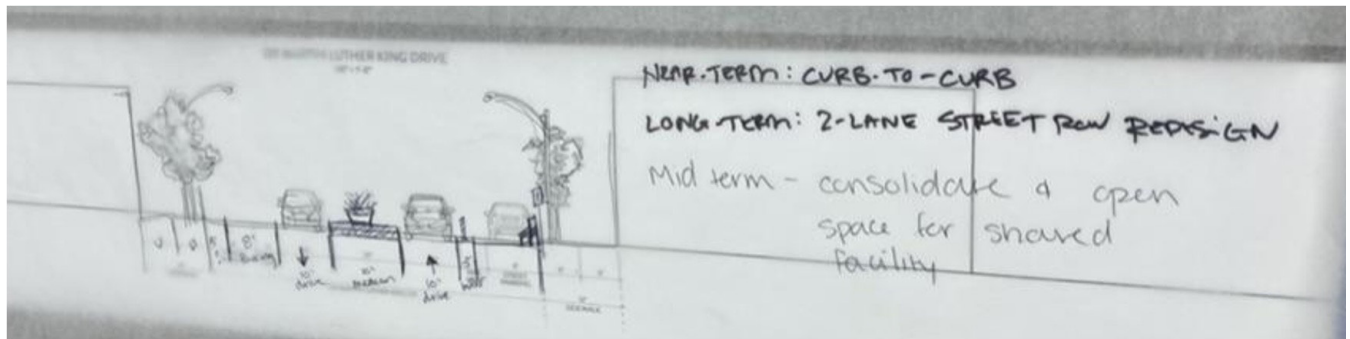
Coordinate and Elevate Improvements

Infrastructure improvements along the MLK corridor, particularly those in the study area, could serve as an example of great community-led roadway improvements. Thoughtful and intentional coordination among development partners and the various transportation partners, including the Missouri Department of Transportation and its work on Page Avenue, MetroBus and its planned bus stop consolidation, and Great Rivers



Sidewalks across the neighborhood require significant repair and improvement. The above sidewalk is one block north of the corridor.





TAP PANEL

This panel sketch depicts the potential phasing of roadway improvements.

Greenway's development of the Brickline Greenway, will help facilitate efficient delivery of the improvements and minimize construction disruption for residents and business owners. Additionally, aligning proposed surface improvements with signalization upgrades can maximize the use of available federal resources. The city's likely "Citywide Transportation and Mobility Plan" is another opportunity to support future mobility and safety improvements in this corridor and identify funding sources for implementation of later-phase improvements.

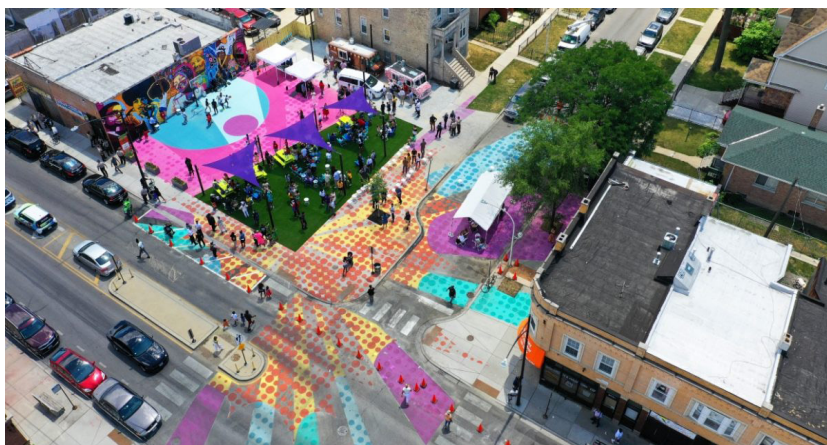
It will also be important to point to and elevate the work of corridor coalition across the surrounding community and with the city's leadership. The visibility of this coalition and the progress it supports could serve as an example for other corridors and communities across the city. As SLDC turns its focus and resources to commercial corridors throughout St. Louis, lessons learned and efficiencies gained through this MLK transformation, should help inform the work in other areas, leveraging best practices to the benefit of all.

Visual Recognition and Identity

Driving along the MLK corridor, the neighborhoods easily blend into one another. In a city that boasts such a diverse and enticing array of neighborhoods, opportunities abound for branding the neighborhoods through which MLK winds. Embracing, reflecting, and celebrating each neighborhood's identity along the corridor could support community pride for residents and business owners, help guide visitors as they travel along the corridor, and provide all with additional reasons to slow down and enjoy the experience.

A celebration of neighborhood could be expressed through the creation a brand for the corridor and leveraging placemaking and/or placekeeping activities. Made at key intersections, these improvements should complement the installation of public safety mechanisms, including crosswalks, signalization, and streetlighting noted earlier.

- A roundabout at the western entry point at the intersection of MLK and North Newstead would create space for public art, provide traffic-calming, and signal



ANEZKA GOCOVA

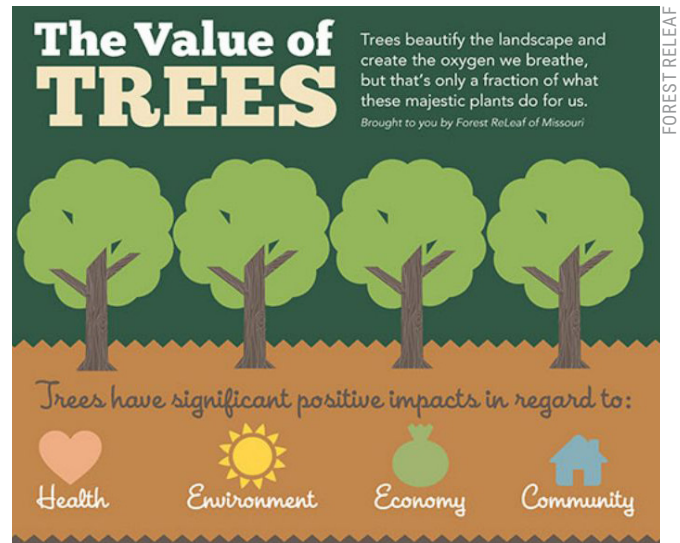
Situated along Chicago Avenue, PopCourts is part of a larger vision to bring development to Chicago's underinvested, and primarily black and brown communities. There are several locations that would be ideal for a PopCourts installation in the study area.



4theVille maintains a small office and informal gift shop within the offices of Northside Community Housing.

- entry into the Cultural Boulevard district. (See map page 25, parcel H)
- At the eastern entry point of the Cultural Boulevard, at North Sarah Street, there is a triangular parcel that is currently closed to traffic. This parcel could be vacated and provide the community with new public open space for public art and programming. (See map page 25, parcel B)
- The intersections of MLK with Whittier Street and Pendleton Avenue also provide interesting points of connection with the community and should be considered for branding installations of some form. (See map page 25, G parcels)

These types of improvements, generally in the public domain – in existing open space and public rights-of-way – would help support new development attraction efforts as well as support the investments made or contemplated by existing business and building owners. Wayfinding signage along the corridor could reflect this visual identity for the Cultural Boulevard and help residents and visitors navigate the corridor and explore all of the neighborhood's assets. Similarly, should it wish to create a more public street-level presence along the corridor, 4theVille could open a gift shop on MLK, which could serve as a launch point for those exploring the Cultural Boulevard and a place of community cultural celebration and expression through the merchandise sold.



Trees provide a host of health and climate resilience benefits.

Public Health and Environmental Resilience

Public health, environmental resilience, and climate justice should be incorporated into all development and infrastructure improvement planning and implementation along the corridor.

- Green Elements.** Improvements to the public realm along the corridor should incorporate more natural elements, including trees with larger tree wells and human comfort elements. These comfort elements should include shade structures, in addition to the existing and new trees, and seating opportunities, particularly around bus stops.
- Stormwater Management.** Given the hardscape nature of the corridor, from street pavement to wide sidewalks and paved spaces in front of businesses, stormwater management should be a priority. Rain gardens along the corridor can help divert a significant portion of stormwater runoff, filtering the water back into the ground and keeping it out of the overburdened metropolitan sewer system. The rain gardens must have maintenance agreements/partnerships in place so as to not place additional burdens on the community (residents or business owners).

The urban heat island (UHI) effect is of particular concern

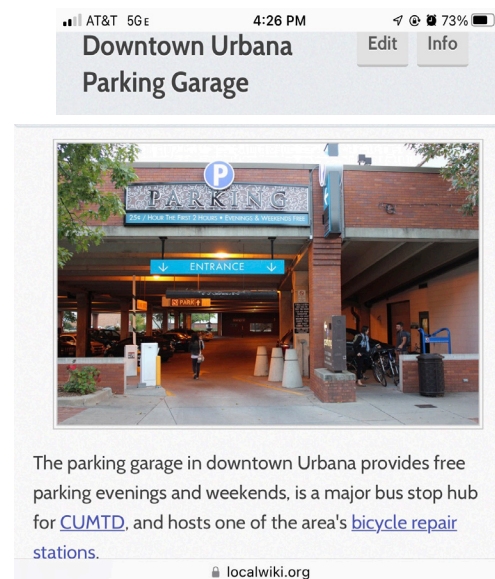
in north St. Louis. The predominance of concrete and the lack of natural elements, particularly the lack of a healthy urban tree canopy, creates a significant heating effect in the summer with little opportunity for nighttime cooling. Efforts to mitigate UHI, including the planting and maintenance of more trees, installing shade elements, rain gardens, and other natural cooling mechanisms, will benefit the community by reducing personal heat stress, lowering air conditioning expense, and support the community's resilience in days of extreme heat, which are increasing annually.

Bridge the Gap

Connecting residents across the corridor from neighborhoods to the north and south should be a goal of any infrastructure improvement along MLK. This work presents a unique opportunity to view the corridor as a connector and a neighborhood spine, branching out and connecting people across neighborhoods. Crosswalks, clearly visible to drivers and safe for pedestrians, are a priority for the corridor.

Viewing the corridor as a transportation spine that connects with the surrounding neighborhoods provides an interesting opportunity to look at the parallel streets one block north and south, to better understand how those streets might support improvements along MLK. Evans Avenue, for example, is one block south of MLK and has been identified herein as a good location for multifamily housing, which will come with associated parking lots. The multifamily developers should be approached with the idea of leveraging their parking facilities for public use during certain business hours when spaces might be freed by residents leaving for work. This approach may also provide interesting and creative opportunities to collaborate on funding pursuits for these developments. Developing parking strategies that bridge the neighborhoods and encourage more pedestrian activity might also help lighten the parking load along MLK and provide businesses with additional proximate parking solutions.

Page Avenue, two short blocks south of MLK, is a Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) controlled corridor and holds promise as an alternative commuting option. MODOT's improvements to Page could be pursued



concurrently with efforts to slow traffic on MLK, thereby providing motorists with a viable commuting alternative and lessening the automotive traffic along MLK.

Funding

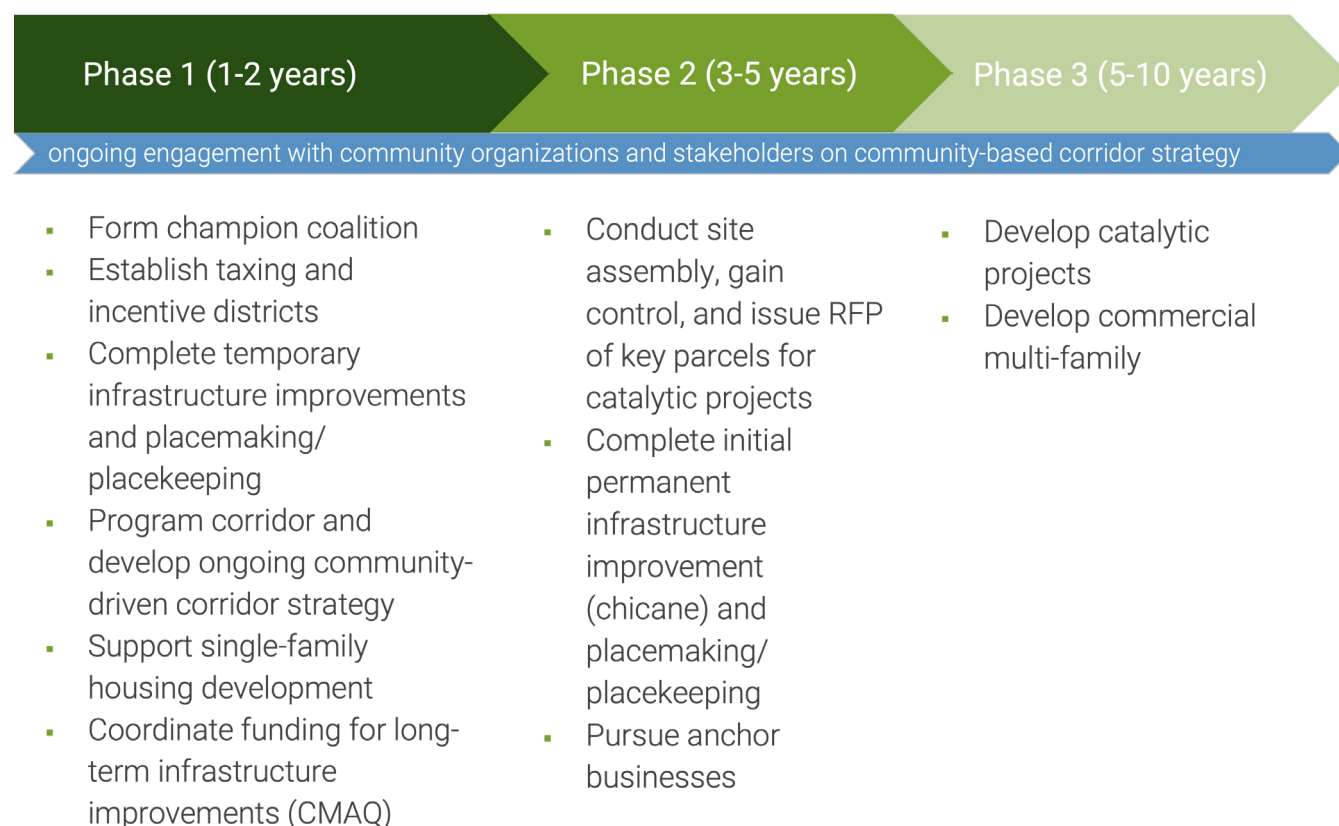
As noted, work along the corridor will rely heavily on partnerships that will support a coordinated vision for MLK. Local funding sources could include the city's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars and the [Metropolitan Sewer District's Project Clear](#) funding. Additional local support could come via Forest ReLeaf, providing support, capacity, guidance, and community engagement assistance. The city's Board of Public Service, Streets Department, and PDA should also assist with guidance and collaboration in setting the stage for implementation of community-supported improvements. On a state level, the [Missouri Department of Conservation](#) may have funds to support tree planting and other nature-centric improvements. Federal funding may be available via the [Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program \(CMAQ\)](#), [Surface Transportation Program](#), [Transportation Alternatives Program](#), [Rebuilding American Infrastructure and Sustainability Equity \(RAISE\)](#), and the [Justice 40 Target](#) initiative. Institutional and philanthropic funding should also be explored, including AARP, the [Kranzberg Arts Foundation](#), [The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#), and [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#).

NEXT STEPS

As 4theVille and its community and public sector partners consider how and when to pursue the Cultural Boulevard recommendations, the panel outlined a potential timeline for phasing the work. Central to planning and implementation, serving as a foundation for all of the development efforts, should be ongoing engagement with community organizations and stakeholders to create and then execute a community-based corridor strategy.

Resources are in place today that can further support this community-based approach. ULI's UrbanPlan workshop can help support community members' understanding of and agency in development decision-making in the study area. The Sumner High School StudioLab can provide additional capacity in the planning process, the

new Northside Economic Empowerment Center can directly connect residents and business owners to SLDC resources, and the Cultural Boulevard Project working group can help convene or reconvene professionals with the expertise and resources to help further define opportunities for improvement and intervention.



APPENDIX

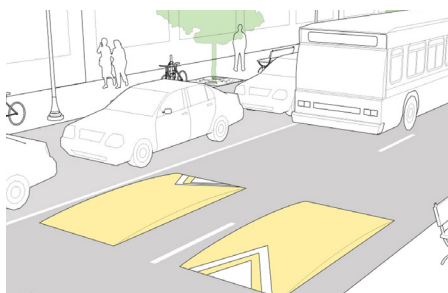
The following questions and answers were generated during the presentation of this report to the community on March 4, 2023.

Pedestrian Safety. Will emergency vehicles still have access ability after road developments?

Yes. There are ways to design streets to calm/slow traffic, prioritize car-alternative transportation (walking, using transit, etc.) and allow emergency vehicles to operate effectively. Soft edges on roundabouts/traffic

(ex. Natural Bridge Ave), the use of

speed cushions (speed humps or speed tables that include wheel cutouts), and appropriately-sized curb bump-outs allow large vehicles to pass unaffected.



Speed cushion. National Association of City Transportation Officials.

Commercial Corridor Boundaries. How far “into” the MLK corridor will be focused on – north & south of MLK?

This Technical Assistance Panel focused on the MLK corridor between Vandeventer (East) and Newstead (West), and including Aldine to the north and Evans to the south.



How can we access corridor grant funds?

Information about the City of St. Louis commercial corridor grant can be found at this [link](#).

How can we help seniors learn how to use their home and skills to earn income?

With respect to the commercial corridor, the goal of 4theVille and other community partners in the neighborhoods surrounding the corridor is for MLK to be accessible to pedestrians of all ages offering places of rest, gathering, reflection, and employment. Our hope is that the corridor will be filled with small businesses and cultural organizations that employ seniors or are owned and operated by seniors.

How do I request speed humps?

4theVille has worked with Trailnet to create a Pedestrian Mobility Infrastructure Plan to present a coordinated message to City departments and officials about the necessary traffic calming in the neighborhoods surrounding the MLK corridor. This coordinated message includes the suggestion of speed humps and repaired sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety. The City encourages a unified and coordinated approach to speed hump installations. To inquire about speed humps, contact your ward alderperson, the Board of Aldermen Streets, Traffic and Refuse Committee, or The City of St. Louis Streets Department (stlstreetdept@stlouis-mo.gov).

How do we ensure opportunities for housing development?

This Technical Assistance Panel report encourages the City, St. Louis Development Corporation, and community development corporations to build or attract private development of multi-family housing along Evans Avenue south of MLK, and to build or attract single-family housing along Aldine north of MLK. Separately, if a community member or community organization is interested in improving housing in the community, they can familiarize themselves with the [City of St. Louis Prop NS Program](#) and City of St. Louis Community Development Administration [housing production](#) opportunities.

What are plans for the infusion of solar in The Ville area?

The 4theVille Cultural Boulevard Project encourages and advocates for environmentally friendly and sustainable improvements to the MLK corridor, including reduction of heat islands, reduction of stormwater runoff and regenerative measures such as solar energy collection.

Will you hold more, and can they be hybrid for those who can only attend virtually?

The 4theVille Cultural Boulevard Project will continue to engage the community through various means including public townhalls and workshops. Virtual options will be made available whenever possible.

Will information be publicly available for accountability?

All information about the Cultural Boulevard Project will be available at 4theVille.org. The reports presented in the March 4 Townhall will be published online before the end of March.

How do I contact the SLDC neighborhood manager?

A list of the neighborhood managers, their contact information, and associated geographies can be found [here](#).

How do I share new ideas for the MLK corridor?

New ideas can be shared with 4theVille at 4theVille.org. The Cultural Boulevard Project will continue to engage the community as efforts move forward.

Will there be a citizens review committee that reviews projects and submits ideas for development of the corridor and adjacent neighborhoods?

Currently, the only proposed advisory body or committee that is the Champion Coalition and that will be made up of residents, nonprofits, and other representatives concerned with the future of the MLK corridor. Additional engagement opportunities, as stated above, will grant residents the opportunity to share feedback and new ideas. One idea that might come out of these meetings is a committee like the one you mentioned.

How will seniors and those with low access to technology be informed about and engaged with the project?

4theVille is committed to reaching many residents no matter what their age is or their access to technology. We will make special efforts to engage everyone in future meetings and processes.

Do you have a list of the townhall presenters and the leaders of the initiative?

The Cultural Boulevard Project is being led by 4theVille. The organizations that presented at the townhall included Urban Land Institute, Trailnet, Northside Community Housing, and Global 9 Development Corp. A full list of panelists from the Technical Assistance Program can be found in this report.

How can we make sure that maintenance of MLK is sustained after improvements are made?

The TAP report recommends the use of several tools that can be used to fund maintenance along the MLK corridor and fund improvements.

We would love to see sidewalk and street art IF it can be maintained? How will maintenance be guaranteed?

See answer above.

Who is in charge of St. Louis Development Corporation?

SLDC is the independent economic development agency serving the City of St. Louis, Missouri. It is governed by a Board of Directors, a listing of which may be found [here](#).

When and how can we get real investment into The Ville to counter the disinvestment over time?

Generally speaking, the goal of the TAP report was to outline some high-level recommendations and partnerships that will bring investment and activity to the MLK Corridor. The goal is “real investment” that benefits the residents and future residents of the The Ville and surrounding neighborhoods.

The brick and mortar is great, but what is the plan for human capacity development such as education, health and food?

The TAP report was primarily focused on real estate development and infrastructure improvement opportunities. Additional, future planning efforts need to be pursued that look at these issues.

How is the project working to curb crime and violence?

The TAP report does not directly address any recommenda-

Some of the “alphabet soup” of real estate acronyms:

CDA – City of St. Louis Community Development Administration

LRA – City of St. Louis Land Reutilization Authority

LCRA – City of St. Louis Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority

SLDC – Saint Louis Development Corporation

LIHTC – Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

AMI – Area Median Income

tions for reducing crime and violence, but it does make recommendations to improve pedestrians, auto, and cyclist safety.

Please add the Homer G. Phillips Residents Association to the list.

4theVille is committed to engaging as many residents as possible in the Cultural Boulevard Project initiative, including Homer G. Phillips residents.

How will current owners of problem properties be dealt with?

Community members having concerns or issues with problem properties can contact the following offices:

St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department - Problem Properties Unit
North Patrol Division

4014 Union Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63115 (314)444-0023

[City of St. Louis Neighborhood Stabilization Office](#)

1520 Market Street, Room 4000 (314) 657-1392

Where is the list of all the businesses in The Ville so that residents can support neighborhood businesses?

This is an excellent suggestion and we will look into the creation of a directory and/or map.

Where is the list of all the businesses in The Ville so that residents can support neighborhood businesses?

This is an excellent suggestion and we will look into the creation of a directory and/or map.

How will St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department be engaged in this process?

The SLMPD was not directly engaged in the creation of this TAP report. The primary focus of the report and engagement was on real estate development and infrastructure improvements.

If tree roots in tree lawns are causing problems for home owners, why should they have to pay to fix the issue?

This is a great question that we hope can be addressed discussions about sidewalk improvements progress.

What is the timeframe for the 50/50 sidewalk program? I have been on the list for 6 years.

The 50/50 sidewalk program was not discussed in the TAP. Additional information about the 50/50 sidewalk program can be found on the City of St. Louis website.

ABOUT THE PANEL



Miriam Keller, AICP
TAP Co-Chair
City Planning Executive,
General Planning / Design
City of St. Louis

Miriam serves as City Planning Executive for General Planning and Design in the City of St.

Louis's Planning and Urban Design Agency. In this role, she co-leads efforts of the City's Planning Division to strengthen land use policy and the built environment in support of a resilient, inclusive, and vibrant St. Louis. Miriam has a wide range of experience in housing policy, design, neighborhood planning, urban ecology, real estate analysis, and community development. She also serves as a member of Northside Community Housing Inc's Housing Committee, and was part of the Cultural Boulevard Project working group. Before joining the City, Miriam worked with Development Strategies, a real estate and community development consulting firm based in St. Louis. While at Development Strategies, she helped to lead housing and community development planning in communities across the Midwest and Southeast. Miriam holds a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from Washington University, and a Masters of Urban Planning and Masters of Public Policy from Harvard University.



Adam Stroud, AICP
TAP Co-Chair
Senior Project Manager
PGAV Planners

Adam Stroud is a Senior Project Manager with PGAV Planners. Before coming to PGAV Planners, Adam spent several years working

in municipal government as an economic developer. He has hands on experience at the local government level with economic development incentives, business retention and expansion, and engagement with the public. Adam's time in municipal economic development involved working with nonprofits, commercial retail developers, industrial developers, railroads, real estate professionals, and elected officials. In 2020, Adam founded Stroud

City Bagels, a small business making bagels out of a shared kitchen space in St. Louis and selling at Tower Grove Farmers' Market. Adam is active with several organizations, including serving as Treasurer and Executive Board Member of the Illinois Tax Increment Association.



Lisa Cagle
Director of Innovative
Services
Bi-State Development

Lisa Cagle is the Director of Innovative Services for Bi-State Development. Lisa is a cross-sector innovator and strategic

systems-thinker, who brings together expertise in research and policy analysis, public health and the built environment, community education, and sustainable development to reframe problems and offer innovative and cost-effective solutions for the St. Louis community. Lisa has a wide range of experiences in fields from sustainable development to government relations and strategic partnerships. She has an M.A. in Philosophy from UMSL, and has conducted research toward her Ph.D. in Social Political Philosophy from Washington University in St. Louis, with a focus on local governmental policy and the built environment. Lisa is President of the Board for local sustainability focused non-profit earthday-365, and serves as co-chair of the Chronic Disease and the Built Environment working group for the St. Louis Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) led jointly by the City and County Health Departments.



Allison Gray-Gunsten
Vice President & Central
Region Leader
Steadfast City Economic &
Community Partners

Allison Gray-Gunsten is an executive-level researcher, analyst, creator and problem solver at Steadfast City Economic & Community Partners. She brings with her more than a decade of experience in the commercial

real estate space. This experience includes professional roles in research and marketing, serving a variety of clients such as distribution/freight users, office occupiers, building owners, developers, investors, and market leaders. Having worked with some of the brokerage world's most renowned companies, Allison combines a broad industry acumen with an educational background in economics and an involvement in community organizations. With a focus on detail and analysis, Allison works alongside the Steadfast City team to assist companies with site selection, economic incentives, development strategy, thought leadership, and more. As Vice President and Central Region Leader, she lends a unique, multi-disciplined expertise to the team that includes research, data analysis, proposal writing, database management, data visualization, troubleshooting, market outreach, and project management.



Karl Grice
Founding Principal
Grice Group

Karl is the founding principal of Grice Group Architects and brings over 40 years of experience to the table. Earning a Bachelor of Architecture, Master

of Architecture and Master of Social Work from Washington University in St. Louis, Karl is dedicated to participatory design methodologies and the enhancement of under-served communities. His dedication is evidenced by projects which have significant social impact. Fueled by his passion for facilities which are beneficial to the community, he is an established leader in the design of youth centers, including the nationally recognized Mathews-Dickey Boys' and Girls' Club and the regionally award winning Jackie Joyner-Kersey Youth Center. Karl is the recipient of several prestigious awards, the most recent being the Saint Louis American Foundation's Entrepreneur of the Year and his elevation to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) College of Fellows.



Jacque Knight, AICP
Senior Planner
Crawford, Murphy & Tilly

Jacque brings a passion for promoting community plans and transportation systems that put people first and create

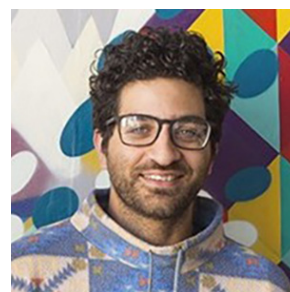
strong, vibrant, and healthy communities. She has been involved with projects including the development of neighborhood traffic calming plans, multimodal corridor planning projects, Great Streets studies, small area plans, and placemaking projects that support users of all ages and abilities. Jacque currently serves as the chair of the East-West Gateway Council of Governments Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee as the City of St. Louis Representative. She holds a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Kansas and two bachelor's degrees, one in journalism and one in American studies from the University of Kansas.



Paul Maginnity
Landscape Designer
Arbolope

Paul is a graduate of the MLA program at The Ohio State University and earned his Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture from the University

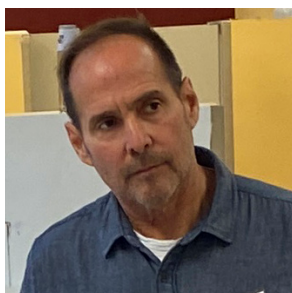
of California, Davis. He also worked for five years in event facility management, obtaining a unique experience of design problem-solving and team collaboration. Paul is passionate about exploring the changing role of public spaces in society and how they can be developed into inclusive places while engaging opportunities for active civic interactions. #publicspace #designforall #diy



Kaveh Razan
Director of Operations
STL Art Place

Kaveh is the director of operations for St. Louis Art Place, an initiative that seeks to build wealth and equity for low- to moderate-income artists through affordable

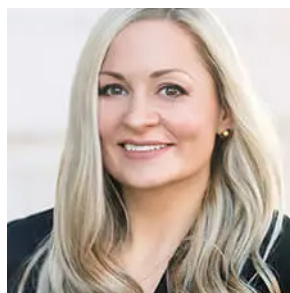
homeownership. Kaveh is also the co-founder, owner, and operator of Blank Space, a community arts and events space that opened in St. Louis in 2012. He also co-founded Lane 4, which is an arts and entertainment promotion company focused on producing thoughtful, complex and multidisciplinary events.



Guy Slay
Owner and Founder
Mangrove Redevelopment

Guy is the founder of Mangrove Redevelopment, a real estate redevelopment company whose focus on neglected or abandoned buildings has helped re-energize

the Grove neighborhood in St. Louis. As a St. Louis native, Guy has always loved the St. Louis City architecture and strives to preserve it. Since its founding in 2000, Mangrove Redevelopment has completed a number of restorations, which are supporting the renaissance of the Grove. Guy began his real estate career with the rehab of the 10,000 square foot Mangrove building which is now home to the famous Sweetie Pie's restaurant, Cultivate Salon, and the Mangrove Redevelopment office. Other projects are now home to City Greens Market, City Boutique, and Outlaw Ink & Styles to name a few. Along with building restoration, Guy is involved in the community, serving on the FPSE Development Committee, Community Improvement District Marketing Committee, the Grove CID Board, and the Delmar Main Street Board.



Cara Weber
Vice President, Business
Recruitment
Missouri Partnership

Cara Weber currently serves as Vice President, Business Recruitment for Missouri Partnership. Cara leads successful business attraction projects

across the state of Missouri. She is the day-to-day contact for companies, site location consultants, state and local economic development partners, and other various influencers involved in the site selection process. Cara began her career in economic development with Missouri Partnership in 2010 as a Business Recruitment Coordinator, where she provided support for location identification, incentive proposal coordination, and more. She then worked in a site selection consulting role for Duff & Phelps in the Site Selection and Incentives Advisory practice, where she focused much of her time on Missouri Works projects and New Markets Tax Credit projects across the country. She then served in a regional economic development role as Vice President of Business Attraction for AllianceSTL (now Greater St. Louis, Inc.) where she was responsible for business attraction efforts for the Greater St. Louis Region before returning to Missouri Partnership in 2021. Cara is a graduate of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and holds a B.S. in Political Science. She is currently pursuing her MBA at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Cara serves on the board of the St. Louis Fashion Fund. She and her husband John are proud parents to two children, Jack and Mary.



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