



# University City Economic Development Strategy

## Task Force Meeting #4

August 27, 2020



# AGENDA

- Welcome
- Overview and Schedule
- Results of Task Force #3 Survey
- Draft Recommendations and Strategies
- Other Items





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY

# PLANNING TEAM



Stephen Ibendahl  
*Project Manager*



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*Economic  
Strategy*



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*Market and  
Demographic  
Analysis*



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*Economic  
Strategy*

Other Team Members  
Laura Linn  
*Graphics and Planning*

Katie McLaughlin  
*Planning*

# Overview of Task Force

The background image is a blue-tinted photograph of a university campus. On the left, there is a tall, square stone tower with a classical design, featuring columns and decorative panels. Atop the tower sits a large, white sculpture of a lion, which is the mascot of the University of North Carolina. To the right of the tower is a large, multi-story building with a prominent dome and arched windows, characteristic of a university library or administrative building. The scene is set against a backdrop of trees and a clear sky.



# ROLE OF TASK FORCE

- **“Ad-Hoc” Advisory Committee**
  - Sounding board for the planning team.
  - A shared strategy.
- **Representatives from across the City**
  - Chosen by City Council and Mayor.
- **Meeting 5 Times During Process**





# Overview and Schedule

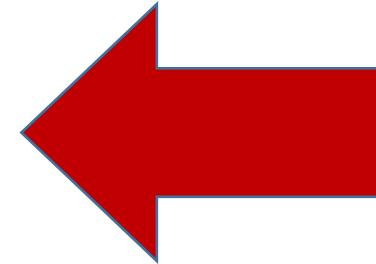
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
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# Schedule

# Schedule







ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY

# Schedule

Task Force Meeting #4  
(Draft Strategies and Recommendations): August 27th

Additional Task Force Listening Session: September 10<sup>th</sup>

Update to City Council: September (TBD)

## Community Engagement

- Week of September 21<sup>st</sup> (or week of 7th)
  - Boards Displayed at Library
  - Online Video by Planning Team
  - Sign-up for Small Group Meetings with Planning Team
- Week of September 28<sup>th</sup> (or week of 15th)
  - Small Group Meetings with Planning Team (via Zoom)

Draft Economic Development Strategy (Document): October

- Public review and comment

Task Force Meeting #5: October (TBD)



# Meeting #3 Survey Results

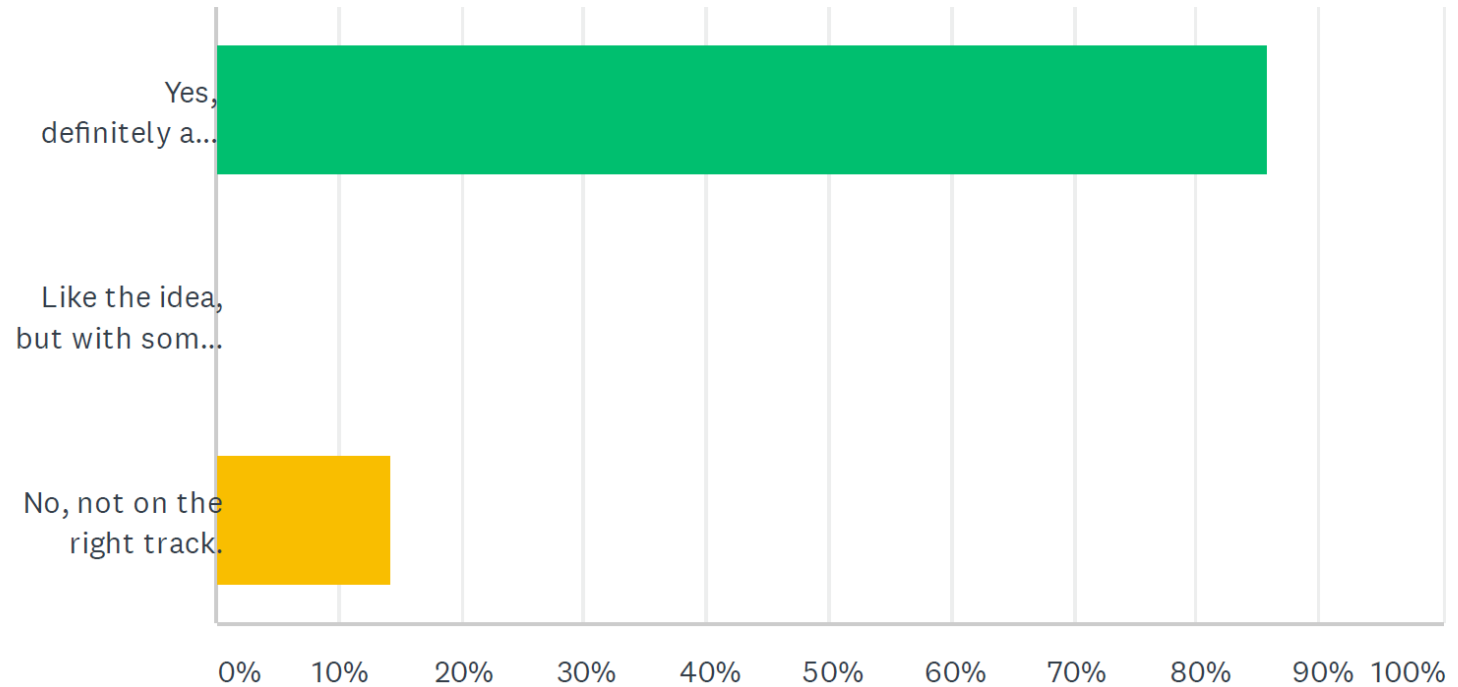
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# Q1 Overall, do you think Districts are a good approach for Olive and city-wide?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

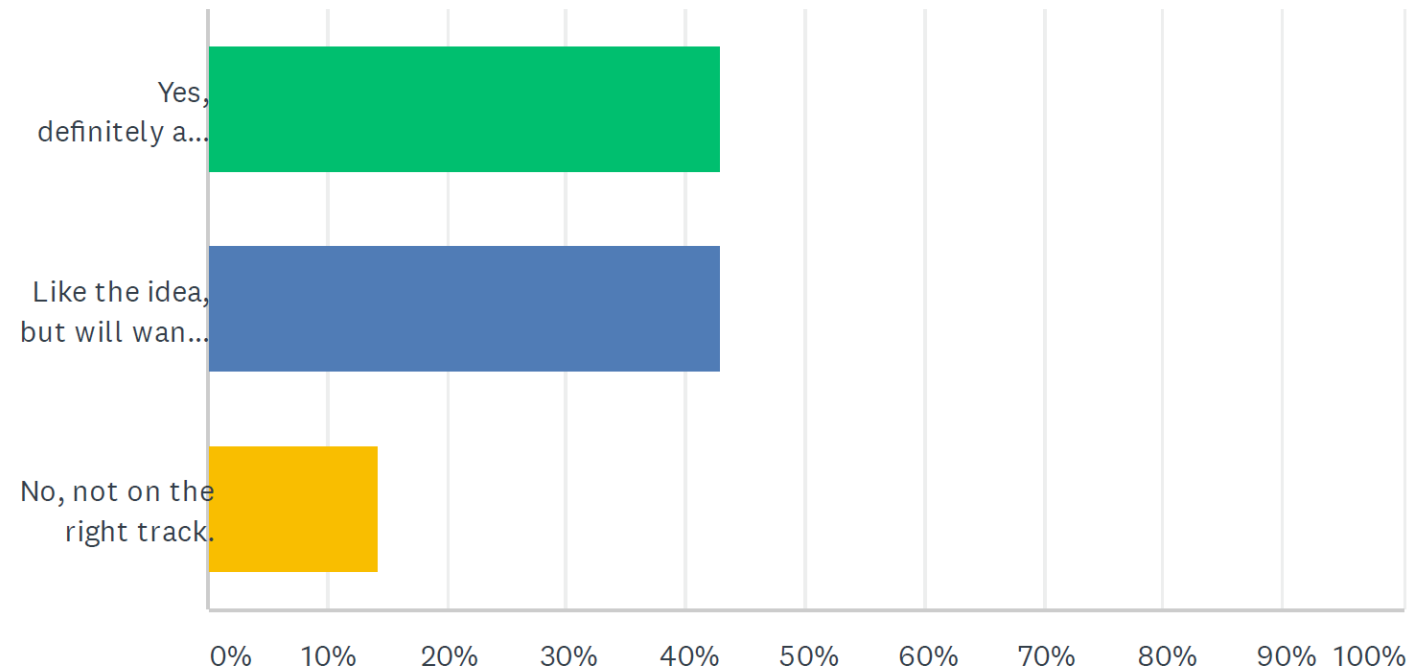






## Q2 What do you think of a potential road diet on Olive that would help spur place-making with traffic calming, safer pedestrian crossings, and provide opportunities for streetscape enhancements? (Knowing that additional study will be required)?

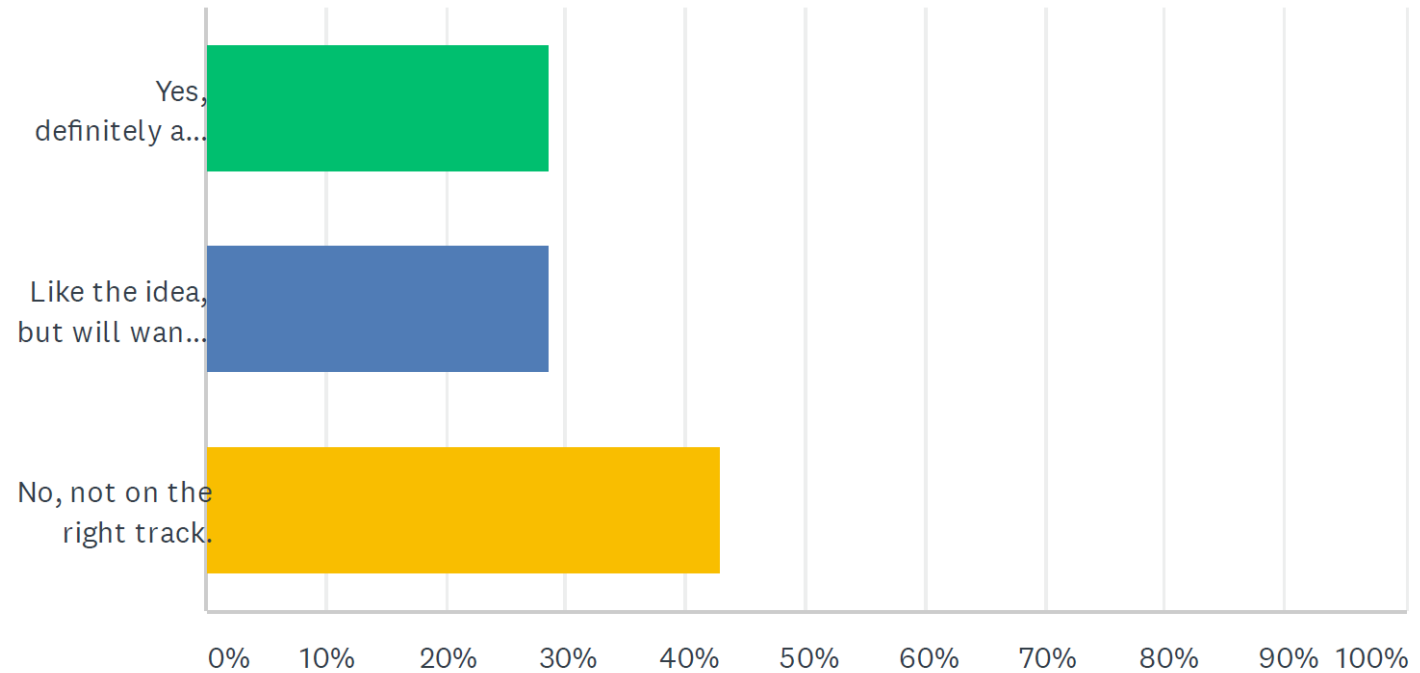
Answered: 7 Skipped: 0





### Q3 What do you think of the potential to use flood mitigation improvements to spur redevelopment and new investments (similar to Brentwood example)? (Knowing that additional study will be required)?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

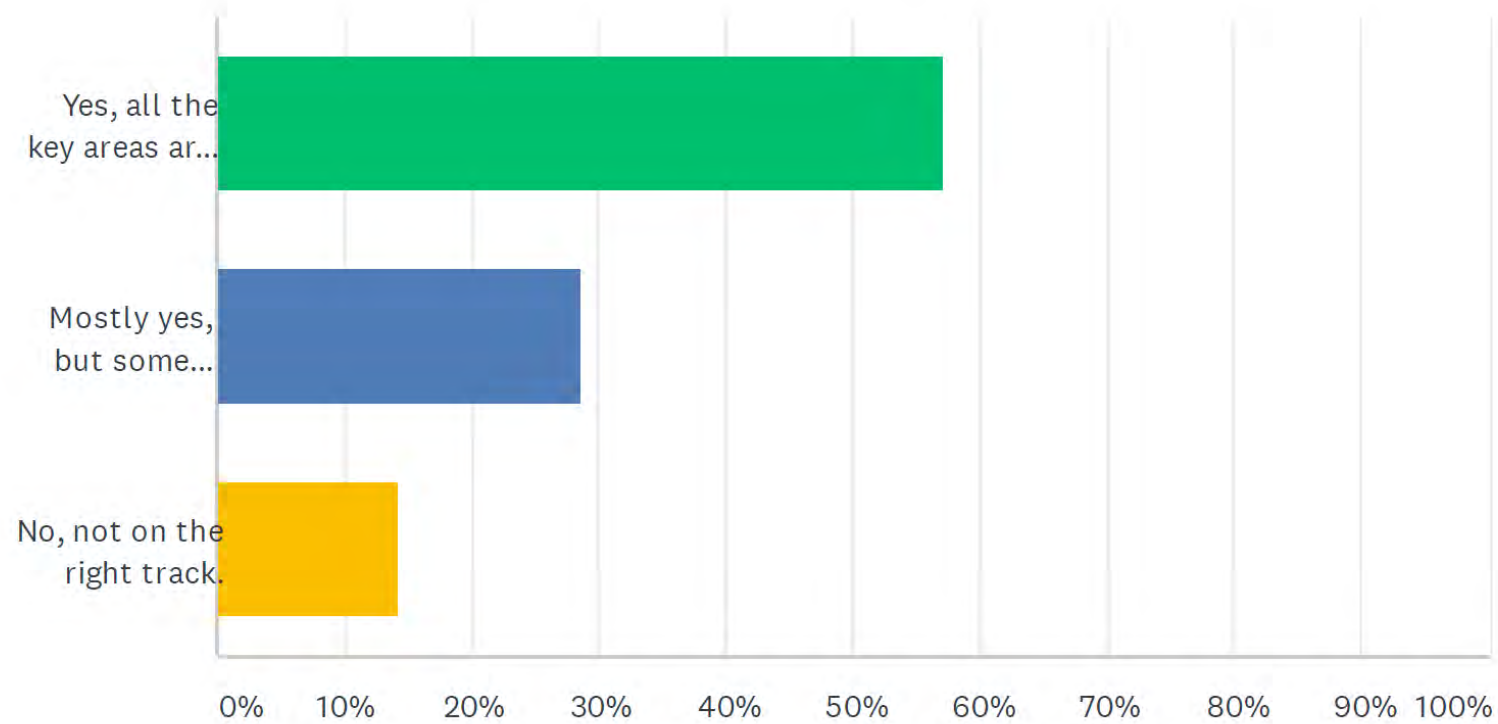






# Q4 Have we captured the key priority development areas?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0



# Draft Recommendations and Strategies

The background image shows a university campus scene. On the left is a tall, octagonal stone tower with a lion sculpture on top. To the right is a large, ornate building with a dome and arched windows. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Grow Existing And Emerging Business Sectors

Principle 2: Ensure Equitable Economic Opportunities

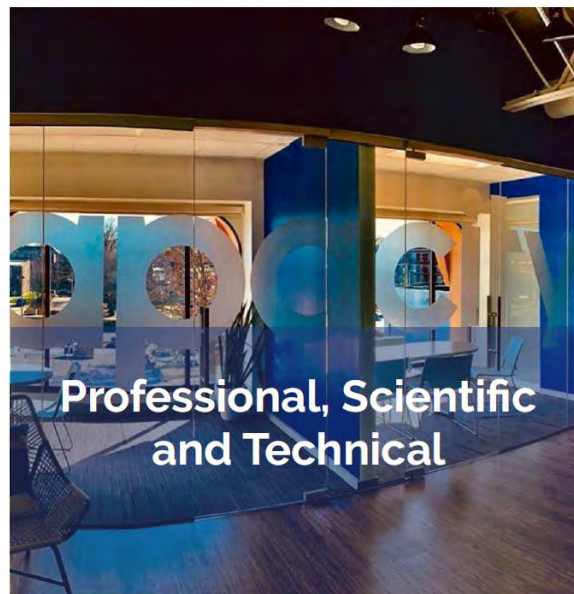
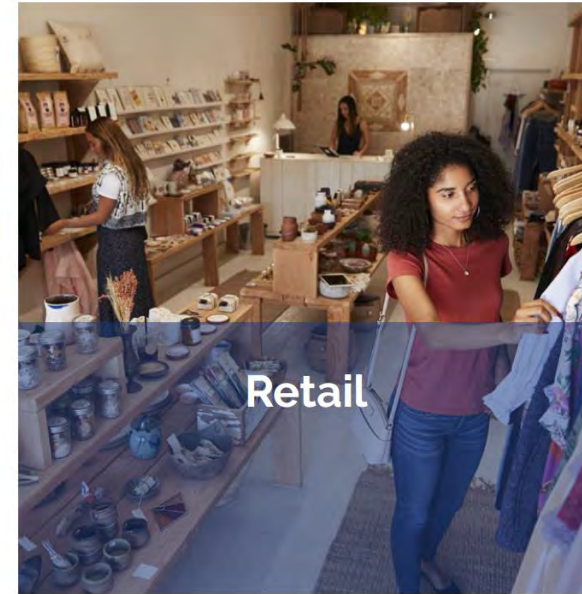
Principle 3: Support University City Businesses And Workers

Principle 4: Collaborate With Local And Regional Partners

Principle 5: Celebrate And Promote University City

Principle 6: Utilize Place-Based Solutions

# PRINCIPLE 1: GROW EXISTING AND EMERGING BUSINESS SECTORS







## Accommodations and Food Service

While this sector emerges as a cluster industry for University City, its importance is the result of the concentration of restaurants in the community; currently, there are no hotels within the city's municipal boundaries. That being said, the City is currently considering redevelopment proposals that include hotels, including the Novus development at Olive and 170 and a proposal from Tristar to re-purpose a portion of the former Delmar-Harvard Elementary site. While the circumstances resulting from COVID-19 mean that travel and tourism are uncertain in the immediate term, the City should support such efforts to bolster and strengthen this cluster through the development of one or more hotels within the City. Such a strategy is also supported by the City's recent hotel study that concluded that the Forsyth site was the best location for a new development of a hotel followed by the West Loop and Olive and 170 locations. Since there is a development underway in the West Loop, this project should be the priority. Additionally, the Olive Crossing development located in Olivette across from the Novus development is currently under construction and includes a dual-branded Marriott Courtyard/ Element Hotel, which may negatively impact demand.





## Accommodations and Food Service

- Support Tristar hotel development on Kingsland between the U City Loop and Innovation Districts.
- Actively promote the diversity of dining establishments throughout the City (especially in the International District and the Loop) through City marketing and communications. Ensure that such efforts focus on attracting both residents and non-residents to visit and patronize restaurants and stores.
- Assess composition of existing restaurant base and communicate City's desire for new, unique dining establishments that further diversifies the community's offerings to local restauranteurs and developers.
- Consider a dedicated page on the Explore U City micro-site promoting the City's restaurants, including special events, featuring specific restaurants (e.g., establishments recognized for special awards, new offerings or those celebrating milestone anniversaries), categorizing by cuisine etc. The goal is to create a marketing piece in addition to a comprehensive directory .
- Develop guidance documents tailored to opening a restaurant in University City to aid entrepreneurs in navigating local and county requirements and to foster positive relationships with the businesses in the community.





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## Health Care & Social Assistance

Among University City's largest employers and largest property tax payers, businesses in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry cluster are a key part of the City's economy and offer residents employment opportunities. The baseline of this sector is only growing: Kingsland Walk Senior Living, which offers assisted living and memory care, opened in 2020. Supporting this sector, especially in light of national trends and an aging population, should be a priority for the City's economic development strategy.





## Health Care & Social Assistance

- Pro-actively engage with employers in this sector to understand workforce needs or gaps and promote opportunities to University City residents through communication with the University School District and highlighting hiring opportunities on the Explore U City micro-site and other City communications.
- Serve as a liaison between local employers and educational and training institutions that could help address talent needs and create advancement opportunities with a focus on promoting these training opportunities for residents. Such institutions could include the University School District, St. Louis Community College, Special School District and Washington University.
- Highlight critical mass of senior living facilities to attract other supportive health care services to diversify industry cluster businesses and to backfill existing office space.
- Identify and target other health and health care related services and professionals in the community to understand any needs, challenges or growth opportunities and how best to retain these businesses in University City.



## Retail

- In light of the impact of COVID-19, focus efforts on strengthening local retailers through tailored business support that could aid them in weathering contractions in purchasing at bricks and mortar outlets. The regular emails to residents promoting shop local efforts are an excellent start as well as the funding made available to businesses that contribute to the Special Business District retail sales tax pool. Understanding their specific challenges in the current environment is key. BRE efforts should be a priority for this sector. Such interventions might include seminars or information sessions about planning in a crisis, using technology or an on-line sales platform to weather the storm or pivoting to providing alternative services or goods.
- Continue close collaboration with Novus to support engagement with national retailers to locate in the Olive Gateway District (Olive/170 development).
- Develop a shop local strategy to support independent retailers and promote program on Explore U City micro-site.
- Share Tapestry market profiles and data with local property owners to aid in recruiting retail businesses that align with local consumer market.







## Professional, Scientific and Technical

- Prioritize BRE efforts targeting local tech businesses to communicate with and understand needs, including talent requirements, in order to facilitate expansion and sector growth within the City. Such efforts are even more important in light of COVID-19 that is driving technological solutions and promoting growth in the tech sector.
- Encourage development of new office space, especially in the Olive Innovation District, to provide options for retaining growing companies in the City and attracting new firms.
- With tech companies valuing the opportunity to locate with other tech firms, highlight University City's assets (e.g., existing tech sector cluster, educated population, location and accessibility and proximity to Washington University) to promote attraction of tech businesses to the community.
- Leverage Explore U City micro-site to highlight University City's unique character and offerings to support tech company talent attraction efforts.







## Manufacturing

While manufacturing falls below even an emerging cluster location quotient (.48), the City is home to a variety of manufacturing operations, ranging from parts and tool manufacturing to clothing. Ensuring a diverse industry base is important to maintaining a robust and resilient economy. Accordingly, the City would benefit from outreach to these companies to ensure that the City understands their needs and how they can best support them. Understanding the manufacturing business community will also help the City with its attraction efforts.

- Pursue expansion of Cunningham Industrial Park in cooperation with the City of Wellston in order to expand opportunities for light manufacturing that leverage location and access to transportation corridors and help ensure a diverse business base. Explore models for municipal cooperative agreements for implementation.



# PRINCIPLE 2: ENSURE EQUITABLE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

## Goal: Invest in the 3rd Ward

Prioritize development and implementation of strategy to re-invest new revenues generated through the Novus development in the community north of Olive and include intentional community engagement that helps to fashion and inform the strategy. Because of the robust community engagement and in-depth review involved in the comprehensive planning process, the plan should be leveraged to develop the strategy.

## Goal: Support Minority Entrepreneurs

Identify and engage with traditionally under-served groups and minority entrepreneurs to understand needs, opportunities and challenges that may be addressed by the City.

Elevate commitment to promoting firms led by minorities or traditionally under-served group through intentional intervention, such as highlighting such entrepreneurs on Explore U City's micro-site to encourage patronage and to underscore the City's diverse business base or revisiting marketing materials specifically featuring diverse businesses in the community.

Provide connections to business support organizations that provide technical assistance and services that are targeted at traditionally under-served groups (e.g., Legal Services of Eastern Missouri's Micro-Enterprise program).

## Goal: Equitable City Policies and Practices

Ensure that City business guidance documents and brochures are available in multiple languages that reflect the local business community.

Consider developing a diversity, equity and inclusion strategy that helps the City evaluate decision-making, policies and programs relating to economic and community development using a racial equity lens. For example, ensuring that City infrastructure investments equitably benefit areas with concentrations of minority businesses or that redevelopment efforts do not have an unintentional adverse impact on predominantly minority neighborhoods.



# PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORT UNIVERSITY CITY BUSINESSES AND WORKERS

## Business & Talent Retention & Expansion

Goal: Focus on the Needs of Existing Businesses

Goal: Invest in Workforce Development for Residents

Goal: Retain Existing Businesses in University City

Goal: Increased Focus on the International District

## Small Business & Entrepreneurship

Goal: Amplify the Voice of Local Businesses.

Goal: Grow Next Generation of Small Businesses Owners in UCity

Goal: Support Additional Neighborhood Retail



## Business & Talent Retention & Expansion

### Goal: Focus on the Needs of Existing Businesses

Continue business retention and expansion (BRE) work in particular to understand opportunities and challenges of firms in industry clusters (Accommodations & Food Service and Health Care & Social Assistance) and emerging clusters (Retail, Professional, Scientific and Technical and Manufacturing).

With the elimination of the Economic Development Director position, consider hiring or identifying a current staff member dedicated to BRE and other economic development initiatives for the City. While the current Planning Director has served in an economic development capacity in the past, the City should evaluate his capacity to implement economic development efforts in addition to the position planning responsibilities.

### Goal: Invest in Workforce Development for Residents

Support University City School District's workforce training programs for City residents in growing industries by ensuring career opportunities for participants in City-controlled operations.

Leverage BRE outreach to identify local employer workforce needs, in particular engaging with the health care and senior service business as well as manufacturers/distributors that provide entry level positions with the potential for advancement (i.e., offer career ladders). Identify skills gaps and communicate those needs and opportunities to educational institutions charged with developing training programs, including, University City School District. The school district is committed to developing or partnering with others to offer robust training programs, including career readiness, students and adults so that they may access jobs that pay a living wage and the potential for economic advancement. Current programs include an EMT training course along with partnerships with LaunchCode (coding), Dream Builders 4 Equity (construction - youth) and the Building Union Diversity (BUD) program (construction apprenticeships).

### Goal: Retain Existing Businesses in University City

Undertake targeted BRE efforts to help retain and support businesses in the western Olive corridor located within the Novus development footprint. Such engagement should center on assisting businesses to relocate within University City and helping to address any business disruption associated with the development. Local business retention also offers an opportunity to backfill vacant retail or commercial space.

### Goal: Increased Focus on the International District

Proactively engage with International District businesses and property owners to build relationships and promote better understanding of business needs and plans and the benefits of this unique district in order to grow and benefit from its economic impact. Leverage local resources such as the International Institute to educate and foster greater understanding and improved communications. Increased understanding and engagement could support additional business attraction and retention efforts, assist with marketing the district to local and visiting consumers and could lay the groundwork for needed redevelopment of under-utilized properties.





# PRINCIPLE 4: COLLABORATE WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERS

## Washington University

### Goal: Develop a Consistent Policy for All Non-profits

Review and prioritize recommendations in Report to the City Council, Tax-Exempt Property Owned by Washington University, Findings, Facts and Recommendations, ensuring that any strategies implemented are consistently applied to all non-profits located in the City. The Fiscal Impact Analysis currently in development should inform and help drive final recommendation.

### Goal: Formalize a Working Relationship

Given Washington University's size, population, real estate holdings and significant resources, a productive and cordial relationship will only strengthen University City's economy and community. Consider engaging a third-party facilitator to mediate an open and frank dialogue between the City and Washington University to help build respect and understanding, identify shared values and collaboratively develop a mutually beneficial working relationship.

Consider a formalized City-University partnership structure to help advance shared vision and mutually beneficial strategies. The College Park City-University Partnership between College Park Maryland and the University of Maryland is a "local development corporation working to make College Park a top 20 college town" and provides an excellent example of how a municipality and university can collaborate to positively impact the university and the community in which it is located.

Work with Washington University to gather specific market data about potential gaps in services and retail offerings so that City is positioned to target business attraction efforts to address potentially unique student, staff and faculty needs and to benefit existing businesses in tailoring their products and services.

### Goal: Leverage Washington University Opportunities

Encourage commercial districts to develop marketing targeting Washington University students, staff and faculty.

Consider opportunities to leverage faculty and student intellectual resources to address municipal challenges.

To expand commercial offerings in the community, support private development anchored by Washington University operations which would ensure long term financial sustainability.





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## Regional Partners

### Goal: Connect to Regional Economic Resources

Engage with organizations focused on promoting economic development across the region to expand resources and tap into specialty services that serve U City's business community. For example, engaging with small business support resources, like the IT Entrepreneur Network (ITEN), the MOSAIC Project, the International Institute, provide targeted support for specialty businesses. The St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, World Trade Center, Arch to Park Collaborative (STLMade and Alliance STL offer broad-based economic and business development support.

### Goal: Align Regional Agencies for Investment along Olive Boulevard

Build relationships with regional entities that can support infrastructure development and enhancement that will particularly important in implementing a strategy for Olive Boulevard (e.g., Missouri Department of Transportation, Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District, East-West Gateway Coordinating Council).

# PRINCIPLE #5: CELEBRATE AND PROMOTE UNIVERSITY CITY

## Goal: Expand Economic Development Web Presence

Expand and centralize economic development content on new "Explore U City" microsite so that it serves as a tool to promote the City as a place to live, work and play, in addition to serving as a resource for promoting local businesses. It will be important that the City ensure it is speaking effectively to a range of audiences (businesses, site selectors, prospective residents/employees and tourists) to maximize economic impact. A more robust and comprehensive website would provide information to firms and site selectors about the benefits of locating in University City and could be used by local businesses to help attract employees (and potential residents). O'Fallon Missouri (<https://www.selectofallon.com/>) and Siolam, Arkansas (<https://whysiloam.com/>) provide great examples of how to integrate and present this information in an appealing and professional matter. The website would serve as a helpful tool for communicating key data about University City without unduly burdening limited staff available for economic development.

- Incorporate demographic data and developable site information to assist businesses and developers considering locating in University City.
- Centralize on micro-site information on all economic development tools, programs and processes.
- Create link(s) to micro-site on main City website to simplify access to all economic development information.
- Highlight community character (diversity, educated residential base) and quality of life amenities (historic architecture, central location and accessibility, arts and recreation etc.) that can be used by site selectors and businesses considering locating in the area, by existing employers to help recruit new talent and which would attract new residents.
- Consider incorporating a "business owners only" portal to improve engagement and communication with local firms (including home-based businesses) by offering important content or messaging relevant to these businesses (e.g., COVID-19 response information or guidelines).
- Ensure that the micro-site is structured to align with the distinct "Districts" identified in the place-making strategy, especially along Olive Boulevard.





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## Case Study: Select O'Fallon

The Select O'Fallon site ([www.selectofallon.com](http://www.selectofallon.com)) targets prospective businesses, site selectors, and developers.



The Select O'Fallon website includes the City's targeted business sections, including:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Automotive & Aerospace Suppliers
- Data Centers
- Financial Services
- HQ Operations, Shared Services & Back Office
- Retail



The Select O'Fallon website includes key data that is readily accessible and of interest to site selectors, developers, and prospective businesses. Information includes:

- Printable data sheet
  - Population*
  - Median Income*
  - Largest Employers*
  - Employment Sectors*
  - Median Housing Values*
- Tapestry Information
- Contact Information
- Latest News



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## Goal: Promote University City's Unique Character

Consider developing a branding/messaging strategy for promoting University City and its unique character (e.g., new tagline).

## Goal: Market Distinct Areas of the City

Evaluate developing specific messaging and marketing for targeted development areas/Districts. Priority Districts are the Loop, the International, Olive Innovation and West Delmar Districts. Once the Novus Development is underway, the Olive Gateway District should be a priority.

## Goal: Strategic Focus on Collegiate Market

Consider a marketing campaign promoting local businesses and residential offerings that targets Washington University, Fontbonne University and University Missouri St. Louis faculty and staff.

## Goal: Ensure Business-Related Publications are "Business-Friendly"

Review existing business-related publications and information and revise as necessary to ensure that they communicate information in a business-friendly manner.



# PRINCIPLE #6: UTILIZE PLACE-BASED SOLUTIONS

## Goal: Increase Focus on Olive Blvd

Olive Boulevard presents an opportunity to expand University City's retail and commercial offerings and the augment its economic base. With the businesses along this important corridor generating the majority of the City's retail sales tax base, attention and investment by the City will be important to maximize the potential of this key commercial corridor and ensure that it is vital part of the City's tax base.

- Using the place-making districts as a strategic framework, prioritize development opportunities at North and South and Midland where there are City-owned properties.
- Ensure that the comprehensive plan incorporates opportunities to refresh and re-position older shopping center to conform with modern expectations (e.g., increasing density, reducing parking requirements etc.)
- Evaluate potential road-diet from Hanley Road east to Sutter Avenue to provide traffic calming and allow for north-south pedestrian crossing. Narrowing the roadway would create a more walkable, neighborhood environment and create connections between the areas on the north and south sides of Olive.

- Evaluate opportunities to address stormwater and flooding issues impacting Olive through the City's Stormwater Committee to minimize impact to existing businesses and those wishing to locate in the area.
- Ensure that effort to expand Cunningham Industrial Park takes into consideration impacts to Olive (ingress/egress and traffic) and development opportunities within the Olive Districts.







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to be color

Proposed Condition - Heman Park District





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Existing Condition - Olive Innovation District





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Proposed Condition - Olive Innovation District



## Goal: Keep The Loop a Top Ten Street

- Promote and, if financially feasible, support engagement of full-time professional staff person to manage Special Business District operations, implementation of district initiatives and ensure compliance with statutory requirements. Additionally, this staff-person could serve as a liaison between tenant businesses and property owners to enhance understanding about SBD initiatives and promote communication of business needs.
  - Use Loop Special Business District strategic plan to build consensus on: Loop marketing, special events, SBD operations and scope for public realm (discussed below).
  - Conduct a comprehensive parking assessment and strategy for the Loop District, including existing on-street and off-street parking capacity, types of users, ticketing levels and cost to better understand the scope and magnitude of the challenges and to identify recommendations to address those issues. Depending upon available resources, a more comprehensive evaluation of public infrastructure would provide an opportunity to develop a public realm investment strategy to enhance the appearance of the Loop District. Given the impact of COVID-19 and the construction of the Loop Trolley, the City should ensure that any infrastructure improvements can be accomplished with minimal impact on business operations.
- Assemble and disseminate data about local crime activity, and where feasible, provide comparative data, in order to address and dispel public safety perceptions about the area. Information could be shared with local businesses and messaging incorporated into Explore U City micro-site.
  - Actively enforce code requirements relating to property maintenance and encourage reinvestment in properties that contribute to a vibrant and welcoming environment that attract patrons and ensures long-term competitiveness of the district.
  - Continue to monitor developments related to future operation of the Loop Trolley to remain informed and to determine actions to mitigate impacts on local businesses and the economy. To the extent feasible, City should ensure open communication lines with Loop businesses about new developments and to gather feedback on their potential effects and how to address them.





## Goal: Implement City-Wide Strategies

- Create a sense of place through physical infrastructure to generate community pride and help define the community for others through entry markers at all key primary and secondary intersections (e.g. at I-170 and Delmar & Olive).
- Consider consistent signage, way-finding and other physical improvement help to establish, brand and frame the commercial districts and create a sense of place.
- Continue to improve public spaces throughout University City, especially in targeted commercial districts, that build on community history and assets and help to define these areas for residents, businesses and institutions and the surrounding community.
- Incorporate placemaking improvements into redevelopment agreements to leverage private investment.
- University City's historic architecture and neighborhood-based commercial properties create an authentic and appealing environment that attracts consumers and businesses to the community. The presence of older properties that are only marginally maintained or functionally obsolete undermines the City's ability to attract new businesses that may be overwhelmed or unable to secure financing for extensive renovations. The presence of vacant or under-utilized properties, even in the City's most iconic retail and entertainment districts, also can be off-putting to shoppers. Intentional engagement by the City with local property owners to encourage on-going investment and maintenance obligations are met will help ensure that real estate offerings are appealing and meet the expectations of modern consumers and users.
- Promote redevelopment of aging shopping areas in a manner that allows for increased density, repurposes excess parking capacity, promotes walkability and traffic calming by locating buildings nearer to the roadway rather than set back behind a sea of parking.
- Continue to pursue and evaluate flood mitigation opportunities to reduce impact of flooding on both residential and commercial properties and potentially expand developable sites within the City.
- Develop strategy and uniform policy framework for managing impact of non-profit entities on municipal revenues (payments in lieu of taxes or PILOTS).



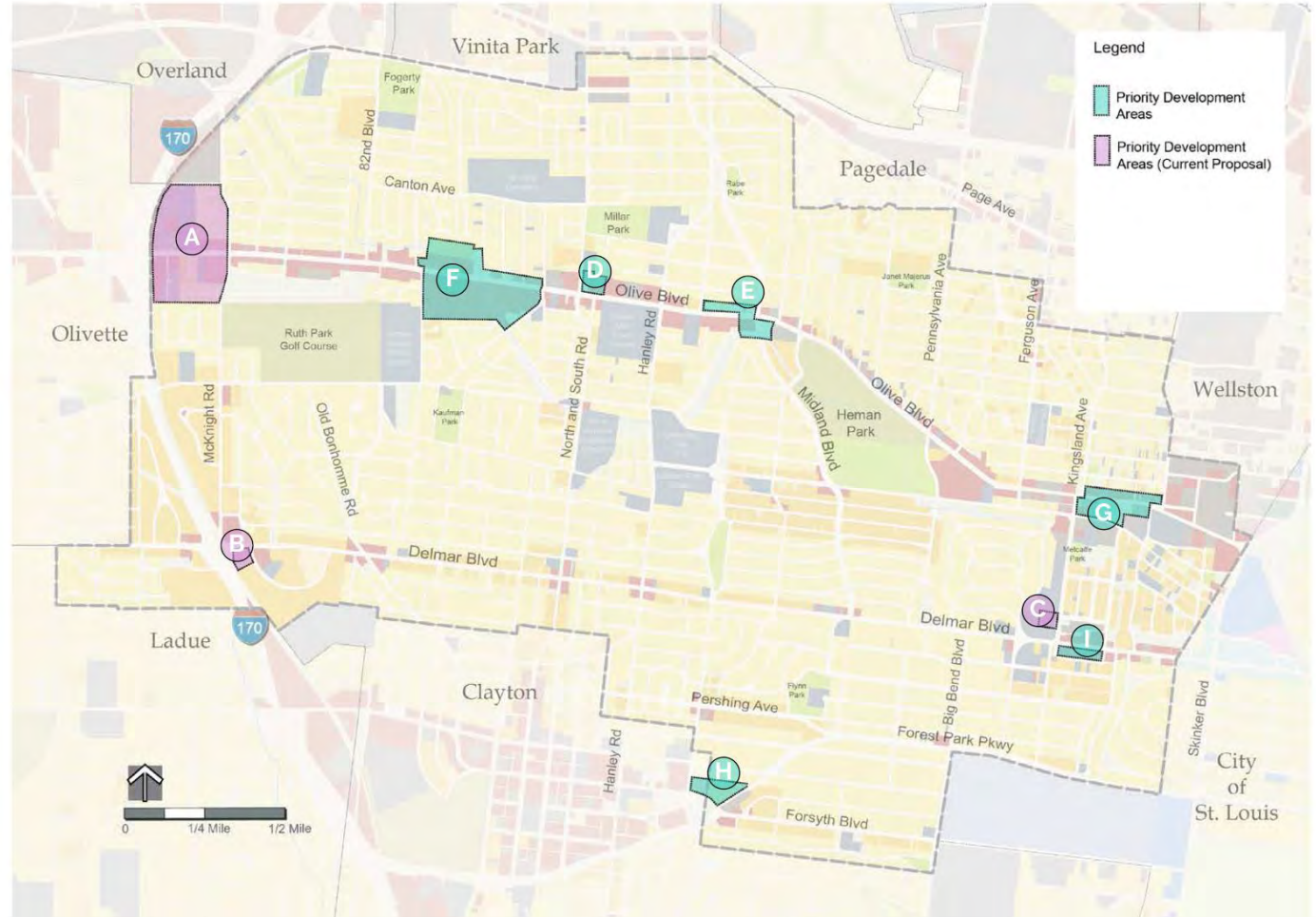
# PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS

## First Tier

- A** Olive Blvd and I170
- B** Delcrest Plaza
- C** Delmar-Harvard Elementary School
- D** Olive Blvd and North and South Rd
- E** Olive Blvd and Midland Blvd

## Second Tier

- F** Olive Blvd and River Des Peres
- G** 6610 Olive (Former Sur-Sav)
- H** Forsyth
- I** West Loop





# Upcoming Schedule

- Additional Task Force Listening Session: Sept 10th
- Community Engagement: Mid September
- Draft Economic Strategy (Document): October



**Thank You!**

