

RICHMOND HEIGHTS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PROGRESS WITH TRADITION

August 2023



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	6
EXISTING CONDITIONS	9
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	14
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FRAMEWORK	47
FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY	96
SCENARIO PLANS	102
IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX	129



To the Richmond Heights Community,

It is my privilege to present the City's new Comprehensive Plan, a visionary roadmap that will shape the future of our beloved Richmond Heights. It outlines our collective aspirations and sets forth a strategic direction to guide us towards a prosperous and sustainable future.

Our Comprehensive Plan represents a significant milestone in our city's development, serving as a dynamic blueprint for growth and progress. It is a testament to our commitment to building a vibrant and inclusive community that fulfills the needs and aspirations of all residents, present and future.

In crafting this plan, we have engaged extensively with stakeholders from various sectors, including local businesses, community organizations, educational institutions, and most importantly, our valued residents. Together, we have examined the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, identifying the key areas where our city can thrive and prosper.

The Comprehensive Plan encompasses a broad range of critical domains, such as land use, transportation, housing, economic development, environmental sustainability, and social equity. It addresses the pressing issues we face in our built environment while envisioning a city that is resilient, forward-thinking, and responsive to the evolving needs of our diverse population.

With this plan, we aim to foster an environment that promotes economic vitality, structural and economic diversity and further enhances quality of life. It will guide us in supporting vibrant neighborhoods that offer a diverse range of housing options, ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and inclusive places to call home. Our focus on sustainable development will safeguard our environment, preserving our natural resources for future generations. All while keeping the look and feel of Richmond Heights our residents appreciate.

Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan is a testament to our commitment to social equity. It aims to bridge disparities, foster social cohesion, and promote equal opportunities for all our residents. By enhancing access to quality education, healthcare, and public amenities, we will create a city that is fair and just, where everyone can thrive.

However, a plan is only as powerful as the collective efforts behind its implementation. The valuable insights, ideas, and feedback from the community were vital to ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan truly reflects the aspirations and needs of our community.

I want to give a special thank you to all of the amazing people who helped create our guide to the future over the past year. It would not be possible without the community members who shared their ideas and inspiration, the Steering Committee, and PGAV Planners.

On behalf of the entire City Council, I want to express our gratitude and reaffirm our support as we continue to move Richmond Heights forward together.

Sincerely,

Mayor Jim Thompson



INTRODUCTION

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City governments provide many important services and functions to communities. One of these functions, the creation and implementation of Comprehensive Plans, is unique in its ability to make long-range impacts on a community. The City of Richmond Heights last prepared a comprehensive plan in 1986. A lot has changed in since that time. While the City has adopted amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to respond to change over the last two decades, a comprehensive look at how the community has changed and may continue to change in the future is necessary to guide the city in the coming years. A result of several years of research and engagement, the Richmond Heights Comprehensive Plan outlines the vision and goals for the community through 2045.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan sets forth a vision and goals for the future and provides the overall foundation for all land use regulation. A Comprehensive Plan is a long-term roadmap for the community to follow as it considers decisions related topics such as economic development, housing, and livability over the next 10-20 years. This plan will be the vision for the future of Richmond Heights and will include a strategic roadmap for getting there. The plan is a policy guide that provides the backbone for making development and zoning decisions.

WHAT DOES A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONTAIN?

The plan will contain the following sections:

- Existing Conditions
- Community Engagement
- Future Land Use Plan
- Scenario Planning
- Objectives & Key Results
- Implementation Matrix including Roles & Responsibilities

HOW WILL THE CITY USE THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to enable City Officials and staff to better plan for future change. The document will guide the actions of staff and elected officials and provide an overall vision for the City in the long-term.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

PHASE 1 *Existing Conditions Assessment*

The Comprehensive Plan process began with an Existing Conditions Assessment in 2021. This included an assessment of existing conditions and a deep dive into the data, taking stock of where the community was at the outset of the process. This resulted in a Community Analysis report published in January of 2022.

PHASE 2 *Community Engagement*

Conducted from Spring 2022 through early 2023, the community engagement phase of the Comprehensive Plan process spanned the entire planning timeline, allowing residents, the steering committee, public officials, and other stakeholders a variety of ways to engage with the Comprehensive Plan process. This feedback resulted in a shared vision for the community moving forward, which serves as the basis for the Comprehensive Plan.

PHASE 3 *Land Use Planning*

The most important component of any Comprehensive Plan is the land use planning process. This piece of the planning process proactively considers future trends and desired land uses and development patterns. Starting with the existing conditions and community feedback, this phase included a variety of scenario planning exercises to contemplate different future conditions for areas of the City. The resulting land use schemes are included in the final Comprehensive Plan in the form of a Future Land Use Map, the basis for the community's Zoning.

PHASE 4 *Objectives and Key Results*

The last phase of the Comprehensive Plan process was geared toward creating a collective set of objectives and key results that help to achieve the community's vision and goals over time. These strategies, detailed in the final Comprehensive Plan, describe the overall vision and the steps the City and other stakeholders will be required to take in order to achieve it. The Comprehensive Plan is not the implementation tool, but rather includes key results related to things like the Zoning Ordinance and Capital Improvement Plan, which help to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

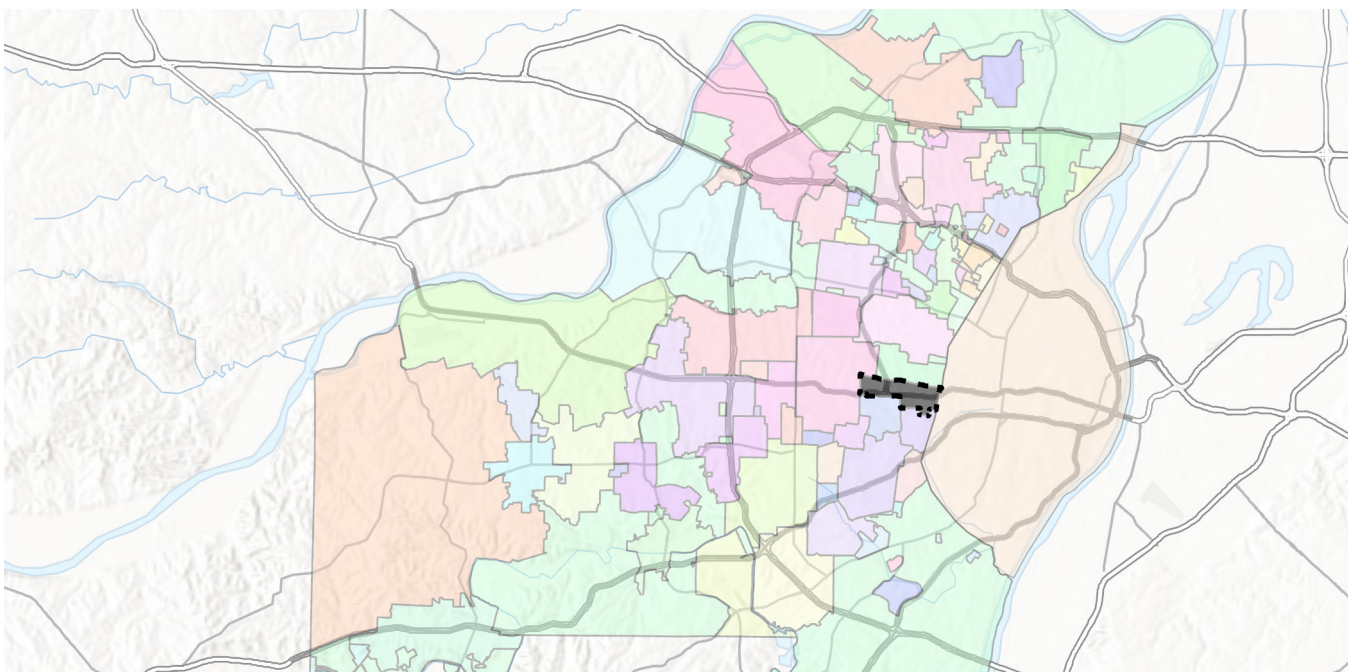


RICHMOND HEIGHTS TODAY

REGIONAL LOCATION

Richmond Heights is located in St. Louis County, Missouri. An inner-ring suburb of the City of St. Louis, Richmond Heights abuts the St. Louis City limits on its eastern boundary and is surrounded by other municipalities on all sides. The City is centered on the intersection of I-64/40 and I-170 in central St. Louis County, giving it easy access to transportation routes and much of the St. Louis region. The City is located in the central corridor of St. Louis County, an extension of the central corridor of Downtown St. Louis. The City contains a large amount of residential land along with retail commercial uses. The commercial area within the City is highly desirable due of the proximity to both residents and workers. Adjacent to the City, and highly accessible from within the City, there are concentrations of office space.

Measuring just over 2 square miles in area, the City is one of the medium-small sized municipalities in St. Louis County. Richmond Heights participates in shared services agreements with some adjacent municipalities. Service agreements are an important part of providing high quality services to residents and businesses within the City. The Parks and Recreation Cooperative (PARC) was formed in 2003 as a joint effort between the City of Richmond Heights, the City of Maplewood, and the City of Brentwood. PARC operates in a similar manner to a parks and recreation department of an individual municipality. Through PARC, City residents are able to visit and use facilities within the City and other participating municipalities at a resident rate. Richmond Heights is home to The Heights, which is operated by PARC and provides significant recreational amenities. PARC



also operates a Senior Van Service with curbside service for residents of the City and Maplewood to connect seniors and residents with a disability to facilities. The City also operates under a shared agreement with the City of Clayton and the City of Brentwood for technology services and IT support.

POPULATION

The population in Richmond Heights has varied over the years, with initial growth in the 1930's. The population peaked at over 15,000 in 1960 as residents of St. Louis continued to move west, out of the urban center. With other nearby communities also seeing growth, Richmond Heights saw some population decline, but has been relatively consistent since the 1990 Census. According to 2022 estimates from the US Census, the current population is estimate is 9,115 residents. Given continued development, the strength of the residential market, and continued desirability for the community, it is anticipated that this slow but steady population increase will continue through 2030.

DEMOGRAPHICS

While the population has remained relatively consistent in size in the last 30 years, with small increases and decreases following development trends, the racial makeup of the community has begun to change significantly. Since 2010, the white population has continued to decline, with an increasing minority population filling the gap. Looking five years ahead, it is anticipated that these trends will continue, with the white population making up just over 70% of the City's population in 2026.

The median household income of residents is estimated to be \$83,885 in 2021 and is anticipated to continue growing to nearly \$100,000 in 2026. Average household income is expected to follow the same trend, with an estimated average household income in 2026 of \$135,000, a more than \$15,000 increase over the previous five years.

Unlike most of the U.S. and many parts of the St. Louis region, 91.4% of Richmond Heights residents have completed at least some college, with 37.6% having a Bachelor's Degree and 36.5% have a Graduate or Professional Degree. 88.2% of residents work white collar jobs, 5.6% work in services, and 6.3% have blue collar jobs including construction, maintenance, production, and transportation. While the vast majority of residents leave the City for work each day, the education levels of residents is a significant strength for Richmond Heights.

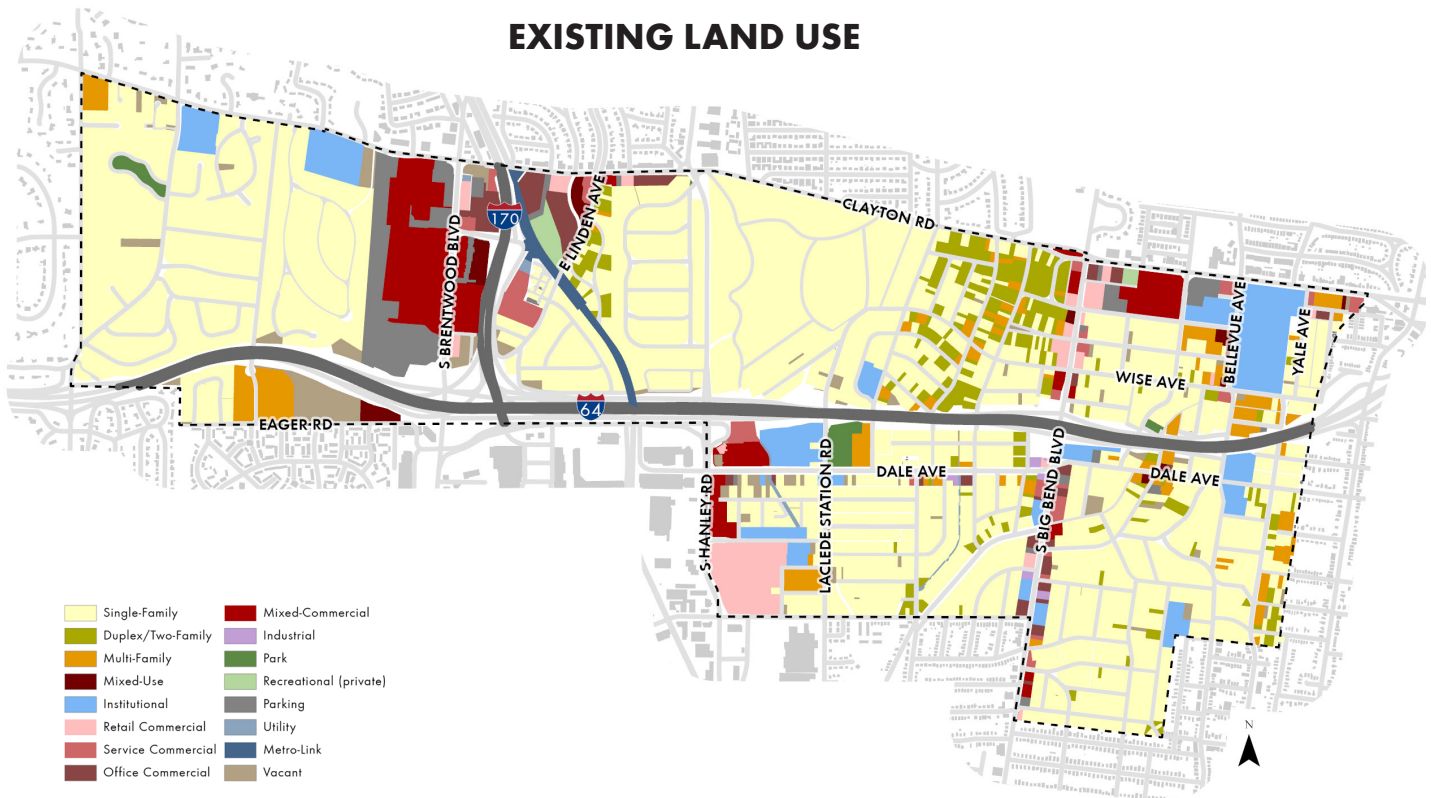
COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The City has a strong sense of community, with residents feeling very connected to the City. Whether long-term residents or recent additions, many residents spoke to the connection they felt to the community through its architecture, history, or neighbors. The City is very diverse in its character, with some parts of the community having a clear identity and others less-so. The commercial and residential built environment varies significantly from east to west and, as a result, contributes to a lack of cohesive identity for the community.

LAND USE

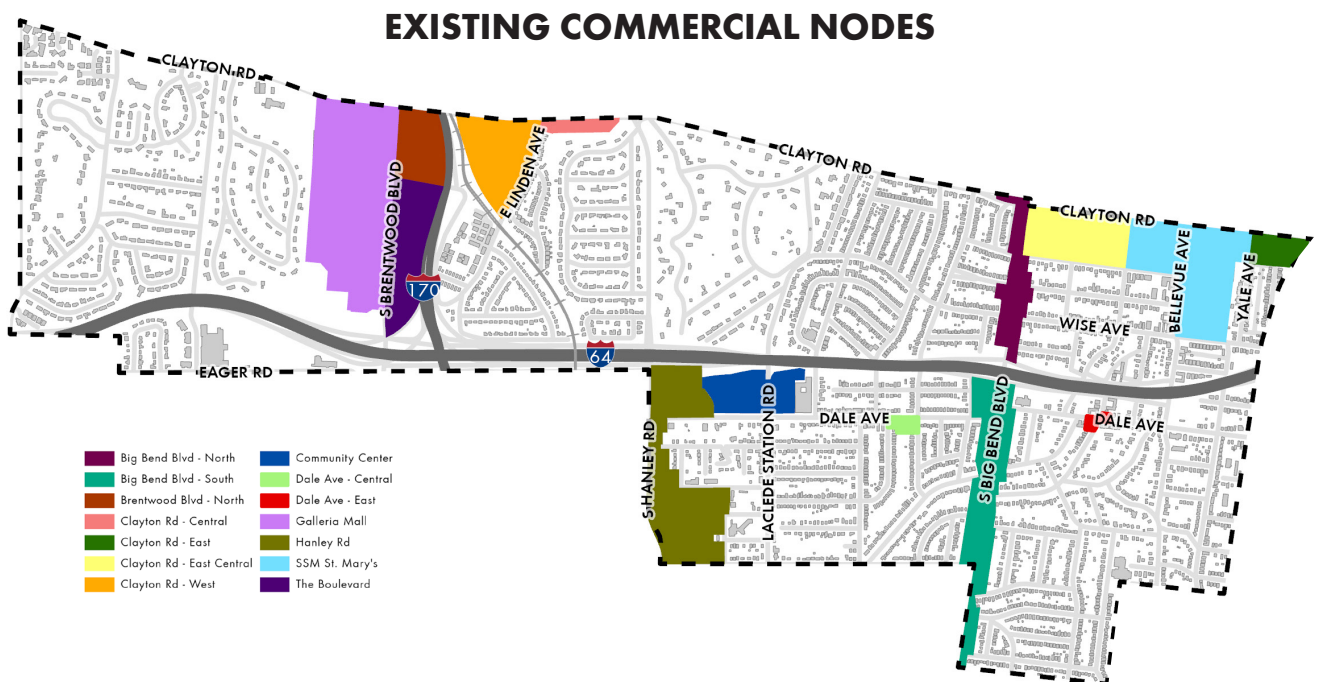
The City of Richmond Heights includes 3,656 parcels totaling more than 50 million square feet. The land use environment is typical of a more suburban city, with about three quarters of parcels being used as single-family lots. The 2,797 single-family structures occupy 63% of all land in the City. Other residential uses include two-family and multi-family which occupy an additional 11.6% of land area in the City. 10.2% of the City is occupied by commercial uses including mixed-commercial, office, retail, and service. In addition, there are 12 parcels being used as mixed-use. Other land uses in the City include industrial, park, MetroLink, private recreational, common ground, and utilities, all at less than 1%. Institutional land uses occupy just over 6% of the City's land and parking, another major user, occupies 35 parcels and 3.18% of the City.

EXISTING LAND USE



ECONOMY

There are 122 commercial parcels in the City, comprising 10.21% of all square footage. 24 of the commercial structures are partially or totally vacant, representing a nearly 20% vacancy rate. Commercial properties range from small-scale retail to large-scale mixed-commercial in regional shopping centers, resulting in a diversified commercial land use environment. The City includes several types of commercial development with mixed-use, retail commercial, service commercial, office, and mixed-commercial developments. These classifications are shown below and organized into Commercial Nodes. These nodes were analyzed thoroughly in the Community Analysis Report.



For more information about existing conditions in the City of Richmond Heights, please refer to the Community Analysis Report completed in January 2022.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS PART OF PUBLIC PLANNING PROCESSES

A Comprehensive Plan process guides the development of a community for the next 10-20 years. As a result, involving maximum community engagement is crucial. As part of any public planning process, a series of steps are required to ensure there is community outreach and, ultimately, community understanding and buy-in for the process. This typically includes the following important steps:

- *Information:* Providing information, data, and updates to the community throughout the process ensures they are kept up to date and in the loop.
- *Consultation:* Providing opportunities to obtain feedback and listen to the community, while also identifying opportunities for continued feedback is an important component.
- *Involvement:* Working directly with members of the community to ensure they are involved throughout the process allows for understanding and, ultimately, implementation.
- *Collaboration:* Working in partnership with community members ensures that community advocates are created through the process that can then champion the effort moving forward.
- *Decision Making:* Ensuring implementation steps are informed by and, if possible, led by community members helps to ensure the decision making powers are in the hands of both residents, stakeholders, and the city itself.

If these five steps are taken into account, a public process can be truly community informed and generate strong community advocates for long-term implementation.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO RICHMOND HEIGHTS

Richmond Heights has not completed a Comprehensive Plan process in over 30 years. In that time, the City has done varying levels of engagement related to large-scale planning processes, sometimes leaving large groups of people behind. In an intentional effort to include community members moving forward, the City has committed to a robust engagement process as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

While the City continues to provide quality city services and communication for residents, this Comprehensive Plan process is an unprecedented opportunity for the City to rethink how it engages with residents related to land use and economic development moving forward.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

To date, a series of engagement techniques have been employed in Richmond Heights. A review of these and the information gathered is below.

STEERING COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT

The Steering Committee is made up of representatives of several City Boards, City Staff, Leadership, and residents and was formed at the beginning of the planning process to meet throughout the Comprehensive Plan process and guide the project team. The Steering Committee includes the following individuals:

- Jim Thomson, Mayor
- Maurice Muia, Council Member
- Ashley Metcalf, Council Member
- Michele Kopolow, Chair, Planning & Zoning Commission
- Susan Ferrara, Chair, Board of Adjustment
- Donna Garcia, Resident
- Jim Benedick, Building & Zoning Administrator
- Amy Hamilton, City Manager

This group met several times throughout the process. The meetings take place at City Hall and have allowed for a series of check-ins with the project team and an opportunity for Steering Committee Members to provide their insight during the process. Many of the Steering Committee Members have also engaged in other ways, from attending the public open house or pop up events to sharing materials with their friends and neighbors.

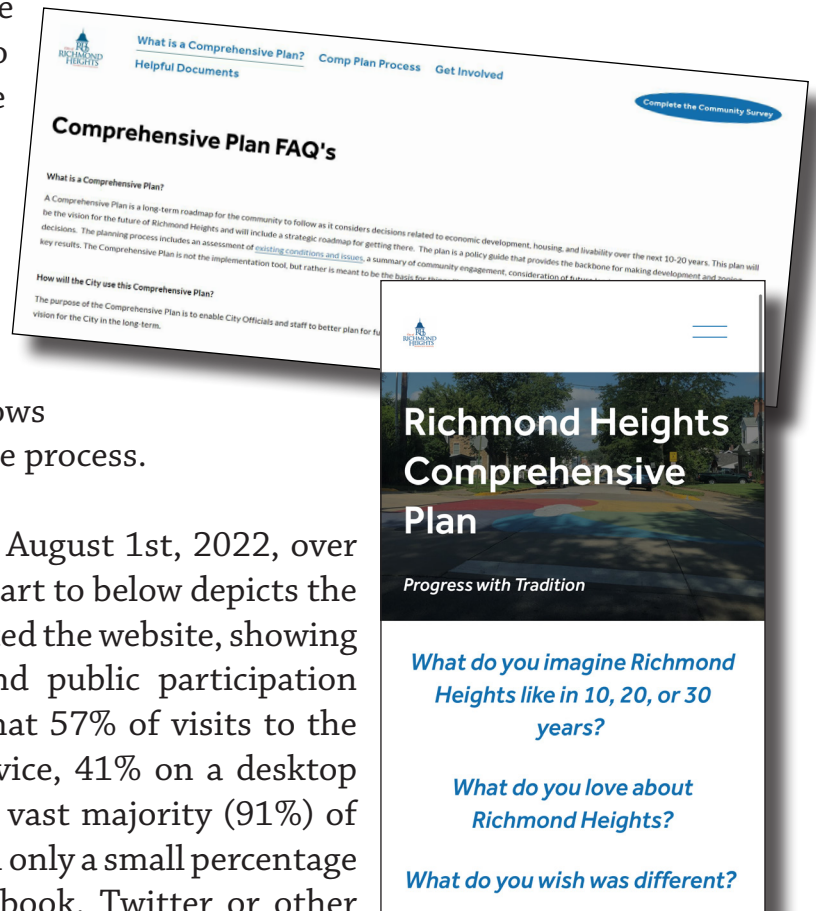
CITY COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

The project team involved the City Council throughout the engagement phase of the Comprehensive Plan process in a variety of ways. Councilman Maurice Muia and Councilwoman Ashley Metcalf both serve on the Steering Committee for the process, providing regular updates back to the rest of the Council. In addition, monthly presentations were made to the Council during regular meetings by the project team. City Manager, Amy Hamilton also provided regular updates to the group to ensure they were up-to-date on the progress of the process. The strategic involvement of the Council ensured consistency with municipal priorities while also allowing for ample resident feedback unhindered by elected officials.

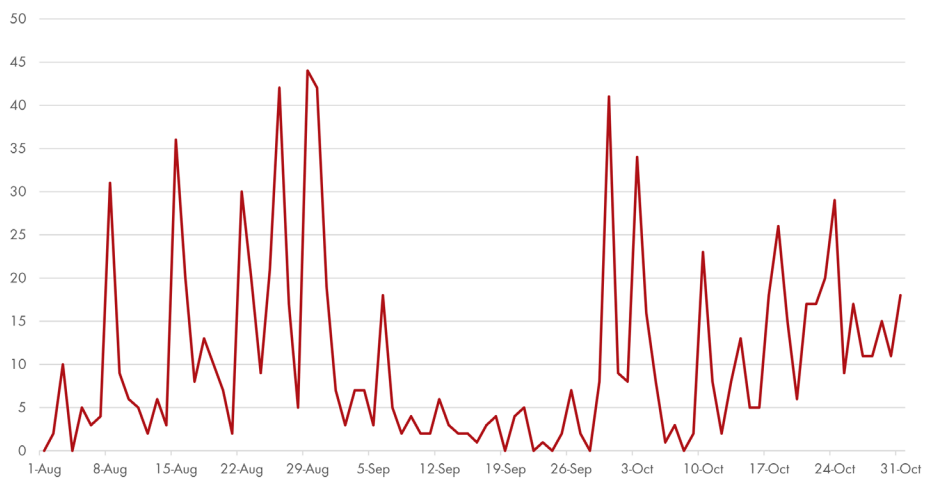
PROJECT WEBSITE

As part of the Comprehensive Planning process, in order to maximize engagement from the broader community, a project website to house all planning materials, event dates, and engagement opportunities for residents was created. This website, www.richmondheights2045.com, launched in August of 2022 and allows residents to follow along through the process.

Since the website became public on August 1st, 2022, over 1,000 visits have been made. The chart to below depicts the daily visit patterns of those that visited the website, showing some spikes during key events and public participation opportunities. The data indicates that 57% of visits to the website were made on a mobile device, 41% on a desktop computer, and 2% on a tablet. The vast majority (91%) of visits were direct to the website, with only a small percentage coming from google searches, Facebook, Twitter or other sources.



DAILY WEBSITE VISITATION



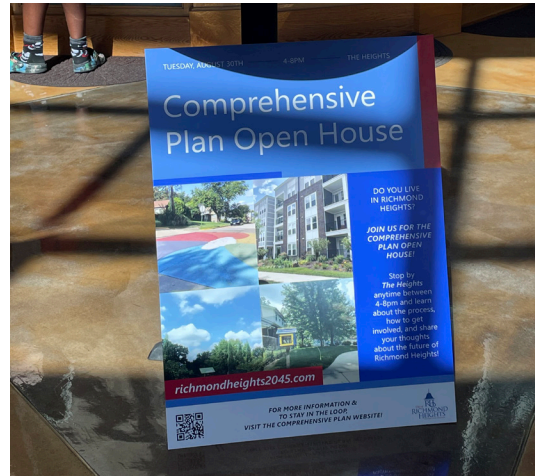
OPEN HOUSE #1

The Project Team kicked off engagement with a public Open House at The Heights Community Center in Richmond Heights. The goal of this engagement event was introduce the community to the project, gather initial input on a variety topics, and create awareness about the planning process and future engagement opportunities.

Over 100 attendees visited The Heights between 4-8pm on August 30th, 2022 to participate in activities during the Open House event. Participants provided their input by responding to both open-ended and visual preference questions at the in-person event through a series of activities. In addition, members of the project team and City Staff were on hand to answer questions about the upcoming Comprehensive Planning process. What follows is a review of the information gathered at the event.

Where do you live?

After signing in and hearing a brief overview of the Comprehensive Plan process, residents were asked to mark their home location on a map. This exercise provided insight who was sharing input and how well public outreach initiatives had reached residents across the city. It quickly became clear that participation was largely from residents living east of South Hanley Road and that more targeted outreach would be needed to reach residents living to the west of South Hanley Road moving forward.



Why Do You Choose to Live in Richmond Heights?

A second station asked participants to indicate why they chose to live in Richmond Heights. While answers varied widely, resident feedback indicated nine key factors that impacted why they choose to live in Richmond Heights, whether less than a year ago or more than 60 years ago.

- Location
- Maplewood-Richmond Heights Schools
- Public Amenities
- The Heights
- Community/Neighborhoods
- Quality of Neighborhoods
- Housing
- Safety
- Diversity

Considering current population trends, how has Richmond Heights changed over the past decades? What does the future hold for the City's demographics?

Participants were provided a series of statistics about population demographics in the City and asked to respond with their thoughts. Residents recognized and valued the city's diversifying population demographics, and think planning for continued age, racial, and economic diversity is crucial to the city's future. However, concerns were raised related to the correlation of population trends with housing demand and maintaining long-term affordability.

What housing types are most in need in Richmond Heights?

The next activity prompted attendees to consider what housing types are most needed in the City. This spurred interesting discussion between attendees, City leadership, and the project team.

As a landlocked municipality, Richmond Heights' housing market is impacted by a low amount of land available for development and increasing land values. In these market conditions, communities like Richmond Heights must identify the best approach to continue providing

Indicate your preferred housing types for future development below.



quality and affordable housing options for its current and future residents. With this perspective on current market conditions and housing needs, residents indicated their preferences for future housing development types.

Most Preferred

The majority of participants indicated that Single-Family residential development is most needed in the city. Residents noted that the quality and character of Richmond Heights' existing neighborhoods as key factor in why they choose to live in the city. Reinvestment in and maintenance of the city's older single family housing stock will be key to preserving the character of existing neighborhoods. Reinvestment in the existing housing stock might also offer housing opportunities to backfill the existing stock with for the "starter home" or "rehab home" residents as aging residents begin to look for homes that are more age- and accessibility-friendly.

Townhouses was the second most preferred housing type. Mid-rise apartments and condominiums received a similar level of preference. Residents recognize that population trends and market conditions in the city dictate that higher density residential development will be needed to house and meet the needs of the city's growing and diversifying population, but prefer smaller-scale residential development type. Residents find that these housing development types along with new single family development can preserve pedestrian safety and the walkability of neighborhoods; offer "missing middle" housing options to provide a variety of options me the needs of residents of across the spectrum of age, life stage, and affordability. Overall, residents desire to more diversity in smaller-scale housing developments to meet needs of current and future residents, particularly students, younger individual, young families, and aging residents to age in place.

Housing affordability for renters and home owners across existing and preferred future housing development types is a priority. Residents noted increasing costs, of new multi-family apartment developments and indicated that more affordable, new multi-family developments are needed to meet the needs of the city's economically diverse population.

Least Preferred

While high-rise apartments generated the lowest level of preference for future development, residents noted that the appropriate location for this type of development could be along in major corridors to enhance walkability, reduce pass-through traffic within neighborhoods, and preserve existing neighborhood character.

What should future commercial development look like?

Richmond Heights has a variety of commercial development styles, from traditional, auto-oriented shopping centers to the more mixed-use style of recent developments in the City, with some historic commercial development scattered throughout the older parts of the City. Redevelopment of some of the City's commercial nodes is likely in the future. As a result, participants were asked to participate in a series of activities related to commercial preferences. As the images above display, participants were shown a series of commercial development types and asked to share their thoughts.

Considering potential redevelopment, indicate your preferred commercial type below.



Most Preferred

Small-scale Neighborhood Commercial and Dense, Mixed-Used Development as the most preferred commercial development types when considering future redevelopment opportunities in the city. While the majority of residents indicated that single family residential is the preferred future housing development type, residents also noted a strong preference for vibrant, walkable, mixed-used neighborhoods offering a mix of commercial and residential uses. Residents also noted the ability of these types of development to support density, promote small, local shops, and create destinations within walking distance of surrounding neighborhoods. Identifying opportunities for small-scale, neighborhood commercial and mixed-use developments like The Boulevard and similar development in surrounding communities can achieve the community's desire future for commercial development. Reinvestment in historic structures, particularly in areas where there opportunities to create small-scale neighborhood commercial nodes can support this vision while preserving existing neighborhood character.

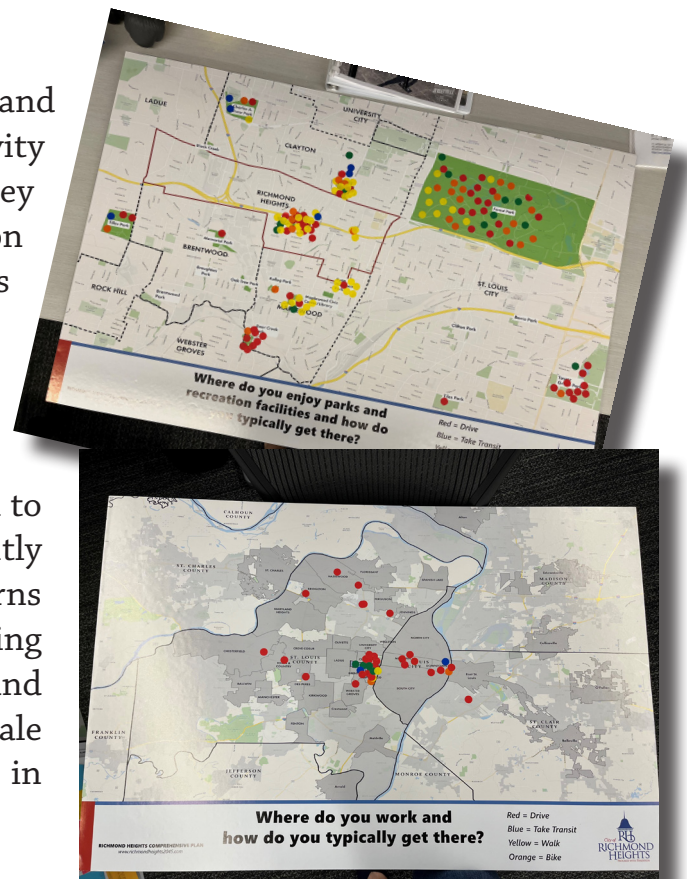
Least Preferred

Residents indicated that auto-oriented retail and shopping centers are least preferred when considering future redevelopment opportunities in the city. Residents recognize that proximity and access to central corridor also supports retail demand in Richmond Heights and attracts customers from throughout the region. Interestingly, when asked where they currently meet their shopping, dining, and entertainment needs, the vast majority of residents referenced auto-oriented retailers such as Schnucks in the Richmond Center, the Brentwood Promenade, and others nearby. While residents indicated that

they frequent the areas auto-oriented retail and shopping centers to meet shopping, dining, and entertainment needs, residents also indicated a stronger desire more walkable commercial developments. This contradiction between residents' consumer preference and desired future commercial development type may be an indication of a market gap for small-scale, neighborhood commercial and mixed use developments in the city with emphasis on local businesses.

Transportation & Connectivity

To learn more about transportation patterns and identify opportunities enhance connectivity to destinations, residents were where they work, where they enjoy parks and recreation facilities, and how they get there. This exercise shows that residents tend to walk or bike to nearby parks and recreation facilities to in Richmond Heights, Maplewood, and Clayton. Driving, followed by biking, is the mode of transportation most often used to travel to nearby Forest Park, the most frequently visited of among nearby parks. These patterns emphasize residents' desire for enhancing walkability in existing neighborhoods and prioritizing pedestrian-friendly, smaller-scale residential and commercial developments in the future.



The majority of residents indicated that they work in Richmond Heights or in one of the surrounding communities. A small concentration of residents work in Midtown and Downtown St. Louis City and few residents travel to St. Louis County and North St. Louis City for work. An overwhelming majority of residents indicate they drive to work. While the city boasts convenient access to two MetroLink Stations and several MetroBus routes, few residents indicated the use of public transit when traveling to parks and recreation facilities or work. Noted factors that may contribute to local auto-dependency include the convenience of access and connectivity to destinations throughout the region by way of I-64 corridor and the relative ease of driving in the St. Louis region.

Additional ideas, comments, and concerns from residents on topics that will impact the future of Richmond Heights:

- As new development occurs and the city continues to grow, residents desire to retain the city's close-knit neighborhood feel.
- Identify ways to address local flooding issues.
- Create or facilitate the creation of new public and private gathering spaces. Public gathering spaces might include a town square, pocket parks, sidewalk dining, or walkable corridors complete with pedestrian-scale amenities. Private gathering spaces might include coffee shops, cafes, local eating establishments, outdoor dining patios, commercial and residential developments set around outdoor plazas.
- Offer or support local groups in hosting different types of community events and neighborhood activities that appeal to the city's diverse population.
- Continue and expand on the quality services and recreational offerings that the City offers. The City should look for more opportunities to create partnerships with adjacent communities to enhance services and amenities offered to residents.
- Plan for traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements to create safe, walkable, and welcoming corridors for pedestrians and bicyclists. Residents noted that traffic congestion, traffic speed, and red light running are commonplace along major corridors and neighborhood streets (especially on Del Norte Avenue, W. Bruno Avenue, and S. Big Bend Blvd.).
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation, particularly walking and biking.
- Residents desire commercial and residential developments that include more landscaping and greenspace, as well as well-maintained landscaping and greenspace throughout the city. The City should establish enhanced requirements for commercial and residential landscape design, landscape maintenance, and tree/tree canopy preservation.
- Enhanced code enforcement for residential property maintenance is needed.
- Residents desire more trails offering connections between parks and destinations, including connections to GRG trails and creating shared use paths for walking and biking in the city.
- Residents desire locally inspired commercial and retail shops. The City should support and create opportunities for small, local businesses to thrive through the use of incentives or other initiatives.
- Residents value the city's population diversity and would like affordably priced housing options to meet housing needs and preserve this aspect of neighborhood character.

POP-UP EVENTS

Two pop-up events were held at The Heights during the month of October. On Thursday, October 13th from 2-4pm and Monday, October 17th from 8-10am, several members of the consultant team were available in the lobby of The Heights to greet residents as they entered the building. These pop-ups provided a casual way to engage with a broader audience. The pop-ups were not advertised and were instead, a way to catch people that may not have heard about the Comprehensive Plan process. Over the four hours of time, more than 50 people were engaged about the process. The demographics of those engaged varied widely from older, long-time residents who frequent The Heights to younger residents coming to check out the space for the first time. The vast majority were thrilled to be involved in the process and share their thoughts.

Passerbys were able to complete several activities in-person, speak with the project team to learn about the process, and share their thoughts about their vision for Richmond Heights in the future. In addition, postcards about the Community Survey were provided to each resident that was engaged. Some chose to complete the survey on the spot while others took the postcards home to complete later.

Overall, the group engaged through the pop-up events were unfamiliar with the Comprehensive Plan process. They were unsure what the plan's purpose was but were excited to learn about how they could contribute. Sentiments were similar to that of those that attended the public open house - excitement about the future of the city, desire for more local businesses, and strong support for the community services offered by the City such as the Heights.

Scenario Planning & Development Activity

To begin gathering input on for the next phase of the planning process, Scenario Planning & Development, residents at the pop-up events were asked to complete a mapping exercise to identify the types of residential and commercial developments most needed in Richmond Heights and where they think those types of developments should be located. Resident ideas for scenario planning and development areas in the city included the following locations throughout the city:



1. Small-scale Neighborhood Retail at the Southeast Corner of Clayton Road and S. Big Bend Blvd.
2. Dense, Mixed-Use Development along Clayton Road between S. Big Bend Blvd. and Blendon Place
3. Dale Avenue: Townhouses, Mid-rise Apartments, Small-scale Neighborhood Retail
4. Small-scale Neighborhood Retail along S. Big Bend Blvd. south of I-64
5. Condominiums and Mid-rise Apartments in the Clayton Road West business district
6. Dense, Mixed-Use Development along the east side of S. Brentwood Blvd. between Clayton Road and I-64

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

A series of individual stakeholder meetings were held during the month of October 2022 to speak to a variety of members of the Richmond Heights community. These included residents, business owners, church leaders, school district representatives, large property owners, and major developers. These stakeholder interviews were conducted in person and virtually and lasted between 30-90 minutes. City Staff did not participate in these stakeholder meetings to ensure maximum transparency and comfort with those being interviewed. Stakeholder meetings helped the project team better understand the local landscape and community values; identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities impacting residents, businesses, the local and regional market, and the city's broader future; and gathering ideas about the community's desired future to inform the planning process. While the questions varied depending on the interviewee, most followed a similar structure and included questions such as:

- What is your relationship to Richmond Heights?
- How long have you lived/worked/owned property here?
- What is great about Richmond Heights?
- What would you like to see improved?
- What relationship do you have to the City itself?
- Is there anything the City could do to better support development, residents, etc.?

Several different topics were discussed with the variety of stakeholders. The results of those interviews are shown below, organized by topic area.

Why Richmond Heights?

- Neighborhood character
- Neighbors... Community/social pride
- Many life-long and long tenured residents

- progressive community
- high quality schools/education
- Location, Location, Location: proximity and access to central corridor offers convenient connection to destinations throughout the region for residents; I-64/central corridor and high traffic counts along other major corridors provides consumers with convenient access to the city which supports the high concentration of retail and creates a strong environment for competition
- high pedestrian activity within neighborhoods
- Concentration of retail. Residents can find everything they need here.
- To diversify – not just racial diversity, but socioeconomic is more important
- The city may not “feel” as diverse as the demographics show. (“Starting to homogenize from a social economic standpoint. Not much diversity like people think.”)

Residential Development

- Housing across the spectrum of affordability is needed. Think about who lives in RH/who wants to live here/who doesn’t and who can afford to live here to help the community understand affordability better. (School teachers, nurse/doctors, police officer, fire fighter, city staff person, students, young professional, couple with children, etc.)
- Housing types meeting market demand of all age groups is needed
- New development should fit in with the character of existing neighborhoods
- Tear downs and rebuilds may offer opportunities for residents to achieve more modern housing in existing neighborhoods
- Rehab/reinvest in existing structures
- Older homes don’t support aging in place. Senior housing is needed of a variety and types and price points to meet the needs of and retain the aging population
- Outgrowing older homes due to age, illness, loss of mobility, etc..
- Older homes aren’t big enough and have poor layouts to support growing families
- Replacement cost of tear down/rebuilds is not economically feasible
- Housing and developing for the growing population without widespread displacement
- Preserve neighborhood character and social pride
- Developer perspective on apartment market: bullish, continued demand for apartments
- Resilient and sustainable must be a part of the development conversation: retaining young professions, students, and other trending demographics; preventing in-migration from one new development to the next
- Single family homes, townhouses, and mid-rise/neighborhood mixed-use

residential are most desirable

- The city and community should be more receptive to housing targeting young professionals, students, and other looking for highly amenitized, luxury housing. Developers see market demand here and want to develop. Figure out how to work with these developers/projects to make them fit in better with neighborhood character.
- How are other communities handling this development trend? Are they retaining this population and income demographic and expanding the local tax base or are these folks mostly transient?
- ALTAIR:
 - some residents think this type of development (primarily the scale) is out of place for the neighborhood and parking spills over onto street taking up spaces for residents
 - large-scale apartment complexes are less desirable

Commercial Development

- Resilient and sustainable must be a part of the development conversation:
 - understand the local market and how retail generally is changing
 - preventing in-migration from one new development to the next
 - retail will need a diverse mix of national and local brands to build and maintain resilience
- Is commercial development attracting new customers...generating new revenues, or are customers “here” now simply going “there”?
- One-stop-shop Trend: Retail anchor(s) with a diverse tenant mix (service businesses and restaurants working for Schnucks center)
- Growing Retail Users: health and wellness oriented “medtail”, boutique fitness growing, salon, small footprint banking
- New development should offer opportunities to create a healthy mix of national and retail tenants
- “Local business” should include mom-and-pops and local franchise owners
- Rehab/reinvest in existing structures
- Developer perspective on market: “confident” in local hotel market
- Local retail market is performing well, stable, and competitive: high occupancy rates at Galleria and Schnucks
- Galleria: very strong metrics, bucking nation retail trends for retail and shopping malls, sales growing, have reached historic sales psf levels, doing well with bringing in more local retailers, mall is “vibrant”, anchors store are here to stay, online retail trends have not negatively impacted sales or occupancy levels...online needs brick and mortar to be successful (last mile retail), has expanded customer base

(ethnically and income), a dominant player in regional mall market

- Successful retail - cyclical - must curate a retail mix that is relevant and reflect changing consumer base and trends
- “Retail follows roof tops” - having more residential creates more demand for restaurant/entertainment uses
- RH at the center of arguably some of the best retail in the market. Synergies like Galleria and The Blvd add to day-time shopping in the area

Nodes of Development and Activity

- Identify opportunities to capitalize on and development around high performing corridors, developments, local destinations (“location, location, location”, traffic counts, foot traffic, market gaps - competition, walkable neighborhood nodes)
- Placemaking improvements to support vibrant neighborhood nodes

Areas Susceptible to Change

- S. Big Bend Blvd. - South
- SE Corner of Clayton Road and S. Big Bend Blvd.
- DESCO would be interested in figuring out if there is an opportunity for that property / city could collaborate on that
- Folkweave Node
- Dale Avenue Corridor has potential to transition to more neighborhood commercial uses (Bredel and Dale)
- Residence Inn
- Galleria Out Lot: Galleria doubling down on their investment in the property, has received interest in redeveloping the property over the years and have considered some opportunities to redevelop it themselves, but just hasn’t been the right project. Temporary leases, revenues, and foot traffic generated have been a stable source of income helping them to sit on the property until the highest and best use is identified. Galleria exploring a TDD to support additional investment in their strong, annual capital improvement program. Parking and signage are a hurdle that will need to be overcome to redevelop this lot. Prefers mixed use/vertical construction to be most successful. They’re open to and have considered all types of uses. Open to selling to developer, JV, or redeveloping themselves as it makes sense.

Municipal Codes

- Establish residential and commercial development design guidelines rooted in preserving and enhancing neighborhood character (building materials, architectural style and features, bulk standards, landscape design, intensity of use standards,

- neighborhood/district design standards, public realm design)
- Tree replacement (consider Webster Groves ordinance)

City Services and Amenities

- Evaluate level of services and amenities provided by property type (services/amenities are provided to single family properties, but not multifamily properties, etc....trash service, sewer lateral program, etc.)
- Review services and amenities offered by neighboring cities which might create value/enhance quality of life for Richmond Heights residents
- Look for new ways to support and enhance local schools
- Streamlining and increasing communication and transparency around city requirements, due diligence for businesses and developers, development goals, application, and approval processes for new businesses and developers
- Red tape, unclear paths to entitlements, and poor communication increase development risks...a turn off for developers
- “Developers want to see the BIG PICTURE....a peak behind the curtain” so they know what the City wants to see, where development opportunities exist, and where they fit in. Help them determine developments worth pursuing.
- Developer perspective: Generally, too much planning is done without clear picture of what actions will be taken next
- The City should create programs to help small and local businesses with business development, affordability of rents in new construction, reinvestment in existing buildings
- The City should do more to attract small businesses
- Business development services through the city or in partnership with other organizations (local SBDC?)
- Map other public and private resources to help businesses through business development. Galleria and DESCO offer some additional tenant support services for their tenants
- Consider place-based incentive tools: CID, etc.
- Consider programs to incentive rehab of existing structures
- PARKING:
 - RH is very auto-centric
 - Schnucks center faces parking constraints during peak weekend shopping
 - VAS Construction noted that parking constraints were one reason the company walked away project to convert Residence Inn to multifamily
 - Galleria noted that current parking requirements will need to be reevaluated to facilitate any development of their out lot

Transportation: Safety, Access, and Connectivity

- Catalyzing adjacent land uses and development
- Creating safe, comfortable, and amenity rich multi-modal paths between destinations and neighborhoods
- Streetscape, placemaking, pedestrian-scale lighting and other amenities
 - Access and excessive curbs cut create traffic issue on older, transitioning corridors like Dale Ave and Big Bend
 - Public infrastructure investment can catalyze new development
 - Public Transit:
 - Metrolink is poorly perceived and underutilized community asset: provides transportation for retail at Galleria; does not generate much foot traffic for The Boulevard (developer does not consider it an asset for them)
 - The majority of residents drive to work.
 - Metrolink a blessing and a curse for Galleria: they believe some retail theft is connected to convenient access to/from metrolink, but many worker use metrolink to get to work
 - Public transit is not used much by residents to get to there destinations

Parks, Trails, Greenspace, and Public Spaces

- Pockets, parks, plazas, etc.
- Brentwood Bound implementation....how can RH build off of this

Local Churches and Community Impact

- Shrinking congregations create to financial constraints and limit capacity for community/social outreach in neighborhoods and property maintenance
- What's driving this change locally? in the region?
- What's are the connections between and impacts of local churches on surrounding neighborhoods? How do local churches stabilize neighborhoods?
- What are the impacts when churches close or discontinue key services or programs like schools? Are some more impactful than others?
- Are local churches important for the city's future?
- Are their services/amenities desired by residents that can be offered through local churches support vibrant and diverse neighborhoods?

Schools

- Pay is not competitive. Heavily dependent on local tax base. How can salaries become more competitive? Can employees afford to live in the city? Opportunities for incentive programs as part of salary package to help employee purchase homes

in the city??, etc. Housing market has priced out many.

- It truly is the community that is attractive
- Quaintness of the businesses that are here is attractive / the history, etc.
- highly rated early childhood program
- nice facilities
- Experiential learning / provide exposure and opportunities that families
- Seeing more collaboration between the two cities lately – just hired a social worker to help in both Maplewood and RH (what other opportunities exist to meet community needs)
- How can schools partner on affordable housing?
- Want to connect students to jobs and opportunities within these communities / partner better with this community to keep them here. How do we continue to provide a good education, so kids are college and career ready?
- Pie in the sky – would love to have a separate middle-school campus:
 - Right now, K-6 elementary schools
 - 7-12 all the same at high school campus
- How do we continue to provide a good education, so kids are college and career ready? Is the same true for the city? Are there opportunities for city and school to partner on community outreach and engagement?
- Diversity:
 - 66% white / 19% black / 8-9% who identify as biracial students of color (not Black) / remaining is other
 - For a district that embraces diversity, it's not that great
 - Free and reduced lunch rate is about 31%
 - MRH School staff is majority white
- The city may not “feel” as diverse as the demographics show.
- “Starting to homogenize from a social economic standpoint. Not much diversity like people think.”
- McKinney Vento – homeless policy / people take advantage of it
- Culturally, people double up and live with other people (intergenerational living situation) MRH gets some of their diversity through this so they allow it. What constraints does this put on budget, ability to offer competitive salaries, enhance educational programming, services, tools, equipment, materials, etc.? What is needed to offer quality education to and retain diverse student population without straining the system?
- Deer Creek flooding is an issue. MRH would like to have their own softball/baseball fields.
- Other sports fields, sciences labs, and other areas of physical improvement/upgrade is needed.
- The city and MRH should work together on the district's strategic planning process to align long-term goals, funding needs and sources, etc.

ONLINE SURVEY

In September of 2022, the Steering Committee and project team began working on an online survey that would be distributed to the broader Richmond Heights community. The goal of this effort was to gather baseline information about where the community stands on key issues in Richmond Heights. The seventeen question survey included questions about the demographics the respondent, how they saw the city changing in recent years, preferences for housing and commercial types, thoughts about greenspace and other amenities, and questions getting to the city's strengths and weaknesses.

The survey was housed on the project website and was be distributed through various social media channels and through the city's existing communication mechanisms. In addition, yard signs and postcards were printed and distributed throughout the City and at key gathering places. Paper copies of the survey and QR codes to provide easy access were also made available at City Hall and the Heights.

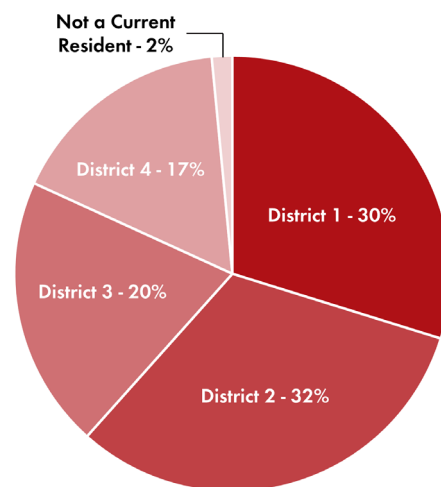


Over 350 respondents completed the online survey regarding the future of Richmond Heights. A summary of results is seen below and on the following pages.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Where do you live in Richmond Heights?

As the chart to the right depicts, there is a relatively good spread of respondents from around the City. District 1, bound roughly by Clayton to the north, Big Bend to the east, 64/40 to the south and the Metrolink tracks to the west represented 30% of respondents. District 2 saw the highest percentage of participation at 32%. This District encompasses the southern portion of the City, roughly between Hanley and Big Bend. District 3 which includes the eastern portion of the City adjacent to the City of St. Louis saw just 20% of respondents. Finally, District 4, the part of the community to the west of Hanley represented 17% of all respondents. Additional efforts will be made in the coming weeks to encourage additional participation from the residents of Districts 3 and 4.

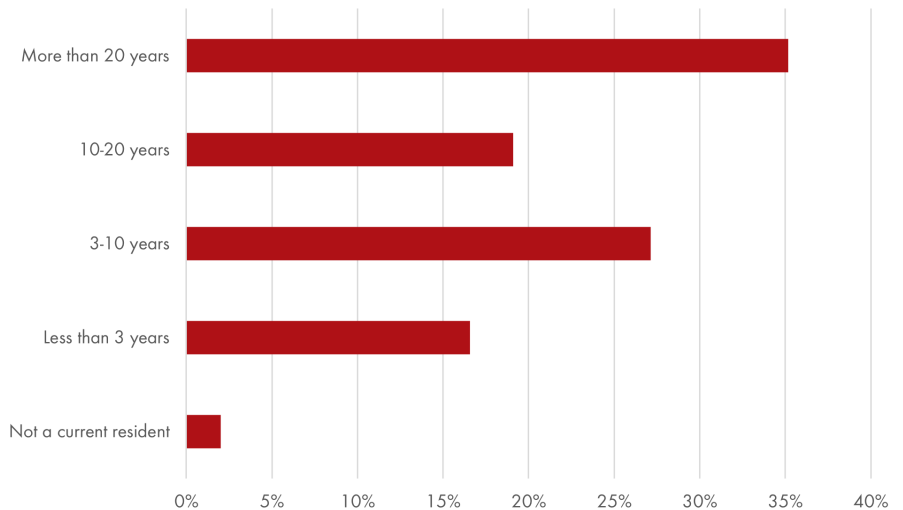


How long have you lived in Richmond Heights?

As a historic community with additional recent development, assessing the length of residence of respondents was also an important piece of the survey. The city sought to encourage feedback from both long-term Richmond Heights residents and those who were new to the community.

As the chart to the right depicts, the largest percentage of residents who completed the survey have lived in the community for more than 20 years.

That being said, 27% of respondents indicated they have lived in the community for 3-10 years. The remaining was split between residents of 10-20 years (19%), less than 3 years (17%), or those that are not a current resident (2%). This represents a diverse mix of the community and allows the city to gauge responses from community members with a variety of levels of history and familiarity with the city.



Where do you go to work?

When asked where respondents go to work, the largest percentage indicated St. Louis County (32%). The other often chosen response was the City of St. Louis, where 19% go to work each day. Unsurprisingly, nearly a quarter of respondents are retired or not currently working. Given the long-term residents who completed the survey, it is likely that many of those respondents are over 65 and therefore not currently working. When looking at the data, of the 20+ year residents, nearly 50% indicated they are retired. Interestingly, 17% of respondents indicated they work from home. These dynamics are relevant as the city considers its location as a strength, being central for workers and residents. It also represents a potential challenge as residents continue to work from home and no longer require the centrality of a city like Richmond Heights for convenient travel each day.

How do you typically get to work?

For those that work outside of the home, respondents were asked about their primary mode of transportation. 91% of respondents use their personal vehicle with less than 3% indicating they ride their bike or walk. No respondents indicated they utilized transit to

get to work, an interesting dynamic given the city’s proximity to MetroLink and several MetroBus routes. Additional work will be done to recruit survey respondents who utilize transit.

COMMUNITY SENTIMENT

Why have you chosen to live in Richmond Heights?

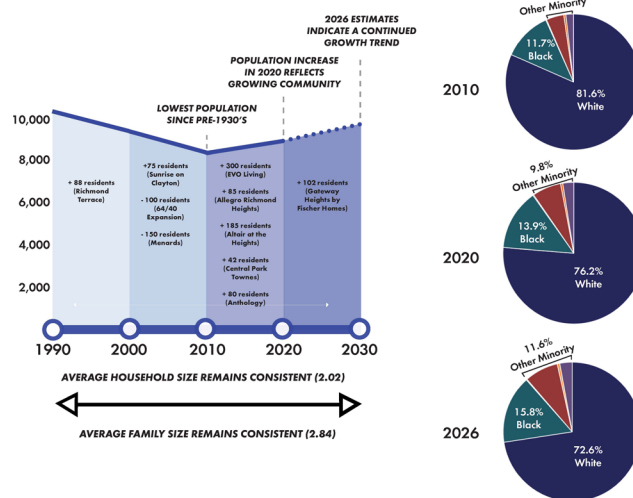
When asked why they have chosen the Richmond Heights community at their home, respondents were given the opportunity to provide an open ended response. By far the most likely response was related to location, a selection of those shown below:

- Proximity to Forest Park, highways and cultural landmarks.
- Location... close to Forest Park, 44 and 64.
- A nice neighborhood close to everything.
- Convenient location to St Louis city.
- The location to midtown and downtown is great is great and is still has a small-town feel. I can get anywhere in the metro area in 20 minutes or less.
- Close to the airport, close to Clayton, close to downtown.
- Proximity to greater metropolitan area

Other responses often cited the sense of community, blend of suburban and urban feel, diversity of people and offerings, walkability, and access to quality schools. Responses to this question varied slightly depending on respondent demographics, with District 4 residents more likely to reference mature trees and the Ladue School District and District 2 residents more likely to reference walkability, the small-town feel, and local businesses. Answers to this question were consistent regardless of length of residence in the City, speaking to the city’s long-term stability and ability to retain these strengths overtime.

How has Richmond Heights changed over the past few decades? What does the future hold for the City’s demographics?

When presented with information about demographics in the City (shown at right), respondents were asked for their reactions. Most respondents indicated agreement with the information having thought about these trends in the recent past.



The vast majority of respondents indicated that the increase in diversity is a welcome

change within the city referencing more young families, a growing population, and new development. Others though brought up negative aspects of this perceived change, referencing crime, affordability issues, and some residents being pushed out by development. Several comments related to this population data are shown below:

- Diversification of our community makes everyone better through more understanding of each other. Extremely important for our schools, businesses, and neighbors.
- The black population of Richmond Heights is aging out of their homes and the community. Younger people are moving in and some are beginning their families. I would like our community to be as diverse as it can and hold true our values: progress with tradition.
- The quality of the school district improved dramatically, so we became a “destination district”. The cost of housing has become ridiculously high. Tearing down simple houses to make big houses that start at 400-500K+ ensures we will not have diverse socioeconomic families moving here.
- My perception is City will continue to expand its diversity. Family size will stay small.

Thinking about the City as a whole, what are the greatest strengths?

Similar to the answers related to why respondents chose Richmond Heights, many of the answers related to the City’s strengths have to do with location. Again and again respondents referenced the convenience of the central location, allowing them to be close to the City of St. Louis and the jobs and amenities it offers while also being close to other nearby municipalities. Many also referenced various city services such as the Heights, the library, greenspaces, and the “quaint small-town vibe” that the city provides. Other strengths referenced included quality housing, local churches, long-term residents creating a sense of community, walkability, and the city’s clean and safe feeling.

What do you worry about related to the City’s future?

While many respondents indicated they had no worries and were happy with the city as it is today, others cited things like increasing crime, too much auto-oriented retail, and a loss of the community feel with new development. Crime was mentioned the most often, with concerns that changing demographics and development patterns are contributing to the uptick in crime perceived by residents. Interestingly, of the residents having lived in Richmond Heights for less than three years, none mentioned crime as a concern for the future. This group was more often concerned with too much growth, increasing taxes, and a lack of diversity. Several comments were also related to a potential closure of several churches in the City, prompting fears that the institutions that tied people to the city would no longer remain in the future.

RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCES

As the City contemplates future development, what type of residential development would you like to see?

This question asked respondents to view a series of photos of different types of residential development and indicate what types they would like to see in the future. Respondents were able to check all types that they would like to see. From the options shown to the right, respondents were asked to consider Single Family, Townhouse, Condominium, Mid-Rise Apartment, and High-Rise Apartment as potential residential housing types that could be added to the city. The responses indicate:

- 79% of respondents selected Single-Family
- 45% of respondents selected Townhome
- 29% of respondents selected Condominium
- 33% of respondents selected Mid-Rise Apartment
- 9% of respondents selected High Rise Apartment

These results are consistent with those gathered at the in-person Open House at the Heights and reflect the mix of housing types that the city already has.

Not surprisingly, these responses were also impacted heavily by where the respondent lives in the City. Trends included:

- District 1 residents were less likely to select High-Rise Apartments and more likely to select Single-Family than the results as a whole
- District 3 residents were much less likely to support Townhomes but much more likely to select Mid-Rise Apartment than the results as a whole
- District 4 residents were more likely to support Townhomes than the results as a whole

District 2 resident responses mirrored the complete data almost exactly. Interestingly, residents of more than 20 years were far less likely to select Townhome, Condominium, Mid-Rise Apartment, or High-Rise Apartment, most often selecting only Single-Family.



What development amenities or neighborhood characteristics are most important for new residential development?

After contemplating the type of new residential development they prefer, respondents were asked what amenities or characteristics they think are most important. Answers varied widely but included:

- Restaurants and pedestrian friendly roads and streets.
- Well maintained, accessible to residents in varying income brackets.
- Safe and fun activities for families to do are probably the most important in my opinion. I think the family unit is important to Richmond Heights and developing amenities that appeal to family units is what will continue to make Richmond Heights an appealing place to live. Playgrounds, maybe outdoor sports like pickle-ball (or something similar), and keeping living units relatively small like single family homes, townhouses, or smaller apartment buildings are what should continue to be built.
- Sense of neighborhood/knowing your neighbors.
- More beautification, street planters and plant more trees!
- I would suggest mixed use, livable walkable areas.

Where is new residential development or reinvestment in existing residential neighborhoods most needed?

This question stumped some people who consider Richmond Heights to be completely built out and not in need of new or reinvested residential stock. For those that provided suggestions, areas such as between Bellevue and Hawthorn along Dale Avenue, Yale Avenue behind Walmart, near the Maplewood border, and on the eastern part of the city were mentioned.

COMMERCIAL PREFERENCES

Where do you typically go to meet your shopping, dining, or entertainment needs?

This question prompted almost complete consensus with Brentwood Promenade, Schnucks Plaza, Maplewood, and the Galleria mentioned repeatedly. Some respondents referenced visiting Clayton for dining or entertainment or the Demun area for local establishments. Very few respondents indicated that they shop often within Richmond Heights with the exception of the Schnucks on Clayton Road.

What should future commercial development look like in the City?

This question asked respondents to view a series of photos of different types of commercial development and indicate what types they would like to see in the future. Respondents were able to check all types that they would like to see in the city. From the options shown to the right, starting from the top, respondents were asked to consider Small-Scale Neighborhood Retail, Dense, Mixed-Use Development, Auto-Oriented Outlot Retail, and Auto-Oriented Shopping Centers as potential commercial development types that could be added to the city. The responses indicate:

- 89% of respondents selected Small-Scale Neighborhood Commercial
- 45% of respondents selected Dense, Mixed-Use Development
- 4% of respondents selected Auto-Oriented Outlot Retail
- 7% of respondents selected Auto-Oriented Shopping Centers

These results are consistent with what was gathered at the in-person Open House and what feedback has been shared by stakeholders. The survey responses were consistent regardless of tenure in the neighborhood and District of residence.

These results are inconsistent with the residential housing types selected by respondents though, with Single-Family and less-dense housing types being preferred while the highest density commercial option most often selected.

Where is new commercial development or reinvestment in existing commercial districts most needed?

When asked where this redevelopment was needed, answers included:

- Near The Heights
- Big Bend (north and south)
- Bellevue
- On Dale



- Clayton Road
- Across from the Galleria

Additional comments referenced needing to rethink the Galleria as a commercial area generally, either suggesting that it gets torn down and replaced or suggesting additional development on its outlots. These comments were not influenced by the tenure of residents nor the location, though the residents living closest to Big Bend often included it in their recommendations.

What characteristics are most important for commercial development?

Responses to this question were predictably similar to the preferred commercial development type selected previously. Comments were nearly all centered around retaining walkability, encouraging local businesses, keeping the small-scale feel, and retaining the city's charm. Residents would like to see unique stores in Richmond Heights like are found in many of the neighboring municipalities.

PARKS & RECREATION

Where do you go most often to enjoy parks and recreation facilities in the area?

When shown a map of Richmond Heights and surrounding parks and recreation facilities, respondents most often indicated that they visit Forest Park for recreation opportunities. Other greenspaces mentioned included AB Green Park, The Heights, Tilles Park, Oak Knoll Park, and Ryan Hummert Park, all in close proximity.

How can Parks and Recreation opportunities be improved for residents?

Many respondents indicated that they were very pleased with the parks and recreation opportunities provided by the City of Richmond Heights and neighboring communities, suggesting no improvements. Others though expressed a desire for additional programming at The Heights, more small-scale greenspaces within neighborhoods, and additional recreational facilities such as pickle-ball courts or a soccer field. Several answers supported the need for better connections to existing greenspaces through safe walking trails or biking routes to provide easier access to existing quality spaces to more residents.

SCENARIO PLANNING WORKSHOPS

The Project Team hosted two Scenario Planning Workshops with the Steering Committee to identify areas of the community which may be more susceptible to change in the future and establish land use and development priorities for each area. Scenario Planning Workshop #1 examined a number initial scenario area options which included the Galleria Out Lot, Development opportunities near the intersection of Brentwood Blvd. and Clayton Road, Big Bend Corridor, Infill development opportunities on Dale Avenue, Commercial nodes along Dale Avenue between S. Hanley and Bellevue Avenue;, and Development opportunities near the intersection of Big Bend and Clayton Road.

The group discussed the opportunities and challenges associated with each area. Through these discussions the following areas were identified: *Galleria Out Lot*, *Big Bend - North*, *Big Bend - South*, and *Dale Avenue*. General planning priorities for each the four scenario planning areas included Land Use Mix, Development Design/Character, Parking, Public Green/Open Space, Public Realm Improvements, and Connectivity. Based on the established priorities and other input gathered during the first workshop, the Project Team developed a series of land use and development concept alternatives for each scenario area using a mix of 2D and 3D maps and renderings.

Galleria Out Lot Concepts

The goal for this scenario area was to explore potential uses for the existing underutilized surface parking lot. The scenario analysis for the Galleria Out Lot yielded five initial land use and development concept alternatives. These alternatives considered a mix of land uses, development types, parking solutions, and a green/open space opportunities: Small-scale Mixed Use, Medium-scale Mixed Use, Urban Mixed Use, Medium Density Residential, Office. The Steering Committee ultimately developed consensus around two concept alternatives which were best aligned with a number of broader planning priorities, including providing higher density housing opportunities, promoting mixed use development, and increase access to green/open space.



Big Bend - North Concept

The goal for this scenario area was to reinforce the mixed use nature of the corridor and identify opportunities to improve the pedestrian experience.

Big Bend - South Concept

The goal for this scenario area was to transform the area into a pedestrian-friendly, mixed use corridor with new land use investment and shared parking arrangements.

Dale Avenue Concept

The goal for this scenario was to consider the Dale Avenue corridor's transition in recent years and contemplate the ideal land use for the future.



OPEN HOUSE #2

On March 21st, the Project Team hosted a second a public Open House at The Heights Community Center. The goal of this engagement event was present the refined scenario planning concepts for the Galleria Out Lot, Big Bend - North, Big Bend - South, and Dale Avenue and gather the community's thoughts on alternative land use and development concepts for each area. Participants examined a series of 3D exhibits intended to help the community visualize the land use and development concepts, and shared input related to their preferences, likes, and dislikes for each alternative. In addition, members of the project team and City Staff were on hand to answer questions about the alternatives. What follows is a review of the information gathered at the event.

Galleria Out Lot

Residents indicated a preferences for higher density, urban, mixed development, additional green/open space amenities with a broader mix of active recreation and entertain spaces, and less surface parking. Residents also raised concerns related to infrastructure improvements needed to create a more vibrant and walkable pedestrian environment including traffic calming improvements to Brentwood Blvd. and safe connections between the Galleria Out Lot concept, Galleria Mall, and The Boulevard.

Dale Avenue

Residents indicated a preference for creating a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly corridor along Dale Avenue, reinforcing low density residential land uses with neighborhood-scale commercial and mixed use nodes in key areas. Other desired development characteristics included promoting small/local retail opportunities, streetscape improvements featuring pedestrian amenities, bike lanes, additional green/open space.

Big Bend

Residents largely supported the mixed use land use and development concepts proposed for Big Bend Blvd. The transition to mixed used was seen as an opportunity promote Big Bend as a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly corridor.

Priorities for Big Bend - North included:

- Creating prominent gateway entrance features at the Clayton Road intersection
- Promoting reinvestment in existing mixed use buildings
- Redevelopment of the existing medical office building at the intersection of Clayton Road as a medium-scale mixed commercial building with ground floor retail and upper floors as medical office
- Redevelopment of the existing Office Depot site as a large-scale mixed use development with ground floor retail and upper floors as residential

Priorities for Big Bend - South included:

- Promoting large-scale, mixed use redevelopment opportunities, ground floor retail uses and upper office or residential uses
- Identifying opportunities for public parking areas to support mixed use developments along the corridor
- Promoting off-street parking areas at the rear of buildings
- Promoting an more pedestrian-friendly environment including traffic calming and streetscape improvements

OPEN HOUSE #3

On May 17th, the Project Team hosted a third a public Open House at The Heights Community Center. The goal of this engagement event was to present overview the planning process to date, present the final scenario planning concepts, and gather feedback on the Draft Objectives and Key Results framework. In addition, members of the project team and City Staff were on hand to answer questions about the alternatives. What follows is a review of the information gathered at the event.

Final Scenario Planning Concepts

The final scenario planning concepts gave community members an opportunity see how their input throughout this iterative engagement process was used develop a preferred land use and development vision for each scenario area.

Draft Objectives and Key Results Framework

The final open house served as an opportunity for residents to view the draft Objectives and Key Results Framework and provide their feedback. All of the draft OKRs were available around the room for comment by the public. Generally, attendees agreed with the OKRs and were excited about the direction for the City.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY SURVEY REPORT, 2023

The National Community Survey Report conducted by the National Research Center and Polco includes citizen feedback on a variety of topics related to “livability” in Richmond Heights. This year’s survey asked residents several questions related to land use and development. The results of the survey are consistent with feedback gained during the Comprehensive Plan process including:

- majority of respondents indicated there is “not enough” public art
- about half of respondents said there are not enough grants/incentives for infrastructure repair/enhancement
- three quarters would like to see more pedestrian improvements
- the vast majority of respondents agree with the redevelopment and renovation of existing commercial areas
- overwhelming support for the promotion of mixed-use developments in key areas while retaining low-density separation of uses in others

The full National Community Survey Report can be viewed on the City’s website.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Based on the engagement to date, a SWOT Analysis was conducted to understand what residents and stakeholders identified as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The results of that process are shown below and on the following page including quotes from the engagement events, public survey, and stakeholder meetings.

STRENGTHS

Location / Convenience

- “Crossroads of StL County”
- “Proximity to Clayton, The Airport and Downtown”
- “inner ring suburb with great access to downtown, west county, airport, hospitals, highways, etc.”
- “Access to Forest Park and other nearby regional amenities”

Safety

- “Walkable, safe, quiet. I can go jog at night (as a woman) and have no fear for my safety.”

School District

- “Financial support for MRH schools have been passed by residents over the years. Schools have improved. I see young couples and more families with kids in my neighborhood now. Often, if house becomes too small...people don’t leave...they add on. Hoping demographics become more diverse.”
- Community Feel / Charm / Character
- “Build nice homes that have character. Keep the charm of Richmond Heights.”
- “Small town government that is personal and cares about the residents. Our mayor is a great example”

Diversity of Housing Types / Neighborhoods

- “You can find basically any housing style in Richmond Heights”
- Diversity of People
- “Feels like a more diverse community than many suburbs”
- “MRH is a diverse district”

WEAKNESSES

School District

- Richmond Heights being split into 4 school districts - perception that MRH School District is not “as good” as others in the region.

Lack of Greenspace

- No large green spaces within the community
- “Would like to see more small greenspaces in the City with amenities”

Limited Local Businesses

- No “town square” or central place for businesses
- “too many chains”
- “residents leave the city for most shopping and entertainment needs”
- “too much auto-oriented development”
- 89% of respondents indicated preference for small-scale neighborhood retail

Affordability

- “affordability is becoming an issue in RH”
 - “I am concerned that the City is no longer affordable for people like me”
-

OPPORTUNITIES

Dale Ave Corridor

- “Mixed-use development is essential. By blending residential and commercial zoning into areas like Dale and Big Bend, we have the rare opportunity to create sustainable, attractive, and highly sought-after neighborhoods in the County. Few municipalities within the County have achieved an adequate mix of low- and high-density housing like Richmond Heights has, so we are well positioned to make these investments.”

Reinvestment on Big Bend

- “Big Bend lacks an identity”
- “It’s a hodge podge of businesses and homes and there is no real

character”

- “the speeds are too fast and not safe for pedestrians”

Small-Scale Infill

- “I would like to see more reinvestment in the older neighborhoods. I don’t like to see empty lots and run down properties”
- “Capitalize on reputation of community to spur growth organically”

Continued improvement of School Districts

- “MRH continues to improve and as that happens I think it will positively impact the RH community”

Improved Connectivity

- It would be great to create safe connections to nearby greenspaces”
- “Parks, trails, and greenways!”

THREATS

Traffic / Pedestrian Safety

- “I feel like the streets are not as safe as they used to be. People go way too fast the city has decided they can’t do anything about that so it’s really not that safe for people to walk or ride their bikes on main thoroughfares in Richmond Heights.”

Perception of Increasing Crime

- “More petty crimes than ever before”
- “Lots of car break ins in my neighborhood”

Decreasing Affordability

- “It is essential that modestly affordable areas remain in tact. Development should not displace those areas, however, those areas should be maintained at the same level as other areas in the city.”

Too Much Development

- “We don’t want to be “too big””
- “losing sense of place with additional commercial development”
- “Sacrificing neighborhoods for revenue”

Galleria

- “Concern about empty stores at the Galleria”
- “Not enough small businesses, too much reliance on the Mall”
- “The Galleria can’t save us forever. We need to think bigger”
- “Lack of local business and small, neighborhood eateries/shops”

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FRAMEWORK





Housing

There is an overwhelming focus on housing as both a strength and potential weakness for the City of Richmond Heights. This theme includes strategies related to housing diversity, infill development, continued planning for new housing and reinvestment, and the city’s codes related to residential development.

Encourage Higher Density Developments in Key Areas

Diversify Housing Stock to Provide Options for a Variety of Resident Types

Maintain a High Quality of Housing Through Continued Regulatory Review

Preserve and Support the Character of Existing Neighborhoods

Encourage Residential Infill and Reinvestment in Existing Single Family Housing Stock

Utilize a Housing Market “Roundtable” to stay up-to-date on housing-related change in the community

Encourage the Development of Affordable/Attainable Housing



Connectivity

Connectivity is one of the City’s greatest strengths. That being said, pedestrian safety and connectivity via other modes of transit are often cited as subjects needing additional planning and investment. These topics, in addition to leveraging the MetroLink access that Richmond Heights is lucky to have creates a strong focus on connectivity for the city.

Transform Dale Avenue and Big Bend Blvd into more pedestrian friendly neighborhood corridors

Encourage Shared Parking

Reestablish the Identity of Big Bend Blvd through the integration of Land Use & Transportation Planning

Encourage Mixed-Use and Small-scale Neighborhood Commercial Developments

Utilize a Commercial Market “Roundtable” to stay up-to-date on commercial trends.



Commercial Development

Over and over, residents, stakeholders, and city staff cited the commercial corridors as areas that are in need of continued planning. Whether reinvestment, new infill development, or larger-scale redevelopment, the city has a variety of commercial areas that need specific thinking.

Transform Dale Avenue and Big Bend Blvd into more pedestrian friendly neighborhood corridors

Reestablish the Identity of Big Bend Blvd through the integration of Land Use & Transportation Planning

Encourage Shared Parking

Encourage Mixed-Use and Small-scale Neighborhood Commercial Developments

Update/Reposition the City’s Economic Development Policy to support the Comprehensive Plan

Utilize a Commercial Market “Roundtable” to stay up-to-date on commercial trends.



Community Character

Considering the vast services and amenities provided by the City, the physical character of the buildings and spaces in Richmond Heights, population demographics, and the perception or “brand” of the city as contributors to the community’s character creates a well-rounded topic area for prioritization.

Update City Parking Requirements

Create More Active and Passive Greenspaces

Increase Partnership Opportunities with Schools Districts

Enhance Development Design Guidelines

Celebrate Local Culture and Diversity

Enhance the Richmond Heights Brand/Identity



HOUSING



There is an overwhelming focus on housing as both a strength and potential weakness for the City of Richmond Heights. Strategies related to housing diversity, infill development, continued planning for new housing and reinvestment, and the city’s codes related to residential development would all fall under this topic area.

-
- OBJECTIVE 1** *Encourage Higher Density Developments in Key Areas*
 - OBJECTIVE 2** *Diversify Housing Stock to Provide Options for a Variety of Resident Types*
 - OBJECTIVE 3** *Maintain a High Quality of Housing Through Continued Regulatory Review*
 - OBJECTIVE 4** *Preserve and Support the Character of Existing Neighborhoods*
 - OBJECTIVE 5** *Encourage Residential Infill and Reinvestment in Existing Single Family Housing Stock*
 - OBJECTIVE 6** *Utilize a Housing Market “Roundtable” to stay up-to-date on housing-related change in the community*
 - OBJECTIVE 7** *Encourage the Development of Affordable/Attainable Housing*
-

Richmond Heights was founded as an exclusively residential community, beginning as a community on the edge of the City of St. Louis for large estates surrounded by open land. As development continued west, the land was eventually subdivided and additional residential homes were built. Like much of St. Louis, growth was spurred by the World’s Fair in 1904. This event, held in nearby Forest Park, encouraged significant development and prompted additional construction throughout Richmond Heights. It was not until nearly 1920 that the City had it’s first commercial businesses. Over the next few decades, additional residential development was completed, the population grew, and the boundaries of the City were expanded. The traditional growth pattern in the St. Louis region reflects westward growth from the central city, beginning first with inner ring communities such as Richmond Heights.

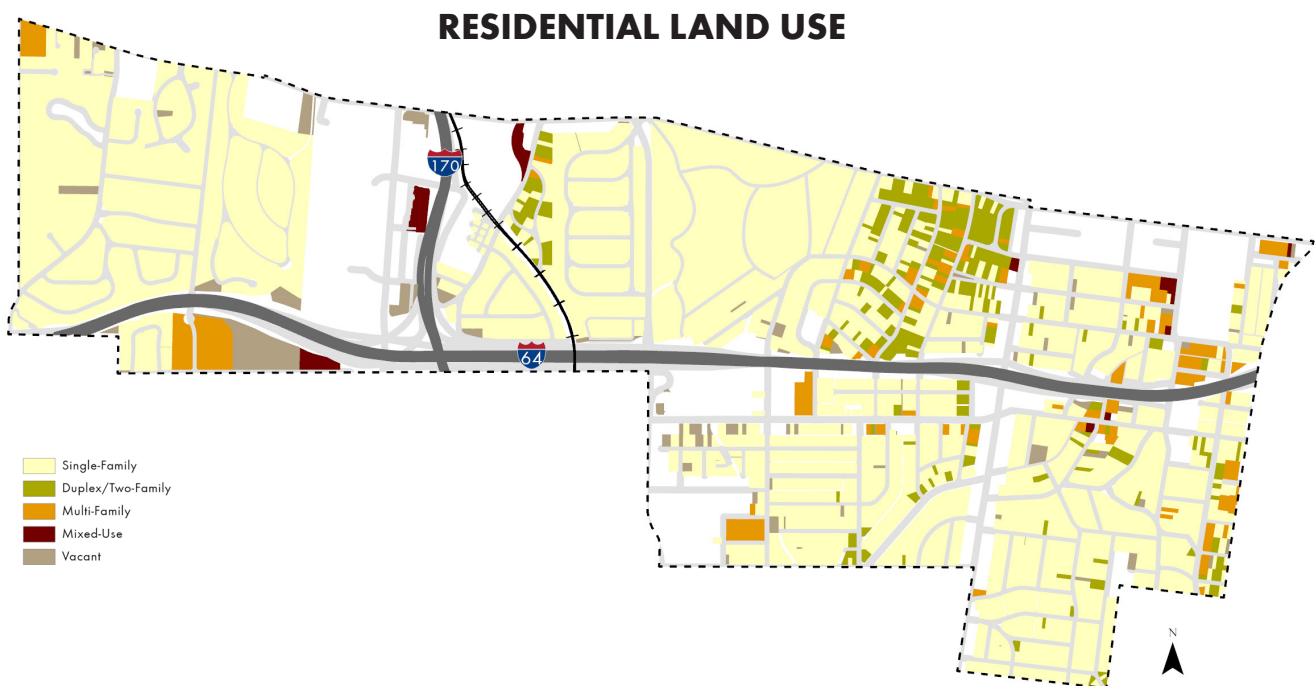
The residential environment in Richmond Heights follows this typical land use pattern as residential uses occupy roughly 89% of the City’s total land area, typical of a more suburban city. In total, there are 2,797 single family structures in the City and, as of August 2021, just 4 of them were vacant. Single-family homes in the community vary in size depending on location within the City. Larger lots occupy most of the western part

of the community, north of I-64 and west of Brentwood Boulevard. Similar larger, single-family options are situated immediately east and west of S Hanley Road, north of I-64. Many of these homes are historic in nature and were built as the City continued to grow, providing stately housing for wealthy members of the growing St. Louis region.

East of Laclede Station Road the lots are significantly smaller, creating a denser residential environment. This part of the City also sees a significantly more mixed residential environment with duplex/two-family options located amid single-family homes. The duplex/two-family option is quite common in the City with 346 structures, all of which are occupied. These structures occupy just 4.5% of the land area in the City, likely due to the density on the eastern side of the City where lots sizes are smaller. The land use pattern is logical, as the eastern side of Richmond Heights abuts the City of St. Louis, which developed earlier and is home to smaller lots and dense development patterns. Many of these more dense housing units provide lower cost housing options, allowing the community to be accessible to nearby students and young professionals.

The City is also home to 148 multi-family structures which are located in key pockets throughout the City. Mostly adjacent to major corridors, multi-family structures occupy 7.13% of total square feet. These multi-family structures vary significantly and feature both historic small-scale multi-family options and recent developments include between 200-300 units. There are also 12 mixed-use buildings in the City which include both residential and commercial uses.

Overall, the residential environment in Richmond Heights is strong, with a varied housing stock and a less than 1% vacancy rate.



The diversity of housing stock is one of Richmond Height’s greatest strengths, attracting a more diverse population than many of it’s regional counterparts. That being said, because the community is land locked, there is a very small amount of land available for redevelopment. The community is built-out, allowing for incremental housing change, rather than large-scale change. While this is a more sustainable way to build a community, ensuring stability and variety in new housing, it is a slow process.

The population in Richmond Heights is changing, with increasing racial diversity and a growth in young families who desire to live in the community because of access to quality schools. As a result, the current housing stock is not fulfilling current need.

There is demand for additional housing suitable for people in a variety of life stages, offering an array of amenities at several price points. To encourage the development of additional housing, the City should focus on higher density development and residential infill, filling in the holes where housing is suitable. It is important that this development is sensitive to the character of the community, scaled appropriately and using compatible architecture and design. In addition, new development should consider attainability, seeking to ensure that Richmond Heights remains a diverse community that provides access for a variety of residents.



Existing residential in Richmond Heights.

OBJECTIVE 1

Encourage Higher Density Developments in Key Areas

One way to add new housing to the community is to concentrate higher density residential development in key areas of the community. This housing should be focused on major corridors, capitalizing on location and serving as a buffer to large-commercial developments and single-family neighborhoods. By adding this housing at a higher density, the City can add much needed units to the community and allow additional residents the opportunity to make Richmond Heights their home.

KEY RESULT 1.1 *Work with the Galleria to facilitate the implementation of the preferred concept for the Galleria Out Lot*

KEY RESULT 1.2 *Work with property owners and developers to facilitate the implementation of the preferred concept for Big Bend north of 64/40.*

KEY RESULT 1.3 *Identify key areas in the city where higher density development is supported by the City*

Several opportunities for large-scale residential development are possible adjacent to major retail. Because retail development is changing, real estate that had been utilized for parking or earmarked for future retail development, may now be more suitable for high-density residential or mixed use development.

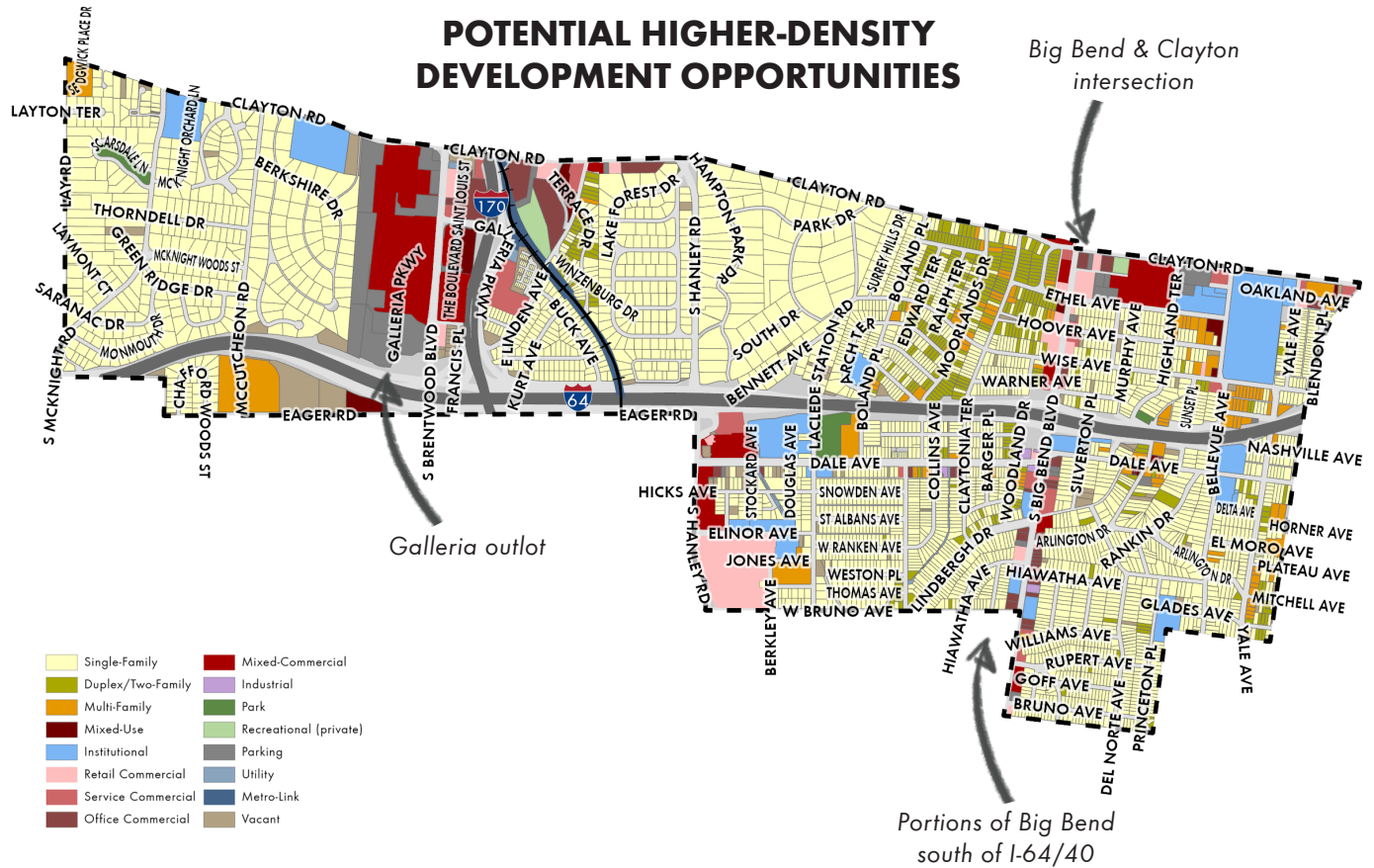
Retail development is changing and has been doing so for nearly 15 years. The advent of online shopping began to impact store visits in 2010. The COVID-19 pandemic then accelerated the decline in in-store visits. Retailers began to recognize that, if their online presence was strong, their need for the large retail spaces, particularly department stores, that have driven the retail real estate markets of the past we no longer necessary. This then led to increased vacancy in many large retail developments. In recent years, a reduction in vacancy has been seen, a result of retail square footage being re-purposed for other uses. This trend has been visible in the St. Louis Galleria, where small businesses and other creative retail now occupy spaces where traditional stores once were. Elsewhere in Richmond Heights, retail strip centers have encouraged service-based tenants to fill traditional retail centers, providing a wider variety of goods and services than was previously available.

Looking at national trends, many large-scale retail properties such as malls and major retail centers, have begun to be re-purposed or redeveloped into mixed-use properties, quite often involving a multi-family residential component or conversion to office use. These locations usually have sufficient acreage to allow for creating a self-contained “neighborhood” that includes retail, restaurant, service, housing, and/or office uses.

The St. Louis Galleria has an opportunity to consider re-purposing some of its southern parking lot, building upon the recent success of the mall property and reusing excess space for a more productive use. There is also an opportunity to consider higher density development at the Big Bend and Clayton Road intersection, where low-density retail dominates the landscape.

In order to facilitate large-scale residential development on this site, at the Galleria, across the street at the Boulevard Phase 2, or elsewhere in the community, the City will need to evaluate the current parking standards. Typical municipal parking standards for retail development today are greater than what is now required. Particularly if new uses are added on or near retail developments, parking standards should be reconsidered, freeing up valuable real estate for new development.

Below is an existing land use map with several locations identified for potential higher density development. The City should work to assess if these locations or others are viable for this type of development in the future.



OBJECTIVE 2

Diversify Housing Stock to Provide Options for a Variety of Resident Types.

Residents and City leaders often cite the diversity of Richmond Heights as something that sets the community apart from some of its neighbors, providing a variety of housing types and price-points, allowing many community members to find a home in the City. As the housing market has grown and shifted nationally, Richmond Heights has become unattainable for many residents. In order to combat this, the City should focus on housing diversity as a way to provide options to a wide variety of resident types.

-
- KEY RESULT 2.1** *Encourage high density residential with ground floor commercial in key areas along major corridors to support population growth*
 - KEY RESULT 2.2** *Encourage medium density residential development that includes ground floor commercial along Dale Ave and Big Bend - South*
 - KEY RESULT 2.3** *Encourage low density Residential Development Along Dale Avenue*
 - KEY RESULT 2.4** *Identify key areas where the City supports opportunities for low and medium density housing types*
-

Richmond Heights should focus on high-density residential development along major corridors to create more multi-family housing options in the community. Key locations on Brentwood Boulevard, Clayton Road, and Big Bend should be considered as a way to add a significant number of housing units on the relatively small amount of available land. The City should work to identify the ideal locations for this development and encourage additional feedback from residents. The focus on these higher-density options in key areas will allow for additional housing units and more attainability for new residents, while concentrating these uses in areas that are buffered from single-family neighborhoods.

The City should also seek to encourage medium-density residential development along smaller corridors such as Dale and Big Bend. These mixed-use building types can add much needed housing stock in the 4-12 unit range, often referred to as the “Missing Middle”. Much of the historic mixed-use building stock that remains in the City is of this type, providing small rental options upstairs with office or retail space for local businesses available on the first floor. This level of density is appealing adjacent to single-family homes as it does not overpower adjacent neighborhoods, but can provide a buffer along more high traveled corridors.

Other areas of the community are suitable for additional low-density single-family development. Parts of Dale Ave have available vacant land and are ideal for infill development. Other single lots scattered throughout the single-family portions of the

community should also be targeted for new development, being sensitive to neighborhood character in design and scale, while adding new housing units where possible.

The Maplewood-Richmond Heights School District has stated that they would like to see more diversity in their student population. Because of the land-locked nature of both communities that support the school district, infill housing opportunities are one way to add housing units. If built with families in mind, these housing units could contribute positively to the school district's desire for a more diverse student population. The City should continue to be in conversation with the school district as developments are introduced to ensure the needs of both entities are managed moving forward.

OBJECTIVE 3 *Maintain a High Quality of Housing Through Continued Regulatory Review*

City residents pride themselves on the unique neighborhoods and strong community found in Richmond Heights. Much of this is due to the high quality of housing in the City. In order to retain this, the city should focus on the regulatory tools at their disposal to maintain this high quality of housing.

KEY RESULT 3.1 *Update Chapter 500 - The International Property Maintenance Code to the latest edition to account best practices*

KEY RESULT 3.2 *Evaluate the City's Code Compliance process and procedures to ensure that adequate levels of service and resources are allocated to property maintenance code compliance*

The City should focus on housing quality by using the available tools to encourage property maintenance and provide the needed resources to residents to retain the high quality housing that currently exists. The City should update Chapter 500, the International Property Maintenance Code to the latest edition to follow current best practices. This will ensure that City code inspectors are up to date with current guidance. In addition, the City should evaluate the current code compliance procedures to ensure that levels of service are adequate enough to address current need. Code compliance and property maintenance are more prevalent issues in certain pockets of the community and, in addition to enforcement, the City should seek to provide resources where possible to residents in need. Several partnerships for property maintenance assistance are available in St. Louis County and the City should investigate these programs if needed by residents.

OBJECTIVE 4 *Preserve and Support the Character of Existing Neighborhoods*

The City of Richmond Heights is home to many unique neighborhoods and residents feel a great deal of pride in their specific neighborhood. Whether they live adjacent to Little Flower and feel strongly about the small-scale housing with consistent architecture, or they are residents of the Hampton Park Historic District and feel connected to the expansive greenspaces and landscaping, community members value the unique character of the City's neighborhoods.

KEY RESULT 4.1 *Focus on residential infill to support population growth and retention of growing families and aging adults*

KEY RESULT 4.2 *Add a Historic Preservation chapter to Title IV Land Use of the City's Code of Ordinances to establish processes, policies, guidelines related to maintenance, rehab, renovation, or replacement of structures designated as historic*

KEY RESULT 4.3 *Ensure development design standards for new construction and "tear down/rebuilds" reflect the standards for high quality housing desired by the City, and don't make affordability more challenging*

In order to preserve and support the character of existing neighborhoods in the City, Richmond heights should focus on residential infill development while ensure development design standards are in place to regulate these infill developments. These standards should also govern the "tear down and replace" activity that has taken place in recent years. Both infill and large-scale redevelopment of existing structures have the potential to impact neighboring properties and the character of a street overall, so emphasis should be placed on ensuring they are compatible with existing structures and contribute positively to the area's built environment. If written appropriately, these regulations can both encourage additional housing investment, maintain consistency with neighboring homes, and consider the affordability of the area long-term.

The City is home to the Hampton Park Historic District, Bennett Avenue Historic District, and several buildings designated as historic landmarks. To protect the character of these areas as well as others, particularly when infill and redevelopment activity are strong, the City should add a historic preservation chapter to Title IV Land Use of the City's Code of Ordinances. Structures designated as "historic", if they are to be protected and preserved, should be subject to zoning provisions that will ensure that the character of these buildings will be maintained. These standards can be written in several ways that depend on whether these buildings exist within an area or are present in individual locations. Where multiple buildings exist within an area, district regulations would be written that control development and design standards not just for the historic structures but also maintain the general architectural character of the area within

which they exist. This approach would involve the designation of a mapped district. The district regulation would set forth the standards that would control building facade appearance, use of exterior building materials, paint colors, or other traits with the intent of preservation of the building architecture. These regulations would also control rehab or redevelopment of adjoining buildings and properties to ensure that major exterior renovations or redevelopment of adjacent properties don't alter the general character of the area involved. Creating historic zoning "overlay" regulations offers another often used alternative. An overlay district or regulation does not change the underlying zoning but requires the application of development and design standards that are applicable to any building or grouping of buildings that are or involve historic structures. This also involves a map designation but is shown as an overlay to a particular parcel, group of parcels, block, or other geographic entity. As part of a review of the full zoning code, the City should consider the best way to protect the historic structures and neighborhoods that exist in the City, with the goal of preserving the existing strong character.

OBJECTIVE 5 *Encourage Residential Infill and Reinvestment in Existing Single Family Housing Stock*

The variety of single-family housing options is something that makes Richmond Heights extremely desirable. The community provides access to many of the amenities of adjacent communities such as Forest Park and the businesses in Dogtown or Clayton, while providing a high quality housing stock with access to highly rated schools. As a result, the City should focus on encouraging residential infill and reinvestment in the existing single-family housing stock to continue to strengthen these neighborhoods.

KEY RESULT 5.1 *Create a residential rehab incentive program*

KEY RESULT 5.2 *Review zoning codes to ensure infill development allows for contemporary building while preserving neighborhood character*

The City should consider creating a residential rehab incentive program to encourage investment by long-time homeowners. Programs like these help to support homeowners remaining in the community as they age, while also ensuring that residential structures get the needed investment. Several programs like this exist in the St. Louis region and the City should seek to partner with those for program support. In addition, the City should review the existing zoning code to ensure that infill development allows for contemporary building design while also being sensitive to current character. Investment in existing housing while utilizing strong regulation of new housing will help to ensure residential development is a focus while also mitigating effects on current neighbors.

OBJECTIVE 6

Utilize a Housing Market “Roundtable” to stay up-to-date on housing-related change in the community.

The housing market across the United States has seen significant change in recent years. Housing prices are increasing, population trends are dictating new preferences, and communities are increasingly having to compete to provide new and attractive products to buyers. As a result, communities can quickly fall behind their peers. To ensure Richmond Heights remains a competitive community in the St. Louis region, the City should utilize a Housing Market Roundtable to stay up-to-date on housing-related changes.

KEY RESULT 6.1 *Identify Realtors, developers, property managers, etc. to participate as stakeholders*

KEY RESULT 6.2 *Host an annual “state of the housing market” roundtable event*

KEY RESULT 6.3 *Make an annual “state of the housing market” report to City Council*

The City should host an annual event focused on the current state of the housing market, bringing together Realtors, developers, property managers, and others to participate as stakeholders and share their perspective on the current market. Through this engagement as well as other regular engagement with professionals, the City can begin to understand current trends and performance indicators to better plan for residential change. To benchmark progress and change, City Staff should make an annual “State of the Housing Market” report to the City Council. This will ensure the group is aware of current conditions and can accurately plan for the future.

OBJECTIVE 7

Encourage the Development of Affordable/Attainable Housing

Many residents in the community have a sense that housing has gotten increasingly expensive and this is preventing people from being able to live in or stay in Richmond Heights. With increasing housing prices across the country, attainability and affordability are of concern and will be important for the City to consider moving forward.

KEY RESULT 7.1 *Create an “affordable” housing incentive program to encourage new development*

KEY RESULT 7.2 *Create a Rental Assistance Program aimed towards supporting current renters so they can stay in the community*

KEY RESULT 7.3 *Encourage small-scale multifamily housing in other parts of the community*

KEY RESULT 7.4 *Consider permitting Accessory Dwelling Units in the City*

Affordable housing is critical for young professionals, college graduates, young families, seniors on a fixed income, and people working in low paying professions. To ensure safe, decent and affordable housing opportunities are available for all residents, the City should seek to encourage the development of affordable and attainable housing that are accessible to a diversity of residents.

The density bonus is the most common form of incentive used to encourage the development of affordable housing. A density bonus provides an increase in allowed dwelling units per acre, height, decreased set-back or similar regulation with the goal of increasing the number of housing units that can be built on a particular site. The City should look at how to alter regulations to incentive increased density in areas that are appropriate. This could include relaxed zoning regulations, permitting Accessory Dwelling Units, or increasing the areas in which small-scale multi-family housing are permitted.



Adams Grove Affordable Housing in St. Louis (Washington University), Crossroads Senior Housing in St. Louis (Tower Grove Neighborhoods CDC), Scott Manor in St. Louis County (Roseman & Associates), 6 North Apartments in St. Louis (Apartments.com).



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT



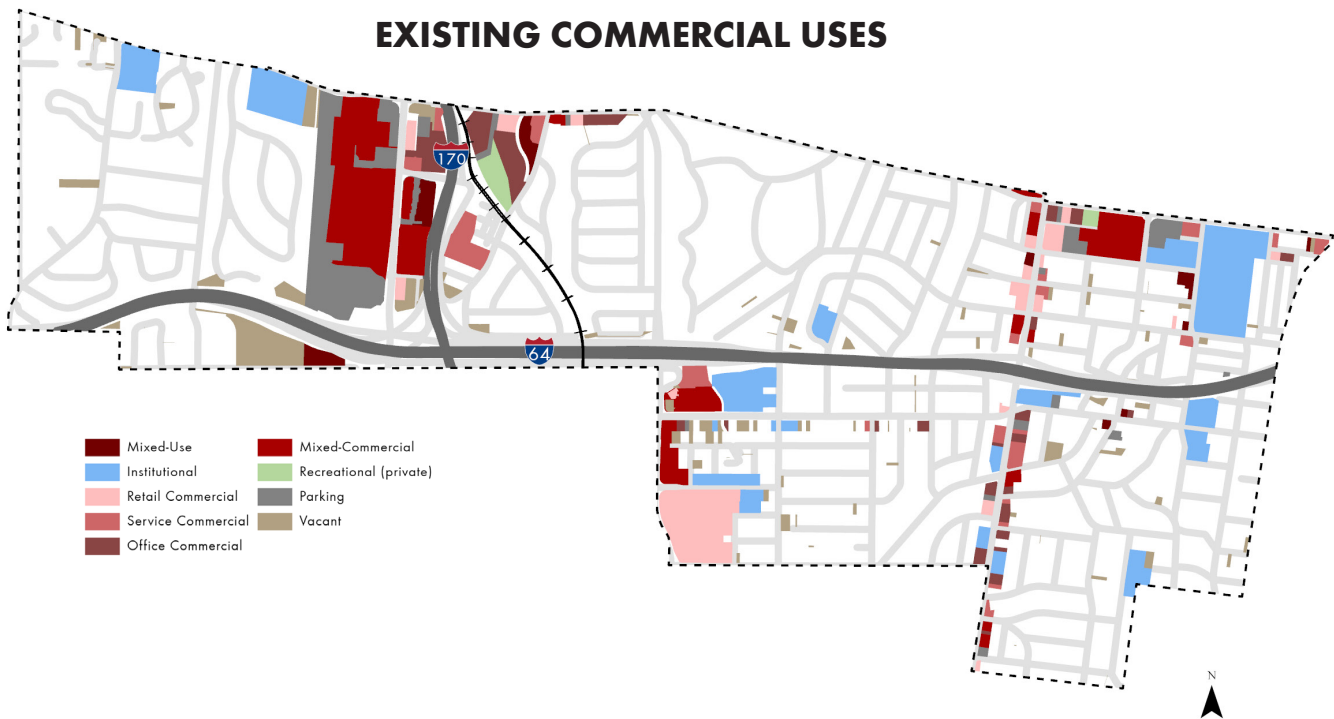
Over and over, residents, stakeholders, and city staff cited the commercial corridors as areas that are in need of continued planning. Whether reinvestment, new infill development, or larger-scale redevelopment, the city has a variety of commercial areas that need intentional planning.

-
- OBJECTIVE 1** *Transform Dale Avenue and Big Bend Blvd into more pedestrian friendly neighborhood corridors*
 - OBJECTIVE 2** *Encourage Shared Parking*
 - OBJECTIVE 3** *Update/Reposition the City’s Economic Development Policy to support the Comprehensive Plan*
 - OBJECTIVE 4** *Reestablish the Identity of Big Bend Blvd through the integration of Land Use & Transportation Planning*
 - OBJECTIVE 5** *Utilize a Commercial Market “Roundtable” to stay up-to-date on commercial trends*
-

Richmond Heights is unique in that the community has everything from small-scale neighborhood retail serving adjacent residents to a large-regional shopping mall. The community’s variety of commercial development is what has helped the City thrive during economic downturns and shifts in commercial trends. Currently, there are 122 commercial parcels in the City, comprising 10.21% of all square footage. 24 of the commercial structures are partially or totally vacant, representing a nearly 20% vacancy rate. Commercial ranges from small-scale retail to large-scale mixed-commercial in regional shopping centers, resulting in a diversified commercial land use environment. The City includes several types of commercial development with mixed-use, retail commercial, service commercial, office, and mixed-commercial developments.

Richmond Heights falls into the St. Louis Central sub market for retail. One of five sub markets in the St. Louis metropolitan area, this market contains 8.9 million square feet of more than 30% of the metro’s total inventory of retail space. As of Q3 2021, effective rent in the Central sub market for retail space was \$15 per square foot. Currently, the area overall has an 11.7% vacancy rate and has seen a total net gain of 87,000 square feet of retail inventory growth over the past 10 years and is relatively stable. The retail environment in this sub market thrives on competition. With a significant amount of retail in the area, the many municipalities in the region are often in competition for tenants and customers.

Fortunately, Richmond Heights has a diversified retail environment which has helped them succeed in recent years, something that will be important to retain moving forward. In addition to retail, the City has some office inventory. This inventory is relatively limited. The City has one large office tower and significantly less office square footage than nearby municipalities. Richmond Heights is also home to several lodging options, rounding out their retail environment. The Richmond Heights hotels have traditionally performed significantly better than the region’s average. While COVID-19 impacted the market significantly, because Richmond Heights is not reliant on this type of commercial development, it has not been a significant impact on the city’s overall performance. Below is a map of the existing commercial in the City.



OBJECTIVE 1

Transform Dale Avenue and Big Bend Blvd into more pedestrian friendly neighborhood corridors

The City is home to several unique commercial corridors, the character of which vary greatly. Dale Avenue and Big Bend are both smaller in scale and would benefit from investment to transition them into more pedestrian-friendly neighborhood corridors. While Big Bend is a county-managed road seeing significantly more traffic, both maintain a mix of land uses and generally one and two story buildings in need of investment.

KEY RESULT 1.1 *Adopt a Streetscape Master Plan for S. Big Bend Blvd. and Dale Ave*

KEY RESULT 1.2 *Work to underground or move overhead utilities to improve the aesthetic and economic value of the corridor*

KEY RESULT 1.3 *Encourage Mixed-Use and Small-scale Neighborhood Commercial Developments*

KEY RESULT 1.4 *Establish a "Mixed Use" Overlay District for Big Bend Blvd to guide future new developments, redevelopments, the rehabilitation/renovation of existing buildings*

KEY RESULT 1.5 *Revisit the Dale Ave "Mixed Use" Overlay District to realign development guidelines with the future vision for the Dale Ave corridor*

In order to transform Dale Avenue and Big Bend Blvd. into pedestrian-friendly neighborhood corridors, the City will need to take several steps. The City should adopt a streetscape master plan for S. Big Bend and Dale Avenue in particular, seeking to transform the roadway to calm traffic and add pedestrian amenities. To do this on S. Big Bend will require cooperation from the County as they manage the road currently. That being said, having an adopted planning document will assist in facilitating this sort of conversation and future improvements. The City should also seek to underground or move overhead utilities where possible to improve the aesthetic and economic value of the corridor. Such work has been done in Downtown St. Louis, Clayton, and parts of Fenton and Kirkwood.

Taking these two steps will help ready the corridors for future development. Small-scale mixed-use commercial developments should be targeted for both areas, with a focus on utilizing street parking, creating shared parking arrangements, and situating additional parking in the rear. Establishing a mixed-use overlay district in both areas can help to regulate the design and form of these developments and help to create a cohesive vision for both areas. Through this vision, a Streetscape Master Plan, and a zoning code that enforces these ideas, the City can facilitate long-term transformation in both areas.

OBJECTIVE 2 Encourage Shared Parking

With growth and development in a variety of contexts across the City of Richmond Heights has come an inconsistent approach to parking. In some parts of the community, parking is compact and has created a walkable environment. In others though, significant parking around large commercial areas has created expansive asphalt, negatively impacting the environment and pedestrian safety. To more efficiently utilize land in the community, the City should encourage shared parking where possible.

KEY RESULT 2.1 *Ensure that Zoning Code supports shared parking and promotes curb access management*

KEY RESULT 2.2 *Encourage shared parking between adjacent uses through access management regulations*

KEY RESULT 2.3 *Identify opportunities to construct public parking along Big Bend Blvd - South*

KEY RESULT 2.4 *Ensure that Zoning Code promotes shared parking in the rear of new and existing developments along Dale Avenue and Big Bend - South*

As part of the zoning code review, the City should investigate ways to update the ordinance to support shared parking and curb access management. As the retail environment has changed since much of the City was developed, parking allowances should be updated to reflect today's needs, encouraging shared parking and the use of street parking and safe pedestrian corridors. This is particularly relevant on the S. Big Bend corridor where future redevelopment could provide opportunities for shared parking arrangements, allowing businesses to utilize an accessible parking area at the rear which is accessible via one or two access points, rather than one access point per business, creating many curb-cuts, an unsafe pedestrian environment, and hard to access parking. In addition, the City should provide more assistance with due diligence related property owners studying the feasibility of shared parking petitions in mixed-use areas. Lastly, considering the feasibility of a public parking area could alleviate some parking pressure in key areas.



OBJECTIVE 3

Update/Reposition the City's Economic Development Policy to support the Comprehensive Plan

The City should update and reposition their current approach to economic development to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Assessing incentive tools, staff support, and other policies to understand consistency with the adopted Comprehensive Plan will help to ensure that the City is reinforcing the types of development supported by residents.

KEY RESULT 3.1 *Encourage the creation of a program to foster entrepreneurship education and boost the small business economy*

KEY RESULT 3.2 *Support the creation of a retail incubator for small-scale, local businesses*

KEY RESULT 3.3 *Create a commercial redevelopment incentive program to support reinvestment in existing and historic structures*

KEY RESULT 3.4 *Create a City webpage with business development resources to support new businesses*

KEY RESULT 3.5 *Evaluate existing economic development tools, policies, and programs*

The City of Richmond Heights administers a variety of programs, policies, and support for businesses in the City. In order to ensure that work is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the City should seek to realign that work.

To help support small businesses, the City should explore what they can do to encourage entrepreneurship. Often cited by residents as a desire, the City has real estate suitable for small-businesses and should seek to provide education and financial support to bring those businesses to the community. Considering the creation of a retail incubator or other entrepreneur support services will help to signal that the community is both “open for business” and all in support of locally-owned businesses finding a home in the community. Residents indicated strong support for this type of activity during the Comprehensive Planning process so the city should pursue these types of programs and policies. Traditionally, many economic development programs and policies are targeted toward large-scale developments. The city should audit their available programs and ensure they are effective for both large commercial opportunities and the small businesses residents desire to see in the City.

The variety of ways the City supports businesses should be included on the City’s website through a page dedicated to business development. This “one-stop-shop” should show current and future business owners the ways in which the City can assist. This will require staff time to set up, but should rely on the current communications staff person to execute.

OBJECTIVE 4

Reestablish the Identity of Big Bend Blvd through the integration of Land Use & Transportation Planning

Big Bend Blvd. is an important arterial roadway in St. Louis County. In Richmond Heights, the road stretches from the northern city limits at Clayton Road to the southern edge where the City meets Maplewood. A St. Louis County managed roadway, the City has a limited role in the road's operation, though through the integration of land use and transportation planning, can begin to shift the way in which the roadway feels. Long-term, through conversations with the County, the identity should shift to be more pedestrian friendly and compatible with the vision the City of Richmond Heights has for their community.

KEY RESULT 4.1 *Pursue an East-West Gateway Council of Governments Great Streets Initiative grant opportunity*

KEY RESULT 4.2 *Revisit the existing maintenance agreement with St. Louis County in order to implement new vision for Big Bend*

The less than 1-mile stretch of Big Bend that runs through Richmond Heights is an ideal candidate for a Great Streets grant through the East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWG). EWG started the Great Streets program in 2006 to create lively, attractive streets that work for a variety of modes of transportation, with a focus on pedestrian safety. Since the programs' launch, many communities both rural and urban, have benefited from the programs planning and implementation support. Big Bend in Richmond Heights, or in cooperation with neighboring Maplewood, would be an ideal candidate for a future grant and the City should seek to begin conversations to facilitate this effort. The City should also seek to include Clayton Road in this application, if possible. In the interim, the City should engage in conversations with St. Louis County about the existing maintenance agreement to begin to implement components of the new vision for the corridor.

Through thoughtful land use planning and conversations with St. Louis County, the City of Richmond Heights can begin to reestablish the identity of Big Bend into one that has a cohesive feel, unique to Richmond Heights, rather than simply existing as a thoroughfare that passes through the community. Specific businesses, placemaking, streetscape improvements, and other interventions will help to create an identity for the area that, in combination with roadway improvements, will help to solidify a unique identity for Big Bend.

OBJECTIVE 5

Utilize a Commercial Market “Roundtable” to stay up-to-date on commercial trends

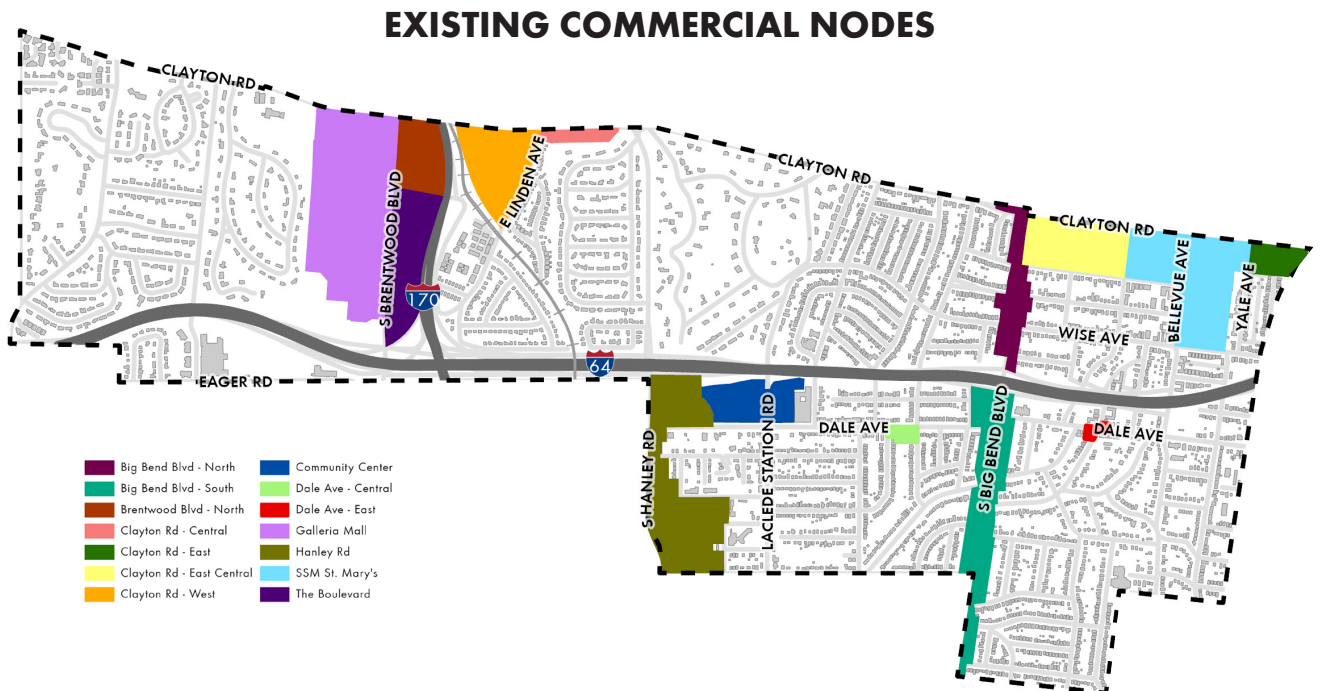
The commercial market in Richmond Heights is varied. In most cases, this works to the city’s advantage, providing a diversified tax base that is not susceptible to particular market changes. In order to plan for potential changes in the commercial market in the future, the City should utilize a Commercial Market Roundtable to stay up-to-date on commercial trends and better plan for continued economic diversity.

KEY RESULT 5.1 *Identify major retailers, major employers, Realtors, developers, etc. to participate as key stakeholders*

KEY RESULT 5.2 *Host an annual “state of the commercial market” roundtable event*

KEY RESULT 5.3 *Make an annual “state of the commercial market” report to City Council*

Richmond Heights has a variety of commercial nodes, as shown below. Each perform differently and have a different character. As a result, they are susceptible to a variety of changes in the market, whether that be in consumer preferences, trends in rental rates, or other aspects. The City should engage retailers, major employers, Realtors, developers, and others to ensure that the city is up-to-date and informed about trends that might impact the commercial real estate market in the city. An annual State of the Commercial Market roundtable event should be hosted by the city to engage these regional stakeholders. In addition, the event should result in an annual report to the City Council by Staff to report on relevant trends, concerns, and opportunities.





CONNECTIVITY



Connectivity is one of the City's greatest strengths. That being said, pedestrian safety and connectivity via other modes of transit are often cited as subjects needing additional planning and investment. These topics, in addition to leveraging the MetroLink access that Richmond Heights is lucky to have creates a strong focus on connectivity for the city.

-
- OBJECTIVE 1** *Enhance Walkability and Bikability City-wide*
 - OBJECTIVE 2** *Encourage Public Transit (Metro Bus and Metro Link) as Transportation Assets in Richmond Heights*
 - OBJECTIVE 3** *Support Transportation, Connectivity, and Infrastructure Improvements through Long-range Planning*
 - OBJECTIVE 4** *Enhance City-wide Connectivity to Parks, Greenspace, and Commercial Corridors*
-

Richmond Heights is centered on the intersection of I-64 and I-170 in central St. Louis County, giving it easy access to transportation routes and much of the St. Louis region. The City is located in the central corridor of St. Louis County, an extension of the central corridor of Downtown St. Louis. The City also has connectivity via MetroLink and MetroBus. In addition to regional connectivity, the City includes compact, tree-lined, pedestrian scale streets providing an array of walkability and bike connections. In order to further this, a focus should be placed on encouraging additional connectivity for non-automobile oriented modes of transportation.

With growing demand for compact development and walkable communities, Richmond Heights has an opportunity to capitalize on it's current built environment and plan for the future. City staff and leadership should follow resident feedback and place a priority on enhanced walkability and bikeability throughout the community, encouraging public transportation access and increased amenities, supporting long-range planning that leverages these aspects, and connecting residents to existing greenspace access. By doing this, the community can become more connected and safer for those on foot or bike.

OBJECTIVE 1 Enhance Walkability and Bikability City-wide

The City of Richmond Heights has existing nodes and corridors that are safe for pedestrians and cyclists. That being said, there is work to be done to enhance walkability and bikeability city-wide. By focusing on overall connections and creating additional walkable and bikeable spaces, the City can improve the character and connectivity, improving the community for current and future residents of all ages and abilities.

- KEY RESULT 1.1** Complete a Walk/Bike Audit to assess existing walkability and bikability conditions and identify physical improvements needed
- KEY RESULT 1.2** Create city-wide Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan to explore opportunities for infrastructure improvements to enhance walkability, bikability, and connectivity to, through, and within the City's four aldermanic districts
- KEY RESULT 1.3** Educate the community (cyclists, motorists, and cyclists) about bicycling skills, safety, and applicable traffic laws
- KEY RESULT 1.4** Enhance the public realm through the addition of pedestrian and cyclist amenities in key areas
- KEY RESULT 1.5** Update Section 410.250 Sidewalks to implement best practices and standards related to the sidewalk zone (sidewalk placement, minimum widths, etc.)
- KEY RESULT 1.6** Regularly update the City's ADA Transition Plan with best practice solutions and policies promote its use in new developments and improvements



Intersection of Oakland and Yale Avenue, looking south.

As the map below depicts, most residents have access to nearby parks, whether in Richmond Heights or in adjacent communities. That being said, the connections to these is often difficult, particularly to pedestrians and cyclists. As a result, the City should assess existing conditions and physical improvements through the completion of a Walk/Bike Audit. This can be done internally by city staff and will help to prioritize future improvements. In addition, a Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan will help to plan for the long-term, large-scale improvements to the city's accessibility and greenspace access. This will help connect residents to existing greenspaces and to the broader greenway network in the St. Louis region. These planning efforts should then inform the City's ADA Transition Plan and the city code related to sidewalks.



In addition to this planning, the City should invest in new amenities in the public realm to improve the experience for those walking and biking. The image on the previous page depicts the Yale and Oakland intersection after several improvements to the built environment. Things like placemaking through public art, bump outs, and additional landscaping can improve the experience for those on foot at a relatively low cost. They can also help to create new amenities for visitors and residents, further cementing the community's strong identity and sense of place.

Community education about bike safety and traffic laws can also help to ensure the community is a safe place for all modes of transportation. Safe streets events could be hosted at The Heights in cooperation with Trailnet, MODOT, Great Rivers Greenway, or St. Louis County.

OBJECTIVE 2

Encourage Public Transit (Metro Bus and Metro Link) as Transportation Assets in Richmond Heights

The City of Richmond Heights is uniquely positioned with access to regional transportation assets that many peer communities lack. The City has access to both MetroLink and MetroBus within the City, providing easy connections to the entire St. Louis Region. During the Comprehensive Plan process, it became clear that many residents in Richmond Heights do not utilize the transit in the community. Many residents cited the lack of convenience as the reason they do not utilize transit. As a result, the City should seek to encourage public transit use through a variety of investments.

KEY RESULT 2.1 *Encourage transit-oriented development (TOD)*

KEY RESULT 2.2 *Enhanced access, connectivity, wayfinding through enhanced signage and pedestrian paths to transit stops and stations*

KEY RESULT 2.3 *Promote best practices to increase safety near transportation assets., including enhancing walking and biking paths, pedestrian-scale lighting, crossings, bus shelters, etc.*

KEY RESULT 2.4 *Host City-sponsored public transit events promoting travel to regional destinations via public transit*

KEY RESULT 2.5 *Community Engagement aimed at gathering input from the community on ways to increase transit use*

The most significant way that the City can encourage increased access and use of public transportation is through the promotion of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Supporting land use patterns that encourage density near transit stations will help increase the residential population adjacent to transit stops and, over time, increase usage. TOD policies often prioritize people on foot or bicycle by creating better connections, improving wayfinding, signage, and pedestrian amenities, and increasing density. TOD encourages mixed-use development near transit stations, creating vibrant, connected communities. Richmond Heights has an opportunity for this type of development adjacent to the Richmond Heights MetroLink station in particular. Other small-scale development opportunities exist near MetroBus stops throughout the community.

In addition to the promotion of TOD policies, the City can encourage transit use and improved experience by adding amenities near bus stops. These could include additional signage, benches, public art, bike racks, or other amenities. These investments will signal to residents of the region that Richmond Heights values transit and wants to support its use. City sponsored events and engagement about transit and transit education can also support these efforts.

OBJECTIVE 3

Support Transportation, Connectivity, and Infrastructure Improvements through Long-range Planning

In order to increase usage and create a better connected system overall, the City should invest in long-range planning aimed toward improving connectivity for all modes of transportation. This includes roadway improvements, investment in public transportation, and infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. All of these improvements should be rooted in long-range planning documents that help to implement components of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

KEY RESULT 3.1 Continue to plan and budget for future improvements in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

KEY RESULT 3.2 Identify and apply for transportation and infrastructure grants to fund improvements

The City should continue to plan and budget for future improvements as outlined in the Capital Improvements Plan. This should identify and plan for future infrastructure investments to serve a variety of audiences. Once identified, the City should investigate and apply for grants to fund these improvements. Whether small-scale grant opportunities for transit amenities or pocket parks, or large-scale investments in roadway updates, the City should devote staff time to looking for and applying for these grant opportunities.



Intersection of Oakland and Yale Avenue, looking north.

OBJECTIVE 4

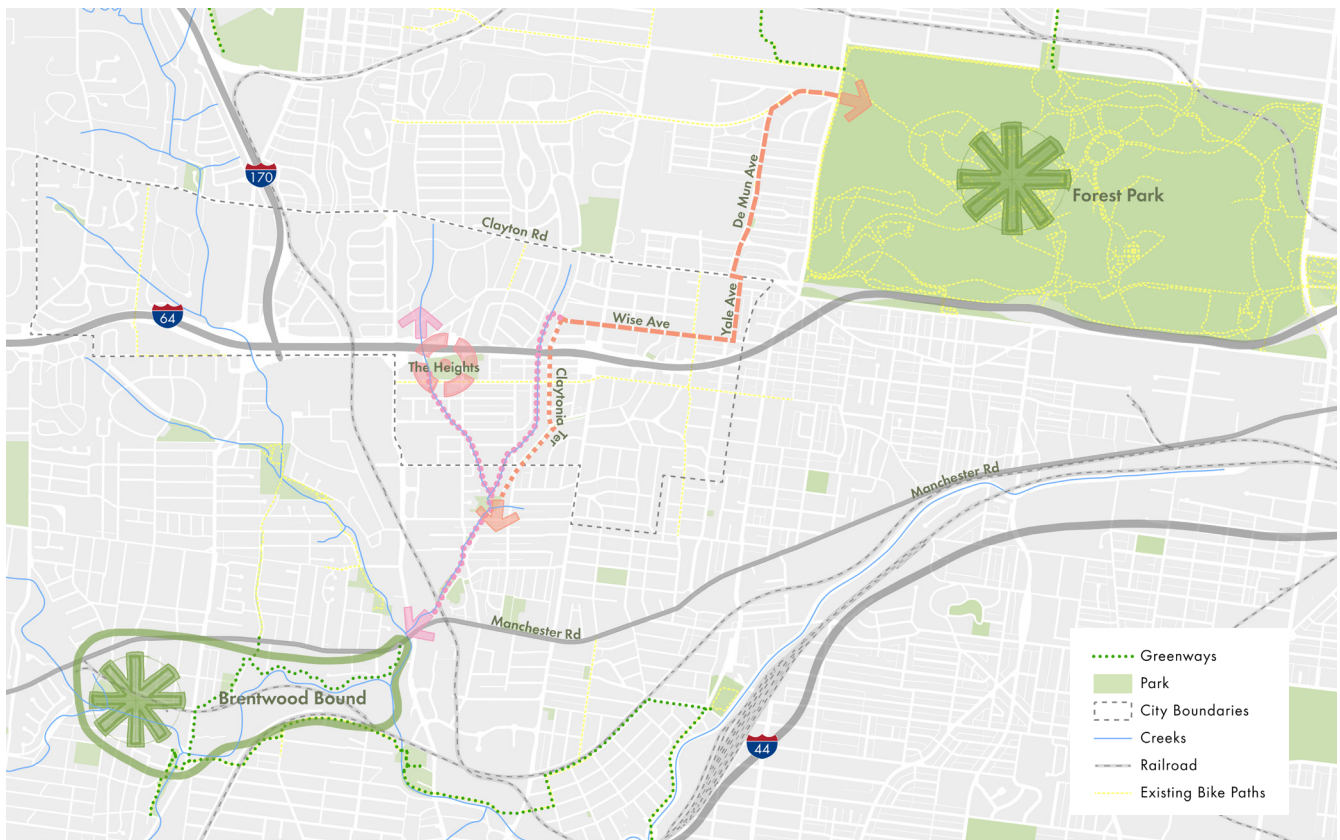
Enhance City-wide Connectivity to Parks, Greenspace, and Commercial Corridors

The City is uniquely situated in the center of the St. Louis region. Connectivity and the city's central location was most often cited as its greatest strength by residents during the Comprehensive Plan process. To build upon this strength, the City should work to enhance pedestrian connectivity to existing assets both within the City and just outside its limits.

KEY RESULT 4.1 Create and regularly update a city-wide map of pedestrian and bike paths to record the location of paths, conditions, and necessary improvements

KEY RESULT 4.2 Install additional wayfinding signage to assist pedestrians and cyclists in navigating safe paths through the community

The City's existing greenspaces include The Heights, AB Green Park, Highland Park, and several other small parks. Because Richmond Heights sits in between other municipalities with their own park systems, residents have access to not only Richmond Heights parks, but others in the region such as Tilles Park, Deer Creek Park, Anderson Park, Oak Knoll, Shaw Park, and Forest Park.



Potential on and off-street bike connections.

In addition to reinvestment in the existing greenspaces, the City should seek to improve connectivity and access to neighboring areas through investments in pedestrian and bike connections. As the map on the previous page depicts, through investment in both on-street and separated bike and pedestrian infrastructure, the City can begin to connect residents to regional assets.

A new on-street connection should be created from Lindbergh Park, just south of the City limits to Forest Park utilizing Claytonia Terrance, Wise Avenue, Yale Avenue, and DeMun. This path, shown in orange on the previous page, can either utilize excess roadway currently being devoted to street parking or can follow the “Share the Road” model currently being utilized on several streets in the community. This connection would allow residents to access the great amenities that Forest Park has to offer without getting in a vehicle. It would also provide a connection to local businesses such as Parker’s Table. An additional connection to the east could be created using the existing median on Lindbergh Drive.

In addition to these on-street connections north to Forest Park, the City should consider an off-street connection adjacent to the existing creek system in the community. Hampton Branch and Claytonia Creek both run through the community, meeting at Lindbergh Park and continuing down to Deer Creek and the Brentwood Bound area. By investing in major infrastructure improvements including a shared path adjacent to the creeks, the City could become a part of the major regional network, while also mitigating flooding concerns. This connectivity effort, shown in pink on the previous map, would require coordination and cooperation with both Maplewood and Brentwood and likely significant outside investment. Great Rivers Greenway should be considered as an implementation partner as providing the connection between Richmond Heights and the adjacent communities would be a huge regional benefit. Implementing the Hampton Branch and Claytonia creek connections would allow Richmond Heights residents to be connected to the broader regional greenway trail network.

As these investments are made, the City should continually update a pedestrian and bike path map and make it available to residents. In addition, wayfinding signage should be installed to connect residents and visitors to the available amenities and better connect each municipality.



COMMUNITY CHARACTER



Considering the vast services and amenities provided by the City, the physical character of the buildings and spaces in Richmond Heights, population demographics, and the perception or “brand” of the city as contributors to the community’s character creates a well-rounded topic area for further planning.

-
- OBJECTIVE 1** *Update City Parking Requirements*
 - OBJECTIVE 2** *Increase Partnership Opportunities with Schools Districts*
 - OBJECTIVE 3** *Celebrate Local Culture and Diversity*
 - OBJECTIVE 4** *Create More Active and Passive Greenspaces*
 - OBJECTIVE 5** *Enhance Development Design Guidelines*
 - OBJECTIVE 6** *Enhance the Richmond Heights Brand/Identity*
-

Residents in Richmond Heights feel a strong sense of community and connection to the City. Many cited this connection as the reason they love living in the City, and why they chose to be involved in the Comprehensive Planning process. Whether recent residents of the City or residents who have called the community home for generations, having this sense of community pride was a consistent theme. Given this community connection, building on the community’s character is an important focus area.

For Richmond Heights, community character includes residents and population demographics, the city services provided for the community, the physical character of buildings, streetscapes, and public spaces, and the overall brand of the city. All of these components help to create the feeling that makes Richmond Heights unique and is something community members felt strongly about investing in.

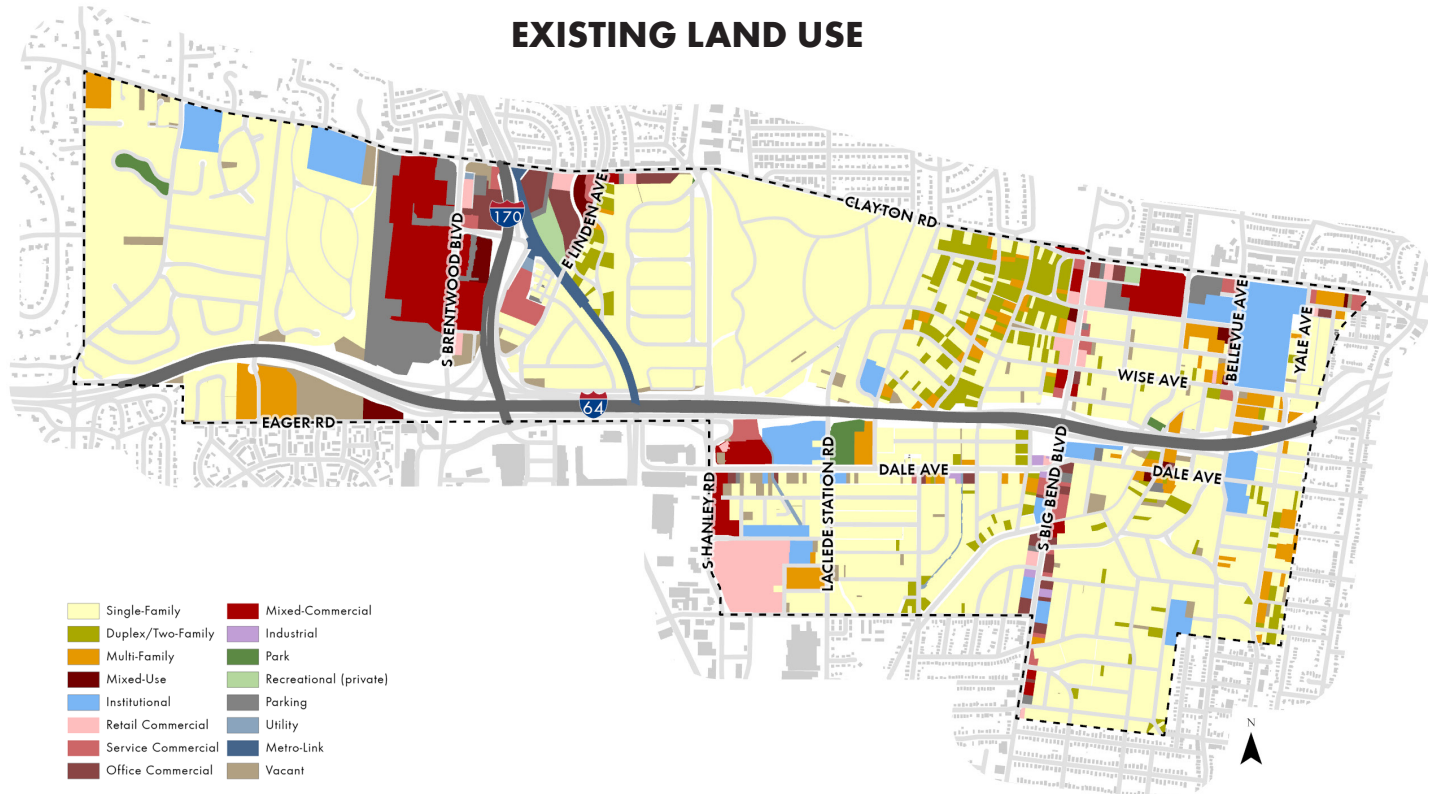
OBJECTIVE 1 Update City Parking Requirements

Today, about 3% of the Richmond Heights land area is occupied by parking. While this percentage is relatively small, the location of parking has the potential to impact the character of the community by making it feel more or less friendly to pedestrians. Because the community is focused on building strong neighborhoods with a sense of community, it will be important for the City to evaluate the existing parking regulations and update them to reinforce the type of land use patterns and community feel that residents desire.

KEY RESULT 1.1 Complete a city-wide parking study to understand parking demand and activity, focusing on commercial corridors.

KEY RESULT 1.2 Make amendments to Chapter 350 - Parking Regulations informed by Parking Study.

In Richmond Heights, Parking 3.2% of the city's total land area square, or 35 individual parcels. Shown on the map below in gray, it is primarily concentrated around commercial uses on major corridors, particularly around the Galleria Mall and the commercial nodes along S. Hanley Road and Clayton Road.



Located near the intersection of I-64/40 and Brentwood Blvd., the Galleria Out Lot site presents a significant redevelopment opportunity for the city. During the Scenario Planning Phase of the planning process, the Galleria Out Lot, a 700-space parking lot providing overflow parking for the Galleria Mall, emerged as an area which may be susceptible to a change in future land use due to the area being largely underutilized, except during peak shopping seasons. Through this scenario planning exercise, it became clear that any alternate land use at this site would require the Galleria to make additional on-site parking spaces available in order to remain in compliance with the City's current parking regulations. This would mean costly improvements to the Galleria property, likely in the form of adding a third parking deck to the existing parking structure attached to the mall. In addition, the alternative land uses considered would require on-site parking ranging from 120 to 649 spaces to meet the City's current parking regulations.

Through engagement with Galleria's ownership and discussions with the City's Steering Committee regarding the parking dilemma associated with alternate land uses for the Galleria Out Lot, the City's current parking regulations were identified as a potential barrier to facilitating new development and redevelopment opportunities. Thus, the need to assess current and future parking needs in order to better facilitate new development and redevelopment opportunities within the City's was identified as a next step to build on the City's strong community character.

Whether the study area is an existing commercial district or for new development site, an accurate understanding of parking supply and demand trends can facilitate new development and redevelopment opportunities. A lack of understanding about parking trends can create barriers to these opportunities. Parking supply and demand studies take into account quantitative and qualitative inventory and utilization data to help communities answer important questions about current and future parking demand and needs:

- *How much parking is available in a specific study area?*
- *How is parking being utilized? (i.e. Who is parking, when, and for how long?)*
- *Are there underutilized parking areas that can be reimagined as a more productive land use?*
- *Does parking demand exceed available parking, or does the supply of parking exceed demand?*
- *Are there physical barriers to driving parking supply and demand trends?*

While simple parking counts can be completed with minimal training by city staff, a comprehensive analysis of current and future parking supply and demand, the identification of policy and infrastructure needs, and the application of best practices is best suited for completion by trained professionals.

In Richmond Heights, a comprehensive Parking Supply & Demand Study should be

completed with a focus on current and future parking needs within the City's existing commercial nodes and scenario areas. For instance, this study can identify true parking demand for the Galleria Mall, helping its ownership balance consumer demand for parking and the future parking regulations with the feasibility of constructing a third parking deck versus pursuing shared parking agreements with any future development of the Out Lot site, therefore facilitating the best possible outcomes related to redevelopment of the community's Preferred Galleria Out Lot Scenario.

A comprehensive parking study may also identify other sites in the city where an imbalance between parking demand and supply exists in order to maximize impacts of future land use considerations (i.e. tax generation, pedestrian accessibility, etc.). Parking studies can also be helpful in addressing other challenges, such as potential wayfinding signage needs, creating parking in areas where vehicles routinely park illegally, and developing solutions to poor platting or site layout inadequacies that make available parking areas poorly accessible or unusable.

On Dale Avenue, for example, street parking is provided for area businesses and residents. Considering if this parking is suitable or should be reconsidered would be an outcome of a parking study. Similarly, if right-of-way will be devoted to a shared-use path or bike lane, considering the impact of the loss of street parking will be important.

OBJECTIVE 2 *Increase Partnership Opportunities with Schools Districts*

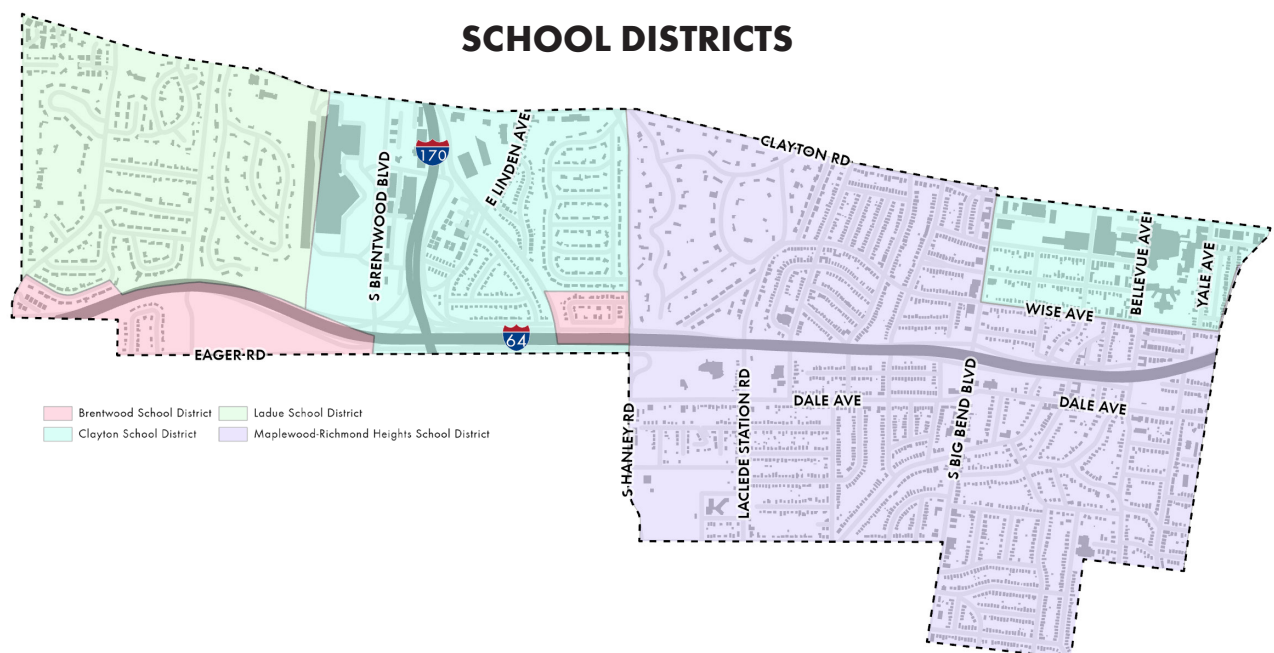
Access to quality schools is a key strength of Richmond Heights' housing market. It was also cited as a major reason people feel connected to the community and plan to stay long-term. Increasing partnerships with the local school districts will ensure this connection remains strong.

KEY RESULT 2.1 *Participate in the School Districts' Strategic Planning Process*

KEY RESULT 2.2 *Identify the City's role in furthering the implementation of the Strategic Plans*

KEY RESULT 2.3 *Encourage the creation of a program to foster entrepreneurship education and boost the small business economy*

Richmond Heights is split into four school districts with youth in the City attending the Ladue School District, Brentwood School District, Clayton School District, or the Maplewood-Richmond Heights School District depending on their place of residence. The single-family portion of the City west of S Brentwood Boulevard and north of I-64, where the lots are larger and homes of higher value, is zoned for the Ladue School District. A small portion of the City is zoned for the Brentwood School District. The area bound by S Brentwood Boulevard, Clayton Road, S Hanley Road, and I-64 and a small portion adjacent to SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital is zoned for the Clayton School District. The remaining parts of the City, representing the largest number of housing units, are within the jurisdiction of the Maplewood-Richmond Heights School District.



One specific way that the City of Richmond Heights can engage with the area school districts is through involvement with their strategic planning efforts. Each of the four districts are in a different place regarding this planning, but the City should seek to engage with school district leaders when possible.

BRENTWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Brentwood School District utilizes four rolling committees to evaluate and update the district’s strategic planning goals aimed at addressing the areas of needed throughout the school district on an annual basis. These committees focus on the developing the vision, priorities, and action plans related to Equity, Social-Emotional Growth, Standards-Based Reporting, and Community Engagement.

CLAYTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

The 2020-2023 Clayton School District Strategic Plan’s vision begins “with the end in mind, using the voices of our community, our students and our alumni to develop a profile of the competencies we want for every Clayton graduate. We use that profile to shape the direction in this strategic plan, influence our approach to learning and challenge the mental models of what our schools should look like for our students.” The strategic plan centers around three goals, each having objectives which present opportunities for the City of Richmond Heights to be a key implementation partner:

- We will ensure all learners, regardless of their identity, feel safe and valued.
- We will commit to the educational growth of our learners through an equitable, personalized and individualized learning experience.
- We will be dedicated to the personal growth of our learners in their social, emotional and physical well-being.

LADUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

In the Summer 2021, the Ladue School District began the process of creating the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. The plan was adopted by the school district in July 2022. The plan’s framework is comprised of six Collective Commitments or priorities that align with the district’s mission, vision, and goals, are embedded in all aspects of the district, and are poised for immediate and measurable implementation.

- Implementing innovative, individualized, and inquiry-based programming designed to address our students’ academic and social-emotional needs inside and outside the classroom.
- Hiring, retaining, and developing exceptional staff dedicated to our students and representing our diverse school community.
- Providing timely, accurate, transparent, and engaging communications with our stakeholders and community.

RICHMOND HEIGHTS MAPLEWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

In September 2022, the Maplewood Richmond Heights School District embarked on the process of creating the 2022-2028 Strategic Plan, an action-oriented roadmap to success which establishes 5 priorities/ goals with associated strategies and outcome measures: For Our Students, For Our Health, For Our People, For Our Resources, and For Our Community. Richmond Heights' City Manager participated on the steering committee for this planning process listening to school district voices, providing relevant insights, and sharing community-wide perspectives. The plan was adopted by the MRH School Board in June 2023.

- MRH believes students who have access to and are engaged in high-quality learning experiences will be equipped with the academic and social-emotional skills to achieve at their full potential.
- MRH believes in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce representative of the broader community and ensuring all staff are supported with resources and professional development to achieve their goals.
- MRH believes managing the finances, facilities, and operations effectively and efficiently is essential to providing quality education for students.

COMMON THREADS

The strategic plans prepared by the school districts each share a few common themes related to diversity, talent attraction, community engagement/communication, and preparing students for real-world experiences post-graduation. These common goals represent opportunities for the City of Richmond to be key implementation partners.

Diversity and Talent Attraction

Attracting a diverse and highly-qualified workforce is another goal across the City's four school districts. With convenient internet and public transit access connecting residents to all parts of the region, quality housing options, proximity to some of the region's most popular parks and green spaces, location within four of the regions top school districts, and a diverse mix of housing options, Richmond Heights is a desirable community for new and existing residents. The demand for a broader mix of housing types and price points is increasing as the community's demographics continue to diversify.

Richmond Heights has strong rental housing market, with average rents per unit exceeding sub market averages and vacancy rates lower than sub market averages. Rental units in the City have a monthly rent, on average, of \$1,531 or \$1.25 per square foot (excluding Altair and EVO Apartments for consistency). In 2022, the average salary in the MRH School District was \$59,472, the lowest average salary of the four school districts in the City, (Public Pay 2022, STL Post-Dispatch). Based on this salary, the average MRH School District employee renting a housing unit in the City would spend roughly 31% of their

monthly income on rent costs alone (down from 33% in 2021). Spending more than 30% of monthly income on housing cost (including mortgage or rent, taxes, utilities, and fees) is a typical indicator of “cost-burdened” households and low affordability. Attracting of a diverse mix of housing types and price points is key to supporting attraction of a diverse, high-qualified workforce for the City’s school districts, and housing demand created due to the city’s proximity to employment hubs and universities in neighboring areas.

Community Engagement/Communication

Engaging families and community stakeholders is a common priority among the City’s school districts. The City of Richmond Heights publishes a seasonal community newsletter which is printed and mailed to every Richmond Heights resident. The newsletter typically sharing updates about City initiatives, services, and programs, public events, new developments, etc. This newsletter presents a great opportunity to collaborate with the local school districts to distribute relevant school information to Richmond Heights families, increase the community’s exposure to relevant cultural diversity and equity initiatives impacting the learning environments within local schools, and spotlight the talents and accomplishments of the Richmond Heights students attending either of the four school districts.

Future-Ready Graduates

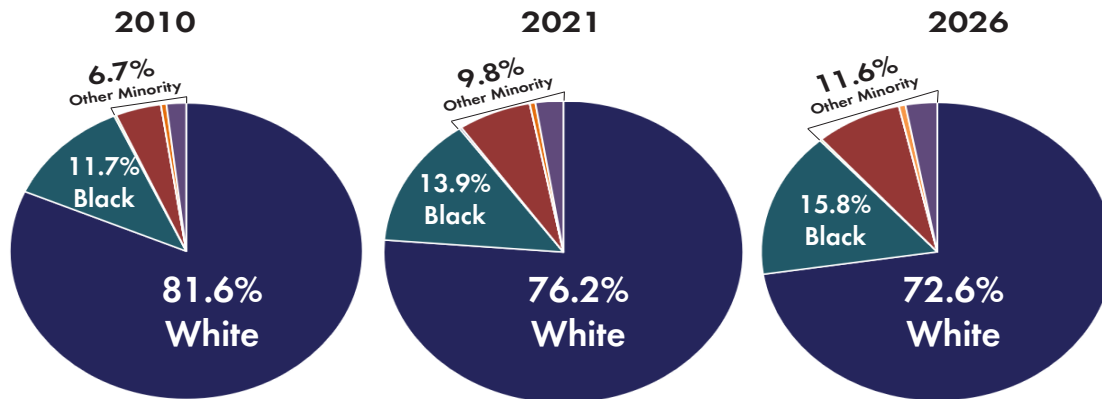
The City’s four school districts also share the goal of providing students with a dynamic education experience complete with real-world learning opportunities and exposure to a variety of college and career paths. The City can support the implementation of this goal by encouraging the creation of and being an active participant in local programs that connect students with local businesses to gain exposure and experience in their fields of interest. These types of “future-ready” or “talent pipeline” programs can also help create the City’s next generation of business owners. Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) is a great example of cities, schools, and local businesses coming together to create hands-on, student learning experiences while simultaneously bolstering local economies.

Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) a hands-on, entrepreneurship education program which seeks to prepare youth to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and contribute to economic development and sustainable communities. CEO is the brain child of former Teutopolis (IL) School District educator and filmmaker, Craig Lindvahl along with community leaders and high school students from Effingham County, IL. In 2007, this group set out to create a an innovative approach to education that focused on real-life accomplishments and empowering young people with the skills they need to thrive in life after school. To support the expansion of the CEO program to communities beyond Effingham County, the Midland Institute of Entrepreneurship was created in 2009. Today, the CEO Program has broadened its reach and impact across the country.

The City should seek regular communication with all four school districts to ensure they are up-to-date on the strategic planning efforts and how the districts' plans relate to and impact the City's future.

OBJECTIVE 3 Celebrate Local Culture and Diversity

As shown in the graphic below, the Black and ‘Other Minority’ populations in Richmond Heights have seen significant growth over the last 20 years, and are anticipated to continue growing in the future. As the City becomes more diverse, the cultural landscape of the community also changes. In order to promote progress in this fashion while also retaining the community’s traditions and historical characteristics, Richmond Heights’ evolving local culture and growing diversity should be embraced by celebrated.



KEY RESULT 3.1 Create new public events to celebrate local culture and diversity

KEY RESULT 3.2 Add public art in the community that celebrates the local culture

Celebrating the mix of backgrounds and experiences that collectively make up Richmond Heights’ local culture and diversity through public events and programming is a way to foster awareness, learning, and respect for the cultural differences among the City’s residents. Cultural celebrations can also help foster a sense of belonging for new and existing residents who do not ascribe to the dominant local culture or demographic. Whether celebrating Juneteenth or El Grito de Delores (Mexican Independence Day), remembering the history of the Bennett Avenue and Hampton Park neighborhoods, or enjoying an outdoor music and exploring new cuisines, cultural events can bring communities together to acknowledge and celebrate their differences, shared histories, and broad interests.

The City should seek to invite residents to share their ideas about the cultural events they would like to see in the community, encourage active participation in bringing these events to life beyond attendance (i.e. volunteering, sponsorships, etc.), and allow residents to curate new cultural events with the assistance of City Staff.

CULTURAL CELEBRATION IDEAS

Cultural Holidays

- While some cultural holidays like Christmas and Cinco de Mayo have become more widely celebrated and commercialized, awareness and celebration of other holidays like Juneteenth, a date commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African-Americans post-Emancipation Proclamation, has been celebrated in various parts of the U.S. since the 1860s, but only recently received designation as a National Holiday.
- Acknowledge the diverse mix of people and cultures in the community by creating awareness and learning opportunities about the cultural holidays that are meaningful to them. Continue utilizing the City's newsletter to acknowledge and create awareness about cultural holidays.
- Encourage City employees, residents, and businesses to share their celebrations through storytelling.

Food-inspired Cultural Celebrations

Traditions around the production, preparation, serving, sharing, and consumption of food has deeply-rooted social, ethnic, religious, and/or cultural significance for many groups of people. Culinary anthropologists study the role of food in different societies to understand broad social, cultural, and economic construct across nations and groups of people. Likewise, food-inspired cultural celebrations can bring diverse communities together to share, learn, and enhance cultural competencies. Examples of these types of celebrations around the St. Louis region include of Taste of Black St. Louis, Soul Food Celebrations, and Cinco de Mayo.

Celebrating Local History Through Public Art

History or heritage tourism can be defined as travel directed towards exploring and experiencing the history, culture, customs, or traditions of a place and its people. Richmond Heights has two neighborhoods and two sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many communities that have a Historic Preservation Commission also host regular programs and events to celebrate local heritage, including holiday home tours and guided or self-guided historic walking tours. Locally inspired public art and historical monuments that incorporate written and oral histories can create awareness of the historical significance of these local treasure for residents and visitors. Murals and other forms of public art can help transform underutilized public spaces into engaging, placemaking opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 4 Create More Active and Passive Greenspaces

Creating more active and passive greenspaces in the community is one way to continue to build on the strong community character that exists in Richmond Heights. These spaces allow for community connections to be formed and are often a place where events can be hosted. In addition, well-designed greenspaces can integrate public art and other aspects of the Richmond Heights brand that further the sense of community and belonging that residents so highly desire.

KEY RESULT 4.1 *Create a plan for the expansion of outdoor programming and greenspace at The Heights*

KEY RESULT 4.2 *Identify pocket park opportunities, and associated guidelines, within neighborhoods*

KEY RESULT 4.3 *Identify opportunities for the addition of sports fields in the within Parks & Recreation Cooperative footprint*

KEY RESULT 4.4 *Encourage the implementation of the greenspace concept as part of the Galleria Out Lot scenario*

KEY RESULT 4.5 *Update Urban Forestry/Tree Preservation Codes*

KEY RESULT 4.6 *Enhance development guidelines related to commercial landscaping and public gathering spaces*

To create more active and passive greenspace, the City should strategically invest in the existing spaces, partner with neighboring municipalities, consider small-scale greenspaces that can be added in the community, and seek to codify tree and landscaping regulations.

Currently, The Heights and AB Green Park offer significant programming and available recreation space on the southern end of the community. Expanding programming and available amenities at these two sites is one way the City can continue to grow the offerings available to residents. In addition, considering the expansion to add new greenspace adjacent to The Heights would help to add additional amenity space for residents. If pursued, this space should be designed in a way that allows it to be used for many purposes, both City-sponsored events and also casual use by residents. Expansion in this area would help to build upon the strong community character that these current assets have created for the community.

Other opportunities for new greenspace exist elsewhere in the community through the use of pocket parks. A pocket park is a small park accessible to the community. While the look of these parks vary, the common characteristic is its small size, typically existing on just one small parcel. The small public space at the intersection of Laclede Station Road and Bennett Avenue and Highland Park are both examples of existing pocket parks in the community. Other opportunities for this type of public space exist in the community and provide an opportunity to create these passive greenspaces with a variety of amenities. Any new pocket parks in the community should be compatible with adjacent land uses and focused on showcasing the community's character through the use of public art. An example of a vacant lot on Wise Avenue just west of Bellevue is shown below, depicted as a new pocket park adjacent to a mixed-use node. Another example on Hoover Ave, east of Big Bend, shows a small-scale park with additional landscaping and opportunities for community connections within a residential neighborhood. The Galleria outlot and creek redevelopment also represent opportunities for additional greenspace in the community.



Potential pocket parks on Wise Avenue just west of Bellevue and on Hoover Ave, east of Big Bend.

Updating tree preservation and landscaping codes in the City is another way to retain existing greenspaces while also encouraging new green elements in the City. These regulations can include landscaping requirements for new developments, a tree replacement program, tree canopy regulations, or other rules that help to mandate additional green elements in the community. The City of Kansas City, Missouri has a strong tree preservation ordinance and protection plan as part of their zoning code. A similar effort could be pursued by the City of Richmond Heights as part of a zoning code review.

OBJECTIVE 5 *Enhance Development Design Guidelines*

Design consistency was often cited by residents as a reason that particular neighborhoods possess a strong identity. In order to retain this in residential neighborhoods and create a more unique identity for commercial areas, the City should consider enhancing development design guidelines.

KEY RESULT 5.1 *Allow for contemporary design while preserving neighborhood character*

KEY RESULT 5.2 *Enhance minimum standards for sustainable, interesting, and attractive building design*

Currently, the City has limited development design guidelines. As a result, new infill development in residential areas often lack consistency as they relate to nearby buildings. Similarly, each commercial area looks different from one another, creating a lack of continuity across the community.

The City of O’Fallon, Illinois has design guidelines to regulate both commercial and residential development. The Commercial Design Handbook and Downtown Design Guidelines have been in place for several years and have helped the city regulate the look and feel of commercial developments. These guidelines regulate things like signage, lighting, materials, and colors. Following the recent Comprehensive Plan, the City began an effort to create similar guidelines for their residential neighborhoods. These guidelines regulate aspects such as site layout, set-backs, accessory structures, context sensitive designs by neighborhood, building scale, form, landscaping, and parking.

For Richmond Heights, adding design guidelines to the zoning code is likely the best route, allowing the city to evaluate the existing code and integrate new guidelines into an updated code for both residential and commercial development.

OBJECTIVE 6 *Enhance the Richmond Heights Brand/Identity*

A community's brand should be synonymous its local identity and culture. The City of Richmond Height's logo embodies the City's motto, *Progress with Tradition*. With references to the historic City Hall building, the logo creates a recognizable logo for the community. To strengthen the City's brand recognition, foster a sense of place, promote Richmond Heights as a desirable place to live, work, and do business, the City should complete on a comprehensive civic branding effort. This effort might include branded gateway and wayfinding signage, publish realm elements, and the development of a shared messaging to tell the City's story.

KEY RESULT 6.1 *Identify key locations and construct branded gateway entry signage*

KEY RESULT 6.2 *Create a strategic branding initiative including wayfinding and other public realm improvements*

KEY RESULT 6.3 *Tell the community's story through creative and strategic brand marketing*

Gateway signage is used a physical landmark to indicate a change in environment or arrival into a new place. Richmond Heights is bisected by I-64/40 and includes several major regional roads including Hanley Road, Big Bend Blvd., Brentwood Blvd., and Clayton Road. These roadways route through adjacent communities with no clear designation as to when a person is entering or leaving Richmond Heights. In order to help motorists and pedestrians recognize these changes in environment, particularly their arrival to Richmond Heights, several sites throughout the City have been identified as potential locations for branded gateway signage. These locations include:

- *Galleria outlot*
- *Clayton Road and Hanley Road intersection*
- *Dale Avenue and Hanley Road intersection*
- *Dale Avenue and Big Bend, adjacent to City Hall*
- *Big Bend and I-64/40 west bound off ramp*

Recommended signage components include gateway signage at key entrances featuring large-scale signs denoting the area to ensure accessibility and wayfinding to these areas of the community. In addition, several monument signs on are recommended to further solidify the area's branding. To ensure the branding is clear, it is recommended that the City utilize the same design scheme for site furnishings (i.e., seating, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc.) and public realm improvements like pedestrian-scale lighting, district banners, and landscape planters.

Two examples of signage in the St. Louis area are shown below. These provide an indication to travelers that they are entering a specific area.



Placemaking signage in Creve Coeur, Missouri and in the Grove neighborhood in the City of St. Louis.

To visualize what wayfinding might look like in Richmond Heights, several examples are shown below. These images depict what wayfinding signage with the current city branding could look like at the intersection of Big Bend and I-64/40 and Brentwood Blvd. and I-64/40.



Placemaking signage concepts for the intersection of 64/40 and Big Bend and the westbound on-ramp of 64/40 at Brentwood.

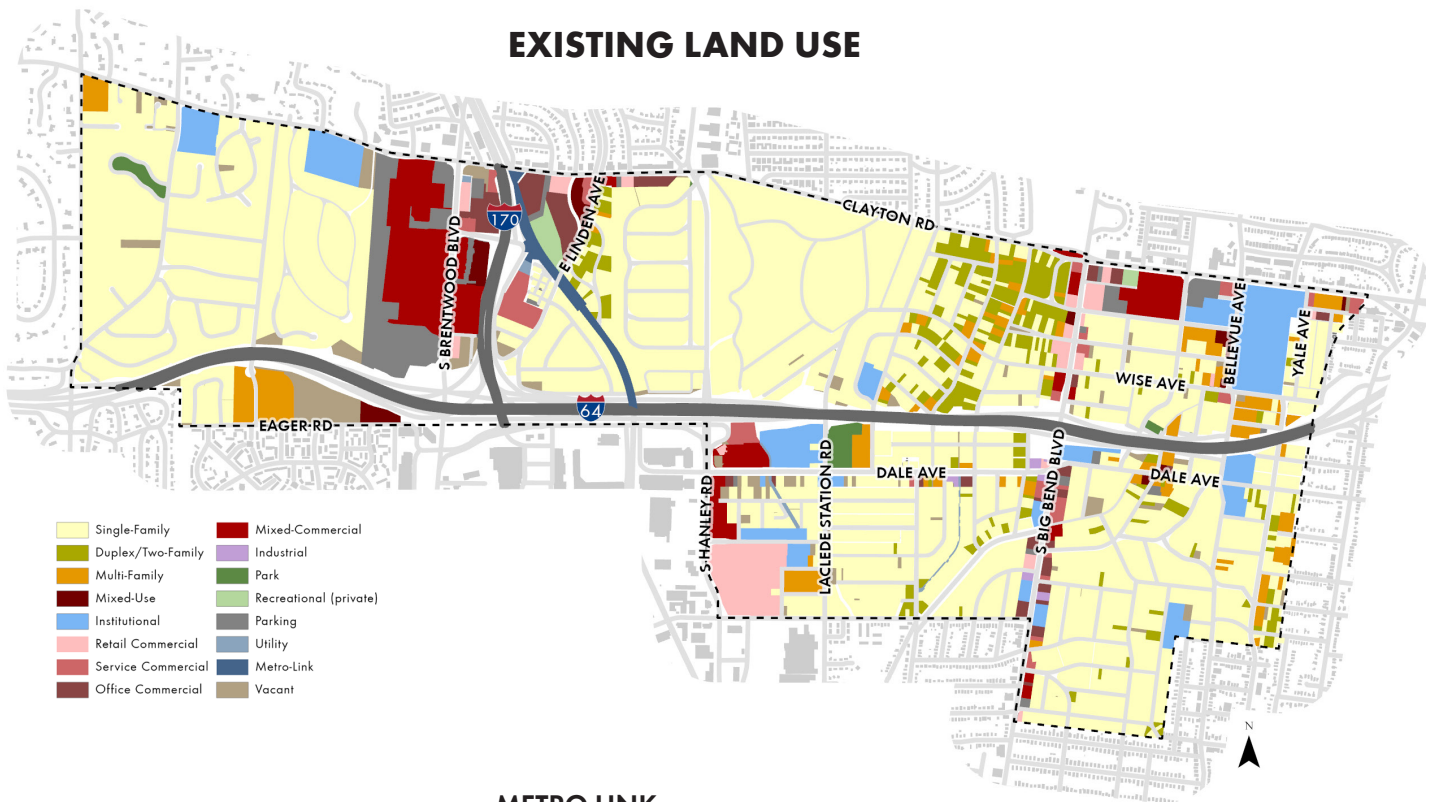
In addition to physical signage, the City of Richmond Heights should utilize media platforms to tell Richmond Heights' story. Creative, targeted, brand marketing initiatives can support the City's community and economic development efforts. Communities across the country use tools like marketing videos, public art campaign, and collateral materials to tout their communities strengths, assets, opportunities, and success stories. In Richmond Heights, elements of this story targeting talent attraction might include highlights about its diversifying population, quality of life, high-quality residential neighborhoods, and convenient location at the center of the region with access to major Interstates, highways, and public transit options connecting residents to commercial and employment hubs throughout the region.

FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

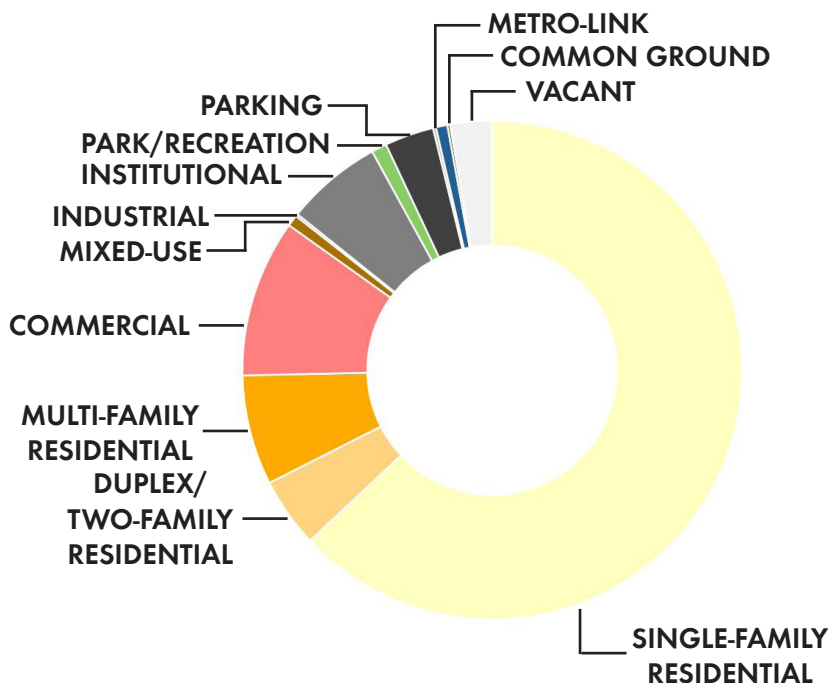


Evaluating existing land use patterns and opportunities is an important part of understanding a community and creating a vision for the future. The land use review conducted as part of the existing conditions assessment of the Community Analysis helps to inform the Future Land Use Strategy presented on the following pages.

EXISTING LAND USE



- Single-Family
- Duplex/Two-Family
- Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use
- Institutional
- Retail Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Office Commercial
- Mixed-Commercial
- Industrial
- Park
- Recreational (private)
- Parking
- Utility
- Metro-Link
- Vacant



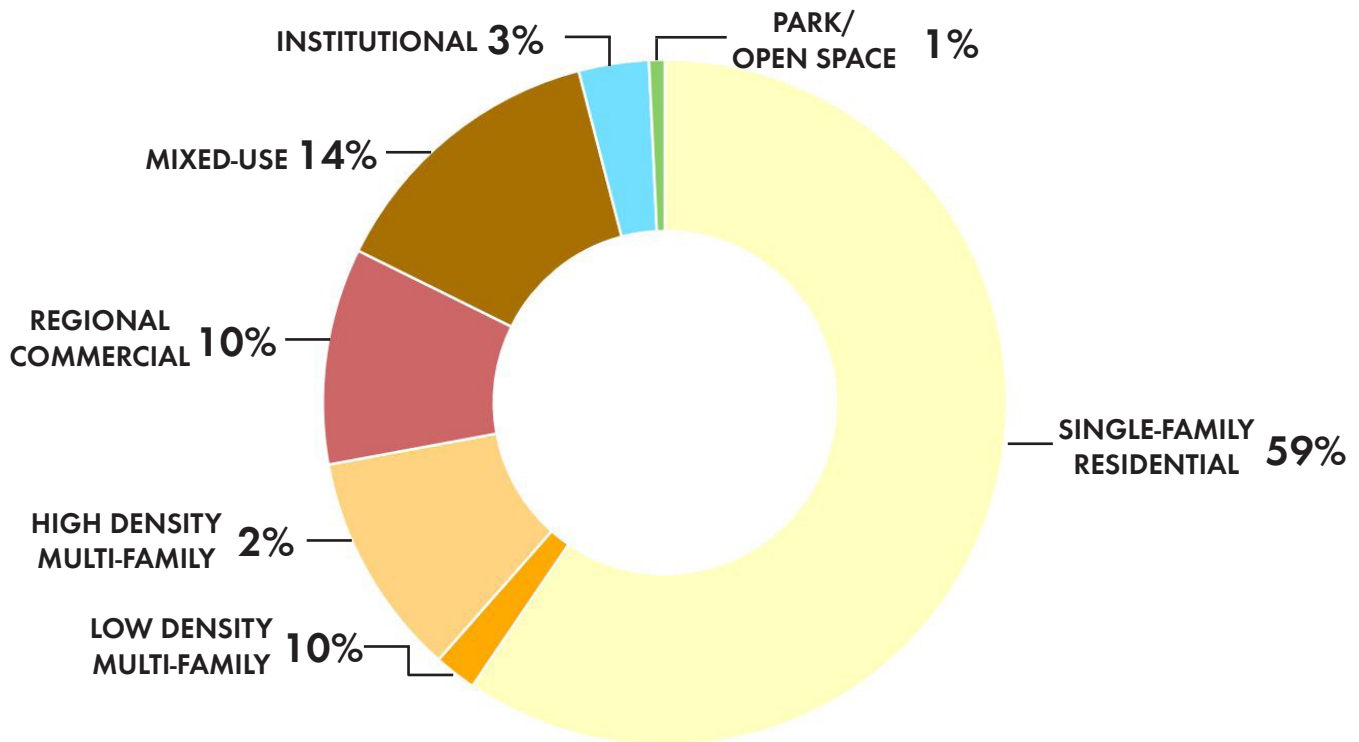
Currently, land use in the City of Richmond Heights is primarily residential, with more than three quarters of the City's land area classified as residential in nature. Commercial land accounts for about 10% of the City's land area. Other land uses in the City include industrial, park, MetroLink, private recreational, common ground, and utilities, all at less than 1%. The map above and diagram to the left show the current land use breakdown.

FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

The Future Land Use Strategy is a result of the entire Comprehensive Planning process and pulls together feedback from residents and stakeholders on how they would like to see their community develop moving forward. Essentially, the Future Land Use Map depicts the future state of the community, should the Comprehensive Plan’s vision come to life.



As shown in the map above, the future land use breakdown would include the following:



The Future Land Use Strategy creates a cohesive vision for the community with a mix of land uses that create a vibrant community, while mitigating potential land use conflicts by organizing the community in a strategic manner.

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Single Family Residential land uses include lots that are occupied by a single residence. This land use represents the vast majority of Richmond Heights. Lot sizes vary significantly across the community and neighborhoods have their own unique character.

LOW DENSITY MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Low Density Multi-Family Residential land uses include lots that are occupied by a small-scale multi-family residential structures, with buildings with 12 units or less. This land use represents a significant portion of Richmond Heights, located in pockets north of I-64/40 west of Big Bend, adjacent to the MetroLink south of Clayton Road, and in small areas of the community at the eastern boundary.

HIGH DENSITY MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

High Density Multi-Family Residential land uses include lots that are occupied by a large-scale multi-family residential structures with at least 13 units. This land use represents a small portion of the city and currently only includes two multi-family buildings.

REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

Regional Commercial includes large-scale commercial developments that are automobile-oriented and typically include substantial parking. Commercial properties of this type typically serve a regional market.

MIXED-USE

Mixed-Use includes uses that include multiple land uses in one building, typically including a combination of commercial on the ground floor with residential or office users above. This use is located on major corridors or in key intersections within neighborhoods. Uses can serve a regional or local market and are pedestrian-oriented and often include parking in the rear.

INSTITUTIONAL

Institutional land uses include government buildings, schools, and religious uses. This category of uses includes locations such as City Hall and The Heights and generally provides community services and support for the surrounding area.

PARK/OPEN SPACE

Park/Open Space land uses include City owned parks, communal open space, and pocket parks. These are all outdoor spaces intended for use by community members and residents.

SIGNIFICANT LAND USE CHANGES

Significant land use changes are recommended in key areas including:

GALLERIA MALL OUTLOT AND BOULEVARD PHASE 1 & 2

This area currently includes parking, vacancy, and a variety of commercial development. To encourage pedestrian-oriented commercial development moving forward, this area is identified as Mixed-Use.

CLAYTON ROAD COMMERCIAL NODE

Located just east of the MetroLink tracks, this node includes the Sunrise on Clayton senior living facility, a large office building, MidFirst Bank, a title company, an SSM Medical Building, a Commerce Bank branch, Tropicana Lanes, and several small retail sites. This area is currently a mix of uses and lacks a cohesive identity. Given its proximity to the MetroLink and location on Clayton Road, this area should transition to a mixed-use node.

BIG BEND

Currently, Big Bend is a mix of uses including retail, service, and office commercial, along with institutional and open space uses. In the future, this corridor should transition to Mixed-Use, focused on activating the street with commercial uses on the first floor, parking in the rear, and residential or office space on the upper floors.

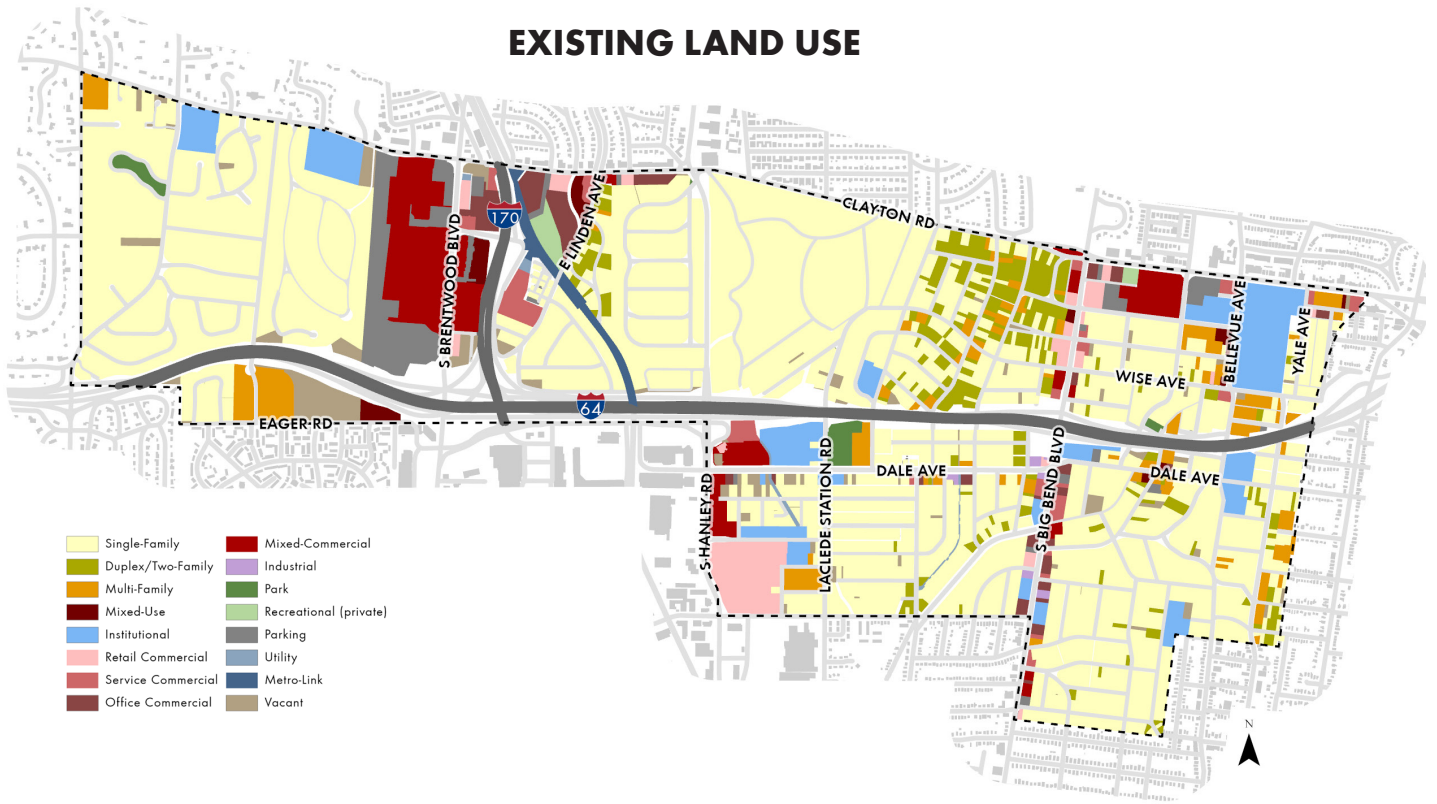
DALE AVENUE

Several portions of Dale Avenue are currently in transition, with significant vacancy and a mix of uses. To create a more cohesive built environment, this corridor should develop in an intentional way with nodes of Mixed-Use, Single Family Residential, Park/Open Space, and Institutional uses.

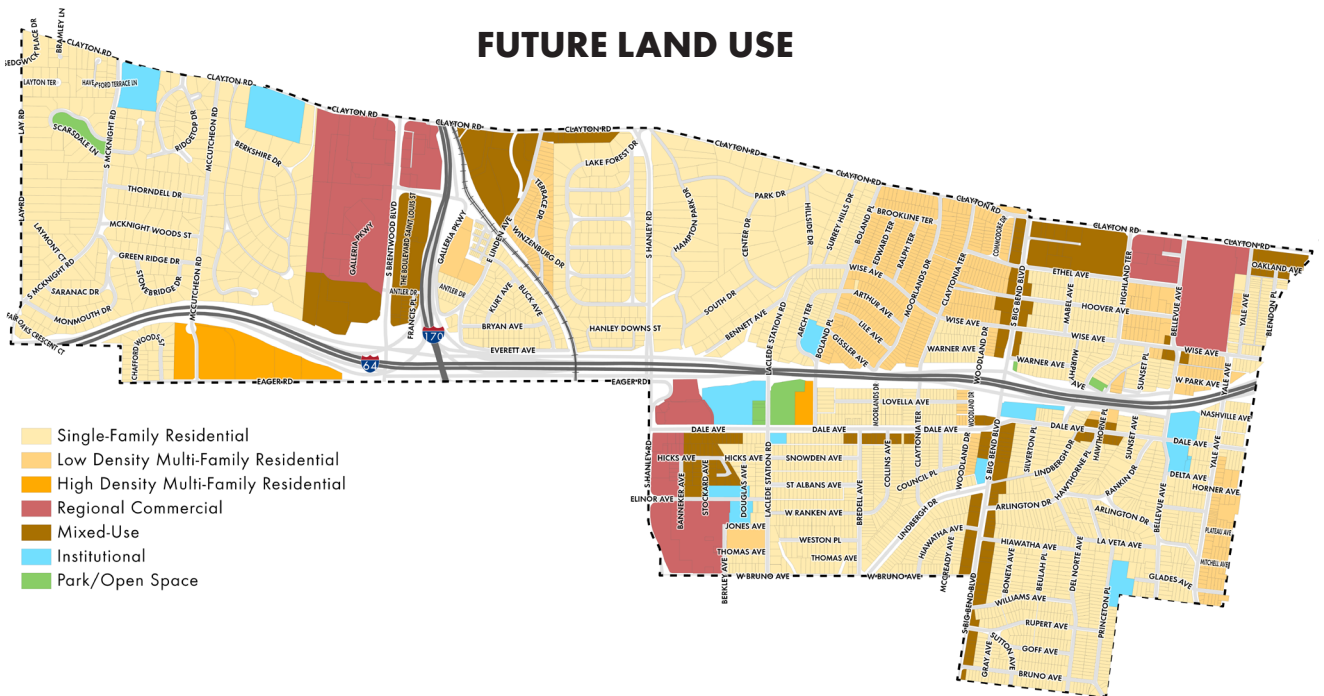
URBAN TRANSITION AREA (BOUNDED BY DALE AVE, HAMPTON BRANCH, ELINOR AVE, AND BANNEKER AVE)

There are currently a mix of uses in this area including vacant/undeveloped lots, commercial, residential, and institutional uses. The area is currently zoned as Planned Development - Mixed Use and should continue to transition towards Mixed Use. Given the areas proximity the Brentwood I-64 MetroLink station, commercial uses along S. Hanley Road, and future commercial development on Dale Avenue, the area is naturally suited to being a buffer between the auto-oriented commercials uses to the north, west and south and residential neighborhoods east of Hampton Branch.

EXISTING LAND USE



FUTURE LAND USE



SCENARIO PLANS



The purpose of examining targeted areas for scenario planning during the Comprehensive Plan process is to provide more specific recommendations for an area of the City that is susceptible to change, faces increased redevelopment pressure, or has significant vacant or underutilized properties. The scenario area plans provided in this section provide a more detailed look at area-specific recommendations for these unique and important parts of the City. These areas were selected in cooperation with City Staff, Steering Committee, and City Council. Each scenario plan is intended to provide a framework for the improvement, redevelopment, and revitalization of each area, and to establish policies for the City moving forward. The information included in the final scenario plan for each area is reflected in the Future Land Use Strategy shown on the previous pages.

The scenario areas analyzed during the planning process include:

Galleria Out Lot

This area includes the existing parking lot at the southern end of the Galleria Mall. The goal for this scenario area was to explore potential uses for the existing underutilized surface parking lot.

Big Bend - North

This area included the parcels fronting Big Bend Blvd from Clayton Road at the north to I-64/40 at the south. The goal for this scenario area was to reinforce the mixed use nature of the corridor and identify opportunities to improve the pedestrian experience.

Big Bend - South

This area included the parcels fronting Big Bend Blvd from I-64/40 at the north to the city limits at the south. The goal for this scenario area was to transform the area into a pedestrian-friendly, mixed use corridor with new land use investment and shared parking arrangements.

Dale Avenue

This area included Dale Avenue from Hanley Road at the west to Big Bend at the east. The goal for this scenario was to consider the Dale Avenue corridor's transition in recent years and contemplate the ideal land use for the future.



GALLERIA OUT LOT

The Galleria Mall is a regional mall, home to several important anchor retail tenants within the St. Louis region. Today, anchors include Dillard's, Macy's, and Nordstrom, in addition to many smaller retailers. The Mall is a significant source of revenue for the City of Richmond Heights and, as a result, was chosen as a scenario area for further study.

Located on Brentwood Blvd, just north of I-64/40, the Galleria attracts a wide variety of visitors on an annual basis. Centrally located, the Mall operates as part of the larger Brentwood-Richmond Heights-Maplewood retail center at the intersection of Brentwood and I-64/40. Given this dynamic, it is likely this area will continue to see retail strength, despite the trends in malls nationwide. That being said, due to the trends in retail overall, excess parking space at the southern end of the Galleria provides an opportunity for redevelopment.

VISION

REUSE EXCESS PARKING FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

An urban, mixed-used development similar to the scale and character of The Boulevard could replace a large section of the existing surface parking lot south of the mall. The existing parking lot, owned by the Galleria, currently provides some overflow parking during peak shopping seasons and houses other seasonal uses throughout the year but otherwise remains empty. In recent years, the area has been used for a variety of pop-up events, providing a test environment for the loss of parking. Due to the success of these events, there is interest in re-purposing the area to the south of the mall for a higher density use.

FOCUS ON COMPLEMENTARY USES

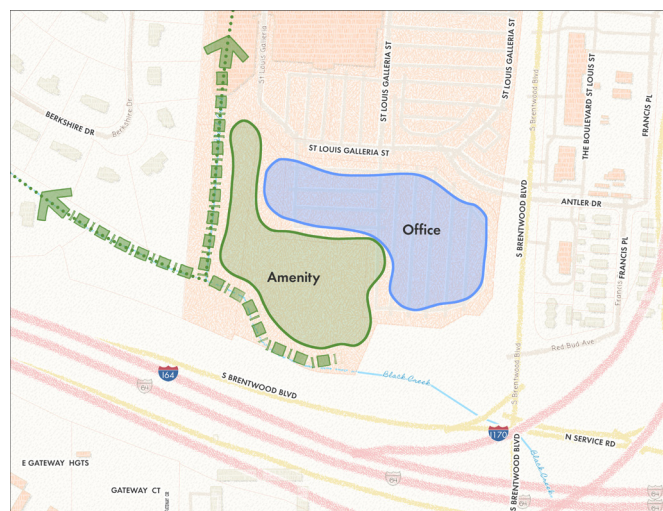
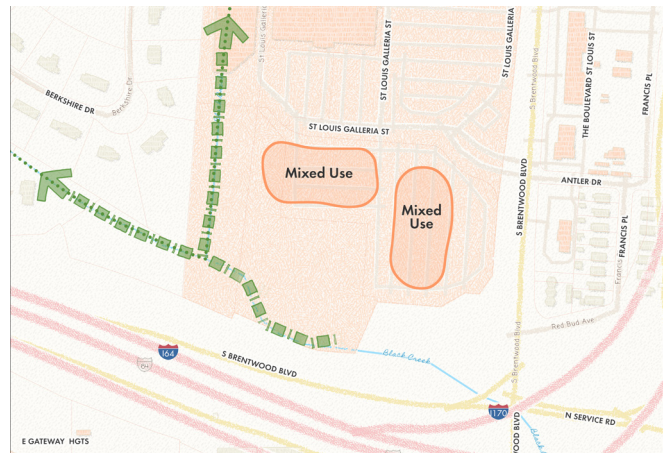
Because the area is retail centric, it continues to be a regional draw. Focusing redevelopment activity on complementary uses such as residential and restaurant uses will help to support the existing retailers while also adding new offerings to the market. These complementary uses will also reduce the need for parking, as visitors are likely to visit multiple facilities within the Galleria and redevelopment area.

USE TOPOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT AS STRENGTHS

The area to the south of the Galleria Mall falls into a flood plain, with much of the land either not currently being used, serving as a highway easement, or devoted to parking. To work with the environmental constraints and still allow for development, it will be important to use the topography and flooding concerns to facilitate the development of a new recreation area.

A variety of options for the Galleria outlet were explored with the community and key stakeholders. These options varied in scale and included a variety of land uses. Because feedback was received from the community about desiring more senior living options, a residential component was included in one of the scenarios. The scale and density of this was not ideal for the area and was therefore not pursued. An office scenario was also investigated, though given the changing trends in office space, this was dropped.

Following discussions with area land owners, it became clear that a mixed-use development would be most compatible with the Galleria Mall and Boulevard development across the street. A focus on adding residents while also creating complementary retail opportunities proved to be most desirable by a wide variety of stakeholders. Many also sought to see additional greenspace in the community utilizing the existing creek bed and flood plain to create an area that is available for recreation, both for us by the nearby tenants and by the broader community.



Potential use mixes on the Galleria outlet.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

By developing two large-mixed use buildings on site, the environment can be transformed from a parking lot to a area home to 15,000 square feet of retail on the ground floor of each building, a combined 88 residential units on three stories, and nearly 150,000 square feet of amenity and recreation space.

PARKING CONSIDERATIONS

Currently, the Richmond Heights code would require 175 parking spaces for a development of this type. These parking spaces could be achieved through a variety of options including underground parking, first-floor parking in part of the building, or a shared parking agreement. Given the adjacency to the Galleria Mall though, it is likely a shared parking arrangement could take place. Updating the required parking for the mall and any future development will be required to facilitate a development of this type.

PUBLIC GREENSPACE

To preserve the existing creek's natural character and create passive and active public amenity spaces, this redevelopment scenario includes nearly 150,000 square feet of greenspace to be enjoyed by residents and visitors. The green space may also function as a creative storm water solution for future development, diverting water resulting from impermeable surface to the existing creek.



Potential site layout on the Galleria outlot, fronting Brentwood Blvd. on the east with greenspace behind, to the west.



Parking for the new development/
potential for future development
expansion



Utilize flood mitigation methods
to unearth the creek and allow
for recreation access

GALLERIA GARAGE

GALLERIA MALL



Galleria outlot, looking northwest toward the existing mall.

BRENTWOD BLVD.



DALE AVENUE

The Dale Avenue corridor stretches from Hanley Road to the west to Big Bend to the east and includes a wide variety of land uses, scales, and conditions. On the western end, the corridor is anchored by a large, auto-oriented shopping center. This shopping center was developed over the last 10 years and includes several regional amenities including a hotel. To the east, the corridor includes The Heights, a 73,000 square foot community center and library built in 2000. With a recent renovation adding additional amenities, the Heights is now one of the largest municipal fitness centers in the region. The Heights is operated by the Parks and Recreation Cooperative (PARC) which provides services to residents of Maplewood, Richmond Heights, and Brentwood.

Elsewhere on the corridor, Dale Avenue is a mix of small-scale neighborhood commercial businesses such as Dale Avenue Pediatrics and Gray's Auto Service, a variety of residential housing types, and the recently constructed Altair mixed-use building. Vacant land and park space occupy the remaining parcels.

The infrastructure on much of the corridor is in good condition, with recently installed bump-outs, bike lanes in both directions, a tree-lawn, and well-maintained sidewalks. This infrastructure helps to contribute to the areas vibrancy and maintains a small-scale environment despite many of the buildings being set back off the street.

VISION

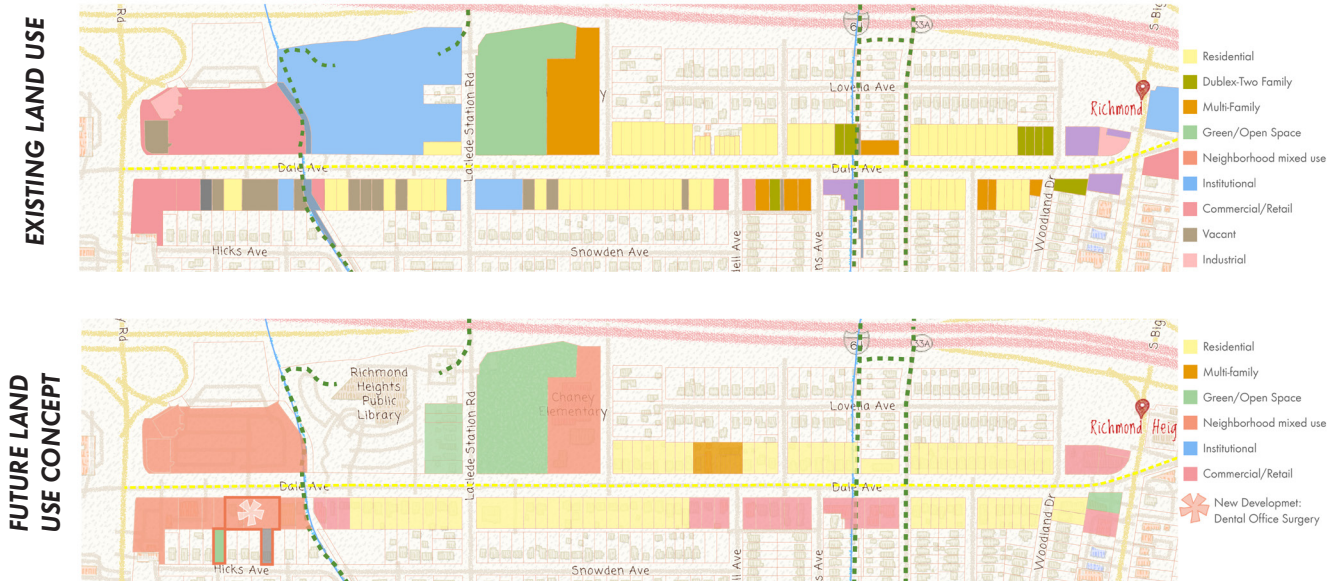
INFILL DEVELOPMENT

In order to create a more cohesive, small-scale corridor on Dale Avenue, many stakeholders called for infill development on the north and south side of the street, filling in the missing pieces and creating a more walkable, amenity rich environment in this part of the City. To do this, updates to existing residential and opportunities for additional single-family and multi-family infill exist. Additional commercial should also be added, with a focus on neighborhood-scale opportunities that could support small-businesses and street activation.

PEDESTRIAN-SCALE ENVIRONMENT

With the adjacent older neighborhoods, it is recommended that the character of Dale Avenue remain unique and designed with the pedestrian in mind, utilizing the existing creek and natural assets to reduce flooding concerns and create new connections within the community. Focus should also be placed on enhanced pedestrian and bicyclist safety through additional street trees, wayfinding, signage, and a concentration on development that is complementary to a walkable environment.

As the diagrams below display, currently, land uses are quite varied along the corridor with residential uses mixed in between greenspace, commercial, institutional, and vacant land. In order to create the cohesive, walkable environment desired by residents and city leaders, changes to the land use environment are recommended.



COMPLEMENTARY DEVELOPMENT

Several nodes exist along the Dale Avenue corridor. On the western end, new development should be focused on increasing commercial activity adjacent to existing commercial development. Near The Heights, complementary development could include small-scale mixed-use buildings or retail that encourages pedestrian access. In the middle section of the corridor, residential development is needed to fill in where there are vacant lots. Another node of mixed-use neighborhood-scale development exists to the east, where Claytonia crosses Dale Avenue. This pattern should be solidified, with complementary development continuing to fill in the environment, creating a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

CREEK CONNECTION TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Currently, the Hampton Branch Creek causes flooding during peak rain events. In order to mitigate these concerns and create a new amenity in the area, the creek could be transformed into a connective thread, providing a multi-use path that runs adjacent to a revitalized creek bed. This new public amenity should feature enhanced landscaping, outdoor seating, and a pedestrian/bike trail. This new trail could connect to a broader regional system, if extended to the north and south. Similar flood mitigation work is in process in neighboring Brentwood and can be seen in other cities across the Midwest.

FLEXIBLE GREENSPACE

Many times during the engagement phase, residents called for additional greenspace within the City of Richmond Heights. Despite access to large, regional parks, community members felt like the City could benefit from smaller-scale greenspace within neighborhoods. The area immediately to the east of The Heights provides an opportunity to add greenspace to the southern part of the City. By utilizing the existing residential land for a small-scale greenspace, the City can add a public space adjacent to The Heights to be used by nearby residents and visitors. This greenspace should create opportunities for a mix of active and passive recreation activities and could include things like a central lawn, an amphitheater or stage, a canopy structure, seating areas, and street trees and other landscaping. This small greenspace can also serve as a nearby amenity for residents in the neighborhoods to the south of Dale Avenue.

SHARED PARKING

Locating this adjacent to the existing public amenity will allow for existing programming and events to be relocated to more ideal space while also allowing for shared parking with the existing lot at the Heights. Several new parking spots can be created on the west side of Laclede Station Road adjacent to the greenspace, but because a large parking lot already exists just off Dale Avenue in front of The Heights, the additional greenspace should not require any other additional parking.



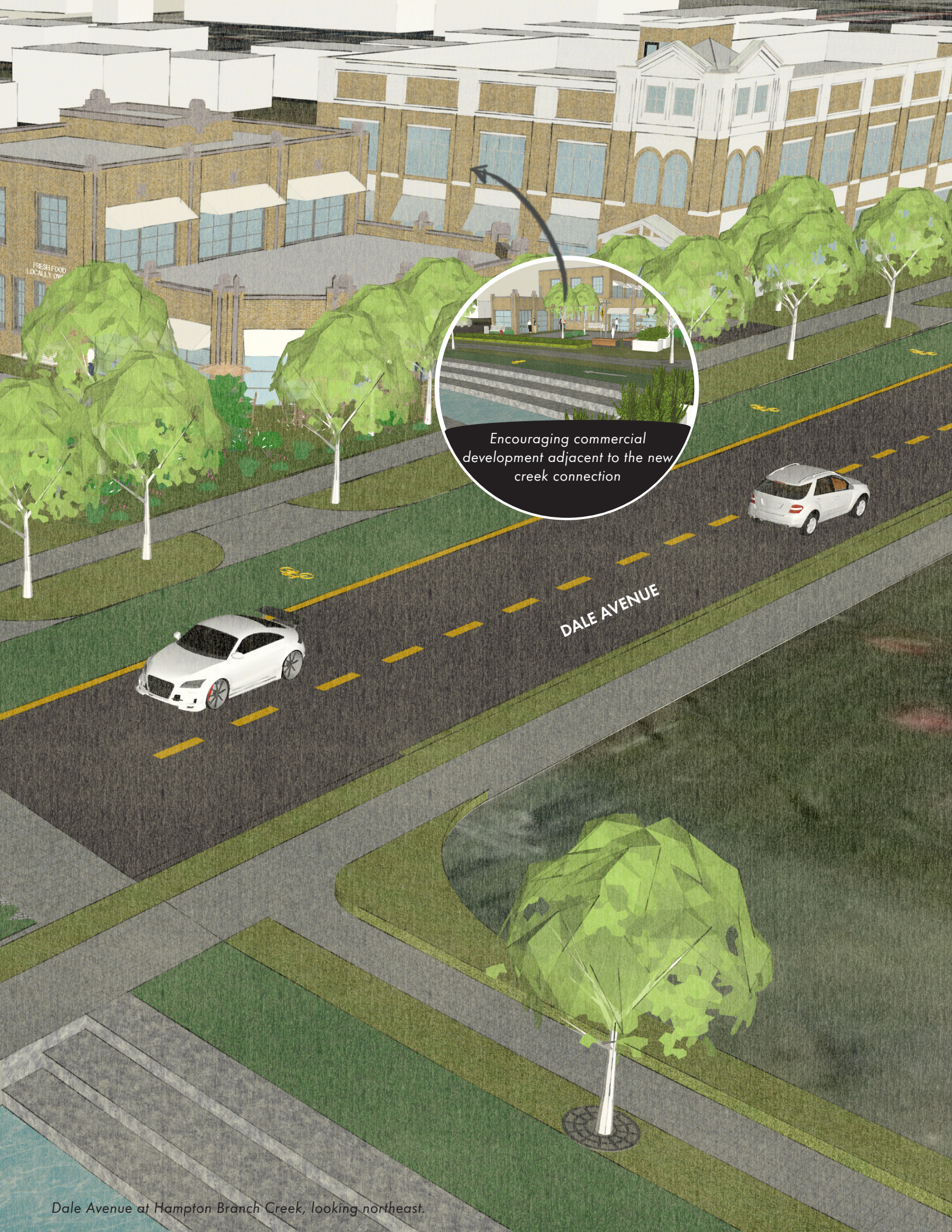
New greenspace just east of The Heights.



Utilize Hampton Branch Creek as a new amenity, mitigating flooding and creating connections



Enhanced crosswalks across Dale Avenue to encourage pedestrian activity



Encouraging commercial development adjacent to the new creek connection

DALE AVENUE

Dale Avenue at Hampton Branch Creek, looking northeast.



BIG BEND BLVD - NORTH

S Big Bend Boulevard is an important arterial roadway in St. Louis County. The Big Bend Blvd - North area is a linear geography that extends from I-64 north to Clayton Road along S Big Bend Boulevard. The area is dotted with neighborhood commercial and civic land uses that are motor vehicle oriented. This area also has some commercial businesses with regional draws. Businesses include Big Shark Bicycle Company, New Balance, Trailhead Mesa Cycles, and the Ultimate Bride. One office building, the Clayton Big Bend Professional Building, is located at the northern edge of the district. Immediately to the south is a Office Depot location with a large parking lot. There is very little vacancy on the corridor with numerous long-standing businesses occupying the existing buildings. Despite this though, the corridor feels empty. Parking lots dot the corridor with most businesses utilizing parking that fronts Big Bend. This, plus the lack of street trees or pedestrian amenities, contributes to the street feeling like a thoroughfare, lacking a real identity.

THE VISION

LAND USE & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Focus on mixed-use and commercial land uses to activate the corridor, encouraging local businesses at a pedestrian-oriented scale. Mixed-use buildings should have activation at the street level, particularly at corners. Office or residential uses should occupy the upper floors. Future developments should be medium to high-density with reduced setbacks and pedestrian amenities such as wayfinding, wide sidewalks, lighting, and street furniture. Businesses should utilize outside space where possible for patio dining.

PARKING

This corridor should prioritize “hidden” parking, not visible from Big Bend. Using signage and wayfinding to navigate visitors, parking should be located at the rear of buildings or accessible off side streets. This will reduce the need for curb-cuts off Big Bend, creating a more cohesive pedestrian experience. Businesses should be encouraged to create shared parking arrangements through cross-access agreements behind new and existing developments. This will increase parking availability overall, improves curb access management, and reduces potential conflict points.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Rethinking the physical design and other characteristics of Big Bend Blvd should be considered to reduce vehicle speeds, improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and promote a more vibrant environment.



Replace the existing building with a mixed-use building with reduced set-backs



Focus on land use choices that improve the pedestrian experience



Replace the existing building & parking lot with a mixed-use building with street activation



Integrate wayfinding to establish a sense of place and arrival at the north end of Big Bend

Big Bend & Clayton intersection, looking southeast.

ACTIVATE THE CORNER OF BIG BEND AND CLAYTON RD.

By pushing the buildings up to the street and integrating wayfinding and placemaking elements, the corner of Big Bend and Clayton Road can be activated, indicating an entrance to Richmond Heights and shifting the perception of the area from one that is simply a pass-through to one that encourages stopping and enjoying.

As the diagram below depicts, a new land use environment here would capitalize on buildings fronting the corner and push parking to the rear. These additions also begin to create a cohesive street wall on the east side of the street, mirroring the historic row present on the west side. This provides an economic development opportunity for the City, creating potential real estate opportunities on Big Bend at an intersection that sees thousands of cars per day.

Facade improvement to the historic buildings on the west side of the 1000 Block of Big Bend will help breathe new life into the existing buildings, potentially increasing their attractiveness to future tenants. Several opportunities exist for outdoor dining between buildings in this stretch. Priority should be placed on parking facilities located in the rear, rather than adjacent to the buildings.



Potential development at Big Bend & Clayton Rd.

CREATE GENTLE DENSITY ON BIG BEND BETWEEN OAKLAND AVE & ETHEL AVE

A new mixed-use building anchors the north east corner of Big Bend and Oakland Avenue, stretching along Big Bend south to Ethel Avenue. The building should have ground floor retail, with a focus on activating the street for pedestrians. A major anchor tenant could occupy much of the first floor, transitioning the traditional retail environment with a large parking lot out front, to one where a retailer occupies the first floor and utilizes shared parking. The existing Office Depot tenant could locate on the ground floor of this building, occupying roughly the same footprint, while creating a more urban environment.

The southern end of the building steps down, built to a maximum height of 4-stories to align with the building heights of existing homes on Ethel Avenue. Amenity space for residential tenants on the upper floors could be located on the roof, away from the nearby commercial.

A shared parking agreement would be required with the commercial tenants to the east, providing parking for the new residents and relocated parking for the ground floor commercial retail.



Potential development at Big Bend & Oakland Avenue.

CREATE A COHESIVE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

As the land use diagram to the right depicts, the future land use plan calls for this corridor to transition from a unplanned mix of land uses to a cohesive commercial mixed-use environment with a dense node at the corner of Clayton and Big Bend. This development is likely to occur overtime through a combination of infill development and building renovations.

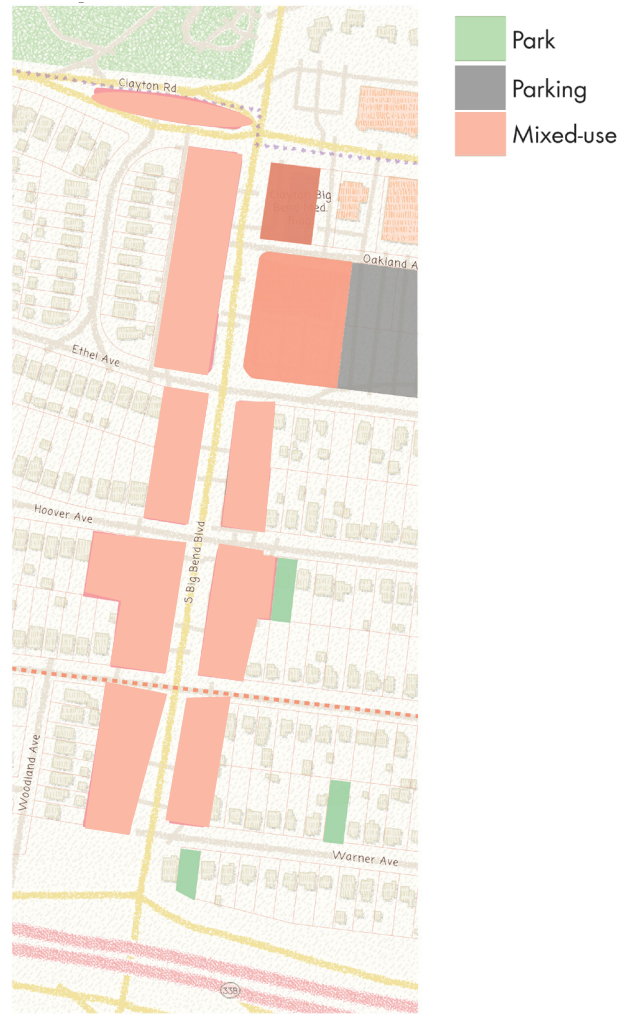
Additional streetscaping such as street trees, bump-outs, and improved crosswalks will complement the more dense commercial environment while street furniture, lighting, and small placemaking elements will help to create a cohesive pedestrian experience. By doing this, a consistent experience can be created, providing activity at the street level and reduced automobile accommodations.

ADD PLACEMAKING & GREENSPACE ELEMENTS

In addition to new building density, the corridor can be improved through the use of placemaking and greenspace elements.

Two locations have been identified just east of the corridor for pocket park locations. To the north, an empty lot exists on Hoover Avenue that presents an opportunity for placemaking. To the south, at the entrance to the community off the I-64/40 westbound ramp to Big Bend, a large easement and empty parcel exist. This area is an opportunity for additional community branding, creating a better “front door” to the community. These green spaces will add park space as desired by residents while also creating a more pedestrian friendly area overall.

In addition, new branded elements such as, planters, crosswalks, and pedestrian-scale wayfinding on Big Bend in this area will help create a more pedestrian-oriented environment and introduce the region to the Richmond Heights community.





Create a small-scale pocket park on Hoover to add passive greenspace for residents



Create a small pocket park adjacent to the highway exit, utilizing signage to establish a sense of place

Potential pocket park locations east of Big Bend.



BIG BEND BLVD - SOUTH

The Big Bend Blvd - South area extends from I-64/40 south to Bruno Avenue. The area is dotted with neighborhood commercial, civic, and residential land uses. The area is also characterized by single-family homes that have been re-purposed into professional office spaces, a unique property re-use that is different in character and feel to the rest of Richmond Heights. There is very little vacancy on the corridor and a strong concentration of business and merchants licenses, reflecting the robust business environment on this short stretch in the City.

THE VISION

LAND USE & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Focus on small-scale mixed-use and commercial land uses to activate the corridor, encouraging local businesses at a pedestrian-oriented scale. Mixed-use buildings should have activation at the street level, particularly at corners. Office uses are likely to occupy the second or third stories. Future developments should be medium-density with reduced set-backs and pedestrian amenities such as wayfinding, wide sidewalks, lighting, and street furniture. Businesses should utilize outside space where possible for patio dining.

PARKING

This corridor should prioritize shared parking not visible from Big Bend. Using signage and wayfinding to orient visitors, parking should be located at the rear of buildings, reducing the need for curb-cuts off Big Bend. Because the buildings on this street are small in scale, businesses should be encouraged to create shared parking arrangements through cross-access agreements behind new and existing developments.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Rethinking the physical design and other characteristics of Big Bend Blvd should be considered to reduce vehicle speeds, improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and promote a more vibrant environment.



CREATE A CLEAR ENTRANCE TO THE COMMUNITY

The corner of Big Bend and Dale Avenue is currently a mix of land uses including City Hall, a US Bank branch, and several automobile related businesses. A non-traditional intersection, the current street layout has created a large triangular island on Dale Avenue and excess pavement, creating an unsafe environment for pedestrians and motorists. This intersection should be a focus area for the city moving forward.

The south side of this intersection should be reimagined with a new mixed-use building on the east side of the street, anchoring that corner, with an active business on the west side, encouraging street life. In addition, a public parking lot could be considered for the remaining area on the parcel at the southeast corner. This parking lot could provide parking for the businesses immediately to the south, alleviating a current stressor for area residents and enhancing access.

Further south, the existing businesses should consider shared parking with cross-access easements behind existing developments to increase parking availability in the area and reduce curb-cuts off Big Bend.



Potential development at Big Bend & Dale Avenue.



Potential development at Big Bend & Dale Avenue.

REDEVELOP THE CORRIDOR WITH A FOCUS ON SHARED PARKING

To redevelop the Big Bend corridor south of I-64/40, the future land use plan calls for a mixed-use environment. In order to do this, it is recommended that the city consider parcel consolidation of existing structures where possible, incentivizing shared parking in the rear, and working to limit curb cuts on Big Bend. A more substantial redevelopment on the southern portion of this corridor would allow for larger structures fronting the street with ground floor retail and residential or office users on the upper floor. It would also allow for shared parking in the rear, rather than the individual buildings with dedicated parking accessible off Big Bend. This shared parking with cross-access behind both existing and new development would improve curb-access management, creating a safer pedestrian environment and a more cohesive street wall.



Big Bend Blvd looking north from West Bruno Avenue.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Ensuring implementation of the Richmond Heights Comprehensive Plan will be crucial to building the future the City of Richmond Heights and it's residents desire. Using the Objectives and Key Results framework, this Comprehensive Plan defines the implementation steps that will help the City make choices to intentionally develop in ways that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan vision.

With the planning process complete, the City now begins the most important and long process of enacting change and growth over the next two decades. Cooperation between City staff, elected officials, stakeholders, the business community, developers, and residents will be crucial in the coming years.

The next few pages detail the implementation strategies discussed in this plan. The City should utilize these recommendations to implement this Comprehensive Plan. The Implementation Matrix uses an Objectives and Key Results framework.

OBJECTIVES

In this case, objectives are the “what” to be achieved by the community. They address the key goals related to Housing, Commercial Development, Connectivity, and Community Character.

KEY RESULTS

Key Results are the “how” to achieve the Objectives and help to provide key measures of success. Some of the Key Results create metrics for the City to measure progress toward an Objective, while other Key Results are more task oriented or policy oriented.

TIME FRAME

This indicates the time frame in which the key result can be accomplished. In this case, short-term tasks can be accomplished in 1-3 years, mid-term tasks 6-10 years, and long-term tasks in 11-20 years. It is important that the City regularly review this matrix to ensure timely completion of tasks.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY

This identifies the party responsible for implementation. It is likely many tasks will involve multiple parties, but this identifies the Department responsible for leadership.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

If the task will require partnerships, they are identified in this section. Partners could be outside organizations, other municipalities, a school district, or similar group.

HOUSING

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 1: Encourage Higher Density Developments in Key Areas			
KR1: Work with the Galleria to facilitate the implementation of the preferred concept for the Galleria Out Lot scenario plan.	Long	City Manager and Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission and Brookfield Properties
KR2: Work with property owners and developers to facilitate the implementation of the preferred concept for the Big Bend - North scenario plan.	Long	City Manager and Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission, Property Owners, St. Louis County
KR3: Identify key areas in the city where higher density development is supported by the City.	Mid	City Manager and Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
Objective 2: Diversify Housing Stock to Provide Options for a Variety of Resident Types.			
KR1: Encourage high density residential with ground floor commercial in key areas along major corridors to support population growth.	Short	City Manager, Planning & Zoning Commission	Real Estate & Development Community
KR2: Encourage medium density residential development that includes ground floor commercial along Dale Ave and Big Bend.	Short	City Manager, Planning & Zoning Commission	Real Estate & Development Community
KR3: Encourage low density Residential Development Along Dale Avenue.	Short	City Manager, Planning & Zoning Commission	Real Estate & Development Community
KR4: Identify key areas where the City supports opportunities for low and medium density housing types.	Short	City Manager	Real Estate & Development Community
Objective 3: Maintain a High Quality of Housing Through Continued Regulatory Review			
KR1: Update Chapter 500 - The International Property Maintenance Code to the latest edition to account best practices.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
KR2: Evaluate the City's Code Compliance process and procedures to ensure that adequate levels of service and resources are allocated to property maintenance code compliance.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
Objective 4: Preserve and Support the Character of Existing Neighborhoods			
KR1: Focus on residential infill to support population growth and retention of growing families and aging adults.	Mid	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
KR2: Add a Historic Preservation chapter to Title IV Land Use of the City's Code of Ordinances to establish processes, policies, guidelines related to maintenance, rehab, renovation, or replacement of structures designated as historic.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
KR3: Ensure development design standards for new construction and "tear down/rebuilds" reflect the standards for high quality housing desired by the City, and don't make affordability more challenging.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission

HOUSING

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 5: Encourage Residential Infill and Reinvestment in Existing Single Family Housing Stock			
KR1: Create a residential rehab incentive program.	Mid	City Manager	Building Department
KR2: Review zoning codes to ensure infill development allows for contemporary building while preserving neighborhood character.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
Objective 6: Utilize a Housing Market "Roundtable" to stay up-to-date on housing-related change in the community.			
KR1: Identify Realtors, developers, property managers, etc. to participate as stakeholders.	Short	City Manager	Mayor
KR2: Host an annual "state of the housing market" roundtable event.	Short	City Manager	Mayor
KR3: Make an annual "state of the housing market" report to City Council.	Short	City Manager, City Council	Mayor
Objective 7: Encourage the Development of Affordable/Attainable Housing			
KR1: Create an "affordable" housing development incentive program to encourage new development.	Short	City Manager	Mayor
KR2: Create a Rental Assistance Program aimed towards supporting current renters so they can stay in the community.	Mid	City Manager	Building Department
KR3: Encourage small-scale multifamily housing in other parts of the community.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
KR4: Consider permitting Accessory Dwelling Units in the City.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 1: Transform Dale Avenue and Big Bend Blvd into more pedestrian friendly neighborhood corridors			
KR1: Adopt a Streetscape Master Plan for S. Big Bend Blvd. and Dale Ave.	Mid	Building Department, Public Works	St. Louis County and MODOT
KR2: Work to underground or move overhead utilities to improve the aesthetic and economic value of the corridor.	Long	Public Works	Ameren, STL County, Property Owners
KR3: Encourage Mixed-Use and Small-scale Neighborhood Commercial Developments.	Short	City Manager, Planning & Zoning Commission	Real Estate & Development Community
KR4: Establish a "Mixed Use" Overlay District for Big Bend Blvd to guide future new developments, redevelopments, the rehabilitation/renovation of existing buildings.	Mid	Building Department and Plan & Zoning Commission	
KR5: Revisit the Dale Ave "Mixed Use" Overlay District to realign development guidelines with the future vision for the Dale Ave corridor.	Mid	Building Department and Plan & Zoning Commission	
Objective 2: Encourage Shared Parking			
KR1: Ensure that Zoning Code supports shared parking and promotes curb access management.	Short	Building Department, Planning & Zoning Commission	Public Works
KR2: Encourage shared parking between adjacent uses through access management regulations.	Short	Building Department and Public Works	Property Owners/Tenants
KR3: Identify opportunities to construct public parking along Big Bend Blvd.	Mid	Building Department and Public Works	Property Owners/Tenants
KR4: Ensure that Zoning Code promotes shared parking in the rear of new and existing developments along Dale Avenue and Big Bend - South.	Short	Building Department, Planning & Zoning Commission	Public Works
Objective 3: Update/Reposition the City's Economic Development Policy to support the Comprehensive Plan			
KR1: Encourage the creation of a program to foster entrepreneurship education and boost the small business economy.	Mid	City Manager	School Districts and Local business Leaders
KR2: Support the creation of a retail incubator for small-scale, local businesses.	Mid	City Manager	
KR3: Create a commercial redevelopment incentive program to support reinvestment in existing structures.	Short	City Manager	
KR4: Create a City webpage with business development resources to support new businesses.	Short	City Manager	
KR5: Evaluate existing economic development tools, policies, and programs.	Short	City Manager	

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 4: Reestablish the Identify of Big Bend Blvd through the integration of Land Use & Transportation Planning			
KR1: Pursue an East-West Gateway Council of Governments Great Streets Initiative grant opportunity.	Mid	City Manager, Public Works, Building Department	St. Louis County and City of Maplewood
KR2: Revisit the existing maintenance agreement with St. Louis County in order to implement new vision for Big Bend.	Mid	City Manager, Public Works, Building Department	St. Louis County
Objective 5: Utilize a Commercial Market "Roundtable" to stay up-to-date on commercial trends.			
KR1: Commercial Market "Roundtable"	Short	City Manager	Mayor
KR2: Host an annual "state of the commercial market" roundtable event	Short	City Manager	Mayor
KR3: Make an annual "state of the commercial market" report to City Council.	Short	City Manager, City Council	Mayor

CONNECTIVITY

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 1: Enhance Walkability and Bikability City-wide			
KR1: Complete a Walk/Bike Audit to assess existing walkability and bikability conditions and identify physical improvements needed.	Short	Public Works, City Manager	Trailnet, Great Rivers Greenway
KR2: Create city-wide Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan to explore opportunities for infrastructure improvements to enhance walkability, bikability, and connectivity to, through, and within the City's four aldermanic districts.	Mid	City Manager	Trailnet, Great Rivers Greenway
KR3: Educate the community (cyclists, motorists, and cyclists) about bicycling skills, safety, and applicable traffic laws.	Mid	Public Works	Trailnet and Local Bike Shops
KR4: Enhance the public realm through the addition of pedestrian and cyclist amenities in key areas.	Mid	Public Works	
KR5: Update Section 410.250 Sidewalks to implement best practices and standards related to the sidewalk zone (sidewalk placement, minimum widths, etc.)	Short	Public Works	
KR6: Regularly update the City's ADA Transition Plan with best practice solutions and policies promote its use in new developments and improvements.	Short	Public Works	
Objective 2: Encourage Public Transit (Metro Bus and Metro Link) as Transportation Assets in Richmond Heights			
KR1: Encourage transit-oriented development (TOD)	Long	Building Department and Planning & Zoning Commission	Bi-State Development, Citizens for Modern Transit
KR2: Enhanced access, connectivity, wayfinding through enhanced signage and pedestrian paths to transit stops and stations.	Mid	Public Works	Bi-State Development
KR3: Promote best practices to increase safety near transportation assets., including enhancing walking and biking paths, pedestrian-scale lighting, crossings, bus shelters,etc.	Short	Public Works	Bi-State Development, Citizens for Modern Transit
KR4: Host City-sponsored public transit events promoting travel to regional destinations via public transit.	Short	City Manager and Public Works	Bi-State Development, Citizens for Modern Transit
KR5: Community Engagement aimed at gathering input from the community on ways to increase transit use.	Short	City Manager and Public Works	Bi-State Development, Citizens for Modern Transit

CONNECTIVITY

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 3: Support Transportation, Connectivity, and Infrastructure Improvements through Long-range Planning			
KR1: Continue to plan and budget for future improvements in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).	Short	Public Works	
KR2: Identify and apply for transportation and infrastructure grants to fund planning, design, and capital improvements.	Short	Public Works	
Objective 4: Enhance City-wide Connectivity to Parks, Greenspace, and Commercial Corridors			
KR1: Create and regularly update a city-wide map of pedestrian and bike paths to record the location of paths, conditions, and necessary improvements.	Short	Public Works	
KR2: Install additional wayfinding signage to assist pedestrians and cyclists in navigating safe paths through the community.	Mid	Public Works	

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 1: Update City Parking Requirements			
KR1: Complete a city-wide parking study to understand parking demand and activity, focusing on commercial corridors.	Short	Building Department	Public Works
KR2: Make amendments to Chapter 350 - Parking Regulations informed by Parking Study.	Short	Building Department	Planning Commission
Objective 2: Increase Partnership Opportunities with Schools Districts			
KR1: Participate in the School Districts' Strategic Planning Process.	Long	City Manager and Mayor	School Districts
KR2: Identify the City's role in furthering the implementation of the Strategic Plan (aligning long-term goals, funding needs and sources, impacts, etc.)	Long	City Manager and Mayor	School Districts
KR3: Encourage the creation of a program to foster entrepreneurship education and boost the small business economy.	Mid	City Manager	School Districts Local Business Leaders
Objective 3: Celebrate Local Culture and Diversity			
KR1: Create new public events to celebrate local culture and diversity.	Short	PARC	School District, Churches, Community Groups
KR2: Add public art in the community that celebrates the local culture.	Mid	Building Department	Local Artists
Objective 4: Create More Active and Passive Greenspaces			
KR1: Create a plan for the expansion of outdoor programming and greenspace at The Heights.	Long	PARC	City Manager
KR2: Identify pocket park opportunities, and associated guidelines, within neighborhoods.	Mid	Building Department	PARC
KR3: Identify opportunities for the addition of sports fields in the within Parks & Recreation Cooperative footprint.	Long	PARC	City Manager
KR4: Encourage the implementation of the greenspace concept as part of the Galleria Out Lot scenario.	Mid	Building Department	Brookfield Properties
KR5: Update Urban Forestry/Tree Preservation Codes	Mid	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
KR6: Enhance development guidelines related to commercial landscaping and public gathering spaces	Short	Building Department, Planning & Zoning Commission	Plan & Zoning Commission

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 5: Enhance Development Design Guidelines			
KR1: Allow for contemporary design while preserving neighborhood character.	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
KR2: Enhance minimum standards for sustainable, interesting, and attractive building design	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
Objective 6: Enhance the Richmond Heights Brand/Identity			
KR1: Identify key locations and construct branded gateway entry signage.	Mid	Building Department	Public Works, MoDOT, STL County, Bi-State
KR2: Create a strategic branding initiative including wayfinding and other public realm improvements.	Mid	City Manager	Building Department and Public Works
KR3: Tell the community's story through creative and strategic brand marketing.	Short	City Manager	Mayor

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

OBJECTIVE / KEY RESULTS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR DEPARTMENT	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Objective 1: Monitor the Progress of Objectives and Key Results to Ensure Timely Implementation			
KR1: Create a system for each Department/Responsible Party to track the progress of the objectives and key results they are primarily responsible to lead.	Short	City Manager	
KR2: Annually report on the status of objectives and key results by the Primary Responsible Party(ies) to the City Manager.	Short	All Departments	
KR3: Annually report on the status of objectives and key results to City Council.	Short	City Manager, City Council	
Objective 2: Update Objectives and Key Results as Circumstances Change from Current Expectations and Situation			
KR1: Annual work session among Primary Responsible Parties evaluate progress, discuss changing conditions, decide on necessary changes to the OKRs to reflect new challenges or opportunities.	Short	City Manager	
Objective 3: Incorporate Recommended Projects into the Annual Municipal Budget			
KR1: List those items from the plan that will impact the City's budget each year.	Short	Finance, City Council	All Other Departments
Objective 4: Seek State and Federal Grant Funding to Fund Recommended Studies, Initiatives, Programs, and Improvements			
KR1: Annually evaluate current or reoccurring grant opportunities to identify grants for which current projects may be eligible.	Short	City Manager	All Other Departments
KR2: Regularly identify potential grant opportunities.	Short	City Manager	All Other Departments
Objective 5: Participate in the St. Louis County Comprehensive Plan Process			
KR1: Formally notify the County of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.	Short	City Manager	Mayor
KR2: Designate a City Staff person or team to represent the City throughout the County's engagement process.	Short	City Manager	Mayor
KR3: Promote and encourage Richmond Heights residents and workers to participate in the County's public engagement process.	Short	City Manager	Mayor
Objective 6: Realign the City's Code of Ordinances with the Comprehensive Plan			
KR1: Update Title IV Land Use	Short	Building Department	Plan & Zoning Commission
KR2: Evaluate the Code of Ordinances to identify other Titles of the Code for which an update may further the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.	Mid	City Manager	

