

Empowerment, Diversity & Equity



Empowerment, Diversity & Equity

The City of St. Louis is home to many diverse ethnicities, religions, ages, lifestyles, and affiliations that add character to and activate the City in many wonderful and significant ways. It is well known that a cosmopolitan city that embraces, empowers, and builds upon its diversity tends to be more creative, equitable, entrepreneurial, and resilient to changes in the economy. Thus, it is important to celebrate the added value that diverse groups provide to the City of St. Louis, and to acknowledge that people – the City’s social capital - are its greatest asset. All must take steps to empower the City’s diverse population, encourage all people to continue their celebratory events, expand their enterprises, and to develop both personally and professionally in the City of St. Louis.

The City’s greatest strength is embedded in its history as “a city of neighborhoods.” Many of the City’s diverse neighborhoods, such as The Hill, Cherokee Street, Dogtown, Old North and The Ville, contain a strong local history, cuisine, and unique street festivals that celebrate heritage and culture in a way that people from across the city, region and nation can enjoy. Notwithstanding these strengths, inequities exist between different ethnicities in the City, and there is an opportunity to integrate underserved groups more fully into the community. In 2009, the percentage of the City’s population living in poverty was 14.7% for white, non-hispanic residents, and 38.6% for black residents. In addition, minority groups tend to live in areas that contain fewer amenities and services, have lower annual incomes, and spend more time unemployed than do white citizens. Disadvantaged citizens are also the least likely to participate in the City’s political process, to vote, attend meetings, or form community groups. In order to reverse these disparities, we can provide those who are disadvantaged with resources to increase stability, improve their neighborhoods, and provide paths for upward mobility. Providing opportunities for people of all ages - from youths to seniors - to successfully live, work, learn, and play in the City is critically important. Creating educated and equitable workforce will continue to attract business and economic development to the City, as well as new residents and tourists to its diverse and vibrant neighborhoods.

EXISTING ASSETS

St. Louis has witnessed diverse alternative lifestyle and ethnic groups that have successfully built strong neighborhoods with an exciting array of cultural amenities and events in the City. This builds upon the City’s history of different groups settling, building, and rehabilitating to create vibrant neighborhoods. As diverse groups have settled and expanded, the City has gained an incredibly rich intellectual and social capital, based around the City’s many universities, research and cultural institutions, nonprofits, and corporations. These groups enjoy the resources and support of many existing governmental agencies and social programs for the needy, underserved, and under-represented.

St. Louis has numerous nationally recognized social programs, including the City of St. Louis Continuum of Care for Ending Homelessness, a partnership of over 60 organizations and individuals, and the International Institute of St. Louis, which has helped settle over 3,500 refugees since 2002. The City has a successful Senior Care program in the St. Louis Area Agency on Aging (SLAAA), and many organizations focused on delivering youth and family programs. These include the St. Louis Jobs Corps, Better Family Life, the St. Louis YMCA, the St. Louis Urban League, and St. Louis Public Schools, which offer remedial education and enrichment programs, such as the Fresh Start Academy.

In 2012, the City received a 100% rating for LGBT inclusion in the Human Right’s Campaign Municipal Equality Index (MEI). The MEI rates cities on criteria in categories of: non-discrimination laws; relationship recognition; the municipality’s employment practices; inclusiveness of city services; law enforcement; and municipal leadership.

The City also has strong affordable housing programs operated by local, state, and federal bodies. The St. Louis Development Corporation has a successful Brownfields program, and the City has established the acclaimed “Lead Safe St. Louis” program to ensure none of its diverse population are affected by lead toxins. The City has an impressive record of civic engagement and a steady appearance in the top 10 of American cities for its volunteer rate and private philanthropy.

GOAL

The City of St. Louis aspires to empower its social and human capital by strengthening its social, cultural, and economic diversity and creating a higher level of respect and civic participation in order to attract, support, and facilitate dialogue, urban innovation, population, and jobs, in order to create an equitable, transparent and inclusive environment for those who live, work, learn, and play in the City.

OBJECTIVES

- A** Embrace the Value of Diversity, Aspire towards Equity, and Attract and Retain a Diverse Population and Culture
- B** Encourage Civic Engagement, Transparency, and Leadership
- C** Promote Youth Development, Education, Engagement, and Empowerment
- D** Promote Senior Civic Involvement, Empowerment, and Intergenerational Engagement
- E** Reduce Homelessness, and Support Low Income Families and the Unemployed
- F** Ensure Equal Access to Amenities, Business Opportunities, Transportation, and Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

Objective A: Embrace the Value of Diversity, Aspire towards Equity, and Attract and Retain a Diverse Population and Culture

Diverse ethnic groups have played an instrumental role in the growth of St. Louis. The historic French and Spanish populations that originally fueled the growth of Soulard, Germans, Irish in Dogtown, Italians on the Hill, the Bosnians in Bevo Mill, Latinos on Cherokee Street, and African Americans in The Ville and throughout the City, have each brought areas of diversity, interest, and culture. By celebrating ethnic diversity and lifestyle choices as some of the City's greatest cultural, social, and economic assets, the City will promote a sense of inclusion. City agencies, such as the Civil Rights Enforcement Agency (CREA), the Office on the Disabled, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), and numerous nonprofit organizations, such as the International Institute, provide services intended to empower, protect, and retain the City's diverse population. These services are instrumental in facilitating the growth of diversity, ensuring all of the City's people have an opportunity to succeed, and attracting new immigrants to contribute additional economic, social, and cultural vitality to the City.

STRATEGY 1

Support and strengthen programs to retain the City's diverse population

Acknowledge the diversity and multi-racial character of all St. Louisans. Enhance amenities and awareness of existing assets that serve and appeal to people of diverse ethnic and social groups. Develop initiatives designed to serve and appeal to families with children. Develop retention initiatives in education and affordable housing.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Higher Education Institutions, Business Associations

Strategy Type: Policy, Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 2

Conduct an open dialogue within the community, educational institutions, and businesses about race, gender, class, and lifestyle differences

Encourage and support initiatives which address the City's racial, social, economic, and environmental justice issues. Increase opportunities for employees to participate in educational activities regarding diversity and inclusion. Make diversity training mandatory in workplaces and schools.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: State Agencies, Schools, Cultural Institutions, Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Education, Partnerships

OBJECTIVE A

Embrace the Value of Diversity, Aspire towards Equity, and Attract and Retain a Diverse Population and Culture

STRATEGY 3

Enhance opportunities available for minorities, women, and the disadvantaged

Increase the number of women and minorities in positions of seniority in businesses, local governments, and nonprofit organizations. Support and nurture minority and woman business enterprise programs to assist firms with workforce inclusion.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Business Development Agencies, Nonprofits, Federal Agencies

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Partnerships

STRATEGY 4

Establish St. Louis as a community of opportunity for all lifestyles

Raise awareness and celebration of LG-BTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, & questioning) lifestyles through Pride St. Louis events and LGBTQ-friendly venues and support centers.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Neighborhood Associations, Cultural & Arts Institutions.

Strategy Type: Education, Partnerships



OBJECTIVE A

Embrace the Value of Diversity, Aspire towards Equity, and Attract and Retain a Diverse Population and Culture



STRATEGY 5

Offer a variety of cultural events and awareness programs that celebrate diversity in the City of St. Louis

Facilitate diverse arts and cultural events and celebrations that celebrate ethnic, racial, sexual, and social diversity.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Foundations, Neighborhood Associations, Cultural Institutions, Arts Institutions

Strategy Type: Operations, Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 6

Assist those who immigrate to the City of St. Louis and seek to attract new, diverse residents

Create programs that ease the process of immigrating, assimilating, and developing local connections in the City. Provide resources and translation services in foreign languages. Create an Immigrant Advisory Committee to advise City leadership on policies and services affecting immigrants.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: State/Federal Agencies, Higher Education Institutions, Cultural Institutions, Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Partnerships

OBJECTIVE A

Embrace the Value of Diversity, Aspire towards Equity, and Attract and Retain a Diverse Population and Culture

STRATEGY 7

Enforce civil and equal rights for all

Seek to eliminate instances of bias-motivated incidents in the community. Address wage recovery issues, inequities in hiring, layoffs, salaries, and advancement, fair housing violations, redlining, and predatory lending. Advocate for accessibility, and provide resources to ensure that St. Louis is welcoming to residents and visitors with all forms of disabilities and special needs. Actively work to retain people living in a safe, healthy community with a good quality of life, and then provide incentives for others to join them in a sustainable community that is diverse in all aspects, including income.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: State/Federal Agencies, St. Louis County, Nonprofits, Business Associations

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Operations

“... city areas with flourishing diversity sprout strange and unpredictable uses and peculiar scenes. But this is not a drawback of diversity. This is the point ... of it.”
– Jane Jacobs



Objective B: Encourage Civic Engagement, Transparency, and Leadership

St. Louis citizens have historically participated in the civic process at very high rates. A majority of citizens tend to turn out to vote in national elections, and at a lesser but still above average level for state and local elections. Public meetings held both by City government and by community groups tend to be well attended, and the City has numerous activist groups that raise local and national issues with wide-ranging support. In addition, St. Louis consistently ranked as one of the top 10 cities in the nation, in the past three years, for volunteer participation (31.3% of the population), and charitable donations by household. In general, St. Louisans are highly capable of voicing their opinions on the issues that concern them, and are able to generate sufficient popular interest from areas and populations that generally have low levels of civic participation. Expanding civic engagement opportunities in areas and among populations that have had historically lower levels of involvement will lead to better representation of citizenry. In general, and nationwide, the groups that are most disadvantaged and rely most heavily on public programs of support are the least likely to be involved in the very civic processes that determine the fate of their families and neighborhoods. The City and related advocacy groups can continue to develop initiatives and facilitate existing outreach to target the growth of civic activity in areas exhibiting low involvement.

STRATEGY 1

Involve the public in decisions that are relevant to their communities

Expand instances of neighborhood town meetings, forums, workshops, festivals, block parties, referenda, and community polling. Create neighborhood-level committees, neighborhood green teams, and allow neighborhood association representatives to review budgetary decisions, assess, revise, and vote on the adoption of local policies.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Neighborhood Associations, Local Businesses

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Education

STRATEGY 2

Expand accessibility of public meetings to increase public input on community issues

Share information on public meetings using a variety of electronic and print techniques. Increase the number of public meetings that occur outside of the typical workday, and in locations near to community centers and transit stops.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Neighborhood Associations

Strategy Type: Policy, Operations, Education, Partnerships

OBJECTIVE B

Encourage Civic Engagement, Transparency, and Leadership

STRATEGY 3

Increase turnout for voting opportunities

Provide polling places in central locations near transit. Publicize information about elections using media and in multiple languages that are used by people of varied demographics. Partner with neighborhood associations to distribute such information.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Neighborhood Associations, Public Transit

Strategy Type: Operations, Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 4

Promote the diversity of City boards and commissions to reflect the City's cultural, economic, social, and geographic mix

Encourage diverse community involvement in City government. Post vacancies and announcements regarding governmental boards in public locations.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Neighborhood Associations

Strategy Type: Policy, Operations



OBJECTIVE B

Encourage Civic Engagement, Transparency, and Leadership

STRATEGY 5

Empower community development corporations, neighborhood advisory committees, and sustainability advocacy groups

Facilitate community development corporations to engage residents to create neighborhood plans. Develop block groups and organizations to gather neighborhood concerns and channel them into effective policies. Host events and conferences that bring these groups together to build partnerships. Develop an integrated, Citywide volunteer program focused on sustainability.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: *Short-term*

Potential Partners: *Neighborhood Service Organizations, Business Associations, Neighborhood Associations, Aldermen*

Strategy Type: *Legislative, Policy, Partnerships*



*“In every community,
there is work to be done.
In every nation, there
are wounds to heal. In
every heart, there is the
power to do it.”
- Marianne Williamson*



Objective C: Promote Youth Development, Education, Engagement, and Empowerment

It is generally understood that youth are a valuable source of social and human capital, but they often need support, guidance, and encouragement to mature into productive and successful members of the community. Youth who lack access to activities, opportunities, and active family support can be “at-risk” subjects of negative and dangerous behaviors. St. Louis Public Schools, the Department of Youth and Family Services, and numerous local nonprofits and community groups have programs dedicated to reducing the number of youth that linger on the streets, and help reverse trends of low education attainment and unemployment, starting at a young age. These programs can keep youth busy and engaged, build useful skills in trades, fine arts, and education that aid in upward mobility, create connections, and provide role models in different parts of the St. Louis community. The City and its partners can facilitate the expansion of these programs such that all youth in the City have access to activities that are fun and engaging, in addition to providing life skills and training.

STRATEGY 1

Provide early-education and supplemental youth education programs

Invest in early childhood education and development, Head-Start programs, free and affordable pre-school, and programs that teach technical and sustainable life sciences to children at an early age. Work with youth providers to engage parents in their child’s activities. Enhance mentoring and tutoring programs that allow youth to have small-group and one-on-one educational and character development experiences with adults and older students.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: K-12 Schools, Higher Education Institutions, Nonprofits, Federal Agencies

Strategy Type: Policy, Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 2

Provide affordable after-school, summer enrichment, and volunteer programs

Create programs that keep youth engaged and learning during time-off from school. Focus on health related activities, such as sports, active living, gardening, and cooking programs, that are educational, develop character, or teach valuable skills. Develop programs to train and pay successful high school students to serve as mentors and teach basic reading, math, and language skills to younger students. Develop and expand youth volunteer programs that encourage social behavior, develop skills, and encourage investment in the community.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Foundations, Schools, Higher Education/Religious Institutions, Arts/Cultural Institutions

Strategy Type: Education, Partnerships

OBJECTIVE C

Promote Youth Development, Education, Engagement, and Empowerment

STRATEGY 3

Develop supervised entertainment, recreation, and commercial areas for youth

Discourage policies that exclude youth from appropriate public spaces. Encourage businesses that offer support, affordable spaces, and products for youth. Encourage supervised youth activities in public spaces.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Neighborhood Associations, Business Associations, Arts/Cultural Institutions

Strategy Type: Legislative, Partnerships

STRATEGY 4

Provide prevention/intervention programs, and mental/emotional health counseling

Develop programs in local schools, libraries, and community organizations that provide a support system for youth and resources for conflict resolution.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: K-12 Schools, Nonprofits, Neighborhood Associations

Strategy Type: Policy, Education, Partnerships



OBJECTIVE C

Promote Youth Development, Education, Engagement, and Empowerment

STRATEGY 5

Direct youth towards college and technical school from an early age

Establish cradle-to-college initiatives in partnership with local universities that show students from an early age that college or vocational training is a realistic goal. Assist high school students in completing college applications and financial aid forms, and that teach organizational, professional, and soft skills. Offer college application courses in local high schools, and host student trips to post-secondary institutions. Expand and connect existing college counseling, GED, and enrichment programs.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: K-12 Schools, Higher Education Institutions, Nonprofits, Foundations, Arts/Cultural Institutions

Strategy Type: Policy, Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 6

Create opportunities for youth as they enter young adulthood and the workforce

Connect youth to training, mentoring, and employment opportunities. Expose youth to corporate environments, entrepreneurship, and advanced technology. Provide opportunities for youth to engage in internships with local companies, nonprofits, and public agencies. Develop awards or tax incentives to companies and nonprofits that provide local internships and mentoring opportunities.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Foundations, Business Associations, Local Businesses, Arts/Cultural Institutions, Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Education, Partnerships

“The foundation of every state is the education of its youth.” – Diogenes Laertius

OBJECTIVE C

Promote Youth Development, Education, Engagement, and Empowerment

STRATEGY 7

Develop a green jobs program for youth

Develop a youth conservation corps to build skills, confidence, and sustainable public-works improvements in the City. Develop skills and interest in sustainability, green jobs, healthy eating, and active lifestyles, and build an appreciation for equity and social justice.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Food Policy Council, K-12 Schools, Nonprofits, Higher Education Institutions

Strategy Type: Policy, Education, Partnerships



STRATEGY 8

Encourage youth civic engagement

Form a City-level youth council. Develop civic programs and improved civic education for public high school students on the importance of voting. Educate local youth on local history and politics, offer youth internships at City Hall, City agencies, and area nonprofits. Strengthen school student councils and develop meaningful connections between the councils, the community, and student government associations at local colleges and universities.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, K-12 Schools, Higher Education Institutions

Strategy Type: Education, Partnerships



OBJECTIVE C

Promote Youth Development, Education, Engagement, and Empowerment



STRATEGY 9

Improve the availability of transportation for youth

Offer subsidized public transit for youth travelling to school, skills training, after-school, and volunteer programs. Develop programs that provide bicycles and other alternative modes of transportation, along with necessary safety equipment, to youth.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Transit, Nonprofits, Neighborhood Associations, Cultural Institutions

Strategy Type: Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 10

Ensure youth and families have access to healthy food

Provide healthy meals to children in day-care, after-school programs, and over the summer, in order to improve the learning process. Develop programs that focus on improving the family situation in order to increase learning opportunities for youth. Ensure that all youth have access to healthy food before and after school.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Foundations, K-12 Schools, Local Businesses, Federal Agencies

Strategy Type: Policy, Education

Objective D: Promote Senior Civic Involvement, Empowerment, and Intergenerational Engagement

A national trend is a steady drift towards an aging population. This trend poses numerous difficulties as well as possibilities. An aging population will reduce the amount of earned wages that the City can tax, as citizens begin to enter retirement. On the other hand, with their increased leisure time, and needs for many accessible amenities within a short distance, many seniors from around the region could be attracted to stay in the dense and successful urban areas of the City, lending economic and social vitality to these areas. Retaining the City's aging population is critical because of the experience and perspective that they can lend to future endeavors, and the history and cultural knowledge that they can share with current and future generations. The St. Louis Area Agency on Aging has already established a comprehensive set of programs and services that make the City an attractive and accommodating place for senior citizens to live. As the nation's population continues to age, the City can take increased action to ensure that seniors are treated equitably and remain engaged in City life and the civic process. This will ensure the retention of its older demographics, and build a reputation for openness and equity that extends to people of all ages, ethnicities, and affiliations.

STRATEGY 1

Encourage and facilitate "Aging-In-Place"

Allow seniors to remain independent and active members of their existing communities by encouraging economic, social, and personal independence, and providing opportunities for employment, socialization, and volunteer activities in the community. Offer nutritious meals to seniors in need. Generate more opportunities to retain experienced workers in the local workforce and as active members of their communities.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Health Institutions, Religious Institutions

Strategy Type: Policy, Partnerships

STRATEGY 2

Offer safe, affordable, and convenient transportation for seniors

Provide affordable transit to seniors through subsidized ticket fares to grocery stores, medical facilities, and senior centers. Identify barriers to mobility for disabled and elderly residents and develop solutions. Locate affordable and accessible senior housing options near transit stops and health care facilities. Enhance public safety, services, and basic amenities in these areas.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Public Transit, Neighborhood Associations, Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Planning, Operations

OBJECTIVE D

Promote Senior Civic Involvement, Empowerment, and Intergenerational Engagement

STRATEGY 3

Encourage intergenerational programs that bring together seniors and youth

Have youth perform services such as home repairs and household chores for seniors through partnerships with volunteer organizations. Teach youth additional soft skills, and expand opportunities for Senior-Youth mentoring and activities. Establish a program for youth to adopt and engage with a senior citizen. Develop programs that have youth engage in technology training/assistance with seniors.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Religious Institutions

Strategy Type: Education, Partnerships



STRATEGY 4

Engage seniors in civic and volunteer programs

Expand outreach to the senior community, including to vulnerable and isolated seniors. Locate community volunteer opportunities and government meetings in accessible locations, and/or coordinate with appropriate shuttle services. Raise awareness for public events using easily readable print, in media accessible to seniors.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Health and Religious Institutions, Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Operations, Partnerships



OBJECTIVE D

Promote Senior Civic Involvement, Empowerment, and Intergenerational Engagement

STRATEGY 5

Promote healthy senior living programs at community facilities

Offer programs that are focused on preventative healthcare and active living. Take steps to ensure that health services provided to seniors are available to all.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Nonprofits, Health Institutions, Cultural Institutions, Neighborhood Associations

Strategy Type: Education

“To be happy in this world, especially when youth is past, it is necessary to feel oneself not merely an isolated individual whose day will soon be over, but part of the stream of life flowing on from the first germ to the remote and unknown future.”
- Bertrand Russell



Objective E: Reduce Homelessness, and Support Low Income Families and the Unemployed

The City and its partners provide a robust set of social services to the homeless and those in need. The programs satisfy a wide array of needs, including affordable housing, food, clothing, homeless and crisis shelters, job skills training, work placements, continuing education, general and women’s health, counselling and therapy. However, St. Louis has high unemployment, with rates as high as 8.3%, and poverty rates at 26% as of 2009. In addition, the rates of unemployment and poverty are nearly doubled among African Americans, 17.3% and 38.6%, respectively. A regional approach is necessary to address the deeper causes of the problems of poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunity, which affect certain communities in greater concentrations than others. Collaboration between social service providers throughout the region can remove the burden from existing providers and provide lasting assistance to all of those in need.

STRATEGY 1

Develop and enhance the homeless services continuum of care

Encourage regional bodies to partner with City agencies and organizations to provide homeless, crisis, and employment connection programs. Use existing community centers and schools to offer on-site social services and health services. Implement and update the City’s 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Higher Education, Health Institutions, Business Associations

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 2

Develop measures to prevent people from falling into poverty or homelessness

Provide resources for affordable health, life, and home insurance, savings development, credit and mortgage management, home ownership, eviction and foreclosure prevention. Provide full service shelters that link to job and skills development programs. Find support for existing programs through additional partners.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Higher Education, Health Institutions, Business Associations

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Education, Partnerships

OBJECTIVE E

Reduce Homelessness, and Support Low Income Families and the Unemployed

STRATEGY 3

Provide a safety net of social services in case of emergencies or personal crisis

Provide homeless and shelter beds, transitional housing, counselling, drop-in health clinics, and support centers. Channel these temporary programs into long-term services with the goal of re-integrating citizens into the workforce and out of poverty.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Higher Education, Health Institutions, Business Associations

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Education, Partnerships

STRATEGY 4

Expand the capacity to create additional affordable housing units

Expand the City's efforts to facilitate the development of low and moderate income rental and owner occupied housing located near transit stops, and provide social services to residents on location.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Local Businesses, Major Institutions, Metropolitan Planning Organization

Strategy Type: Planning, Operations



*“One in three Americans would be unable to make their mortgage or rent payment beyond one month if they lost their job.”
- DS News 2011*

OBJECTIVE E

Reduce Homelessness, and Support Low Income Families and the Unemployed

STRATEGY 5

Create pathways for qualified low-income families to become homeowners

Develop and enhance programs that provide training and low interest loans to low and moderate-income people in return for personal involvement and investment. Develop programs that help people build their credit and increase their financial literacy.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Federal Agencies, Local Businesses, Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Policy, Partnerships



STRATEGY 6

Support efforts to reduce foreclosures and evictions

Provide rent, mortgage, and utility assistance, and debt counselling to keep residents in their homes and apartments. Reduce foreclosures by implementing rent/mortgage assistance programs. Work with local providers to expand the number of buyers who receive home ownership training. Connect residents with quality home loans.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Federal Agencies, Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Policy, Partnerships



OBJECTIVE E

Reduce Homelessness, and Support Low Income Families and the Unemployed

STRATEGY 7

Provide job placement services for the unemployed and underemployed

Inform residents of jobs that are available in the City and throughout the metropolitan region. Offer support and resources to ensure that all residents have their basic needs met.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Business Associations, Local Businesses

Strategy Type: Policy, Partnerships

STRATEGY 8

Develop an online public resource of available human, medical, and social services in the City

Develop a website that lists service providers and makes it possible to look them up by zip code via a free kiosk in libraries and grocery stores.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Health Institutions, Non-profits, Local Businesses

Strategy Type: Policy, Education, Partnerships



Objective F: Ensure Equal Access to Amenities, Business Opportunities, Transportation, and Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

Environmental Justice is an issue of growing concern throughout the nation and international community. In order for St. Louis to be a healthy city of opportunity for all, there must be modes of transit that ensure all people can access jobs and the City’s full array of amenities, as well as safe, clean neighborhoods that are affordable for all demographics. The City of St. Louis strives to create a safe and healthy environment for all of its citizens and is largely served by the Metro transit system. However, as in most cities around the nation, there are areas in St. Louis that have heavy industry, major infrastructure, and municipal and waste facilities, that could benefit surrounding neighborhoods by upgrading to a healthier and more sustainable condition. The City continues to mitigate the results of the existing blighting influences in neighborhoods through investments in remediation, rehabilitation, and re-investment in land in these areas. The City, working with Metro and other partners, can ensure that the transit system serves the population most in need in an effective, affordable, and efficient manner.

STRATEGY 1

Address blighting and environmental health hazards

Prioritize the remediation of all brownfields close enough to affect the health and land value of residential areas. Clean up toxic land and facilities where they affect vulnerable populations of youth, seniors, low-income residents, or the disabled.

Leverage the success of Citywide lead abatement and the clean air monitoring programs to eliminate toxins from all City and private land. Measure and restrict pollutants that cause asthma and respiratory diseases. Conduct soil testing, especially where urban agriculture programs are currently located or planned.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: *Short-term*

Potential Partners: *Private Developers, Federal Agencies, Community Development Agencies, Neighborhood Associations*

Strategy Type: *Legislative, Policy, Partnerships*

OBJECTIVE F

Ensure Equal Access to Amenities, Business Opportunities, Transportation, and Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

STRATEGY 2

Ensure residents have access to public transit and alternate modes of transportation

Track the disparity of transportation costs and transit accessibility to jobs by neighborhood relative to income. Implement strategies to reduce mobility disparities where they are identified. Utilize car-sharing, bike facilities, and expanded public transit in areas beyond existing coverage. Expand transit access to underserved areas, subsidize Metro tickets, and develop more affordable housing along transit lines.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Neighborhood & Business Associations, Major Institutions, Public Transit Nonprofits

Strategy Type: Planning, Operations

STRATEGY 3

Ensure all neighborhoods are safe and are perceived to be safe

Follow the City's Neighborhood Ownership Model to reduce crime and improve the perception of safety across the City. Provide for adequate police patrol, active, well-watched streets, and adequate street lighting. Establish well-trained neighborhood watch groups.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Neighborhood Associations, Major Institutions, Nonprofits, Legal Community

Strategy Type: Operations, Planning



OBJECTIVE F

Ensure Equal Access to Amenities, Business Opportunities, Transportation, and Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

STRATEGY 4

Ensure equal distribution of healthy food options

Provide incentives to new groceries and markets that locate in areas identified as food deserts. Provide tax incentives to corner stores that provide quality fresh produce. Expand the use of EBT to all farmers markets, and develop fresh produce vouchers to incentivize purchase of healthy foods. Establish a shuttle bus or delivery program to link residents with fresh, local, and healthy food. Foster interest in farmers markets. Provide associated community programming, including cooking classes, nutritional education, and job training based out of neighborhood community gardens/farms.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Short-term

Potential Partners: Public Transit, Nonprofits, Federal Agencies

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Planning, Operations, Education, Partnerships

“Environmental justice for all is civil rights in the 21st century.”
- Majora Carter



OBJECTIVE F

Ensure Equal Access to Amenities, Business Opportunities, Transportation, and Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

STRATEGY 5

Conduct a City-wide equity assessment

Conduct an equity assessment with the intent to alleviate concentrated poverty and ensure equity access to amenities and services. Develop a plan of action to alleviate concentrated poverty, and work to create communities of opportunity for all. Work with partners and expand City programs to bring small businesses, market-building investments, and a wider mix of socio-economic groups to communities of concentrated disadvantage. Strategically target areas closest to existing areas of strength in order to have the greatest impact.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Neighboring Counties & Cities, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Nonprofits, Neighborhood Associations

Strategy Type: Policy, Planning

STRATEGY 6

Ensure the application of universal design and accessibility codes

Monitor programs, policies, plans, and activities to assure the identification, prevention, and elimination of physical and/or programmatic barriers that interfere with physical access to facilities, programs, and resources in the City. Require all developments receiving City subsidy to implement universal design guidelines.

Cross Benefits:



Timeframe: Long-term

Potential Partners: Business Associations, Nonprofits, Legal Community

Strategy Type: Legislative, Policy, Education

