



**PARKS COMMISSION
Heman Park Community Center
975 Pennsylvania**

**Tuesday, July 18, 2023
6:30 p.m.**

AGENDA

- A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**
- B. ROLL CALL**
- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 1) June 20, 2023
- E. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**
- F. DEPARTMENT REPORT**
- G. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**
- H. COMMISSION MEMBERS PARK INSPECTIONS REPORT**
- I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
 - 1) Parks Centennial Update
 - 2) Municipal Parks Planning Grant
- J. NEW BUSINESS**
 - 1) Comprehensive Plan Update
 - 2) M. Felder Park Presentation
- K. COMMISSION COMMENTS**
- L. ADJOURNMENT**

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PARK COMMISSION
CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI
TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2023**

Agenda Item A: Call Meeting to Order

Park Commission President, James Wilke called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Agenda Item B: Roll Call

Those in attendance included Commission President James Wilke, Commission Members Su Schmalz, Amy Gascon, Lisa Hummel, Carl Hoagland, and Patrick Fox. Also, in attendance was Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry Darren Dunkle, Deputy Director of Parks Maintenance Todd Strubhart, and Deputy Director of Recreation Services Lynda Euell-Taylor. Those not in attendance included Council Liaison Steve McMahon.

Agenda Item C: Approval of the Agenda

Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to approve the agenda. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item D: Approval of the Minutes

- 1) Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Hummel seconded to amend the minutes to Agenda Item H #5 to state: "Reported that there was a limb down that had been removed and that attention would need to be made at the water feature". The motion was approved.
- 2) Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Fox motioned seconded to amend the minutes to Agenda Item J #1 to include "Further discussion took place regarding the status of the City of Clayton receiving resident rates and if the status could be amended or modified to reflect the rising cost of maintenance to the golf course". The motion was approved.
- 3) Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Gascon seconded to amend the minutes to Agenda Item K – Commission Member Schmalz to state "Stated that we need to have the availability to have soccer camps at Centennial Commons". The motion was approved.

Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to approve the amended minutes. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item E: Citizen Comments

- 1.) Ms. Samudra Haddad of 6633 Clemens Avenue Apt 2E spoke about Metcalfe Park and stated that the park is home to Canadian Geese and that there are EPA regulations regarding the Geese; That the park grounds were unstable and that areas puddle after rains; Stated that she would like to see a 440 yard natural trail around the park, but it should not be a hard surface; Stated that kids play on the playground and ballfields, and would not like the character of the park change and that she had concerns as to pickleball courts; Asked that the Commission take all of her comments into consideration.
- 2.) Mr. Mike Miller of 1331 Purdue Avenue stated that he had reviewed the 2008 Parks Master Plan and wondered if the Parks Commission had a sub-committee to look at upgrades and to consider top priorities versus bottom priorities; Asked why the city didn't have low costs amenities such as skate parks, disc golf course, horseshoes, and pickleball; and he asked if there were future plans for Greensfelder Park.

- 3.) Mr. Kevin Taylor of 7022 Canton Avenue spoke about Flood Restoration and in particular the responses to questions of moving the baseball field to another park and the affect it may have on the neighborhood, such as parking, etc.; Mr. Taylor also asked why we weren't talking to the UCity School District about a ballfield complex; Mr. Taylor stated that he understood the floodway/floodplain, however, the Commission needed to talk about bigger issues and not personal issues.

Mr. Taylor also pointed out the makeup of the Commission and stated that he wouldn't say it was racist, but the Commission never talks about the basketball courts at Centennial Commons and is it because of race or age, but the Commission seems to talk about pickleball.

Agenda Item F: Department Report

- 1) Mr. Dunkle reported that the city anticipated the opening of the pool on Saturday and that the pool hours would be from 12-6.
- 2) Commission Member Schmalz asked about the timing of the implementation of the RecTrac Software in June as this is a busy time at the Golf Course. Mr. Dunkle stated that due to several factors the implementation of the upgrade had been pushed back and as such June was the only time, we could begin implementation and that because of the high use of the golf course staff chose to begin the implementation there to make sure that we could get it up and running and to not cause any further issues or delays.
- 3) Commission Member Gascon asked about the software's ability to take online reservations of pavilion rentals etc. Mr. Dunkle and Ms. Euell-Taylor stated that they would have to further explore the ability as the city currently requires proof of residence (occupancy permits) for resident rates etc.

Agenda Item G: Council Report

- 1) No Report.

Agenda Item H: Commission Members Park Inspection Report

- 1) Fogerty Park (Su Schmalz) – Splash pad is not currently working.
- 2) Kaufman Park (Su Schmalz) – Asked about the timing of the pickleball lines. Mr. Dunkle stated that staff had recently met with the contractor and is waiting on the schedule.
- 3) Ruth Park Golf Course (Su Schmalz) – Stated that the Jim Woods bench leg was broken and was wondering when it would be repaired.
- 4) Heman Park (Su Schmalz) – Reported that there was a lot of smoking and glass bottles at the concerts.
- 5) Millar Park (Lisa Hummel) – Reported that an irrigation line had broke and that there had been flooding on the east end of the park. Also reported that the drinking fountain by the fields did not work.
- 6) Ruth Park Woods (Lisa Hummel) – Reported looks good; with the exception of the portion of the vehicle that still remains.
- 7) Dog Park (Patrick Fox) – Reported that the fencing had been replaced and asked about the water faucet access. Mr. Strubhart stated that staff would be moving the timer.
- 8) Lewis Park (Amy Gascon) – Reported that the center fountain in the pond was not working. Mr. Dunkle stated that the city was still waiting on a part.

Agenda Item I: Unfinished Business

- 1) UCity 100th Birthday – Commission President Wilke reported that the Park rededication ceremony to name Kingsland Park to Shelley Welsch Park took place on Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 11:00 am; the Manikins in the LOOP had been taken down; and that there was going to be a Scavenger Hunt for kids 5-12 in the city parks.

2) Flood Recovery and Restoration

Mr. Dunkle referred to the Agenda Item Cover contained within the packet.

Discussion took place by the Commission regarding the restoration or moving of the baseball field and what were the options, costs, scope of work, and the advantages of already having site amenities such as restrooms, parking lots, street parking, playground, and pavilions. Further discussion followed in regard to other possible locations within Heman Park and working with the UCity School District, and if a field would be available to the School District next season. Mr. Dunkle stated that the softball field at Heman Park would be ready for the fall, and that a practice field could be made available for baseball in the spring, however, a game field would not be available.

Further discussion revolved around flood insurance vs regular insurance and could the commission do anything to assist with FEMA. Mr. Dunkle stated that there wasn't anything that the Commission could do, however, the City is continuing to have ongoing discussions with FEMA on a weekly basis.

Agenda Item J: New Business

1) Municipal Parks Planning Grant – Mr. Dunkle referred to the Agenda Item Cover contained within the packet.

Discussion of the Commission took place regarding if Metcalfe Park was the ideal place for pickleball; would the Parkview Gardens Association pay or donate the 20% match for the grant; what would be the scope of work; what would a Concept Plan costs; and do we have money on the table?

It was further stated that the Commission could use the Planning Grant for a Parks Comprehensive Plan rather than for individual parks

Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Hummel seconded to table the discussion until the July meeting. The motion was approved.

2) Municipal Parks Construction Grant Round 24 – Mr. Dunkle referred to the Agenda Item Cover contained within the packet.

Discussion of the Commission took place regarding various projects such as the basketball flooring in Centennial Commons, Band Shell at Heman Park, other Heman Park priorities, as well as the development or redevelopment of the existing ballfield at Millar Park into a full-size baseball field.

Commission Member Hummel motioned, and Commission Member Fox seconded to support an application for the development or redevelopment of the existing ballfield at Millar Park into a full-size baseball field. The motion was approved.

3) Youth Sports and Recreation Programs – Commission Member Schmalz asked if any other program than the Scavenger Hunt was being offered at this time. Mr. Dunkle stated that staff was concentrating on reconstruction, RecTrac upgrade implementation, and getting the pool up and running.

Comments were made as to the possibility of a youth basketball league for this fall/winter.

Agenda Item K: Commission Comments

Commission Member Fox – Spoke about the Budget Presentation Study Session that was held and stated that the City Code/Charter states that the Parks Commission should make recommendations for the budget and stated that he would like to receive further clarification on the ordinance and what the role of the Parks Commission should be. It was asked if Council Liaison McMahan or the City Manager could provide further clarification.

Agenda Item L: Adjournment

Commission Member Fox motioned, and Commission Member Hummel seconded at 9:08 pm to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved.

DRAFT

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL FOR
IMPROVEMENTS TO HEMAN PARK
FOR A PERFORMANCE VENUE

Merrick Felder, Architect

June 14, 2023

Merrick Felder

a r c h i t e c t

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PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO HEMAN PARK FOR A PERFORMANCE VENUE

Apr. 19, 2023

PREMISE:

University City needs and deserves a permanent amphitheater.

I am an avocational percussionist and have enjoyed playing with the University City Summer Band for more than 20 years. For quite some time I've been thinking about how the present Heman Park concert venue might be improved, although even now it is a reasonably good place to sit and enjoy a concert. Following are some of my ideas; I have listed them in terms of possible phases based on cost and priority.

Primary concern: During band concerts, more than half the sound is lost at the present venue on grass: not only in volume, but also in the resonance and tonal depth of the sound. That means that half the efforts of many fine musicians is wasted; and that the audience misses out on half the beauty and power of the music. Performance quality is also affected because the grass makes it difficult for musicians to hear each other; see Liabilities below.

Option A: Present venue in southern picnic area of Heman Park

ASSETS:

This is a lovely and comfortable venue, with plenty of shade and nearby picnicking and rest rooms, and surrounded by park activities. Electrical power is also in place.

LIABILITIES:

- Ultimately there is a limit to crowd size, although this has not been a problem for the group in which I participate.
- Parking is extremely limited and patrons, many elderly, nearly always have to walk a long distance.
- Ambient noise: Sports activities and honking of cars, though these are minor nuisances and rarely a problem.
- Acoustics for performance are a problem. The band is obligated to sit on grass, which limits how well the musicians can hear each other, and also how the sound is transmitted to the audience. In addition, there is no rear wall to reflect sound to the audience, although when it is present the portable trailer-mounted stage is marginally helpful.
- The difficulty of moving large instruments across a grassy lawn is an additional burden for members, especially the percussion section.

PHASE 1:

Pave an area large enough for the band, perhaps 2500-3000 sq. ft., using sustainable materials such as porous pavers, which do not interfere with rainwater runoff. The area would be usable for picnicking or parking on non-concert dates. In addition, there may be grants available for installing sustainable paving, and it could be partially installed by community groups such as U. City in Bloom.

If need be, this could be the permanent solution, accomplished at a modest cost.

PHASE 2:

Provide stone or precast walls, perhaps 6 ft. tall, behind the performance area to reflect sound. These could be combined with possible barbecue grills or seating for picnickers.

PHASE 3:

Build a permanent band shell, which would be usable by all types of musical groups or speakers. The drawing attached shows just one of many possible designs, with outside dimensions of about 45 x 65 ft. It should be:

- a structure acoustically designed to help broadcast sound to the audience; this also benefits the performers.
- no larger than necessary
- harmonize with the park environment
- be usable as a picnicking pavilion, and
- be built of durable, low-maintenance materials.

Option B: Potential future amphitheater in northwest corner of Heman Park

ASSETS: A beautiful area near the fountain, with mature trees for shade, high visibility, convenient access and plenty of parking. An amphitheater with a seating area for 200-300 or more could be built in this area, potentially without the loss of any old-growth trees.

LIABILITIES:

- The location may be considered by some an intrusion on the beauty of the park's main entry area, although concerts have been held there in the past.
- Rest rooms: At first, rest rooms could be made available inside the Pool or Community Center. Ultimately new rest rooms should be built.
- Ambient noise: Vehicular traffic noise, primarily from Olive Blvd., could be problematic at times. The drawing attached indicates a system of walls, which should be located to work with existing tree locations. Earthen berms would be equally effective and less unsightly. Walls behind the performance area would add to the acoustics of the performance pavilion.
- Flora: The project would be designed in cooperation with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry. In case it is deemed necessary, removal or relocation of any trees would be done only with its prior approval.
- Utilities: Electric power and sewers are not presently available.
- Drainage: The proposed concert area is flat and retains water following rainfall. A civil engineer should be consulted and French drains or other mediation considered.

PHASE 1:

Provide a paved surface of perhaps 2500-3000 sq. ft. for performance, with an access drive from Princeton Ave., and electrical power for microphones and electronic instruments. The pavement should be sustainable as in Option A, and usable for picnicking. Build walls for noise abatement, and address drainage. Add picnic tables and possible barbecue grills.

PHASE 2: Build a band shell. This would need to include a room for amplification equipment and storage.

PHASE 3: Erect a public rest room.

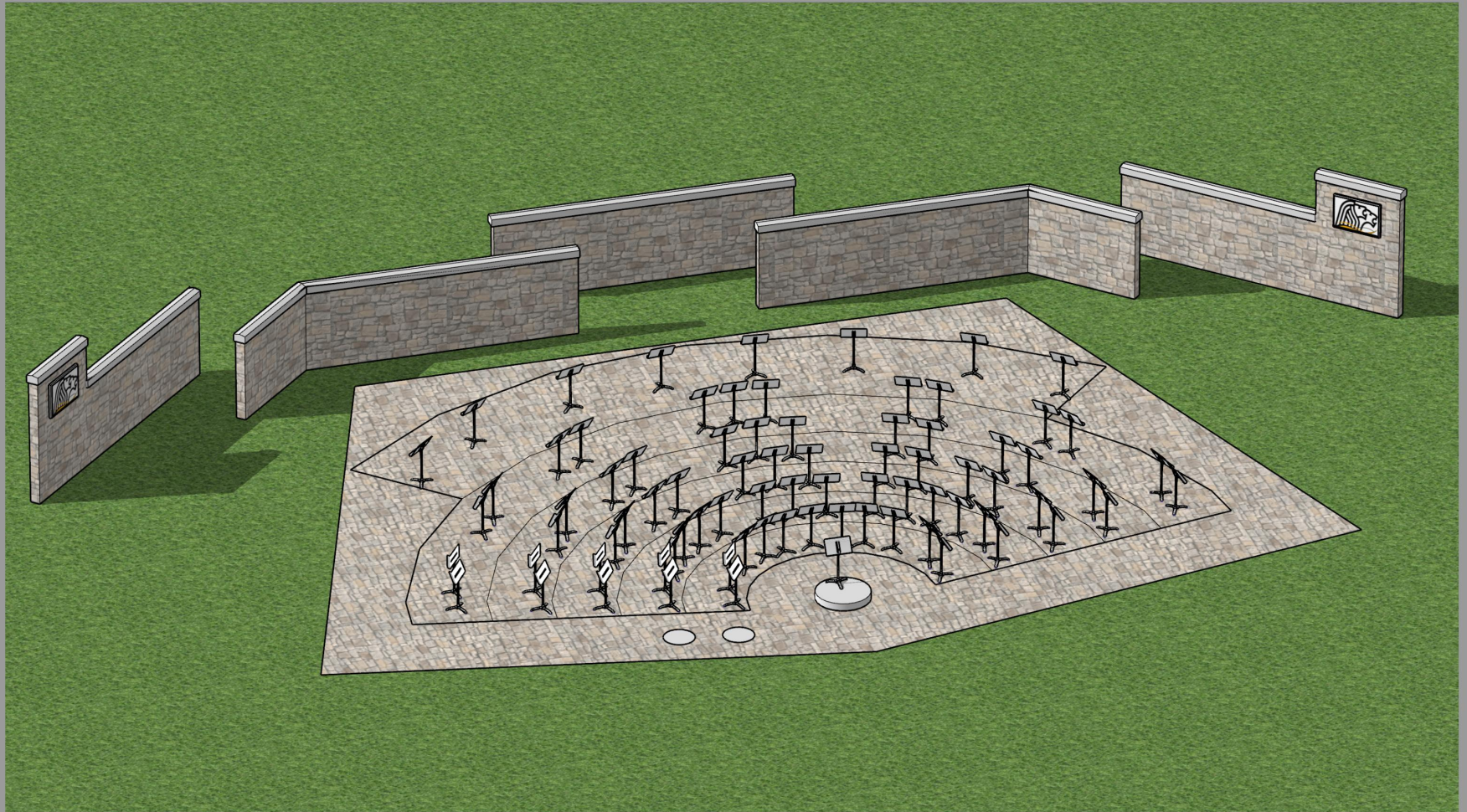
Conclusion:

Heman Park is a pleasant place to play and hear a concert as it exists today. Even minimal improvements can add greatly to the experience. Ultimately, however, a community so historically rich with musicians, musical appreciation and performance venues should have its own amphitheater.

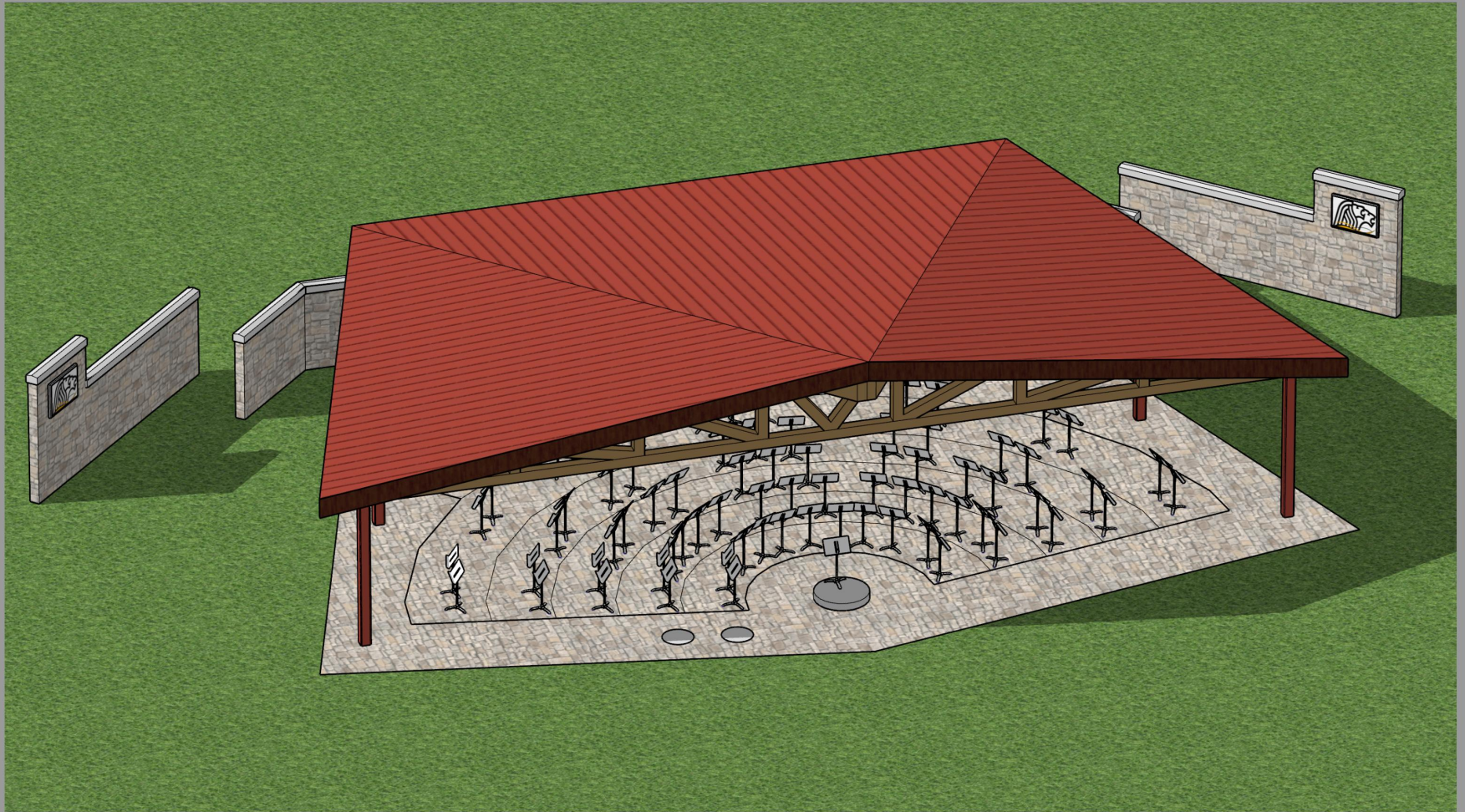
Note re: lighting for nighttime concerts: An additional perk a shell offers is stage lighting. University City has an advantage in that its parks are open until 10:30 pm, unlike nearly all other parks in the county which close at dusk. The park is safe and well-lit at night for patrons; but presently the length of concerts is severely limited by the performers' inability to read their music after sundown.

Note for comparison: The Manchester Community Band plays summer concerts at Schroeder Park. The park's concert venue includes a performance pavilion with convenient rest rooms and plenty of parking. The City of Manchester Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Arts sponsors the band; and it enjoys support from the Parkway School System and the Dept. of Public Works, which furnish and transport chairs, music stands and large percussion instruments. Though the U. City Summer Band and other performance groups enjoy some support from the City's Parks Dept., University City certainly merits the type of cooperation apparent in places like Manchester.

Respectfully submitted by Merrick Felder



Conceptual Plan for 80-Piece Concert Band
Permeable pavers approx. 2200 sq. ft. | Sound-reflective walls



Conceptual Band Shell for 80-Piece Concert Band

Standing seam metal roof | Timber framing | Steel columns

Merrick Felder
a r c h i t e c t



South Site - Birdseye View



South Site

Permeable pavers | Sound-reflecting walls

Merrick Felder
a r c h i t e c t



South Site
Completed band shell

Merrick Felder
architect



North Site - Birdseye View



North Site



Schroeder Park, Manchester, MO – Birdseye view



Manchester Community Band at Schroeder Park

Storage, electrical and rest rooms behind shell

Merrick Felder
a r c h i t e c t

Draft Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Actions
Updated July 12, 2023 for the July 18 Park Commission Meeting

The following draft goals, objectives, and actions have been developed for consideration and comment for potential inclusion in University City's comprehensive plan.

Highlighted in blue are those action items that we would like the Park Commission to focus on. Action items that include additional italicized text are the key draft recommendations that will be focused on in Round 2 of community engagement this summer. Ultimately, all actions will have similar supporting text.

Context

(Some of the following will be included as introductory information at the Open House. This information will ultimately be included in the final plan document).

University City was incorporated in 1906. In the 127 years since then, the city has grown and changed and been influenced by the greater St. Louis region as well as world events. Our community is still impacted by that history and our community has shared that these are the most important areas to address. The comprehensive plan is intended to address two major community challenges that have come from that history.

First, historic discriminatory practices in housing and real estate. University City is home to just over three miles of the "Delmar Divide," described by Wikipedia as

...a socioeconomic and racial dividing line in St. Louis, Missouri. The term was popularized outside Greater St. Louis by a four-minute documentary from the BBC. Delmar Blvd. is an east-west street with its western terminus in the municipality of Olivette, Missouri extending into the City of St. Louis. There is a dense concentration of eclectic commerce on Delmar Blvd. near the municipal borders of University City and St. Louis. This area is known as the Delmar Loop. Delmar Blvd. is referred to as a "divide" in reference to the dramatic difference in racial populations in the neighborhoods to its immediate north and south: as of 2012, residents south of Delmar are 73% white, while residents north of Delmar are 98% black, and because of corresponding distinct socioeconomic, cultural, and public policy differences.

Notably, University City has sought proactively to address this major concern, most notably through the establishment of the University City Residential Service which for two decades monitored realtors to assess for racial steering and provided home sale and rental listings particularly to persons of color who had experienced exclusion.

The legacy of this history shows up within the city, with significant differences in racial populations between the city's three wards. This history has created significant barriers to freedom of movement within University City.

In drafting an urban renewal proposal in 1962, University City officials candidly feared that redevelopment might bring with it an influx of "lower class transients and Negroes." Once that transition was under way, the City responded with efforts to stem blockbusting (including a ban on "for sale" signs) with its own fair housing ordinance. But such efforts were trumped by realtors who scoffed at "social do-gooders: and continued to steer white clients away from "changing" neighborhoods. In 1970, the Post-Dispatch observed bluntly that University City was "no longer one of the more desirable areas of St. Louis County," citing as its first reason "a great influx of minority groups." In the eyes of local civil rights groups, realtors' "concession" to fair housing amounted to little more than giving up on pockets of the County (especially inner-ring suburbs such as University City) in order to protect the rest. [Mapping Decline pp 87-88](#)

1. Use proactive measures to promote development that aligns with this plan.

- a. Update the zoning code to support the implementation of this plan.
The City’s zoning code is the primary means of implementing the recommendations illustrated on the Future Land Use and Character Map. The City’s current regulations strictly regulate use but provide limited guidance on form or quality, which can result in development that doesn’t contribute positively to the City in the ways that are desired. Best practices in modern zoning codes often provide more flexibility in the use of buildings and clearer guidelines and standards for building form and quality.
- b. Encourage mixed-use communities where people enjoy easy access to jobs and services in connection with the Future Character and Land Use map.
- c. Establish zoning overlay districts¹ that promote Transit-Oriented Development (development that creates dense, walkable, and mixed-use spaces near transit) near MetroLink stations and major MetroBus routes.
- d. Remove barriers in the zoning code and specify form-based standards for the development of duplexes, triplexes, and other forms of “missing middle” housing.
“Missing middle” housing includes housing that falls between single-family homes and large apartment buildings, such as duplexes, triplexes, courtyard apartments, and townhomes. The City can expand this type of housing by amending the zoning code both to allow for new housing of these types and to ease the requirements for upgrading and renovating existing missing middle housing in the city and to bring non-conforming uses into legal compliance. Special attention should be made to providing housing options that fit into the city’s existing neighborhoods in form and scale. These types of housing should especially be encouraged in areas that are well served by transit.
- e. Evaluate allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in areas designated “Traditional Neighborhood” in this plan.
- f. Modernize or remove definitions of family or household relationships in the zoning ordinance to reflect changing household composition and lifestyles.
- g. Evaluate “MixTape” zoning² to better allow mixing of uses and live-work-play environments.
- h. Regularly update building codes to most recent ICC³ Codes.
- i. Revise the zoning code for barriers to green energy and green development (e.g., residential solar panels, electric vehicle charging stations).
- j. Investigate establishing and/or supporting an existing Community Development Corporation (CDC) to address housing affordability, vacancy, maintenance, and stability in University City.

2. Proactively manage vacancy.

- a. Strengthen the City’s existing vacant property registration program.
- b. Create a program for selling vacant and/or oddly-shaped parcels to neighboring property owners, such as a “Mow to Own” program.

¹ Zoning Overlay District: Special zoning districts that impose additional regulations for the development of a specific area. Overlay districts are often created to further a specific goal, and can be imposed over one or more existing zoning districts.

² MixTape Zoning: A planning initiative originating in Detroit, which aims to re-evaluate and change zoning and land use regulations to allow for easier mixing of land uses.

³ International Code Council (ICC): A non-profit, non-governmental organization that creates model building codes and standards. Municipalities can adopt model codes as-is or make changes as needed to best suit the needs of their communities.

- c. **Prioritize City control of vacant parcels when possible. Use the City's Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA) (or similar mechanism) for acquisition of vacant properties.**

The City should proactively manage vacant sites to facilitate maintenance of properties and potential infill or redevelopment. Strategies such as land banking allow the City to hold land for future uses, which could include consolidation of lots for redevelopment, lot sales to adjacent property owners, "adopt-a-lot" maintenance programs, or reuse for green space. These strategies can also address odd lots (oddly shaped lots) that are especially challenging to redevelop.

- d. Create and monitor a citywide vacant property database.
- e. **Promote green reuse strategies for utilizing vacant parcels in partnership with existing organizations and programs (e.g., MSD, Missouri Botanical Garden, U City in Bloom).**

The City should identify vacant lots that are not suitable for infill development, particularly those at risk of flooding, and utilize these lots to expand the open space network. Green reuse strategies could support a range of kinds of spaces such as community gardens, rain gardens, pollinator gardens, natural plantings areas, low-maintenance trailways, or pocket parks. Green reuse strategies can improve stormwater management, protect property values, and enhance neighborhood character, quality of life, and environmental stewardship. The process of designing and/or making physical improvements to such spaces can also be a community-building opportunity, bringing residents from different parts of the city together.

3. Create attractive, cohesive, compact, and diverse residential areas throughout the city.

- a. Encourage infill and redevelopment in strategic locations to restore and/or create more vibrant, walkable neighborhoods that meet the needs of households at a variety of income levels.
- b. Monitor conditions at larger, aging multi-family developments and support redevelopment potential.
- c. Selectively encourage increased residential density on main connecting streets, including on lots that were formerly occupied by single-family homes.

4. Remove barriers that limit vibrant commercial and mixed-use districts.

- a. Encourage the creation of neighborhood-scale commercial uses.
- b. Explore the use of parking maximums and mandatory shared parking in higher density, mixed-use areas (e.g., Activity Centers).
- c. Revise automobile-related standards and requirements, such as mandatory parking minimums, to encourage alternatives to automobile-based transportation.
- d. Revise dimensional regulations (e.g., height, setbacks) and permitted uses in the zoning code to allow more compact development in mixed-use areas (e.g., Activity Centers).

5. Promote sustainable development.

- a. Conduct a citywide climate resiliency assessment.
- b. Continue ensuring new construction and substantial renovation/additions comply with the Energy Conservation Code.
- c. Promote existing programs for construction that meets Energy Star or similar energy efficiency standards.
- d. Update the Urban Forestry Strategic Plan to include a citywide tree planting plan.

Trees serve many beneficial purposes, including minimizing the impacts of flooding, improving air and water quality, and reducing the urban heat island effect (increase in temperatures in urban areas). A citywide tree planting plan could establish replacement requirements when trees are removed, set quantifiable goals for a tree canopy, and outline strategies for removal of dead and hazardous trees. To maximize effectiveness,

this action will also require coordination with private subdivisions to align practices and standards.

- e. Set replacement standards for tree removal associated with private development.
- 6. Encourage stewardship of and connect residents to natural resources.**
 - a. Strengthen protections for flood-prone areas where appropriate.
 - b. Pursue opportunities to expand publicly accessible and connected open space apart from formal parks.**
 - c. Promote existing partner organizations’ native plant guides to encourage use in landscaping on private property.

Goal B: Advance shared prosperity. Support and expand a diverse local economy, quality education, and a strong workforce that improves opportunities for all residents.

1. Build upon existing development momentum.

- a. Focus development energy to create catalyst areas.

The city has many areas with potential for revitalization that are in and adjacent to successful neighborhoods, such as the Musick neighborhood and the Seafood City site. The City should focus infrastructure investments, incentives, and other programs for these areas. Revitalization is an incremental process that often starts by creating visible examples of successful projects and showcasing how a few strategic investments can lead to change. Demonstrating success is particularly important when promoting new development types, regulatory tools, programs, or funding mechanisms.
- b. Identify opportunities to leverage the Market at Olive development for reinvestment along the western portion of Olive Blvd that aligns with this plan and the Economic Development Strategy.
- c. Pursue targeted development strategies for the International District on Olive to align with the Economic Development Strategy.

Key locations along Olive Boulevard outside flood-prone areas have the potential for targeted redevelopment. The International District presents an opportunity for an approach to development that supports the specific goal (3.4) in the Economic Development Strategy to promote this district. Specifically, increased density should be allowed in this area, parking requirements should be reduced, and vertical mixed-use development (especially residential above commercial) should be encouraged.
- d. Implement the TIF District requirements from the Market at Olive through the Housing and Third Ward Revitalization Task Force.
- e. In keeping with the Economic Development Strategy, align regional agencies for investment along Olive Boulevard.

2. Strengthen and support the labor force and entrepreneurship.

- a. Partner with national and regional workforce development agencies and the University City Schools to implement strategies to align worker skills with sectors that have jobs available.
- b. Expand support for small and minority owned businesses in accordance with the Economic Development Strategy.
- c. Promote and partner with locally-owned, neighborhood retail and local business associations.
- d. Leverage existing programs and funding opportunities (e.g., Build Back Better) to support entrepreneurship and emerging industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing).

3. Foster equitable economic opportunities.

- a. Partner with entities that can help expand access to credit in historically redlined areas and areas that are still considered "riskier" investments today.

Home ownership is key to helping families build wealth but is often out of reach for lower and moderate-income households. The City should explore options to improve credit access, such as partnering with non-profit organizations that offer non-traditional mortgage options and promote existing resources.

- b. Connect the community with available resources such as financial literacy programs and educational sessions on home ownership.
 - c. Adopt a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA).
 - d. Develop a diversity, equity and inclusion strategy that helps the City evaluate decision-making, policies, and programs.
- 4. Leverage incentives to support desired economic development in key locations.**
- a. Develop a transparent policy for providing municipal incentives such as Tax Abatement and TIF, that are consistent with the goals of comprehensive plan.
The City can incentivize desired development with a number of financial tools or subsidies such as Tax Abatement and Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Historically, the City has evaluated the decision to award such incentives for development on a case-by-case basis. Creating a transparent policy for the use of incentives can create more consistency and credibility, while reserving incentives for developments that demonstrate social, economic, and environmental benefits to the community.
 - b. Market development opportunities within the Federally designated Opportunity Zone and TIF areas.
 - c. Adopt a Community Benefits Ordinance (CBO)⁴ or other similar ordinance.
- 5. Improve the City's fiscal position.**
- a. Diversify tax revenue streams to improve fiscal resilience.
- 6. Determine the desired character of the Cunningham Industrial Area.**
- a. Develop an area plan for the area and its surroundings that considers support for its ongoing activity and potential expansion in a way that is compatible with surrounding areas.
 - b. Develop a strategy to heighten regional awareness about the area as an economic generator.

Goal C: Connect community. Invest in community connection to increase mobility options, improve social cohesion, and encourage civic involvement.

- 1. Create "equity of mobility" within University City.**
- a. Implement a street and sidewalk repair and improvement program for City streets.
 - b. Adopt a Complete Streets⁵ policy to ensure that University City streets are designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all citizens.
 - c. **Work with neighborhoods, businesses, and community groups to promote streetscape projects and corridor improvements.**
 - d. Identify low-cost improvements at key locations which are currently unsafe for those getting around without a car.

*Infrastructure improvements that are low-cost can also improve connectivity.
 Maintaining and completing sidewalks, upgrading streetscape facilities such as street*

⁴ Community Benefits Ordinance (CBO): A law that requires developers to engage with community members to identify potential impacts of development projects. CBOs are designed to ensure that the community benefits from planning and development decisions.

⁵ Complete Streets: Streets designed to be functional and safe for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. They are often especially focused on improvements for pedestrians and cyclists, and include a combination of traffic calming, amenities, dedicated lanes, and/or other features.

lighting, introducing traffic calming measures, and completing crossing improvements can help people to navigate to and through different neighborhoods by foot or bicycle.

e. Complete the Centennial Greenway as a fully contiguous trail through University City.

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

f. Implement the 2013 University City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

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

- a. Establish a Safe Routes to Schools Plan which will identify needed safety improvements on streets and sidewalks near schools.
- b. Prepare for micromobility,⁶ bikeshare, and other emerging transit partnerships.
- c. Promote existing programs to educate people about bicycle safety, bicycle regulations, and maintenance.
- d. Create a safety campaign that promotes safe driving practices and increases awareness of pedestrians and cyclists.
- e. Create demonstration projects and events that showcase small-scale safety improvements.
- f. Increase housing supply in locations with potential for good access by biking and walking so those without vehicles can live in areas already served by these modes.

3. Support and coordinate with regional initiatives that improve connectivity, including public transit.

- a. Establish municipal procedures that require for better coordination with state, county, and regional transit authorities.
- b. Coordinate with the county and surrounding jurisdictions to implement the recommendations of the St. Louis County Action Plan for Walking and Biking (SCLAP).
- c. Coordinate with Metro to improve and expand public transportation services.
- d. Contribute to the planning and engineering of regional road projects.
- e. Coordinate with MODOT to reconfigure Olive Boulevard to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety.**

Missouri Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining a significant portion of Olive Boulevard. Reconfiguration of Olive Boulevard would allow for more room for pedestrians and bicyclists and improve the appearance of the streetscape. This would benefit businesses by creating a more inviting environment and residents seeking to access Olive Blvd. by bicycle or foot.

f. Seek alternative funding sources such as grants and public-private partnerships.

4. Encourage civic participation, mentoring, and volunteerism.

- a. Realign citizen opportunities for government participation and engagement with the priorities of the Comprehensive Plan.
- b. Become a City of Service⁷ to improve citizen engagement and action.

⁶ Micromobility: Transportation using lightweight, single-user vehicles, like bikes and scooters.

⁷ City of Service: An organization that provides technical assistance and resources to cities looking to engage community volunteers to help identify and solve critical public problems.

- c. Establish a volunteer Community Leadership or Neighborhood Liaison⁸ program.
- d. Create a youth involvement initiative to empower University City’s youth in conjunction with University City schools, churches, and other community organizations.

A youth involvement initiative, focused on civic engagement, would allow youth from all neighborhoods in the city to interact with and be involved in the community in a variety of ways, and could be connected to opportunities to engage in volunteerism, sports, or arts-related activities. This would provide youth with the opportunity to have a positive impact on the community and create a more unified and connected city.

- e. Modernize City communications channels, website, and social media channels to encourage young people to become more civically active.

5. Celebrate the community’s diversity.

- a. Support diverse business owners through City promotion and resources in accordance with the Economic Development Strategy.
- b. Support community events that highlight the city’s diversity.
- c. Sponsor community-building activities, including cultural festivals that connect to and showcase diversity.

Goal D: Leverage assets. Capitalize on University City’s diverse cultural, historical, and physical assets while investing in new amenities.

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

- a. Modernize and clarify historic preservation objectives and guidelines.
University City is rich in historic assets with many districts and landmarks that are nationally and locally recognized. Guidelines that lack clarity can make property owners uncertain of how to maintain historic character and discourage creative uses of properties. Updating guidelines can allow for new uses of historic buildings that maintain their original character.
- b. Engage the Historic Preservation Commission regarding coordination between their work and the comprehensive plan’s recommendations.
- c. Create a youth initiative focused on celebrating diversity in the city’s history.
- d. Create a University City walking tour focused on diversity in the city’s history.

2. Enhance the community’s parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs of all residents.

- a. Update the University City Parks Master Plan to include a maintenance management plan for parks, prioritizing strategic investment in maintenance, programming, and naturalized spaces.

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

- b. Expand parks and recreation funding mechanisms.
- c. Celebrate the city’s history and diversity through parks, historic preservation, and public art.

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

⁸ Neighborhood Liaison: A volunteer who serves as the link between local institutions and members of the community. They assist in communicating the ideas and goals of each group to the other.

- d. Consider cross-community partnerships and park programming and how to encourage participation by community members across racial and ethnic groups.
 - e. Expand parks and recreation programming for seniors and youth.
 - f. Create a Safe Routes to Parks plan to improve pedestrian and bicycle access.
 - g. Develop youth sports programming that engages university students as mentors and coaches.
- 3. Strengthen support for community and cultural institutions.**
- a. Continue to expand public art in the city.
 - b. Engage with the Municipal Commission on Arts and Letters to create a plan that promotes art and culture in a manner consistent with comprehensive plan.
- 4. Enhance the experience for visitors to University City.**
- a. Continue to expand and promote the Explore UCity website, per the Economic Development Strategy.
 - b. Implement a signage program to highlight the city and its neighborhoods.
 - c. Improve gateway locations and neighborhood nodes with landscaping, amenities, signage, public art or other features.

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

- 1. Protect each neighborhood’s distinctive character and support compatible new development.**
- a. Evaluate short-term rental regulations.
 - b. Develop a “Good Neighbor initiative”⁹ for college students living in University City neighborhoods.
 - c. Strengthen property maintenance enforcement practices and connect residents to home repair assistance resources.
 - d. Celebrate examples of quality homeowner and neighborhood improvements.
 - e. Focus growth around existing neighborhood activity nodes (areas that already include a mix of commercial and/or mixed-use development).
Neighborhood activity nodes are areas with commercial or mixed-use spaces that provide amenities like retail and restaurants within walking and biking distance or residential areas. Some areas of the city have well-established neighborhood activity nodes. Focused growth and development in these areas can provide more opportunities for people to live within a short distance of activity nodes.
 - f. Promote neighborhood activity nodes in parts of the city where there are not many currently (includes the Third Ward or locations along Olive Blvd. that are accessible from the Third Ward).
Because some areas of the city, particularly in the Third Ward, were developed differently and during a different era, neighborhood-serving commercial areas mostly do not exist in these neighborhoods. By updating the City’s land use policies and making strategic investments in infrastructure, such as improved sidewalks, the City can promote new neighborhood activity nodes.
 - g. Improve the Delmar/I-170 interchange as an opportunity for a community gateway and center of a mixed-use district, including bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

⁹ Good Neighbor Initiative: An initiative in many university communities whereby college students get involved in structured programs get to know neighbors, engage in communication with police and representatives from the local government, and/or participate in community service as a ways to build positive connections between students and the neighborhoods in which they live.

2. **Promote housing variety and affordability to support a range of household types, lifestyles, and demographic group needs** (young people, families, older adults, etc.)
 - a. Facilitate the creation of diverse housing options to serve “workforce housing”¹⁰ needs.
 - b. Establish regulatory incentives for affordable or workforce housing such as fee reductions or density bonuses.
 - c. Establish pre-approved building plans for certain housing products (e.g. smaller-scale multifamily) to reduce costs and streamline the approval process.
 - d. Establish a public-private workforce housing capital pool (a public-private housing trust fund).
 - e. Evaluate potential for a City-sponsored down payment assistance program.
 - f. Find opportunities to improve the rental inspection program to ensure safe, habitable, and fair housing.
 - g. Evaluate the creation of a renter protection program.
 - h. Adopt a source of income discrimination ordinance.
3. **Address stormwater management through proactive, regional flood mitigation planning.**
 - a. Implement the flood mitigation plan for the River Des Peres that is currently underway.
 - b. **Expand park coverage and stormwater management through reuse of vacant parcels.**
 - c. Encourage use of Low Impact Development (LID) strategies to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality.

Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management approach modeled after nature. LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavement. LID can be found in open spaces, streetscapes, rooftops, parking lots, sidewalks, medians, and other spaces and be incorporated into new construction and retrofits.
 - d. **Incorporate Low Impact Development strategies into the City’s capital improvements (e.g., permeable pavement for road resurfacing).**
 - e. Take proactive measures to address flood-prone areas and properties impacted by flood inundation.

Some parts of the city are prone to flooding and have experienced significant impacts from flood inundation. The City will take proactive measures to address areas that have been impacted by flooding in the past and work to mitigate future flood risk. This can include a variety of measures, such as utilizing open spaces for stormwater management, acquiring properties, and working regionally to address flood management.
 - f. Generally discourage additional new development in flood-prone areas.
 - g. **Develop parks and open space in flood prone areas that are designed to accommodate water inundation provided that maintenance and security can be addressed.**
4. **Prioritize emergency and other service provision that meets needs as new development advances in the City.**
 - a. Evaluate the need for a new fire station based on the type and amount of development that takes place.
 - b. Evaluate the use of impact fees to support infrastructure improvements and public safety.
 - c. Expand the city’s fiber network and cellular reception

¹⁰ Workforce housing: Housing targeted for households that earn too much to qualify for traditional affordable housing subsidies, but for whom market rate housing may be out of reach.

Goal F: Improve Collaboration. Prioritize commitment to action through responsive governance and strategic partnerships to realize the community's vision.

1. Improve communication and cooperation with adjacent communities.

- a. Collaborate with neighboring communities to strengthen connections and advance shared development opportunities along borders.

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

- b. Study building code inconsistencies across communities and establish a dialogue about coordinated improvements.
- c. Establish a cross-community crime prevention network.

2. Strengthen the partnership with University City School District to enhance the reputations of both the City and District.

- a. Establish a joint branding strategy for the University City School District and the City of University City.
- b. Partner with the University City School District to grow and sustain early childhood education programs and school readiness networks in the city.
- c. Develop mentorship opportunities for students to learn about employment and entrepreneurship opportunities with the City and regional businesses.
- d. Maintain quality infrastructure in the University City School District that can be utilized by the entire community.
- e. Make City assets available for use by the University City School District.

3. Develop additional partnerships with Washington University to address areas of mutual interest.

- a. Establish a more deliberate partnership with Washington University focused on strategic, mutually beneficial developments and investments in the Loop.

Washington University has purchased several properties in and around the Loop and has a strategic plan for development in the Loop. Washington University has made investments in the Loop. As a non-profit institution they may choose to make purchased properties tax-exempt by using them for tax-exempt purposes, and have done so with many. This results in net reduction of property tax revenue supporting the City and Schools. The City and University have mutual goals to invest in the Loop and should partner to ensure that development and investment in the area is mutually beneficial.

- b. Develop a citywide lighting task force focused on safety and invite Washington University to participate.
- c. Establish and expand educational partnerships between Washington University and the University City School District.

4. Improve intra-governmental coordination and cooperation.

- a. Evaluate options for technology platforms to improve collaboration and sharing of information across City departments.
- b. Develop and implement formal training programs for board, commission, and council members.
- c. Conduct an audit of internal City communications and prepare a strategy for improvements.

An audit of communications should include methods and efficiency, particularly for departments with corresponding roles. This will help ensure that City departments'

communication and initiatives are not hindered by unnecessary or inefficient communication. This will also help identify areas where improvements can be made in order to streamline and improve the efficiency of communication within the City. A special focus should be on opportunities for utilization of technology.

- d. Conduct a review of all City boards and commissions to ensure adequate, but not duplicative, responsibilities and sufficient staffing capacity.
- e. Create a forum for regular communication among boards and commissions to address long-term issues that impact multiple boards or commissions.

Currently, there is established practice or requirement that the City's boards and commissions communicate with each other on the issues and areas of opportunity they work on. Despite this, the boards and commissions often have overlapping interests and there are opportunities to improve collaboration and increase the impact of each entity.

5. Manage implementation progress for recommendations of both previously adopted plans and the comprehensive plan.

- a. Evaluate and report on progress on the comprehensive plan on a regular review schedule (e.g. annually).
- b. Establish task forces comprised of community members and, where appropriate, coordinated with City boards and commissions, focused on each of the comprehensive plan's goals.
- c. Update regulations and establish new regulatory tools that align with the comprehensive plan.
- d. Prepare departmental work programs with references to the comprehensive plan.



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Park Commission Update

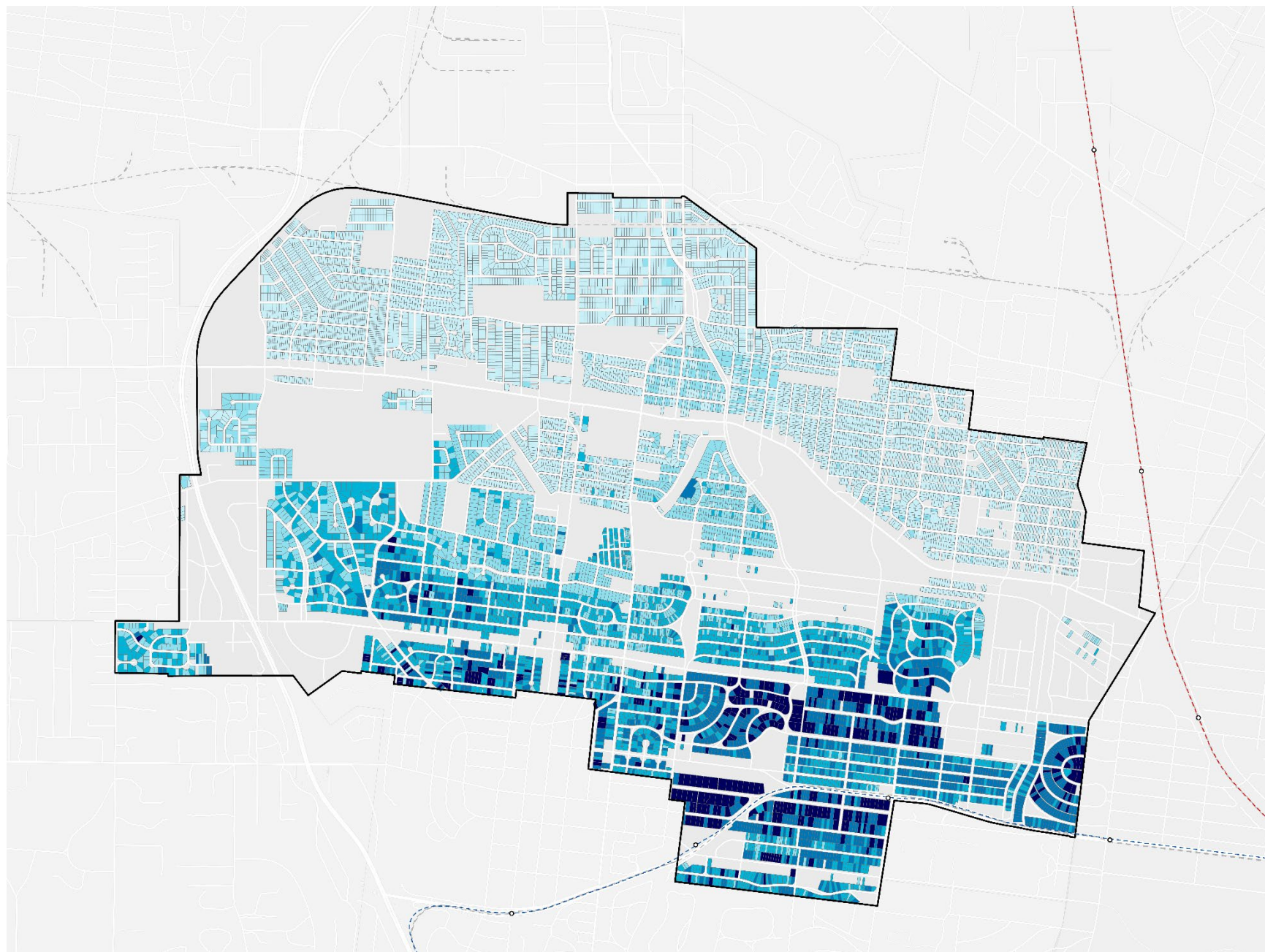
July 18, 2023

Agenda

1. Guiding Ideas
2. What We've Heard
3. Key Recommendations for Park Commission
4. Future Character & Land Use
5. Next Steps

Property Values (Single Family Homes)

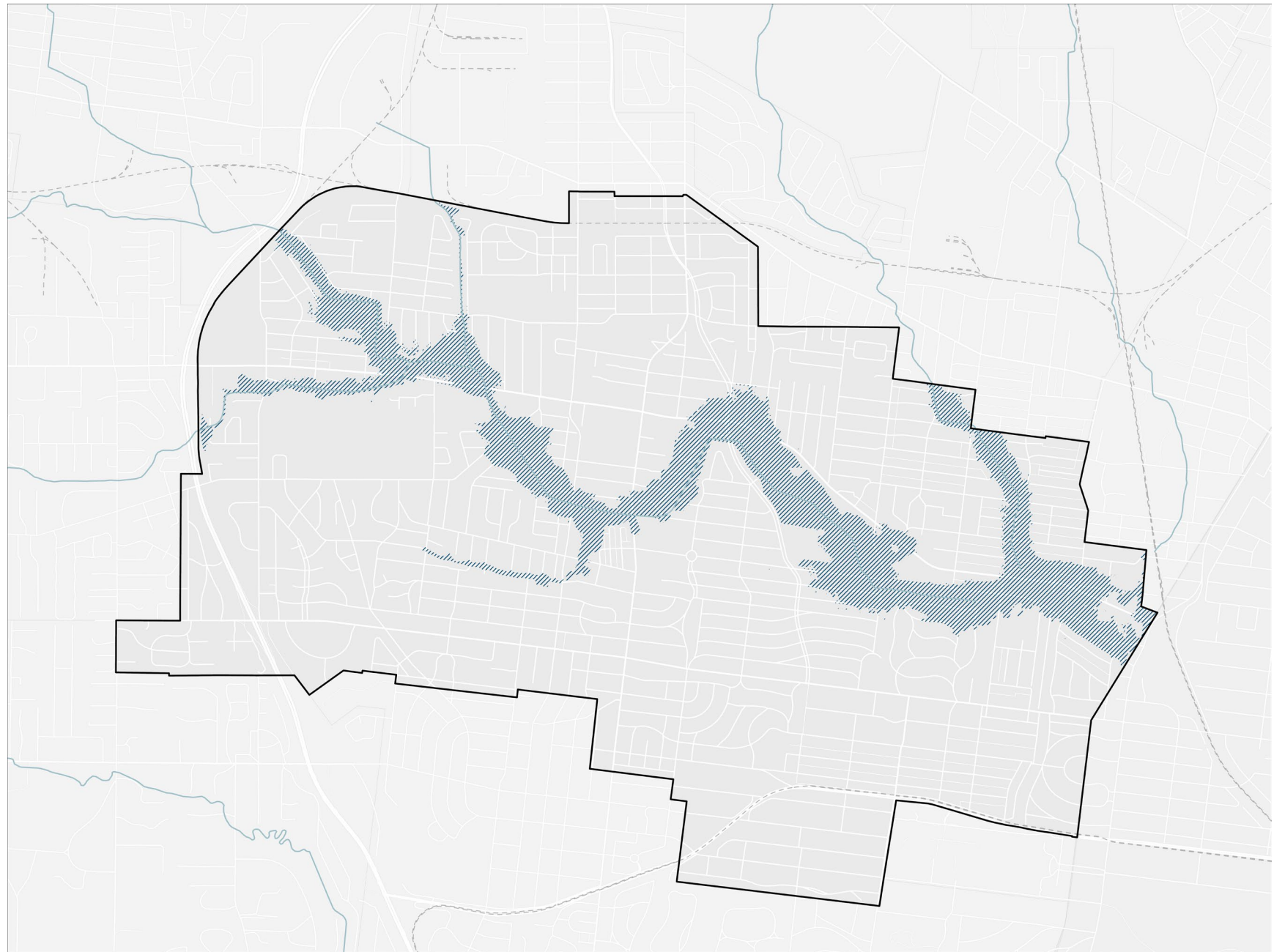
Property Values, January 2023



Flood Prone Areas



Flood Prone Areas (Areas in Floodplain or in 2022 Flood Boundary)



Guiding Ideas



The Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity to...

- Manage a smaller population while improving quality of life for the community
- Address unequal access to University City's different neighborhoods and improve diversity of housing choices
- Address impacts of segregation and improve freedom of movement

The Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity to...

- Share a vision for the physical environment of flood prone areas
- Make it easier and safer for people to move through the City without a car
- Improve access to retail, services, and amenities in neighborhoods where they are lacking
- Commit to a long-term strategy for maintaining parks and open spaces

The Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity to...

- “Make space for everyone” in a diverse community where everyone is valued
- Define a mutually beneficial and equitable relationship with Washington University
- Build a framework to coordinate with the schools to strengthen our community and make opportunities for youth central a top priority
- Recommit to transparency and cooperation in University City’s government

What We've Heard



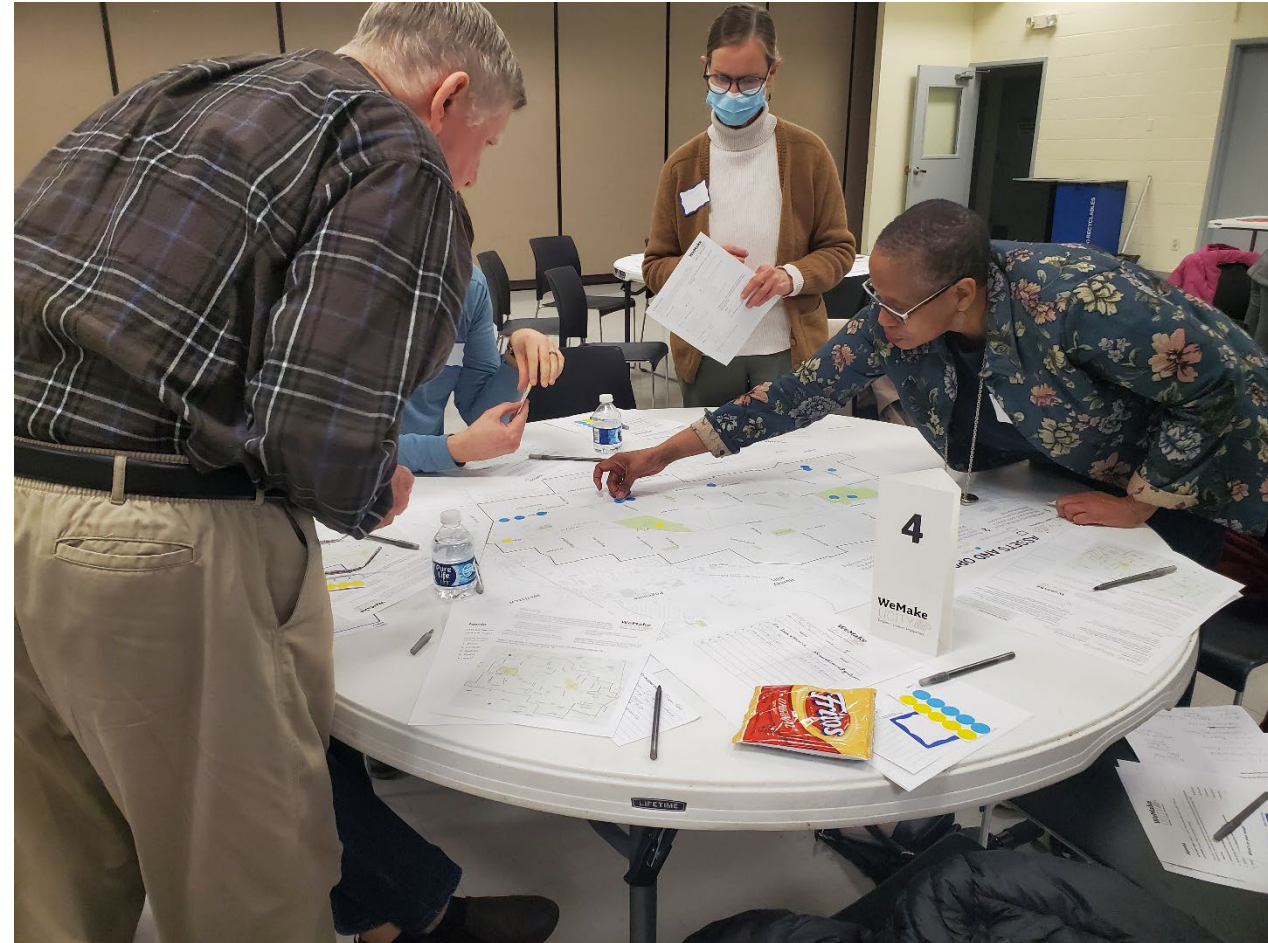
Who we heard from the community

- More than 520 people participated in workshops, online activities, paper surveys, or focus groups
- Overall representation was similar to the City except for people aged 25-34, who were underrepresented
- Most people heard about We Make U City through word of mouth and city communications



What we heard from the community

- The goals and objectives were generally popular and well-supported
- Respondents like the sentiments of the Vision Statement but do not feel the City is living up to that vision currently
- The Round 1 Summary Memo contains more key takeaways



What we have heard from Council

Discussed key topics in one-on-one interviews

1. Flood prone areas
2. Housing vacancy
3. Mixed-use areas

Key Recommendations



Goals

- A. Preserve and Enhance Great Places
- B. Advance Shared Prosperity
- C. Connect Community
- D. Leverage Assets
- E. Strengthen Livability
- F. Improve Collaboration



Goal A: Preserve and Enhance Great Places

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

Goal A: Preserve and Enhance Great Places

- Prioritize City control of vacant parcels when possible. Use the City's Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA) (or similar mechanism) for acquisition of vacant properties.
- Pursue opportunities to expand publicly accessible and connected open space apart from formal parks.



Goal A: Preserve and Enhance Great Places

- Promote green reuse strategies for utilizing vacant parcels in partnership with existing organizations and programs (e.g., MSD, Missouri Botanical Garden, U City in Bloom).



Vacant lot repurposed for stormwater management



Goal C: Connect Community

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

Goal C: Connect Community

- Work with neighborhoods, businesses, and community groups to promote streetscape projects and corridor improvements.
- Complete the Centennial Greenway as a fully contiguous trail through University City.
- Coordinate with MODOT to reconfigure Olive Boulevard to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety.



Before



After

Goal D: Leverage Assets

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

Goal D: Leverage Assets

- Update the University City Parks Master Plan to include a maintenance management plan for parks, prioritizing strategic investment in maintenance, programming, and naturalized spaces.
- Expand parks and recreation funding mechanisms.
- Celebrate the city's history and diversity through parks, historic preservation, and public art.



Goal D: Leverage Assets

- Consider cross-community partnerships and park programming and how to encourage participation by community members across racial and ethnic groups.
- Expand parks and recreation programming for seniors and youth.



Goal D: Leverage Assets

- Create a Safe Routes to Parks plan to improve pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Develop youth sports programming that engages university students as mentors and coaches.
- Continue to expand public art in the city.



Goal E: Strengthen Livability

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

Goal E: Strengthen Livability

- Expand park coverage and stormwater management through reuse of vacant parcels.
- Incorporate Low Impact Development strategies into the City's capital improvements (e.g., permeable pavement for road resurfacing).
- Develop parks and open space in flood prone areas that are designed to accommodate water inundation provided that maintenance and security can be addressed.



Goal F: Improve Collaboration

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

Goal F: Improve Collaboration

- Maintain quality infrastructure in the University City School District that can be utilized by the entire community.
- Make City assets available for use by the University City School District.



Future Character & Land Use



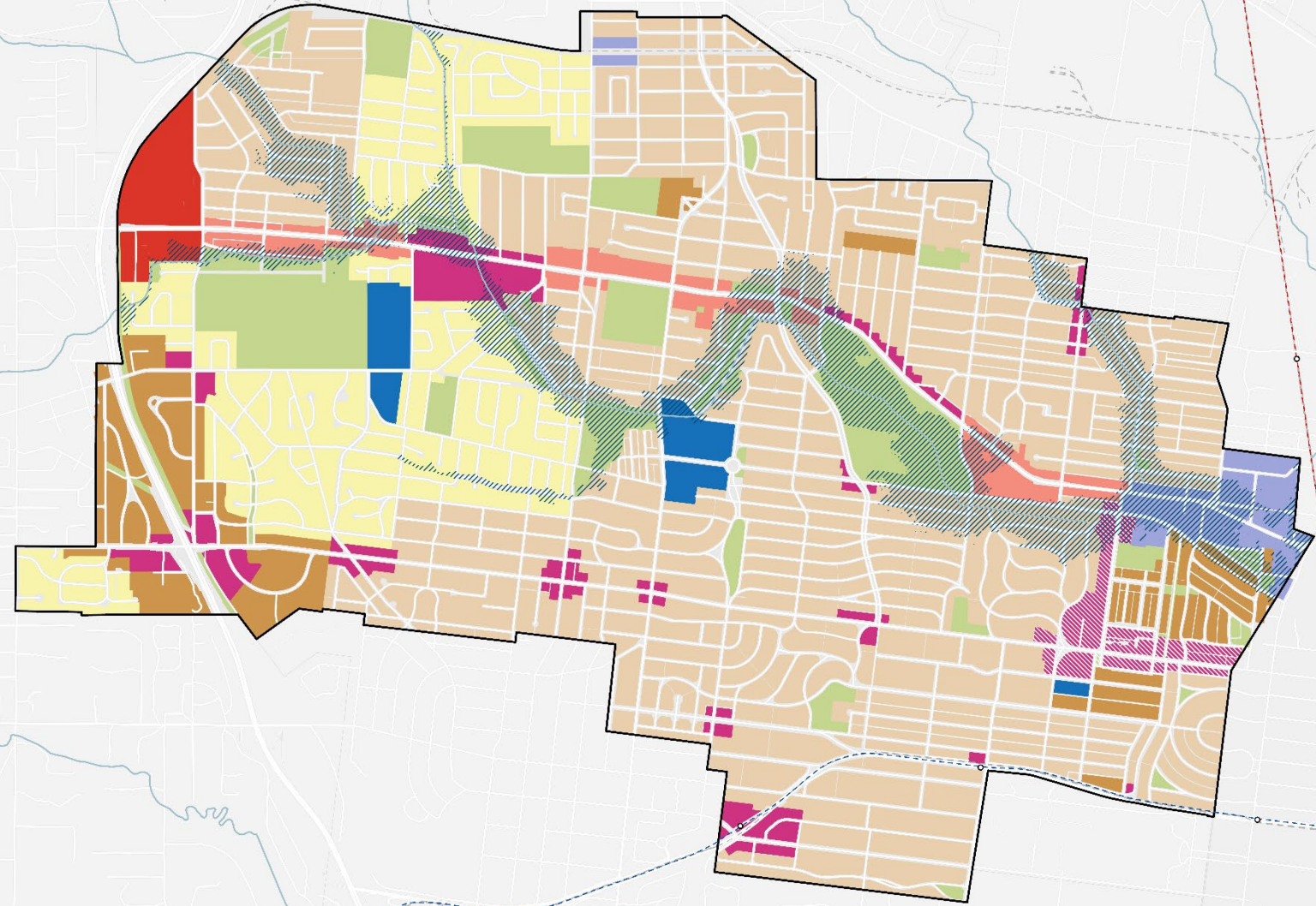
What is the character and land use map for?

- To assist the Plan Commission and staff with **review of development proposals** so that future development conforms to desired character in different parts of the City
- To provide **guidance to developers** regarding the Plan Commission's expectations for quality and characteristics of development
- To provide **predictability for residents, business owners, and others** with respect to the kind of development they can expect to be approved by the Plan Commission
- To provide a **common, citywide** understanding—including by other City Commissions and departments as well as the public—of where and how University City should change over time
- To serve as a **foundation for zoning code changes and design guidelines**, including the possibility of additional zoning standards that better regulate physical form and the quality of the public realm

Draft Future Character and Land Use

Character Types

- Activity Center
- Loop Overlay
- Regional Retail District
- Community Corridor
- Innovation District
- Compact Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Public/Semi-Public
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Flood Prone Area Overlay



Next Steps



Purpose of Round 2 Engagement

- Build off Community Vision 2040 process and Round 1
- Focus on key actions that will be most critical to the plan
- Provide opportunity for community to give input on draft actions and Future Character and Land Use Map



Picture the Possibilities

See the draft recommendations for the City's comprehensive plan, which will impact how University City looks and develops in the future. Share your feedback and help shape the future of University City!

Three ways to participate!

In-Person
Attend the Picture the Possibilities Open House! **Wednesday, July 19**
Drop in any time from 3:00 to 7:00 pm
University City High School Library

Surveys
Fill out an online or paper version of the activities. Complete the activities online at WeMakeUCity.com or pick up a paper version at City Hall or the Public Library. Available July 19 - August 21

Monday, July 25 - 1:00 pm
Tuesday, July 26 - 9:00 am
Wednesday, July 29 - 10:00 am

To learn more, visit: WeMakeUCity.com



Picture the Possibilities

Shape the future of University City!

WeMake UCITY
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There are many ways to get involved!
Visit WeMakeUCity.com for more information.

Schedule of Engagement Opportunities

In-Person Open House

- July 19, 3pm-7pm (drop-in event)

Virtual Open Houses

- July 25, 12-1pm
- July 26, 8-9 am
- July 29, 9-10am

Online and Paper Surveys

- July 19-August 21

Road Show

- Centennial Commons
- Public Library

Pop-up Events

Next Steps

- Conduct Round 2 Engagement
- Revise Actions and Future Character and Land Use Map
- Conduct Commission and Council updates
- Prepare draft plan

Thank you!

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