



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES THROUGH MEMBER IMPACT ON THE BUILT WORLD

The journey starts here.



THE MISSION OF THE URBAN I AND INSTITUTE

Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide

MISSION COMMITMENTS

CONNECT active, passionate, diverse members through the foremost global network of interdisciplinary professionals

INSPIRE best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing

LEAD in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement

















The Advisory Services Program has provided strategic, impactful recommendations to communities for over 70 years.

We engage experts in a diverse array of real estate development and land use fields, including transportation and transit-oriented development; neighborhood and regional planning; infrastructure; retail and commercial corridors; academic and medical institutions; disaster response and sustainability; and housing.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

GREATER ST. LOUIS INC.



ST. LOUIS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



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SCOPE AND STUDY AREA

SCOPE

- Advocacy and Marketing
- Complementary Real Estate Investment
- Financing
- Park Identification & Activation
- Policy

STUDY AREA

Gateway Mall from Broadway to 11th Street





CONTENTS

- ASP process
- Engagement and findings
- A more equitable, diverse, resilient mixed-use district
- Placekeeping, placemaking, and activation
- Leadership, governance, and policies
- Phasing





PROCESS

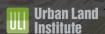
- City briefing presentation
- Walking tour
- Stakeholder interviews
- Deliberation
- Presentation
- Report





THANK YOU, STAKEHOLDERS

Abdul Abdullah, Alex Anderson, Anthony Bartlett, Nichole Belford, John Berglund, Seth Berkowitz, Jim Berlage, Dave Biales, Yvette Bly, Jared Boyd, Zachary Boyers, John Breitinger, Jasmine Brooks, Mary Campbell, Justin Carney, Michelle Cheli, Jen Claridale, Stephen Davis, Caressa Davis, Katie Fischer, Timothy Flavin, Joel Fuoss, Eva France, Greg Gleicher, Clayton Geenen, Brian Hall, Jason Hall, Catherine Hamacher, Amos Harris, Craig Heller, Emily Hemingway, Chrissy Hill Rogers, Lesley Hoffarth, Peter Hoffman, Dillon Holliam, Travis Howser, Ricky Hughes, Jassen Johnson, Kiara Jones, Miriam Keller, Sarah Arnosky Ko, Anna Leavey, Steve Lindsay, Rania Lombera, Harvey Love, Annissa McCaskill, Ryan McClure, Mike McCubbins, Margaret McDonald, Larry Morris, Kristopher Nelson, Steve O'Loughlin, Britteney Ofodile, Rob Orr, Lisa Otke, Lindsay Pattan, Virgil Pearson, Jamar "Church" Pinkston, Dan Pistor, Christopher Randall, Kaveh Razani, Juwan Rice, Neal Richardson, Don Roe, Will Smith, Jayvn Solomon, Martell Stepney, Dani Strehle, Evan Hines, Sarah Kasoff, Jeremy Sweat, Heather Sweeney, Peter Tao, Jason Thein, Randy Vines, Donovan Vogler, Christopher Walter, John Warren, Christina Weaver, Hank Webber, Kurt Weigle, Brittnee White, Chris Zimmerman





WHAT WE HEARD

STRENGTHS

- Internationally known city
- Rich cultural history
- Deep bench of creatives
- Diverse population
- Recent capital investment
- Events and programming

WEAKNESSES

- Negative perceptions and "self-talk"
- High vacancy rates
- Public safety concerns (both real and perceived)
- Physical fragmentation; lack of cohesion
- Monumental public space
- Overwhelming maintenance needs

OPPORTUNITIES

- Redefine the space and the narrative
- Affordable real estate for acquisition
- Rapid deployment of programming and activation
- Spectacle
- Enhanced connections to nature, water (riverfront), food, culture

THREATS

- Changing nature of work
- Continuation of current economic conditions; decline in commercial occupancy, etc.
- Negative perceptions

"Digging into the detritus of the past not only illuminates historical harms, but looking back also fertilizes future potential, nurturing new visions of what may persist and may be planted in tomorrow's gardens. Personal and collective memory is honored, celebrated, and transformed..."

From Revival: Digging Into Yesterday, Planting Tomorrow





THE TIME TO ACT BOLDLY IS NOW

Regional commitment to St. Louis's future

- Economic development momentum through STL 2030
- Substantial capital investment

BUT Downtown economic driver at risk

- Like all downtowns post-pandemic, commercial shrinkage
- Brand defined by safety concerns
- Transformative investments (Wash Ave.) generated success, but proved fragile
- Downtown plans need accelerated, focused implementation

Downtown is the gateway to the region and generates 19% of citywide general fund while consuming <5% of budgeted services. The region can't afford to let it languish.





THE CENTRAL SOCIAL DISTRICT

POSITION CULTURE, CREATIVITY, AND JOY AS KEY DRIVERS OF ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Make culture, creativity, and shared joy legible and accessible as a core experience of downtown. Support creative enterprises through incentives and targeted investments. Define creative hubs and corridors animated by the music industry, fashion, and other forms of creative expression.



DIG INTO THE PAST TO PLANT THE FUTURE

Honor the long history of Black and brown innovators and culture-makers who have created value and joy in the district. Integrate meaningful storytelling and placemaking that references this history — while creating fertile ground for future innovation.



GENERATE A VIRTUOUS CYCLE OF ACTIVATION AMENITY ANCHOR

Implement a foundational strategy for weak market locations. Start with intentional temporary but consistent activations — such as musical events, test kitchens, and pop-up retail — that offer welcome amenities to residents and visitors. Foster these amenities into becoming strong, recognizable anchors for attracting and retaining residents, visitors, and businesses.



BUILD AND NURTURE A "REEF" FOR SOCIAL CONNECTION

Invest in a nurturing, supportive environment for civic life and social infrastructure. Identify specific locations within downtown that serve as nodes and attractors of civic life. Subsidize rents, improvements, and operations for key tenants.



INVEST IN MARKET-MAKERS

Create market demand that doesn't exist today. Offer products, services, and experiences to consumers that they didn't know they wanted. Rather than relying on outside investments or franchises, grow promising existing entrepreneurs, creatives, and civic organizations.



INVEST IN COMMUNITY CAPACITY-BUILDING

Channel resources and power to organizations and individuals in communities who will be strong allies and activators for downtown. Grow capacity for entrepreneurs and culture-makers already embedded in neighborhoods — focusing on BIPOC leaders — who will be key tenants and attractors in the downtown core.



CELEBRATE AND COMMUNICATE DISTINCTIVE AREAS OF STRENGTH

Use marketing and messaging vehicles to foreground diversity as a competitive advantage for downtown. Center narratives of BIPOC innovators and culture-makers in communication strategy, positioning downtown as a place where Black and brown communities thrive.



CHOREOGRAPH THE URBAN EXPERIENCE THROUGH A STRONG DISTRICT MANAGER

Consolidate governance and stewardship into an empowered curatorial position. Establish a strong steward for the district with the resources and responsibility for managing both the public realm and the private sector tenant mix. Make space for a broadly representative cohort of diverse leaders.



CREATE AND CAPTURE VALUE BY CONTROLLING MORE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Make strategic real estate acquisitions in an underpriced market. Hold and activate real estate for value creation and value capture. Define nodes and corridors for concentrated public-sector real estate investment.





THE OPPORTUNITY

Central Social District

A socially and economically resilient district that feels like a neighborhood: accessible, inviting, beloved, and cared for.

- A continuing economic driver for the city, but more diversified, resilient, and less cyclical
- A focus on greater equity and inclusion in all aspects of commerce, culture, and city life
- A neighborhood offering many housing choices at a variety of price points
- A neighborhood that meets the needs of St. Louisians to live, work, learn, create, and play
- A hub for art, culture, and entrepreneurship











REAL ESTATE STRATEGY

Grounded in 3 premises:

- The down market positions the public sector to acquire and activate catalytic properties downtown to control the environment
- 2. St. Louis-based creative entrepreneurs—especially in the Black and brown communities—are "market-makers"
- 3. Providing market-makers an ownership stake in downtown's development will bolster their interest and commitment, and produce a more resilient neighborhood in the face of future downturns



MARKET REALITY CHECK

- As in all downtowns post-COVID, the commercial market is struggling
- Even pre-pandemic, there was movement west, no recent commercial construction, and high vacancy
- Post-pandemic, factors such as remote work and downtown crime are driving offices closer to "safe," amenitized locations near employees
- This has led to a shadow office vacancy of up to 40%



THE UPSIDE

There's strong potential to bring people and activity through RESIDENTIAL USES + TOURISM

- Nationally, downtowns with major entertainment focus (and hospitality jobs) have proved most resilient post-COVID
- Both residential uses and tourism require a similar mix of neighborhood amenities and quality of life







THE STRATEGY

Cultural production provides both an **amenity** for residents and an **authentic St**. **Louis attraction** for visitors.

- Populating downtown with cultural production has multiple positive effects: it engages youth, enhances safety, offers resident amenities, and attracts tourism.
- However, producers don't naturally want to be downtown their audience is in the neighborhoods. If the public sector wants to bring them downtown, it needs to build in ways for them to benefit from the value they will generate through ownership and equity participation.
- Community and cultural ownership will also generate more resilient revitalization in the face of future downturns.



THE BIG PLAY

- The current market downturn creates an opportunity for targeted acquisitions.
- These assets should be leveraged to catalyze activity and population along the Mall and facilitate BIPOC wealth creation.











CULTURAL ECONOMY – PROVEN GROWTH STRATEGY



The state of Black consumers: An opportunity for growth and equity

Black consumers' collective economic power is set to expand dramatically, from about \$910 Billion in consumption in 2019 to \$1.7 trillion (in nominal dollars) in 2030. Even so, they are more likely than their non-Black counterparts to live in consumer deserts and be underserved across all areas of consumption. This collection of research highlights both the social and commercial benefits of integrating broad racial-equity goals into consumer businesses to better serve Black consumers.

McKinsey & Co., McKinsey Institute for Black Economic Mobility



CULTURAL ECONOMY – PROVEN GROWTH STRATEGY

\$109.4 billion on leisure travel in 2019, making up about 13.1 percent of the U.S. leisure travel market

"The Black Traveler: Insights, Opportunities, and Priorities" - MMGY Travel Intelligence





CASE STUDY – EASTPOINT DEVELOPMENT

- East Point as a Catalyst
 - Total Development Cost (Phase 1&2) 8.6 million
 - \$200 Million economic impact (estimated)
 - 41,536 sf of healthcare clinic, grocery stores, and 11 retail spaces on 2.7 acres.
 - Over 50% Female minority owned business
 - 90% Minority Locally Owned Business –
 15% ownership for tenants
 - Social and cultural strategy maximizes the catalytic ripple.



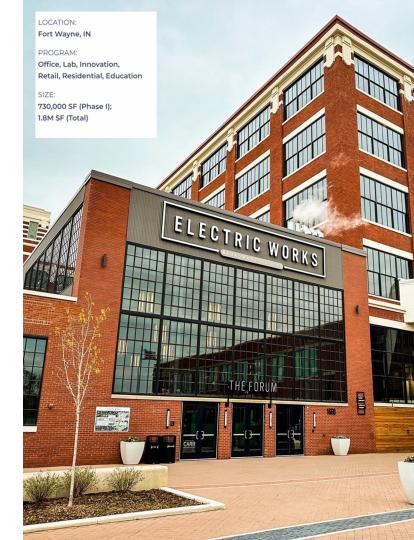




CASE STUDY - ELECTRIC WORKS

Large Scale Study - \$425 million mixed-use redevelopment

- Electric Works Phase 1
 - \$286 Million Dollar
 - \$400 Million economic impact 3000 jobs estimated reinvested into neighboring community
 - 740,000 sf of office, retail, co-working, Amp Lab, and market
- Leverages inclusive economic, social and cultural to maximizes the catalytic ripple.
- Electric works set up to be the engine for future economy of Fort Wayne, building on the legacy of GE.













Peckham Levels London

Great, but a cautionary tale

7 levels of an underutilized parking garage transformed into a cultural and creative hub.

Opened 2015. Lease and planning extended to 2039.

130+ independent enterprises, 70%+ are local residents, 300+ jobs, providing 20% studios at 35% of market value, 25% event spaces free, 10% of profits are retained in a community investment fund.

Image Source: Turner Works https://turner.works/works/view/peck ham-levels-2/

REAL ESTATE APPROACH

Short-term acquisition and disposition that delivers:

- Space and ownership for multiple creative producers
- BIPOC equity participation (potentially based on development partner selection criteria, in addition to cultural producer participation)
- At grade street front activation
- Interim uses leading to redevelopment as market matures based on value created by cultural uses
- Long-term hold with interim activation through ground floor tenanting and façade activation, future mixed-use redevelopment (similar disposition process)





RESPONDING TO THE EXTRACTIVE NATURE OF TRADITIONAL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

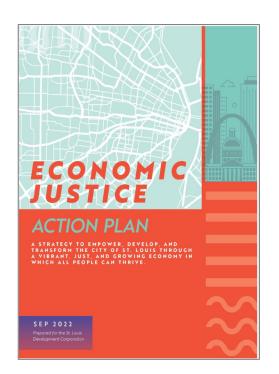
Government and development entities must recognize and react to the extractive nature of the real estate and development industry. The traditional structure of the real estate industry does not pay communities equally for the culture it extracts and upon which it generates long-term capital.

Opportunity

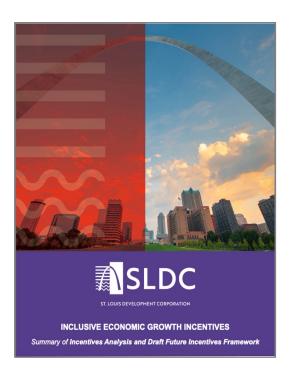
Understand, develop, and share the economic benefits with local community. Implement proactive measures to protect and cultivate resilient community assets.



RECENT STL PLANNING DOCUMENTS HAVE ALL THE INGREDIENTS FOR A VIBRANT MIXED USE DISTRICT



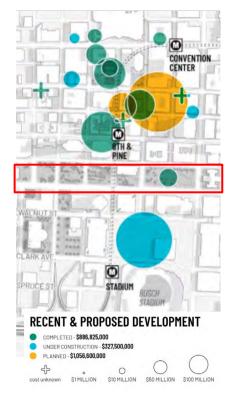






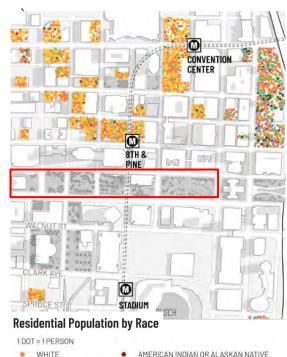
CULTURE AS A CONNECTOR

POSITIONING - NORTH SOUTH CONNECTIONS



Focus on Mall connectors – greatest potential for cultural cultivation ROI

- Focus on areas to uplift current downtown residents
- Facilitate spaces for cultural experience creation
 - Prioritize creation of whitebox spaces
 - Prioritize different scales of access along north south connections





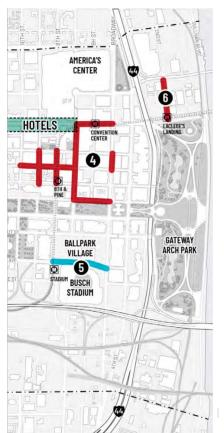


CULTURE AS A CONNECTOR NORTH SOUTH POSITIONING – RATIONALE

Benefit of having the best quality frontage outside of Washington Ave.

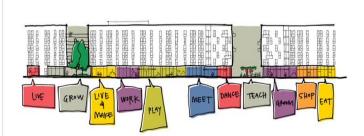
Mixture of frontages along 7th Street to allow for different short- and long-term term activation strategies.





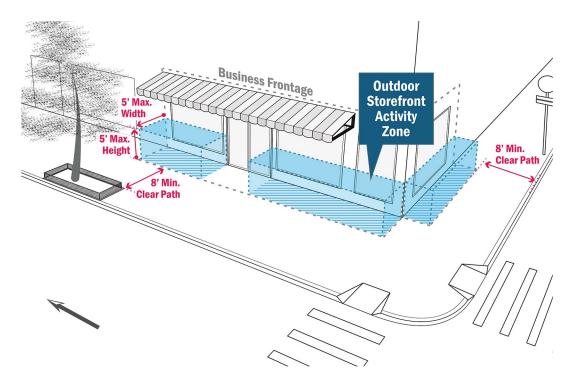


TYING SHORT- & LONG-TERM STRATEGIES



Leverage a road diet to improve the retail experience and reduce the urban heat island effect:

e.g., use wider sidewalks for seating pop-ups and green space.













Collections

ifting Ideas

DISPLAY

Contact

California Inspired.

DISPLAY California is a hub for products made in California or inspired by it.

Our mission is simple: put a little bit of California in your home.

We rely on designers, creators, and artists to bring you unique expressions of California. We always begin our search for products in our native Sacramento, CA and then expand beyond. We are all about California. We live it, breathe it, and most of all. We support it.



CASE STUDIES DISPLAY AND CLTRE CLUB

"This Midtown incubator helps Sacramento Entrepreneurs start their small businesses."

- Sacramento Bee

"How support for diverse Micro Businesses is shifting Sacramento's 'cultural landscape."

- The Sacramento Observer



CHEROKEE STREET MARKET-MAKER BUTTER LOVE SKIN

- Founded in 2014
- Grew from pop-up events to have placement in markets and retail locations
- Participant in the UMSL
 Accelerate program in 2022
 Received \$50k grant
- Opened a brick-and-mortar shop on Cherokee Street in 2023



"I built Butter Love on that street. That community is such an important part of the growth of my company. It felt like home."



FISCAL APPROACH TO CULTURAL AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE

Creating Inclusive Enhancement Funds that are flexible over time.

Fund Development

- Develop a graduated contribution schedule
- Pursue matching fund commitments
- Institute inclusive award criteria
 - Individuals, organizations, businesses

Fund Partnership

- Identify areas for local impact & investment
- Welcome partners with aligned Impact Goals

CASE STUDY: ELECTRIC WORKS







EXPAND THE OUTDOOR LIVING ROOM

St. Louis already knows how to create an outdoor living room.

We heard some of these critical elements from a small business owner: "Give me . . ."

- A story that makes me want to care
- Temporary experiences and anchor experiences that will keep me returning
- Intentional development clearly developed by stakeholders from diverse backgrounds
- Safety
- A social media-worthy place





BUILDING CAPACITYACTIVATION TO ANCHOR

- Build consistent drum beat of events, programs, and promotion
- Create a platform to grow STL talent over time
- Center BIPOC and young community members
- Support 365 x 18/7 programming
- Draw on the city's cultural strengths
- Enable 'plug and play' informal placemaking
- Create a 'curators committee' to program, identify talent and build advocacy





BUILDING VISIBILITYPROMOTION & REPUTATION

- Build long-term trust with marketmakers to create authentic and resilient "buzz"
- Build a paid cultural ambassador program with STL's content creators
- Pay them for social capital and for sourcing tenants
- Manage a centralized social media account
- Rename spaces to create recognition e.g., The Market on Market





BUILDING COMMUNITY WEALTH

EQUITY & RESILIENCE

- Generate BIPOC wealth over time
- Secure empty anchor spaces early under community ownership
- Pay talent for building community and adding cultural value
- Test the market and build audiences/community by moving from temporary pilots to permanent anchors
- Reveal creative process through visible ground floors
- Elevate land values by giving meaning to spaces





CULTURAL PLACEMAKING FROM ACTIVATION...





CULTURAL PLACEMAKING ... TO AMENITY





CULTURAL PLACEMAKING ... TO ANCHOR





FOOD | COMMUNITY EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIVATION



Monthly Farmers
Market + Food Truck

AMENITY



Rooftop Farm + Grocery Store

ANCHOR



Market Hall + Destination Restaurant

Time

Scale



MUSIC | COMMUNITY EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIVATION



Busking Backdrops

Time

Scale

AMENITY



Plug and Play Stages

ANCHOR



Music Industry Incubator



ART | COMMUNITY EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIVATION



Mural Program

AMENITY



Digital Canvases

ANCHOR



Digital Arts Institute / Art Museum Outpost

Time

Scale



NATURAL WELLBEING | COMMUNITY EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIVATION



Indigenous gathering space for envisioning an Eastern Gateway

Time

Scale

AMENITY



Meadows, coffee kiosk, and seating at Serra's Twain

ANCHOR



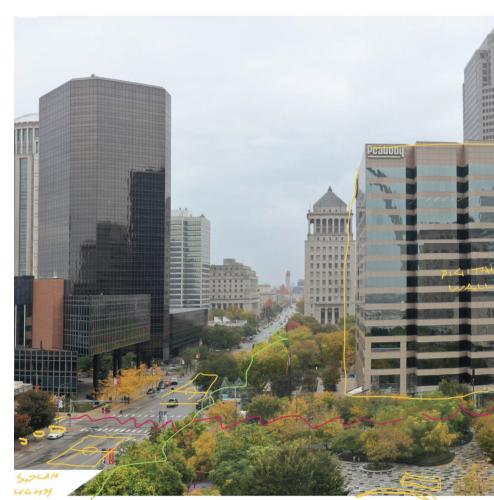
Gateway to the East commission for Indigenous Art



UNIFY SPACES + OPERATIONS

- Work with consistent placemaking identity
- Design for 'on the ground' and 'up above'
- Go big and draw from afar—leverage empty facades and roads that are wider than they need to be
- Bring joyful design to everyday street furniture to create delight and a sense of positivity





UNIFY SPACES + OPERATIONS | TOOLKIT



Wayfinding Pillars

Encourages movement across the site and into surrounding streets



Moveable Chairs and Tables

Creates recognition at human scale and enables people to make a space their own



Banner and Building Wrap Program Draws from afar



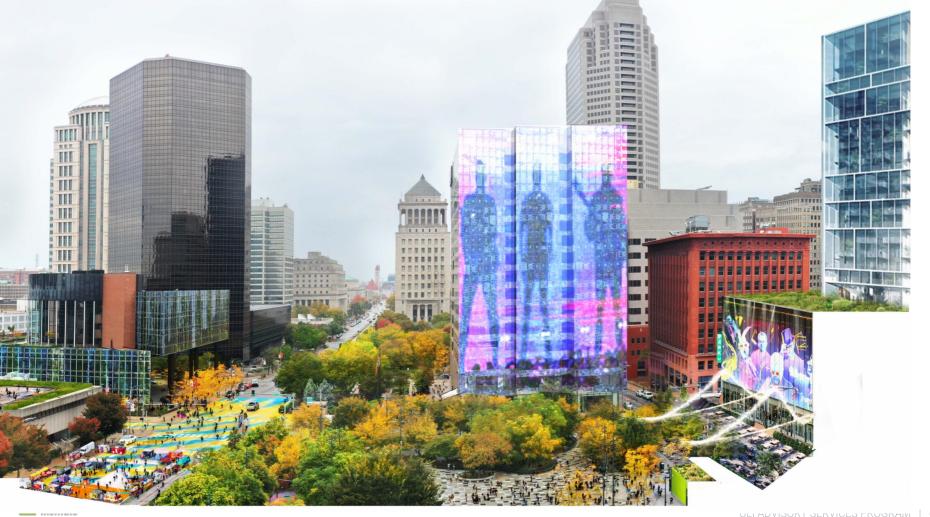
Graphic Crossing

Connects across blocks and slows traffic























GOVERNANCE NEEDS

There is much to do – but there are wonderful partners already present in downtown

Required Responsibilities

Gateway Mall parks

Public realm

Development

Ground floor & retail activation

Cultural production cultivation

Cultural production

Marketing

Entrepreneurship support

Stewardship

Existing Capacity

City of St. Louis

Greater St. Louis, Inc. (GSL)

St. Louis Development Corp. (SLDC)

Downtown Community Improvement Dist. (CID)

Citizens for a Greater Downtown

Downtown Neighborhood Association

National Park Service

Great Rivers Greenway

Gateway Arch Park Foundation

Gateway Foundation

Explore St. Louis

...and More



GOVERNANCE | OBSERVATIONS

- GSL's re-establishment of downtownfocused resources has been effective, and more is needed
- Fragmented park operations responsibility
- Unclear ownership/accountability for park programming
- District security is a top priority
- CID under-funded and lacking capacity
- Resident mistrust of corporate entities
- Desire for focused and rapid implementation of existing plans





Urgency requires strengthening public/private partnerships and capacity. But we must recognize that reliance on private solutions for delivery of core municipal functions sidesteps a larger need to strengthen City capacity.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSIBILITIES

Gateway Mall Parks

Conservancy encompassing Kiener Plaza, Citygarden, and Serra site. (Potentially GRG, Gateway Foundation, or collaboration identified through task force)

- Maintenance
- Programming (events, venues)
- Capital improvements/repair (in partnership with Bureau of Public Service)
- Permitting (can this be taken over from City?)

Coordination with Public/Private Development & Community Development Partners for construction, tenanting, and capacity building for in-park venues.

Downtown Stewardship & Management

Downtown requires continued—and perhaps expanded—financial, political, and people resources to successfully address:

- Public Realm
 - Clean
 - Safe/welcome
 - Wayfinding
 - Infrastructure maintenance (in partnership with Bureau of Public Service)
- Stewardship
 - Vision for ground floor activation (in partnership with Development entity)
 - Vision for development strategy
- Marketing



RECOMMENDED RESPONSIBILITIES

Public/Private Development

Strengthened development capacity in service to downtown steward vision (existing/new CDC, SLDC, or other entity with capacity and ability to build downtown participation into Board oversight)

- Development
 - Acquisitions
 - Financing
 - Disposition
 - Structuring
 - Interim operations
- Ground floor and Mall park venue activation
 - Tenanting (in coordination with Community Development capacity builder)
 - Permitting
 - Murals
 - Curation



RECOMMENDED RESPONSIBILITIES

Community Development

Consult with Invest STL to help identify strategies for identifying an **existing CDC or develop a new CDC**

- Cultural Production Cultivation (at private and Mall park locations)
 - Curation
 - Relationships
 - Operations
 - Business planning
 - Fundraising
- Entrepreneurship Support
 - BIPOC/women-owned business support
 - TA/legal assistance to tenants
 - Entrepreneurship support

Cultural Production

Potential Capacity & Coalition Builders

- Regional Arts Commission and Community Arts
 Training Institute
- Kranzberg Arts Foundation
- Seed St. Louis
- Greencubator

Potential Producers

- St. Louis Shakespeare Festival
- St. Louis Public Library
- St. Louis Symphony
- The Muny
- Rated Test Kitchen
- Milk & Hummus
- STI Run Crew
- Mvstercamp (Musician capacity-builder)



FUNDING NEEDS

Significant new investment is needed, but sustainable cultural placemaking will generate long-term value and economic strength.

- Gateway Mall parks: Continuous programming, enhanced maintenance, minor capital improvements
- **Public realm:** Significant service increase (GSL investors have committed to fund public safety ambassadors for all of Downtown starting in 2024)
- Public/private development: Acquisition; interim operations; facade improvements; tenant improvements; cultural subsidy; lease or revenue guarantees for ground floor activation; later, development subsidy
- + Potential additional costs for marketing, ground floor activation, and community development.



POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

	Operations	Infrastructure	Development
Public			
ARPA or Rams \$		х	Х
Increase share of general fund proportionate to revenue generated Downtown	X		
Redirect Earnings Tax toward Downtown	Х	Х	Х
Increase/establish citywide tax for increased amenities or downtown revitalization	Х	Х	Х
Earned Income			
From private events, parking, facade advertising/projections (and potentially bond)	X	X	



POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

	Operations	Infrastructure	Development
Private/ Value Capture			
Office-to-resi conversion tax credit: State will need more than \$50M			X
CID & TIF – leverage future value, but won't be available initially	Х	X	X
Foundations focused on equitable development (e.g., Mellon, Ford)	Х		Х
Define powerful champions	х	х	Х





	IMMEDIATELY: First 100 days	NEAR-TERM: Year One	MID-TERM: Three Years
Real Estate	 Prepare acquisition strategy 	 Advance acquisitions Adopt office-to-resi tax credit program 	 Advance temporary activation Commence disposition for publicly-owned real estate Drive housing production
Programming & District Connections	 Advance activation Build curator committee Plan Year 1 events Create/purchase low-cost activation equipment Hire more ambassadors Create cultural tenanting and capacity building structure 	 Activate cafes and kiosks Create consistent programming Define identity and branding for study area 	Convert temporary culture- maker activations into permanent space / amenities
Governance & Funding	 Seek powerful champions and build a Downtown coalition 	 Establish conservancy Confirm community dev and cultural partners Convene cohort of community culture-makers 	Solidify development capacity





