

## **One City, belonging to all**

*Our project is a vision for a strong connected city center linked to vibrant, healthy neighborhoods.*

Hiding in the structure of St. Louis is the potential for a new way of seeing the city. The “city of islands” is reconnected by the valley between them. Reunited with the water system and reclaimed for people, art and nature, the valley is now a beautiful and useful place in the city, a destination.

The Valley Beeline is the fast bicycle and pedestrian route from the Arch to Forest Park, going by The Pond and through the Wetlands alongside the railroads and MetroLink. Six new public spaces have been integrated along the Beeline, which connect to and strengthen the attractions and institutions already existing in the central core. So even though it’s the fast route, you may be attracted to stop and enjoy the surroundings.

The civic street of Forest Park/Market also links the Arch to Forest Park in a more ceremonial way. People and bikes can stroll down the center, protected by vegetation in a space of their own. We have removed the highway interchange at Compton and replaced it with a new central Community Hub, a place to meet and gather as well as play and recreate. The interchange at Jefferson has been transformed into Chestnut Valley, the historic name of the site when it was the hub of an African-American community, with jazz clubs and cafes. Josephine’s is a small performing arts facility that overlooks the new Chestnut Street Park. A stream water feature attracts children and adults to play in the cool waters. This west end of the Gateway Mall has been revitalized mixing in more uses like picnic areas and playgrounds with the existing fountains. All of these improvements together make this strong and vibrant center into a destination.

This plan is also more than beautiful and attractive. The valley water features are also green infrastructure, storing and cleaning water, to help keep dirty water from polluting the Mississippi. Native plants and water will attract wildlife, especially birds and aquatic creatures to the site. This will be a working, educational as well as recreational, landscape benefiting humans and other species.

We also want strong communities, connected to the center and to each other. Protected bike trails and support spaces weave north and south to the neighborhoods, connecting them to these activities and to each other. Spring Avenue is a particularly important street linking the Armory and City Foundry in Prospect Yards with St. Louis University and Grand Center Arts District and Fairground and Tower Grove Parks. A more pedestrian and bicycle friendly Spring Avenue will allow families to access the new central amenities as well as local neighborhood destinations.

We recommend investing in the neighborhoods, working with the communities to find what new projects would help them most. Starting with the Sarah Street area, we would reach out to community members to “seed” future developments.

Art is a fundamental part of St. Louis and an integral part of our plan. Art should be infused everywhere, broadening access, and bringing enjoyment to all. St. Louis has world-class art institutions. We believe that by making art—in its many forms—a foundational component of the Chouteau Greenway along with the above landscape improvements, the city will gain stature on a national and international level.

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