

# Technical Assistance Panel Proposed MetroLink Station in the Cortex District St. Louis, Missouri



Panel Recommendations to  
Citizens for Modern Transit  
and Metro, June 2013



Urban Land **St. Louis**  
Institute

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The Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program provides expert, multi-disciplinary advice to public agencies and non-profit organizations facing complex land use

and real estate issues in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Drawing from its extensive membership base, ULI St. Louis conducts TAP programs to offer objective and responsible advice on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide sponsoring organizations a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. ULI St. Louis members from across the region participate as panelists, volunteering their time and expertise to the process.

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*MetroLink train crossing Boyle Avenue*

## Introduction

At the invitation of Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT), in partnership with Metro (the Bi-State Development Agency), ULI St. Louis was asked to form a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to address the addition of a MetroLink (light rail) station along the current alignment in Midtown St. Louis, between Boyle and Sarah Avenues and within the Cortex life science district (the District). The Panel was also asked to address related development matters including possible parking options and incentives to attract further development to the area.

The proposed station location sits in the middle of the Cortex life science district, a ten-year old development which is attracting national attention. The vision for the District is innovative, compelling, and broad-reaching,

yet the challenges faced at this stage of development – the need for gap financing, timing of new infrastructure development, and complexity of development incentives and other possible gap funding solutions – made this a particularly interesting charge for a ULI TAP.

The primary stakeholders for the TAP process included representatives from the City of St. Louis, Citizens for Modern Transit, Metro, Cortex and its founding institutions, and surrounding residents and businesses. As part of the TAP process, the various stakeholders were interviewed, and discussion largely focused on station placement and planning for and management of parking in the District. The wide variety of perspectives provided the Panel with a spectrum of ideas, options, and opinions.

## Panel's Charge

In keeping with its goal of TOD (Transit Oriented Development) education and advocacy, Citizens for Modern Transit – the Sponsor – in partnership with Metro, turned to the Panel for answers to the following questions:

1. If a MetroLink station is added to the current system between Boyle and Sarah Avenues in Midtown St. Louis, what specific location would maximize the potential benefits for the Cortex development as a whole and best serve residents in the surrounding neighborhoods?
2. There are four sites identified for a potential parking garage in the Cortex district. If a MetroLink station is added to the current system between Boyle and Sarah Avenues in Midtown St. Louis, what are the pros and cons of each potential garage site from a TOD perspective? How can specific site design and tenant mix enhance the opportunities?
3. What incentives could be utilized to bring in even further development at the site?

## TAP Process

The TAP Panel, consisting of six professionals selected from the ULI membership, represented the following skills and perspectives: real estate development, finance, urban planning, commercial brokerage, and municipal and real estate law.

Prior to the TAP workday, Panelists toured the District, reviewed the proposed development sites, and walked the proposed station area.

With firsthand experience of the District, the TAP Panelists assembled on the workday and conducted meetings with groups of stakeholders, including: the sponsoring organization – Citizens for Modern Transit – in partnership with Metro; community leaders, City planning officials, and representatives from Cortex and its founding institutions, including BJC HealthCare, Missouri Botanical Garden, Saint Louis University, University of Missouri–St. Louis and Washington University; and real estate, economic development, and related professional advisors.

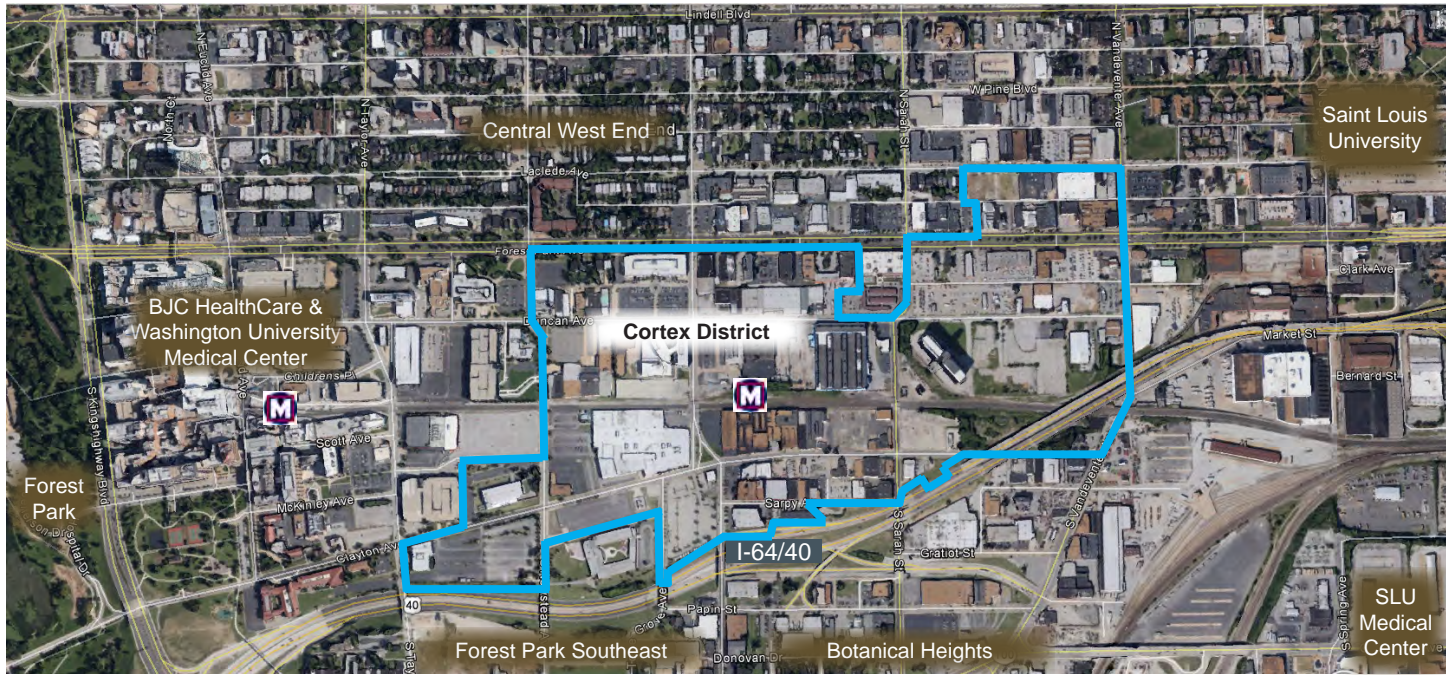
Following the stakeholder meetings, the Panel spent the remainder of the day processing the information and insights gathered from the meetings and reviewing the



information and maps provided by the Sponsor. During this work session, drawing on the Panel members' professional expertise, the group further explored the Sponsor's charge and formulated recommendations designed to help the Sponsor determine the optimum location for the station, identify the opportunities and obstacles associated with each potential parking garage site, and identify incentives which may be used to attract further development in the area.



# Study Area



*Aerial of the study area*

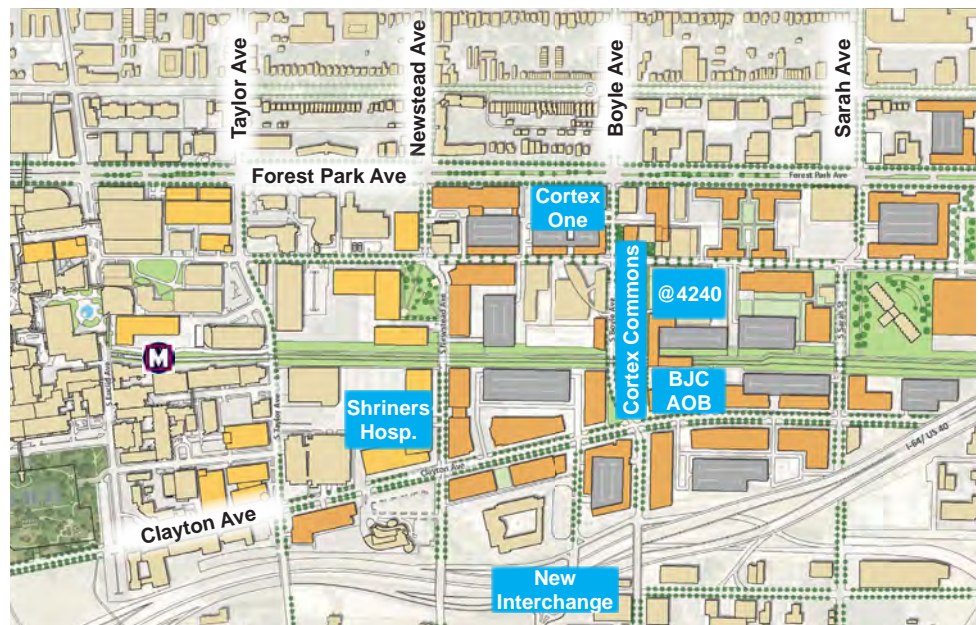
Cortex, a not-for-profit organization, was founded in 1998 by five educational and research institutions – BJC HealthCare, Missouri Botanical Garden, Saint Louis University, University of Missouri–St. Louis, and Washington University. Designed to become a regional and national hub for life science research, development, and commercialization, the District is transitioning this former industrial area into a vibrant, mixed-use knowledge community – an “Innovation Community,” a phrase coined by Dennis Lower, President of Cortex.

Development and growth in the District to-date includes:

- Development of the Cortex One building and rollout of Phase 1, including \$155 million invested, 950 jobs created, and 124 housing units online.
- Redevelopment of the 190,000 square foot Heritage Building by Wexford Technologies into the @4240 Building, via a \$73 million investment, creating 400 jobs.
- Construction of a new 200,000 square foot administrative office building for BJC, involving a \$45 million investment and 1,000 new employees in the District.
- Development of Cortex Commons (breaking ground August 2013), a linear park running north and

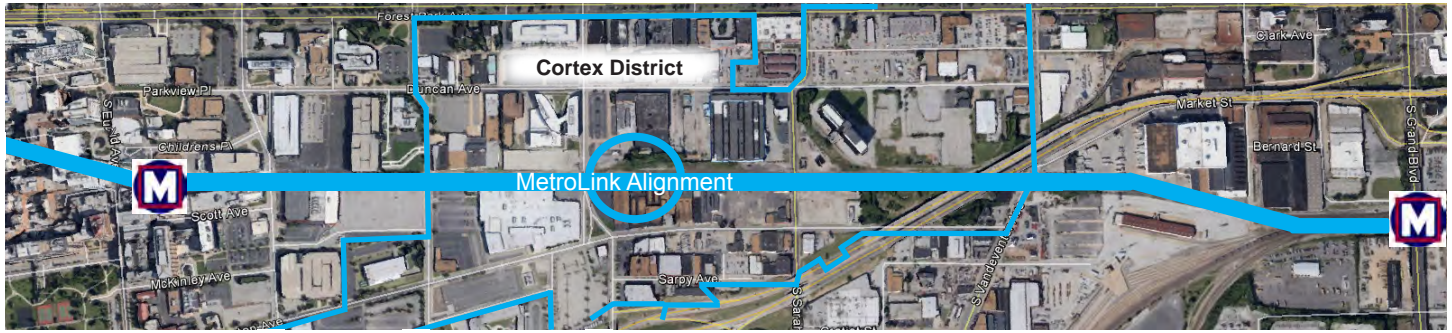
south through the District at Boyle, bringing green space and programming opportunities to the heart of the area.

- Approximately \$40.7 million invested to-date in public infrastructure improvements in the District.
- Construction of a new I-64/40 interchange by the Missouri Department of Transportation in the southern and central portion of the District.
- Construction of a new hospital building by Shriners Hospital.





# Light Rail and the Cortex District



The Cortex District is bisected by the current MetroLink alignment and is served by the Central West End Station (approximately 0.8 miles to the west) and the Grand Station (approximately 1.3 miles to the east). The location of these stations requires lengthy walks generally outside the comfort zone of a typical commuter. Placing a light rail station in the Cortex District, however, would be of great benefit to the employers, employees, and residents in the District and beyond. CMT is leading the charge on the Midtown Corridor Access Study which will look at the feasibility of a new station in Midtown as well as other transit options for the area. The study is scheduled to begin September 1, 2013.

Businesses operating on a regional, national, and international basis require connectivity in a variety of forms. Placing a station in the District would provide the District's businesses with a direct connection to Lambert-St. Louis International Airport.

Knowledge workers want access to light rail. Through its recruitment efforts across the United States and abroad, Cortex has received confirmation from business owners in the life sciences industry indicating that their employees seek, highly value, and actively use public transportation, particularly light rail. Therefore, in order to draw businesses employing knowledge workers to the District and to become more competitive in this industry, the Cortex District would benefit greatly from the addition of a light rail station within its boundaries.

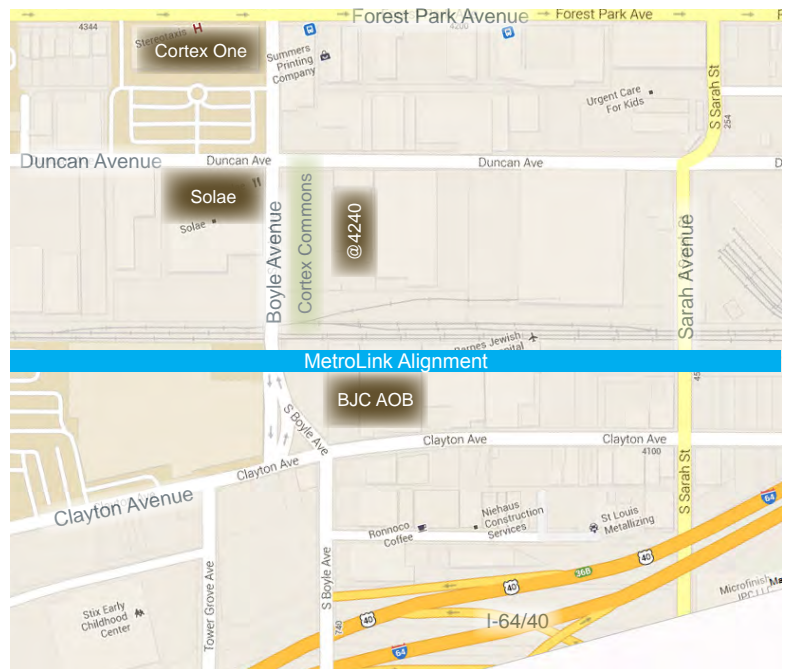
Connectivity on an individual basis could also be more readily gained via a station in the District. Through light rail, employees of the District could forego car ownership, yet remain highly connected to housing options, entertainment venues, and shopping along the MetroLink alignment.

Residents in the immediate area, like the commuters above, currently face significant walks to a MetroLink station. For those living south of I-64/40, walking to one of the current stations is inconvenient and generally considered too far for regular use. By placing a station in the District, between Boyle and Sarah Avenues, residents in the Forest Park Southeast

and Botanical Heights neighborhoods have much more direct and proximate access to the MetroLink system.

There was also a great deal of discussion relating to bike ridership throughout the District and the larger neighborhood and community. Tower Grove Avenue is a major thoroughfare for bicyclists in St. Louis and the placement of an at-grade station in the District would provide this segment of the population with an attractive solution to wider mobility via connections to the region's system of bike lanes and trails and MetroLink's accommodation of bicycles on its trains.

Through the course of the TAP, Metro informed the Panel that it is prepared to stop the train in the District, if that is what the Midtown Corridor Access Study recommends, yet could not finance the accompanying station and associated operating costs. With the help of several already-identified existing sources of funding, however, the District should have the funding necessary to build and install a basic station. The specific location of the station, although somewhere between Boyle and Sarah, was left undefined and thus in the hands of the Panel for a recommendation.



## Station Location

Cortex leadership informed the Panel that, based on findings from a careful study of the area, the station would be sited between Boyle Avenue to the west and Sarah Avenue to the east.

To-date, much of the development in the District has taken place around Boyle Avenue, evidenced by the construction of Cortex One, the Solae office building, the BJC office building currently under construction, and the redevelopment of the Heritage Building into @4240. The addition of the Cortex Commons later this year will also increase the vitality of the area around Boyle Avenue.

At the same time, little development or redevelopment has taken place to-date in the eastern end of the District near Sarah. U.S. Metals runs a very large operation northwest of the intersection of Sarah and the MetroLink alignment. Grain silos and an abandoned train station sit to the northeast. An empty lot sits to the southeast of the intersection and staging for the BJC construction project takes up the southwest quadrant.

There was also discussion of placing the station mid-block, half-way between Boyle and Sarah. Placement here limits visibility to a degree from two streets and therefore places a much heavier reliance on signage to direct passengers to the station entrance. Those driving through the area could easily miss the station completely and, without ready knowledge of the station location, dismiss possible future ridership. There is also the chance that a new parking garage may be placed south of Duncan, mid-block between Sarah and Boyle, which would leave passengers with a garage as the 'front door' to the District if the station is placed mid-block.

By placing the station as close to Boyle as possible, riders would be welcomed to the District by the Commons, thereby creating an impressive and distinctive park-like 'front door' to the District. The station would be also easily visible from Boyle, making way-finding easier and promoting future ridership by virtue of its visibility to auto traffic.

While the station should be placed close to Boyle, the Panel still felt strongly that the station should be accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists via entrances at Boyle and Sarah, providing riders with two options for ingress/egress. Directional signage should also be placed on and highly visible from both streets to assist passengers with finding the station entrance.



*Intersection of MetroLink & Boyle, View to the North*



*Intersection of MetroLink & Sarah, View to the East*



*Potential Location for Station, Close to @4240 Development*



Finally, in keeping with the idea of creating a 'front door' to the District, the Panel felt it important to recommend additional items which may help create a sense of place and assist passengers using the station.

- The station should be named and branded in a manner consistent with the branding used throughout the District. The area around the station provides riders with a first impression of the District and should be treated with importance.
- The District should pursue a signature design for the station canopy. A signature design or distinctive canopy would raise the visibility of the station, create a sense of arrival at something larger than a typical light rail station, and provide a greater sense of place, particularly if fashioned in a manner that is in keeping with the design and branding found throughout the District.
- The District should also consider using art and lighting to make the station area recognizable and more distinctive.



- Station furniture and billboards could be used to convey messaging for the District.
- A map with a "You Are Here" locator could also make note of area cafes and locations where WiFi is readily available.
- Finally, District businesses could also use the station – shelter advertisement space or new video monitors – to share information about new innovations or events taking place in the District.





## Cortex District Parking

Through its conversations with Cortex leadership, the Sponsor was also made aware of the need for additional parking in the District, particularly if a light rail station is located within its boundaries. To that end, four distinct sites were identified by Cortex as possible sites for a parking garage, and the Panel was charged with the evaluation of each site – identifying the pros and the cons of each location from a TOD perspective.

### Site 1

Site 1 is located mid-block between Boyle and Sarah Avenues and is bordered by Duncan Avenue to the north and the MetroLink tracks to the south. The U.S. Metals building abuts this site to the east and the @4240 building is nearby, to the west.

Sitting in a compelling location, close to the MetroLink tracks, this site has a number of features which make it a promising garage location:

- This location is proximate to development currently underway in the District and could be put to immediate use. Putting this site to use may also make the area feel safer than if it were left in its current state as an industrial parking lot.
- This site could provide two separate entrances, creating greater automobile and pedestrian access to the District and providing a possible alternative for a bus turnaround if necessary.
- A garage at this site could easily accommodate additional, mixed uses. In the Cortex Master Plan, Duncan Avenue is marked as a pedestrian-oriented thoroughfare. If first floor retail were added to the garage development, the retail component would be appropriate for the proposed uses along this portion of Duncan. This positioning would provide good visibility for signage relating to the garage, promoting its use.
- This lot is currently in use by U.S. Metals. The use of this site, therefore, assumes that the U.S. Metals operation is relocated. If that is the case and the U.S. Metals site is acquired in full, the garage may work better oriented east to west, with a longer southern edge oriented to border the MetroLink tracks. This would move the primary entrance to the garage to Sarah and would largely keep garage car traffic away from pedestrians on Duncan.



- Site 1 also provides interesting opportunities for adding biking amenities: it creates a circulator for bikes between Sarah and Boyle; and there may be space between the garage and @4240 for a bike station.

Although Site 1 is an appealing location for a parking garage, it also poses a number of drawbacks that may prove problematic.

- The District does not currently control this site and relocation costs associated with moving U.S. Metals are difficult to determine at this time.



Site 1, View from Duncan Avenue

- The current orientation of the site – north and south – would necessitate an entrance off Duncan. This would draw more traffic into the District, particularly into a section identified as a pedestrian-oriented thoroughfare. Developers will need to be mindful of how the increased traffic flow may impact the experience on the street and in the District.
- Timing relating to this site may also prove problematic if the build-out needs to be tied to the greenway improvements under development by Great Rivers Greenway. The addition of the Greenway trail through the District will positively impact the area, yet given its proximity to the trail, the garage should be built in a manner flexible enough to accommodate a possible bike station.

## Site 2

Like Site 1, Site 2 is also located mid-block, between Boyle and Sarah, yet sits on the north side of Duncan Avenue. The site is similar to Site 1 in many respects, yet poses a slightly different set of opportunities.

- Like Site 1, this site is close to current development underway within the District.
- In addition to providing parking for the businesses in the District, this site would be a natural location for additional residential parking as it is close to the West End Lofts (residential apartments) on Forest Park Avenue.
- This site, while not as close to the potential station as Site 1, sits within the same distance to the station as Site 4, another site under consideration at the south end of the District.



Site 2, View from Duncan Avenue

Site 2 also poses a number of challenges as a potential parking garage location:

- Much like Site 1, this site sits in the midst of the Duncan Avenue pedestrian corridor. Not only is it in the middle

of the corridor, its current east and west orientation means there will be even more garage to address/hide along Duncan and less opportunity for other mixed-use development in this section of the block.

- If the site were oriented north and south, it would cause fewer disturbances to the Duncan streetscape and might create an alternative entrance off Forest Park Avenue, thereby relieving traffic from the Duncan corridor.
- Of additional consideration is the site's designated use on the Cortex Master Plan, which indicates residential use at this location. Given the demand for residential options in the area and the proximity to the universities and medical centers, a parking garage should not be built in place of residential units, particularly apartments.

## Site 3

The proposed parking garage site identified as Site 3 sits on the same site as the current surface lot directly south of the Cortex One building, bordered by Boyle on the east and Duncan on the south. This site is also oriented east and west and also marked as future residential use on the Cortex Master Plan.

A parking garage at this site would accommodate the current needs of the Cortex One building as well as the parking needs associated with new residential development proposed for the adjacent site.

At the same time, the proximity of this site to the Cortex One building limits the height of the garage to one deck so as not to block the view from the building. Limiting the height of the garage limits the overall capacity and would therefore not provide much additional future parking beyond the needs of Cortex One and residents at the site.



Site 3, View from Duncan & Boyle Intersection

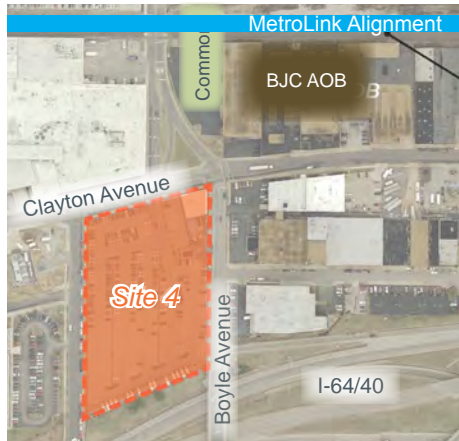


## Site 4

Site 4 is situated at the southern end of the District and is bordered by Clayton Road to the north, Boyle to the east, Tower Grove Avenue to the west, and I-64/40 to the south. This site is currently a surface parking lot and is owned by BJC.

This site is interesting and holds promise as a parking garage site for a number of reasons:

- Site 4 is close to the new BJC administrative office building (under construction) and provides easy access to those entering the District from the south and from the new highway interchange at Boyle.



View FROM Site 4, Looking North

- There is also good visibility to this site from I-64/40.
- The site is large enough to provide the opportunity to build a mixed-use development, adding value to the site and surrounding neighborhood.
- With the Midtown Corridor Access Study set to evaluate, among other things, the bus transfer station currently located next to the Central West End MetroLink Station, the size and location of Site 4 may also be of interest as an alternative bus transfer location.

One of this site's most notable characteristics – its location between the highway and the center of the District – also raises a number of questions:

- How might a garage at this site impact traffic flow? Given its proximity to the highway, there is a possibility that cars exiting the highway and hoping to enter the garage may begin to slow traffic to the point of creating a backup on the highway exit ramp.
- There is also the question as to the highest and best use of this site. Given its proximity to and visibility from the highway, is a parking garage the best structure to build at this site? The site also enjoys what is sure to be a wonderful view north into the Cortex Commons. With this site used as a parking garage, there is little way to leverage the benefits of that view. (Cars cannot enjoy the view, yet people working in offices at that location or perhaps guests staying in a hotel at that site might enjoy the view.)

## Additional Notes on Parking

Following the careful evaluation of the various proposed parking garage sites, and working with the understanding that the District's current surface lots are meeting today's parking needs, the Panel felt strongly that the District would benefit from a comprehensive parking study prior to making any decisions regarding future parking garage locations.

Working together, the members of Cortex could use this study as an opportunity to come together once again to the benefit of the District and, by extension, to each institution's benefit. Working together, Cortex members could form a parking entity that could build, own, and manage the parking (surface and garage) in the District. This new entity would also control key design standards for the District's parking structures, including height restrictions, new building parking quotas, signage, branding, street-level retail, materials, lighting, etc.

This joint management entity could also provide much-needed pricing management for the District and work with the City Treasurer's Office to stage the integration

of parking meters throughout the area. The current pricing disparity between garages, employer-provided pricing discounts, and the lack of meter management in the District creates an unwieldy environment that is not conducive to the introduction of new parking options. Bringing this chaos under one management system would assist employers with pricing/discount solutions, assist new District businesses in finding a reasonable solution for their parking needs, and ease the confusion caused by the current system of meters in the District.

Once the study is complete and a system is in place, it will be highly important to continue to review the study periodically and evaluate the District's evolving needs. Given the projections for new business recruitment to the District and the corresponding increase of workers in the area, the parking needs will likely change quickly and dramatically. Through a careful and periodic review, the District will be able to continue to plan and prepare for parking needs well into the future.

## Financial Incentives

The Sponsor also asked the Panel to evaluate the potential incentives that could be utilized to bring additional development to the District and, building on the idea of promoting Transit Oriented Development, to the station area in particular.

In addition to the existing Tax Increment Financing District in place in the Cortex District, the Panel suggested the exploration of a Transportation Development District (TDD) or Community Improvement District (CID) overlay in the area. Given the current lack of sales tax generators in the District, the TDD or CID might best work via an assessment levied on buildings. Additionally, the taxing district could possibly incorporate a guarantee that would require building owners to cover any gap that may occur in event of a shortfall in assessments.

Tax credit programs may also be of interest to Cortex or to developers evaluating a new project in the District. New Markets Tax Credits, available through an entity such as St. Louis Development Corporation, might be explored. The Missouri Development Finance Board also provides tax credits. Some credits are currently available to Cortex, and an opportunity may lie in matching corporations in need of these credits with Cortex.

The parking garages may also offer a range of opportunities for financing:

- The District could build a certain degree of excess parking now that might provide future 'perks' for new businesses locating in District.
- The garages may also present an opportunity for the public sector to participate in the building and ownership of the garage in return for a certain degree of participation in the resulting income stream.
- The District may also be able to make use of certain special purpose bonds and should consider discussing the opportunity with the St. Louis Treasurer's Office, which currently manages the public parking function for the City of St. Louis.
- Employers can also play a role in funding the garages by providing employees with a voucher for transportation. Employees are then free to decide how to use the funds – for garage parking or transit use – and therefore support both the business of the garages as well as MetroLink ridership.

Finally, a conversation should be explored with Great Rivers Greenway with regard to potential funding sources.

The regional Greenway plan includes a trail through the District, along the MetroLink alignment, which may open the doors to the District for additional regional or federal funds that support the Greenway.

## Additional Incentives

In addition to the more traditional financing incentives noted above, the Panel also made note of a range of amenities the District might also explore as a means to encourage additional development and investment in the area.

Of immediate note was the current state of the streets and pedestrian experience in the District. There is a significant amount of overgrowth in the area, particularly along sidewalks, which leaves visitors with a sense that the area is largely ignored or abandoned. To truly operate as a District, care should be taken to maintain the sidewalks and streetscapes throughout the area, not just those in the immediate vicinity of current or complete development.



*Southeast Corner of Duncan & Boyle Avenues*



*Southeast Corner of Sarah & Clayton Avenues*



As noted in the stakeholder meetings, there is a vision to create an “Innovation Community.” Building on this idea, the District should take care to identify those current community attributes that fall in line with this idea and work to bring them to the forefront and publicize them – share the story of what makes this an Innovation Community.

Throughout the stakeholder interviews, the Panel also heard a need for additional child care in the area. The facilities currently in place are over-subscribed and the influx of additional businesses and workers will only place more strain on the system. Close and convenient child care options for District employees would be a welcome addition.

Knowledge workers, like those found in the District’s businesses, also seek and value amenities such as free and readily available WiFi. By installing District-wide WiFi, the District could further position itself as thoughtful and innovative.

Readily available biking options would also be of benefit to the District. With the addition of the Greenway bike trails, bicycle parking, and possibly bicycle rental stations, the District could provide wonderful alternatives for those who are moving to a car-optional lifestyle. A bicycle rental station would also provides District workers and residents with an easy way to explore the surrounding neighborhoods or, by utilizing the District’s MetroLink station, the larger St. Louis region by bike.

The District may want to consider utilizing certain safety and security options to provide a greater sense of security for those working and living in the District. Unobtrusive yet readily available security stations like those found on most college campuses would assist in providing a safer and more secure environment. Public safety escorts might also be employed to assist workers in moving between buildings and transit/parking when they might otherwise feel unsafe.

Additional consideration could also be provided for those employees and/or residents of the District who choose to utilize energy-saving alternatives. Parking garages could provide preferential parking for electric or hybrid technology cars with spaces equipped with charging stations. The District could also partner with Enterprise CarShare to provide cars on call to employees and/or residents.

Finally, the District could utilize the proposed parking garages in such a manner as to provide additional amenities for the District’s businesses and residents. Wrapping the garages in residential or office development would help hide the garage from the street. The garage rooftops could also be used as additional green space or patio space for residents and employees.



*Bicycle Rental Station, Denver, Colorado*



*Emergency Call Boxes and District Guides Provide Security and Assistance*



*Nine North, St. Louis (rendering of parking garage incorporation)*

## Summary

At the end of an interesting and challenging process, the Panel had the following recommendations for the TAP Sponsor and Cortex District leadership.

### Station Location

The new MetroLink station, envisioned to serve the Cortex District, would best serve the businesses, employees, and area residents if it were placed between Boyle and Sarah, at the western-most section of the block. This location, close to Boyle, would best serve the core of the District, provides ample opportunity for access and visibility, and welcomes riders to the District with a grand view of the Cortex Commons.

### Parking Garage Location(s)

Following a careful review of the four potential locations for a new parking garage in the District, the Panel did not feel strongly that any one site was ready to be developed into a parking garage at this time. From a TOD perspective, each site poses a number of opportunities as well as challenges, and as such, no one site rose to the top as an ideal location for a parking garage.

Since the Panel did not believe any one site was prime for development, and the process in fact raised more questions than were answered, the Panel felt strongly that the members of Cortex should put any immediate plans for new parking structures on hold until they can conduct a comprehensive parking study.

- Further evaluation will be required to identify the current parking needs or capacity in the District through a better understanding of the number of current spaces, the total number of employees working in the District, and thus identification of the current need or glut of parking.
- Additionally, the study should evaluate the anticipated parking needs for the District. Based on the information in the Cortex Master Plan, how much more parking will be needed and when?
- The District should also consider a comprehensive strategy related to parking in the District addressing employee vouchers/discounts, meter integration, and a unified pricing structure.
- A comprehensive approach to parking can also help ensure that sites best left to other uses are not used for parking garages. Thus, time is of the essence.

### Development Incentives

Finally, with regard to the Sponsor's inquiry into possible incentives to promote development and attract

new businesses to the District, the Panel had the following recommendations.

The District should evaluate and include where possible financial incentives, such as:

- TDD or CID
- Special purpose bonds
- New Markets Tax Credits
- Partnering to make use of MDFB credits
- Great Rivers Greenway funding or partnership

In addition to financial incentives, the District should consider providing amenities that might appeal to businesses and knowledge workers and attract additional development to the area.

- District branding and wayfinding to create a sense of place and a user-friendly experience
- Improved pedestrian environment (cut grass, pull weeds) and safety and security measures such as call-boxes or escort assistance
- District-wide WiFi
- Bike-stations and/or bike sharing
- CarShare availability or preferential treatment for electric or hybrid cars
- Garages wrapped with office or residential uses
- Use of garage roofs for additional green space or patios for District residents and/or employees

A great deal of planning, collaboration, and hard work has joined five impeccable St. Louis institutions together to bring Cortex into reality and grow it into the burgeoning success seen today. This collaboration and dedication is evident in the operation of the District and the vision to bring a MetroLink station to the District.

With the station nearing reality and additional businesses planning to bring innovation and employees to the District, the members of Cortex are faced with another opportunity to come together once again to solve a need. In this instance, the challenge is parking in the District. By creating a parking district or ownership/management entity consisting of the five Cortex members, a more thoughtful and comprehensive strategy can be put in place which will address future parking needs, create a unified parking solution that is in keeping with the design and operational principles of the District, and help determine the most advantageous pricing strategy that will meet the needs of the consumer, fund the parking entity, and ultimately provide for a system of parking that is successful and sustainable.



## Panel Professional Biographies

**Laura Radcliff, Senior Vice President, Public Finance, Stifel Nicolaus & Company, Inc.** During her career, Laura has served as investment banker on more than 300 bond issues with a total par amount in excess of \$17 billion. Laura's primary investment banking focus is on economic development and revenue bonds of public entities. She has served as investment banker for numerous development financings, including Public Improvement Districts, Tax Increment Finance Districts, Municipal Management Districts and Community Development Districts across the country. Laura has lectured extensively on the topic of financing to a wide range of audiences, including the American Bar Association, the Council of Development Financing Agencies, several individual state agencies and municipal organizations, and numerous real estate and economic development organizations. She currently serves as Treasurer of the Urban Land Institute St. Louis District Council and is a Member of the Board of the Partnership for Downtown St. Louis. In addition, she is the Co-Chair of the National Tax Increment Finance Coalition. Laura holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Urban Planning from Michigan State University and she earned a Masters of Public Affairs degree from Princeton University.

**Natasha Das.** Natasha, a licensed attorney, is a recent graduate of Saint Louis University's Master of Urban Planning and Real Estate Development program. She received her undergraduate degree from Saint Louis University and proceeded to attend the University of Kansas School of Law, from where she graduated in 2011. Upon completing law school, Natasha worked as a consultant for urban planning and development in Saint Louis. Natasha continues to support the growth of St. Louis, as she serves on Mayor Slay's Vanguard Cabinet, contributes her time to the Friends of Arch Grants Executive Board, and promotes community development through her involvement as a Board Member with InvestSTL.

**Colleen McNitt Ruiz, Lathrop & Gage LLP.** Colleen is an attorney practicing in the real estate area with 20+ years of experience. Her experience includes working with developers from start to finish on their projects. She represented a national company on a myriad of real estate issues with respect to the development of two gaming and mixed use projects representing a private investment of more than \$1 billion in St. Louis metropolitan area. This project included teaming with the Missouri Department of Transportation, the City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, the Metropolitan Sewer District, and numerous utilities and stakeholders on development agreements, road construction, infrastructure easements, excess property acquisition from the federal government, development of M/WBE plans, street vacations and other property matters. She represents buyers and sellers of real property, ten of which have closed in just the last seven months. Colleen works on all facets of real estate transactions.

**Brian O'Connell, Hilliker Corporation.** Brian O'Connell attained a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with dual emphases in Finance and Banking and Real Estate from the University of Missouri in May of 2008. Hilliker Corporation welcomed Brian immediately following graduation. He has participated in Alpha Kappa Psi Professional Business Fraternity and held multiple executive board positions during his tenure as a student, as well as participation in the Robert J. Trulasko Sr. College of Business Ambassadors. Brian honed his service and marketing skills in summer durable goods sales. With Hilliker Corporation's expertise available to him and ready to serve in any aspect of Commercial Real Estate, Brian possesses characteristics found in the most successful Commercial Real Estate Brokers.

**Glenn Powers, St. Louis County Department of Planning.** Glenn is the Director of Planning for St. Louis County. He directs the activities of 45 employees in four divisions at the Department of Planning. One of those divisions, the Current Planning Division, is charged with the administration of all land use regulations in the unincorporated areas of St. Louis County. Mr. Powers has been with the St. Louis County Department of Planning for over 30 years, primarily in the Current Planning Division. Prior to being appointed the Director of Planning in 1997 he was the Land Use Manager. Mr. Powers has a Bachelors Degree in Biology from Hope College (1975) and a Masters Degree in Urban Planning from Texas A&M University (1978). He has been a County representative on numerous municipal Tax Increment Finance Commissions and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Great Rivers Greenway.

**Brian Pratt, Green Street Development Group, LLC.** Brian, Vice President of Development, directs community relations, obtains government entitlements, performs incentive advising, coordinates project management, and assists with lender/investor relations. Brian has served in senior positions with the Credit and Incentives practices at Deloitte and KPMG, having negotiated discretionary tax incentives and applied traditional tax credit programs to a diverse portfolio of business and industries. With national experience in corporate site selection and incentives, Brian can influence the program management of incentive and tax credit programs on behalf of Green Street's clients. Brian's professional experience at Deloitte Tax was preceded by 6 plus years as a Senior Manager and then Director of Peckham, Guyton, Albers and Viets Urban Consulting practice. Brian's experience included the analysis and evaluation of real estate development and business investment projects on behalf of nearly 150 municipal, county and state organizations. This experience included developing private/public financings to facilitate projects as well as the use of economic models to analyze the appropriate incentive level to support companies and urban development. In this capacity, Brian has attained deep insight that enables him to interface with the public sector decision-making process on behalf of Green Street and its clients.

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