

Proposed Amendment #14 of the Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) of the St. Louis Comprehensive Plan

The City of St. Louis Planning Commission is holding a Presentation and Public Hearing regarding Amendment #14 of the Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) of the St. Louis Comprehensive Plan at its regular meeting on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency, 1520 Market St., Suite 2000.

Proposed Strategic Land Use Plan Amendment #14 is a proposal to amend the City's Strategic Land Use Plan of the St. Louis Comprehensive Plan for an area consisting of a large portion of the Forest Park Southeast neighborhood, as well as small portions of two adjacent neighborhoods, Midtown and Botanical Heights. The site is generally bounded by Interstate 64, S. Vandeventer Ave., the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way and S. Kingshighway Blvd.

The SLUP is the City's general land use plan that covers the entire City. It categorizes each city block into one (sometimes more) broad land use/development category, known as a Strategic Land Use Category.

Background information and recommendations for the proposed land use changes are provided on the following pages.

Written and oral comments on proposed SLUP Amendment #14 can be made at the Public Hearing. Written comments also can be made prior to or after the hearing (through Wednesday, May 18, 2016, 5:00 p.m.) in care of Roman Kordal by e-mail at kordalr@stlouis-mo.gov; by mail at Roman Kordal, City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency, 1520 Market St., Suite 2000, St. Louis, MO 63103; or by fax at 314-613-7014. These comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for its review before a vote to adopt the proposed amendment is held at its regular meeting on Wednesday, June 1, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency 1520 Market St., Suite 2000. For further information, please contact Roman Kordal at 314-657-3872.

Proposed SLUP Amendment #14 Background Information and Recommendations

Proposed Strategic Land Use Plan Amendment #14 is a proposal to amend the City's Strategic Land Use Plan (SLUP) of the St. Louis Comprehensive Plan for an area consisting of a large portion of the Forest Park Southeast neighborhood, as well as small portions of two adjacent neighborhoods, Midtown and Botanical Heights. The site is generally bounded by Interstate 64, S. Vandeventer Ave., the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way and S. Kingshighway Blvd.

Proposed SLUP Amendment #14 is based on two documents recently prepared for Park Central Development, a community development corporation that serves the area, by H3 Studio, a consulting firm. The first document is a neighborhood plan, "A Vision for the Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood". The second document is a draft of a proposed zoning overlay district, "Forest Park Southeast Form-Based District". Park Central Development and H3 Studio staff, along with a 15-member steering committee, worked closely with residents, business owners and local political and civic leaders to prepare a comprehensive vision for the future of the area that would also create a foundation for a form-based district in the future.

The planning process included numerous public meetings, open houses, charrettes and interviews. The neighborhood plan includes a series of recommendations that will improve the general welfare, perceptions, identity, safety, livability and quality of life for residents in the study area. The vision statement for the neighborhood plan states as follows:

"We are a strong Community that wants to continue building a sustainable neighborhood around our central location, urban history and cultural diversity. By 2025, we see Forest Park Southeast as an economically-vibrant, mixed-income Community with access to a variety of living options; transit, bicycle and recreation amenities; and employment opportunities!"

The new vision for the neighborhood will ultimately be codified (legally established) and regulated by amending the City's Zoning Code to establish a form-based district -- an emerging alternative approach to zoning that emphasizes physical form -- rather than land uses -- in its regulations.

A complete copy of "A Vision for the Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood", dated February 12, 2015, is available for downloading from the following Park Central Development webpage:

<http://www.parkcentraldevelopment.org/community/forest-park-southeast/fpse-neighborhood-plan-form-based-district/>

The future of the study area is based, to some extent, on its proximity to adjacent districts and neighborhoods -- many of which are improving or expanding -- and development projects. These include the Washington University Medical Center, the Cortex Innovation District, IKEA, a new MetroLink station at Boyle Ave., the proposed redevelopment of the Federal Mogul site, the Botanical Heights neighborhood and Forest Park. All of these assets will make the study area a more desirable location for residents and businesses, but they will also increase development pressure in the study area.

10 specific goals were identified in the neighborhood plan:

- 1) Support development which builds the district branding and identity of the neighborhood and commercial district.
- 2) Preserve the area's historic character and diverse architecture qualities.
- 3) Establish walkable streets and high-quality public spaces throughout the entire neighborhood.
- 4) Increase transit access and mobility for everyone throughout the neighborhood.
- 5) Improvement management of vehicular circulation and parking throughout the neighborhood.
- 6) Increase neighborhood stability and social equity with improved housing stock, increased housing diversity and reduced vacancy.
- 7) Increase business diversity, employment opportunities and local entrepreneurship.
- 8) Expand special events, daytime activities and programming for all ages of residents and visitors.
- 9) Continue to increase safety and reduce crime.
- 10) Improve cooperation and working relationships between the Community, leadership and institutions.

Each goal references existing strategies, as well as recommended strategies.

A series of nine redevelopment principles were also established regarding physical improvements in the study area. These are:

- 1) Ensure that the neighborhood has exceptional connectivity to the Central West End, Botanical Heights, Kings Oak, Tower Grove Park, Forest Park, the Missouri Botanical Garden and other local assets.
- 2) Increase seamless, multi-modal access to the interstate system, major arterials, MetroLink, MetroBus, and the regional bicycle network.
- 3) Strengthen the Kingshighway Blvd. and Vandeventer Ave. edges of the neighborhood by making them into great walkable streets.
- 4) Establish iconic gateways into neighborhood and commercial district from Kingshighway Blvd., Tower Grove Ave., and Vandeventer Ave.
- 5) Reinforce Manchester Ave. as the main street and central gathering area for the neighborhood.

- 6) Establish Tower Grove Ave. as a mixed-use, neighborhood street between Manchester Ave., Botanical Heights, and the Missouri Botanical Garden.
- 7) Build the character of Chouteau Ave. as a grand boulevard and residential edge for the neighborhood with strong bicycle connections to Chouteau Park and Forest Park.
- 8) Provide a safe, walkable, and integrated street network across Interstate 64 between the neighborhood, MetroLink, CORTEX, Barnes Jewish, and the Central West End.
- 9) Reinforce the well-established, historic and walkable character of the residential cores of the neighborhood with incremental infill and development.

The neighborhood plan includes a framework plan that serves as a guide for development in the area. It includes the following specific elements: development type and character; public realm improvements; and access, circulation and parking.

In order to reflect this neighborhood vision, a number of changes are proposed in the City's SLUP. All of the changes involve revising the Strategic Land Use Categories for designated areas.

The first change -- SLUP Amendment #13 -- was already reviewed and approved by the City's Planning Commission at its April 1, 2015 meeting. A key portion of the study area -- located along Chouteau Ave. and Manchester Ave., near the intersections of S. Sarah St. and S. Vandeventer Ave. -- called Chouteau Gateway -- had its Strategic Land Use Categories changed in order to facilitate the development of Chouteau's Grove, a mixed-use development project proposed by Green Street Development Group, LLC.

Maps showing the Existing SLUP and Proposed SLUP Amendment #14 are attached. The Existing SLUP map identifies the current Strategic Land Use Categories for the study area (and adjacent areas), as well as descriptions of all the Strategic Land Use Categories. The Proposed SLUP Amendment #14 map identifies all of the proposed changes of Strategic Land Use Categories for designated areas. Most of the proposed changes occur at the perimeter of the study area, while the interior of the study area generally remains the same. The major changes are as follows:

- Changing the northeast portion of the study area from Business/Industrial Preservation Area (BIPA) to Opportunity Area (OA).
- Changing the western side of S. Vandeventer Ave. from Neighborhood Preservation Area (NPA) to Neighborhood Commercial Area (NCA).
- Changing S. Kingshighway Blvd. from Neighborhood Preservation Area (NPA) to Neighborhood Commercial Area (NCA).

- Designating the southeast corner of Interstate 64 and Kingshighway Blvd. as a Neighborhood Commercial Area (NCA). (This site currently doesn't have a Strategic Land Use Category.)
- Changing Chouteau Park from Opportunity Area (OA) to Recreational/Open Space Preservation and Development Area (ROSPDA).
- Changing Manchester Ave. from Neighborhood Commercial Area (NCA) to Specialty Mixed Use Area (SMUA).
- Changing the northern portion of S. Sarah St. from mostly Business/Industrial Preservation Area (BIPA) to Specialty Mixed Use Area (SMUA).

If proposed SLUP Amendment #14 is approved by the Planning Commission, a number of steps would remain in order to establish the proposed form-based district. These include:

- Submittal of a formal form-based district application form.
- Review of the proposed form-based district regulations by City staff.
- Review by the City's Planning Commission.
- A public hearing to be held by the Board of Aldermen's Housing, Urban Development and Zoning (HUDZ) Committee regarding the proposed ordinance to establish a form-based district.
- Approval of the ordinance by the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor.