

Wellston TOD: A Center for Workforce Development

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## **Executive Summary**

Participants in the development of this proposal included Becky Bitzer and Anne Wachtel, Washington University Brown School of Social Work, Shuai Cao, Xueyi Rui, and Bingbin Zhou, Washington University Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, and Matthew Eaton, St. Louis University Law School. The faculty advisor for this proposal was Barbara Levin, Washington University Brown School of Social Work.

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive proposal for transit-oriented development (TOD) around the Wellston, Missouri MetroLink Station. The information presented in this report comes as the result of a semester-long classroom learning and community engagement process. Best-practices for TOD, community stakeholder interviews, and additional research about Wellston and regional resources provide the basis for this proposal.

The primary recommendations stemming from this proposal are included below, utilizing the Citizen's for Modern Transit's "10 Strategies for Attracting Development Near Transit in a Slow Growth Market" as a guide.

### **1. Engage the Surrounding Neighborhoods**

This step is perhaps the most essential to any TOD project. Due to limited time, this group was unable to fully engage Wellston residents. However, moving forward, Wellston residents will need to become more fully a part of the planning process in order to facilitate resident buy-in and to gain valuable knowledge about the community and its people. Beyond Housing utilizes an extensive community engagement chart when working with neighborhoods, and it is recommended that this chart, found in Appendix B, be used to engage Wellston residents, government officials, area businesses, and service providers.

### **2. Increase Transit to Create Value**

Over 10,000 visits to the MET Center, located just east of the Wellston Station, are made each year. This high volume destination is an ideal site to assess and increase MetroLink utilization. Before transit can be increased an assessment of MET Center students and instructors must be completed to answer key questions, including: Who uses MetroLink? What do current riders like/dislike about their rider experience? What would serve as an impetus for taking the MetroLink for those that currently do not? This survey could also be utilized at the Enterprise Center, the daycare upon its completion, and in the broader Wellston community. Once ridership and influencing factors are assessed, a plan can then be developed to address the identified issues that deter individuals from riding the MetroLink to and from Wellston.

### **3. Start Small – Invest in Walkability**

A focus on this step is essential in Wellston. While many of the larger TOD goals are out of immediate reach for this area, increasing walkability is a big step that could more quickly become a reality. Investments in this area include sidewalk improvements and additions, installation of pedestrian scale lighting, landscaped walkways, and appealing artwork. The

design and placement of walkways should be guided by community residents and based on their needs to access the station safely and comfortably. Additionally, implementing this strategy could be used to address crime and fear of crime. Concrete crime statistics could be found for Wellston; however, second-hand reports identify that safety is certainly an issue. Talking with residents and the Wellston Police Department in order to identify hot spots for crime and how to address it, particularly around the station area, would be an essential part of investing in walkability.

#### **4. Pursue Catalytic Public Projects**

There are three primary catalytic public projects that have been identified for proposed implementation around the station area. First is the creation of a charter school in the now vacant Eskridge High School, located a few blocks west of the station. A charter school in Wellston would address the need for quality education within the community, and further the vision of Wellston as a place for education and workforce development across the lifespan. Second, is the construction of a health clinic. The clinic would not only be a vital resource for Wellston residents, but could also serve as a site for job training for those completing CNA training programs at the MET Center. Finally, the construction of a building adjacent to the station to hold needed services such as a small grocer, a barber, a sandwich shop, or other needs identified by residents would serve as a hub for activity around the station. The three proposed projects would help support Wellston residents in educational, physical, and social aspects of life. A variety of partners would be needed to make these developments happen.

#### **5. Create Design Standards**

The creation of design standards also offers a variety of ways to enhance the Wellston community around the station. Crosswalks around the station and at Page Boulevard to the north are one element of design that could be added. Page Boulevard has been identified as a dangerous street for pedestrians to cross. While it is away from the immediate station area, increased pedestrian access-ways may increase ridership by helping people get to the station more safely. Additional standards include mandating the placement of parking in the rear of any new developments around the station and installation of pedestrian scale lighting, both to promote a pedestrian designed environment. Finally, appropriate signage throughout the community directing people to transit, and bike paths, should be designed and implemented consistently throughout the community.

#### **6. Tackle Parking**

An important hallmark of TOD is downplaying the high value society places on personal car travel. Currently in St. Louis, there is a legal mandate that requires a ratio of parking spaces to the square footage of building space, designated by land use (CMT, 2012). This mandate requires some unique solutions to more effectively utilize TOD. In Wellston, this mandate holds true. In our new design plan, we suggest sharing parking among the new development as much as possible. In addition, we suggest exploring “green” parking lot construction for new lots, and building rain gardens and other features to minimize the stress on Wellston’s sewer system. We will provide the adequate number of spots per legal mandate, but parking is not a part of our integral design.

## **7. Invest According to Our Ambitions**

To build successful TOD, investment needs to come from public engagement first. It will be absolutely vital to work on building trust with city government and residents, something we struggled with in Wellston. After achieving community buy-in, it will be vital to pull in investors interested in Wellston's future. Wellston has the potential to become a premier center for workforce development, and investors should fully understand this goal. Because the daycare plan is already developed, we believe this is a possible goal. It will be important to explore unique incentives and funding opportunities. Are their government subsidies available to open a charter school? Are there more EPA grants available for continued Brownfield clean up? Are there tax incentives for developers to build much needed services in Wellston?

## **8. Revise Local Policies**

While zoning restrictions present some problems (discussed at length later in this report), there is one important policy to change as soon as possible: permitting. Currently, the city of Wellston controls all permitting for development. The neighboring Pagedale sends permits through the St. Louis County Public Works Department. While this change is somewhat political in nature (and therefore difficult), switching the permitting to St. Louis County would streamline and improve the process for developers, which could attract more development. Wellston and Pagedale are immediately adjacent, thus this change could make working with neighboring communities easier as well.

## **9. Get the Density Right**

TOD is fundamentally about creating dense communities around public transportation. But realistically, we understand that it may be a slow process to bring back the densities that inner ring suburbs like Wellston enjoyed fifty years ago. Therefore, getting the "density right" in Wellston make look different than other communities. To build density, we must first focus on fixing the current housing stock in Wellston: demolish what is unusable, and fix what is fixable. Rent and housing prices are low. Wellston should remain an affordable place for families to live, but we do not want rent to be low because houses are unlivable. Improving the housing stock will bring new families, and families will stay because of the new daycare, parks, charter school, commercial areas, and MET programs. Density will build.

## **10. Educate the Public on TOD**

TOD's philosophy is spreading, but Wellston Station users need more exposure. The neighboring Rock Road Station in Pagedale is just beginning its TOD development. It will be useful to share these results in Wellston to give the community a feel for what TOD looks like. Information booths on TOD at the MetroLink station and the MET Center could provide a good catalyst for the spread of TOD in Wellston.

The above 10 elements are vital components of TOD in Wellston. Using these guidelines, and focusing on realistic short and long-term goals that are supported by residents has the potential to again make Wellston a center for workforce development and viable community life.

## **Part 1: Goals and Objectives**

There are several goals and objectives to be considered in a Wellston TOD plan. These goals have been developed from an excellent resource, a report generated by Citizens for Modern Transit entitled “10 Strategies for Attracting Development Near Transit in a Slow Growth Market” (2012). This resource has guided and influenced much of the content in this report.

The first goal and objective in building TOD in Wellston was to provide unique solutions to the unique needs of the Wellston community. Wellston, a small, predominately low-income municipality of St. Louis County, has suffered much loss of population and economic development in the past decades. Therefore, our objective was to provide a design plan with vital community services for the community of Wellston: a new commercial area that would have services such as a small food market, a health clinic, a barbershop, and other needs of a small community and new beautiful parks that provide the community of Wellston (especially its children) a safe and supportable connection to the Metro Station. We have included the plans for the upcoming daycare, and have made accommodations for a charter school utilizing the now-empty former Wellston High School building. We have made a sustainable plan that includes current zoning restrictions, a barrier we will discuss later in this report.

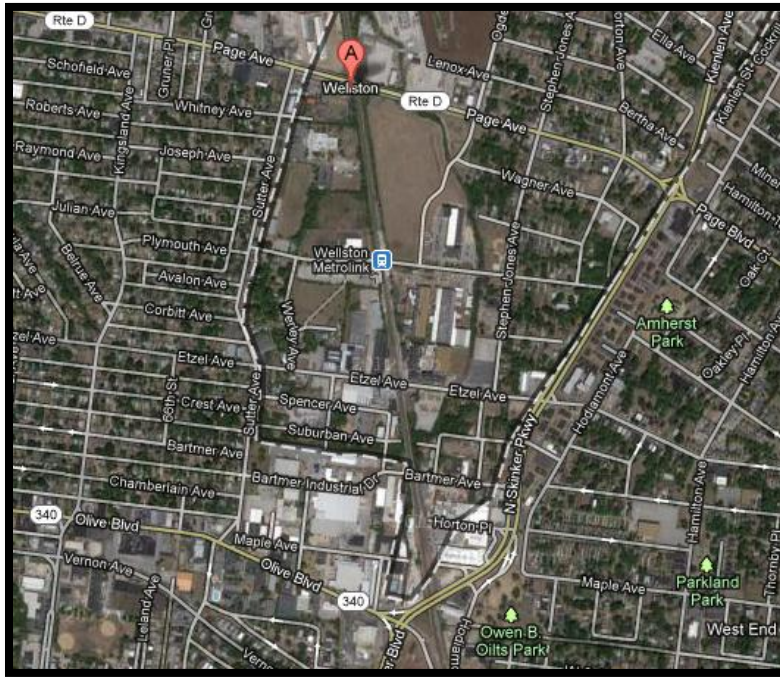
A second goal and objective was to provide Wellston with a design plan that maximizes safety, walkability, and utility. Many people from outside the community, including Wellston police officers, expressed concern that Wellston is simply not a safe place to be. To create successful TOD, this perception needs to change. Our plan will bring in new lighting, walking paths, and design that will make people both from Wellston and other communities feel secure enough to walk to and from the Metro Station, MET Center, daycare, and new commercial district.

A third and vital goal and objective for Wellston is to set the groundwork for future engagement with Wellston community members and leaders. Because of past events and current perceptions, people who live in Wellston are understandably wary of connecting with those interested in developing their community. Without community buy-in, TOD in Wellston will never be sustainable. It will be necessary to work on gaining the trust and participation of the Wellston community.

A final over-arching goal and objective is to make Wellston a place of workforce development and education for the entire lifespan of a Wellston (or neighboring) community member. The MET Center is already doing admirable work at providing excellent GED and technical training for adults. Our goal is both work with and from the MET Center’s model to build a community in which a child can begin his or her educational development at the daycare, continue this development through the charter school, go on to technical training or college, and enter the workforce with superior preparation and community support.

## Part 2: Site Analysis

### Station Area



Satellite Image, Wellston Station and Surrounding Areas

The Wellston MetroLink Station has total monthly boardings of 24,700, less than the MetroLink average of around 36,500. Its weekday boardings are considerably higher than weekend boardings—950 compared to only 490 on weekend days. The quarter-mile TOD area around the station encompasses 342 lots on 25 blocks. The station has a large parking lot on 2.6 acres with 242 spaces. The majority of the buildings around the station are industrial in nature, reflecting Wellston’s industrial past. The biggest building, the former Wagner Electric building, now holds the MET Center. Another large building holds the Arch Material Handling Company, which builds pallet-racking material. Another industrial building adjacent both to Arch Material Handling and to the station is “burned out,” and is no longer usable as a business.

In addition to these industrial buildings, the quarter mile area also includes: the Enterprise Center (directly across from the MetroLink parking lot), which was built upon former brownfield land and serves a small business incubator; a county police and fire training facility; the former Eskridge High School building; several empty parcels of land, two “parks”, and small areas of single family homes.



Wellston MetroLink Station, West Side of Tracks



Wellston MetroLink Station, East Side of Tracks

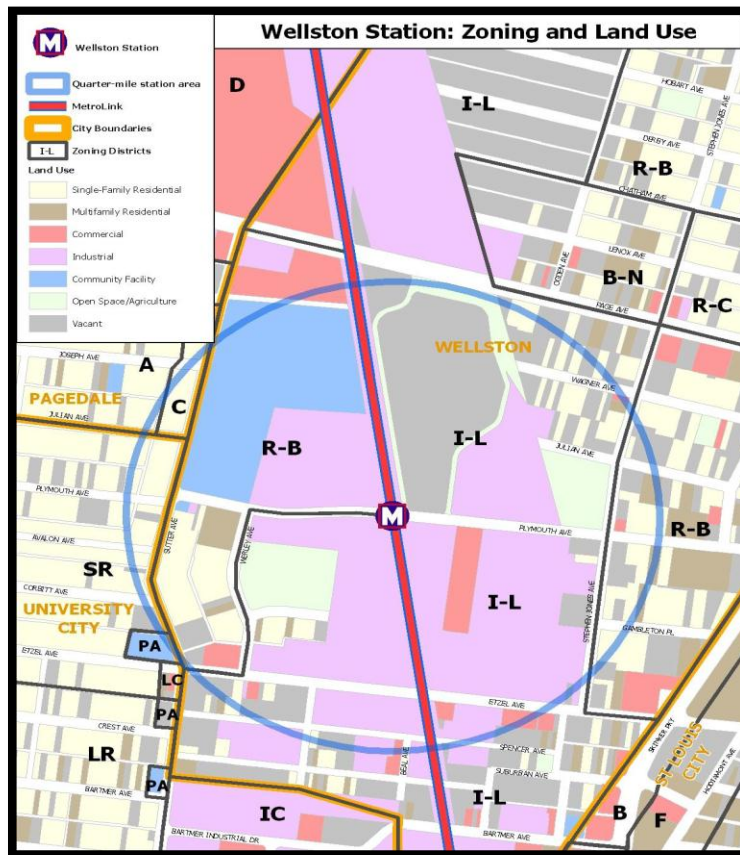
We had several insights upon visiting the MetroLink station. The parking lot is strikingly large. At the time of our visit, only about a third of the lot was being used in any capacity. We had immediate thoughts of developing or sharing some of the unused space, in order to make the areas surrounding the station denser and better used.

In addition, we were impressed at the sheer amount of green space surrounding the station. Directly adjacent to the parking lot is Robert L. Powell Park, which amounts to a large, grassy field. Between the MET Center and MetroLink station is a very large, undeveloped parcel of land. A ballpark developed by the Cardinal Cares Foundation is located behind the MET Center to the east. The Enterprise Center is also on a large green lot. This wealth of land is a sure asset to developing TOD, as many other stations are not nearly as land-rich as Wellston.

A final insight on the station area: there seem to be very few well-kept walking paths to and from the station. While there is a good sidewalk from the parking lot to the MetroLink, every other direction was lacking in upkeep, safety, disability access, and simple pleasantness. Indeed, we witnessed many people trudging their way through a pitted, puddle-filled alleyway with seemingly no lighting east of the tracks to get to the station platforms. While it was a pleasant, sunny day on our visit, this could easily become a dangerous path in bad weather or at night. Wellston deserves, at the least, to have safe, well-lit well-kept walkways to and from their own station.



## Existing Land Uses



Zoning Map Courtesy of CMT, 2012

From Citizens for Modern Transit (2012): the quarter-mile TOD area, like many areas straddling municipality borders in St. Louis County, is divided between three jurisdictions: the Cities of Wellston, Pagedale, and University City. All three cities have different zoning restrictions. The City of Wellston zoning districts are: light industrial (seen as “I-L” and in pink in the above image), two-family residential (“R-B” in brown), and neighborhood business (“B-N” in red). Pagedale zoning in this area is only commercial. The City of University City zoning in this area is single-family residential (“SR” in white).

The vacant parcels (seen in gray) are available for development. However, there are several zoning restrictions at play. Mixed uses are not allowable. While light industrial zoning does have several uses (discussed later), housing may not be built. There is little chance of having this zoning changed, because almost all of the light industrial areas in Wellston are in various stages of brownfield. Much of the area around the station has been cleaned, but not to residential standards. In addition, buildings must be 45’ or under in the immediate area around the station.



## Community Data

According to 2010 Census data, Wellston has a population of 2,313. The 1960 population of Wellston was 8,000, illustrating the general decline in population in Wellston and other inner-ring suburbs. There are slightly more females than males; 55.1% of Wellston is female and 44.9% is male. The age breakdown presents interesting information: 36.9% of Wellston is between birth and seventeen. Because Wellston no longer has a school district, these children must be bussed out of their own community every day. The next largest population group is ages 35 to 64, at 31%. In the past five years, the 25 to 34 age-group has lost population, while all others have gained (minus the 65 and older group, due to natural loss).

This data shows definitively that there are several service needs in Wellston. First, the daycare is a clear requisite. As well, because Normandy School District also recently lost its accreditation, the educational needs for Wellston children and teens must be addressed. A community K-12 charter school would be a wonderful asset for Wellston. Finally, the population loss of young working-age people illustrates a necessity for more jobs *in the community*. Wellston is predominantly Black/African American, at 95.4% of the population. The most common level of education was a high school diploma, at 63.3%, though a little over 26% did not graduate high school or receive a GED. 48.8% of the community is employed, leaving unemployment at 12.1%. However, 39.1% of the population is not in the labor force, due to permanent disability or other reasons. The majority of the jobs in Wellston are in manufacturing and industrial sectors, with retail trade close behind. 40.4% of Wellston lives under the poverty line. While this number seems high, it has decreased dramatically—poverty was at 60% in 2000. Incomes proved to be interesting, as well. The largest income bracket (32.7%) was \$25,000 to \$49,999. The next largest income bracket was people who make only \$0 to \$9,999 annually, at 22.7%. However, these rates do not take into account family size. With the high percentage of children under 18, there would appear to be many young families, or adults with dependent young children, in Wellston.

Housing numbers for these families and other community members were surprising, as there is much talk about the vacant homes in Wellston. However, according to the Census, 78.6% of Wellston's housing is occupied. The majority of the housing stock is valued at less than \$100,000, and rents average around \$500 to \$749. Though, percentages of rents between \$100 and \$499 are extremely close.

The most common form of transportation is driving alone, at 60%. But the second most common form of transportation is public transit at 22%, and a little over 28% of Wellston residents are car-free.

## Historic Structures and Spaces



Mikado Theater of the 1900s; Wellston Movie Theater of the 1950s; Wellston High School Building

Unfortunately, many of Wellston's historic structures were demolished over the years, including the beautiful Mikado/Victory Theater. The Wellston High School building, renamed Halter High in 1962, and finally, Eskridge High in 1979, remains empty and within the quarter-mile TOD radius. Another historic structure, the Wellston Loop trolley shelter, still stands but is in need of serious repairs. This Loop, similar to the Delmar Loop, was a trolley line that traveled up and down what is now Martin Luther King Drive, allowing people to shop in the busy Wellston business district (Tate, 2012).



Wellston Loop Trolley; Wellston Loop Trolley Shelter in past years; Wellston Loop Trolley Shelter in current condition (Tate, 2012).

One of the original structures built in the 1900s, the Wagner Electric Company building, still stands adjacent to the MetroLink stop. Wagner was a major employer in the Wellston area for decades, and had thousands working there during both World Wars. Unfortunately, Wagner Electric closed permanently in 1983, and donated the building to the City of Wellston. The building sat vacant and deteriorating for another decade (Williams, 2009).

After watching the Wagner building become a dumping ground, the City and the St. Louis County Economic Council took steps to redevelop the area. The entire city was declared

blighted, and a Wellston Redevelopment Corporation was established. Because Wagner and the other neighboring industrial buildings created polluted land called brownfields, the land needed to be cleaned and rezoned as “light industrial,” which can be used for commercial development, as well as the current industrial uses (Williams, 2009).

The redevelopment of land happened over the following seven years of the declaration of blight. The only building saved was the original Wagner structure, which was filled with asbestos and lead paint that needed to be removed. The land and groundwater surrounding the building was contaminated with metals, solvents, and petroleum products. To clean the area, over 1,400 tons of soil was removed and disposed offsite. A two-foot cap of compacted soil covered the brownfields, which protects from any contaminants from reaching the topsoil (Williams, 2009).



Abandoned Wagner building, before redevelopment – Met Center in former Wagner building after redevelopment

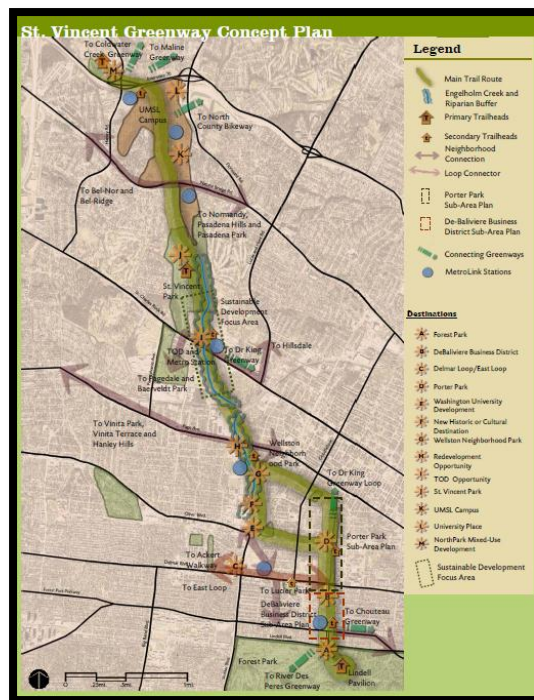
Though the future use of the Wagner building was limited to industrial uses, a unique tenant now uses the cleaned and redeveloped building. The Metropolitan Education and Training Center (MET) is a state of the art workforce training facility open to enrollment for any city or county resident. The MET Center uses the large industrial building to teach several programs: welding, tool and die, precision machining, electrical, carpentry, heating/ventilation/air conditioning/refrigeration, general building maintenance/plumbing/blueprint reading, and automotive technology. In addition to these industrial programs, the MET offers health careers in practical nursing, certified nurse assistant (CNA), certified medication technician (CMT), and insulin administration. There are also “green” programs in home energy auditing and building maintenance. Finally, the MET offers an in-building St. Louis Community Credit Union site, financial literacy programs, a Fathers’ Support Center, a program to teach administrative assistant skills, a program to help students get their GED or “catch up” on high school level science and math, and open, rolling enrollment (MET Center, 2012). The MET Center is a vital community asset, and leads our plans to make Wellston a premier center for continued workforce development.

### Transportation Networks

Though small, the city of Wellston has the beginnings of an excellent transportation network. In 1993, the county of St. Louis began construction on the light rail system, and soon built a stop in Wellston on the “red line,” which travels from Scott Air Force Base in Illinois to Lambert Airport. Just one stop from the popular Delmar Loop area, Wellston is only twenty minutes from downtown St. Louis, twenty minutes from Lambert Airport, five minutes from the Central West End (home to many of the city’s hospitals), and an hour from Scott Air Force Base. Wellston also has a stop on the #94 Page Metro Bus, which serves Maryland Heights, the Jewish Community Center, Olivette, Pagedale, and the Civic Center MetroLink Station (CMT, 2012).

Accessibility is a continuing issue. The MetroLink station is accessible by car, with its impressive parking lot. As mentioned before, there is an excellent sidewalk from the parking lot to the station, one of Wellston’s best. Walking and biking to the station is possible, but not “friendly:” the surrounding areas are not well lit or well kept. Fortunately, in addition to our plans for new parks and paths, Great Rivers Greenway (GRG) has developed an extensive trail plan called the St. Vincent Greenway, which will extend north-south from Forest Park in St. Louis to Ramona Lake Park in Berkeley, MO.

The St. Vincent Greenway is set to go directly through Wellston along Engelholm Creek, which is adjacent to the MetroLink stop. Great Rivers Greenway also recently broke ground on a new Wellston Neighborhood park that will be directly in front the ball field, adjacent to the MET Center (GRG, 2012). These new parks and paths will not only beautify Wellston and provide more paths around the MetroLink station, but they will also bring new people into Wellston. It is an excellent opportunity to show off new development and growth.



St. Vincent Greenway Concept Plan, Great Rivers Greenway, 2012



### Part 3: Social Capital

Much of Wellston's history can be found in the past 100 years. Wellston's past is integral to understanding its present, and what can happen in the future. The city government in Wellston is also an essential part of understanding this small municipality. Unable to reach residents in Wellston, this group interviewed key stakeholders who have worked in Wellston over the years. The information gathered in these interviews was instrumental in shaping the TOD proposal for Wellston. The indication from sources was that the residents of Wellston are very transient, and that relationships in Wellston are all about trust – which takes longer than a few months to develop. Stakeholder interviews are a start, but moving forward, input from residents is of the utmost importance.

#### History



Easton Avenue, (now Martin Luther King Dr.) Wellston in 1910

Wellston has a rich history and connection to transportation. The city began in the 1880s as a station along St. Charles Rock Road for a local rail line. The land that is now known as Wellston was originally the estate of Erastus Wells, the founder of the first public streetcar line in St. Louis. The original train station soon became known as the Wellston Loop, part of St. Louis' well-known "loop" terminals for streetcars and busses (Tate, 2012).

By 1910, there were many Wellston businesses and resources, including three banks, a beautiful theater known as the Mikado (later renamed the Victory during World War II), numerous shops and restaurants, and a four-room schoolhouse. Wellston built a new high school in 1940, and became officially incorporated in 1949. In the 1950s, Wellston was so well regarded that it was known as the "Spotless Town." But beginning in the 1960s, Wellston suffered the

same fate as St. Louis and other inner-ring communities, and began losing major population numbers and businesses (Tate, 2012).

In 1981, the Wagner Electric Manufacturing Company, Wellston's biggest employer, the Wagner Electric Manufacturing Company, shut down permanently. By 1999, the entire city of Wellston was declared "blighted" in a push for redevelopment (discussed later, at length) (Williams, 2009). A decade later, after loss of accreditation and financial issues, Wellston School District was closed and incorporated into Normandy School District.

### **Municipal Structure**

Wellston's mayor is Linda Whitfield. Mayor Whitfield was most recently elected in 2010, receiving 59.07% of the vote (St. Louis County, 2010). The municipal government also consists of six council people, a city administrator/clerk, a public works director, and Police Chief G. Thomas Walker (St. Louis County, n.d.). 2010 election results show a total of 1,519 registered voters in Wellston, and a voter turnout of 24.58% (St. Louis County, 2010). Council Meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of the month, and Municipal Court on the second and fourth Wednesday (St. Louis County, n.d.). Mayor Whitfield suspended Police Chief Walker twice in the past year, both times reportedly acting without the approval of the community council to do so (KMOV St. Louis, 2012). This indicates tension between the executive and law enforcement arms of city government.

### **Stakeholders**

Stakeholders interviewed included: Janice Trigg, City Administrator and City Clerk in Wellston, Jillian Guenther with Beyond Housing, two Wellston police officers, the manager of "More than Carpentry Christian Ministries, an organization in Wellston, Jackie Wellington of the St. Louis County Economic Council, and Carolyn Seward and Vamadu Sheriff, both of the MET Center.

## **Part 4: Design and Environmental Issues**

### **Concept**

The driving concept behind a TOD in Wellston is envisioning it as a place for educational and workforce development across the lifespan of an individual. The renderings included in this section provide a visualization of how the MetroLink station can serve as a hub for the Wellston community, and those coming in and out of it via transit. The overall site plan can be seen in the image below with dark grey buildings representing structures that have yet to be built, and light grey buildings representing existing structures.



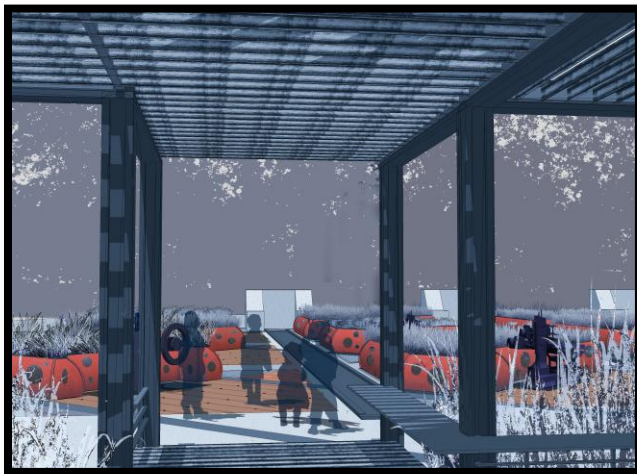
The whole design is based on the idea that we should design for the current residents and bring more people to the Wellston station. We propose to introduce commercial and industrial buildings to the north part of the site, which is brownfield now, utilizing the land designated as the Plymouth Industrial Park. In the site plan above one can see that there is one main road from south to north and a smaller road beside it. To the south, on what is currently vacant land, the daycare will be developed. The dark grey building farthest to the left represents the daycare. Based on the consideration of the children in the building, most of the remaining area has been redesigned as a “new Forest Park” for people to walk through, connecting not only the daycare to the MetroLink, but the southern portion of Wellston as well. The MetroLink station, seen above in orange, is the core element to the whole site. The biggest characteristic of the station redevelopment is that it goes above the railway providing a safe, comfortable space for people to gather and wait for their transit. Viewing the whole design, the current proposal is to build a passageway from the commercial streets to the north to day care to the south, connecting through the MetroLink station. As a result, the station will be the most important part of connecting people with their community, and other parts of the region.

The image (below right) shows a portion of the currently vacant land that is designated as the Plymouth Industrial Park. The image (below left) represents what a street in the commercial/industrial area might look like. A mixture of densities, typical of TOD, will be used, keeping in mind the 45-foot maximum height limits set forth by the city’s zoning laws.





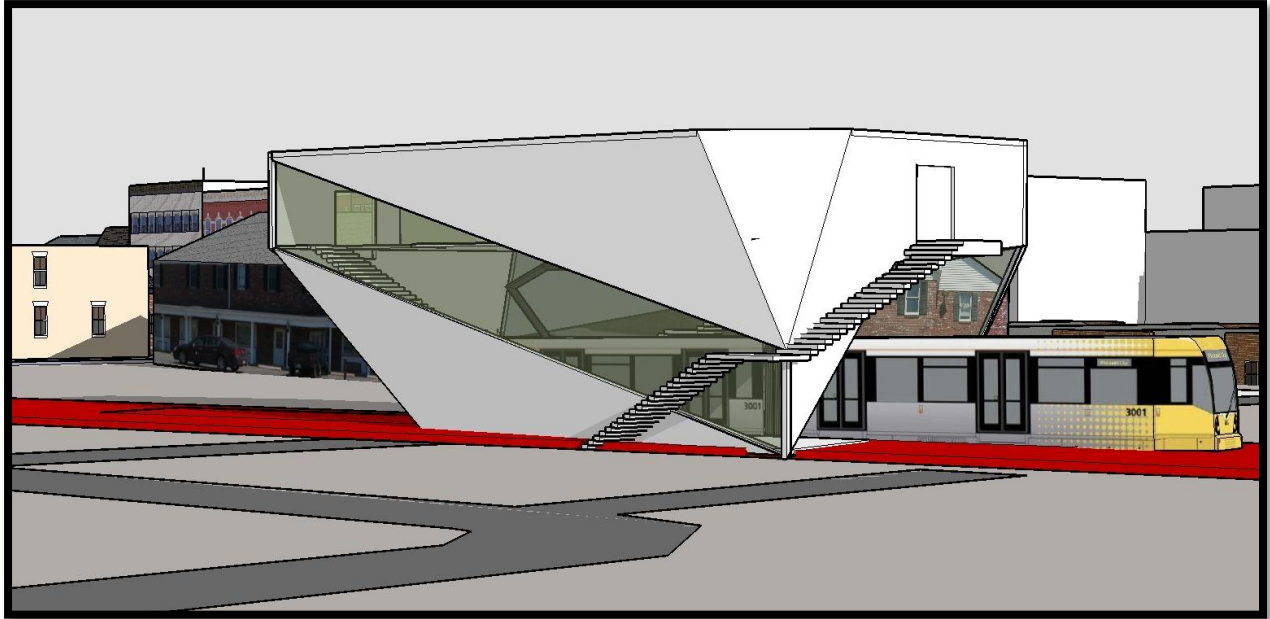
The image (below right) shows the site of the daycare and the proposed park. The image (below left) represents a vision for the currently vacant land, which will serve as a connector between the southern edge of Wellston, the daycare, and the MetroLink station.



Using the structure of the burnt out industrial building (in the background, below right), the image (below left) represents a vision for a public space that recognizes Wellston's past as an industrial town, and it's future as a place for community gathering. The location of this structure in the site plan can be found in tan, just south of the orange MetroLink building.



The rendering below shows what the over-tracks building might look like. A simple, yet eye-catching design will draw people to the station and provide cover for those waiting for transit. Services such as a coffee stand or newsstand could be offered inside in order to increase the functionality and utilization of the building.



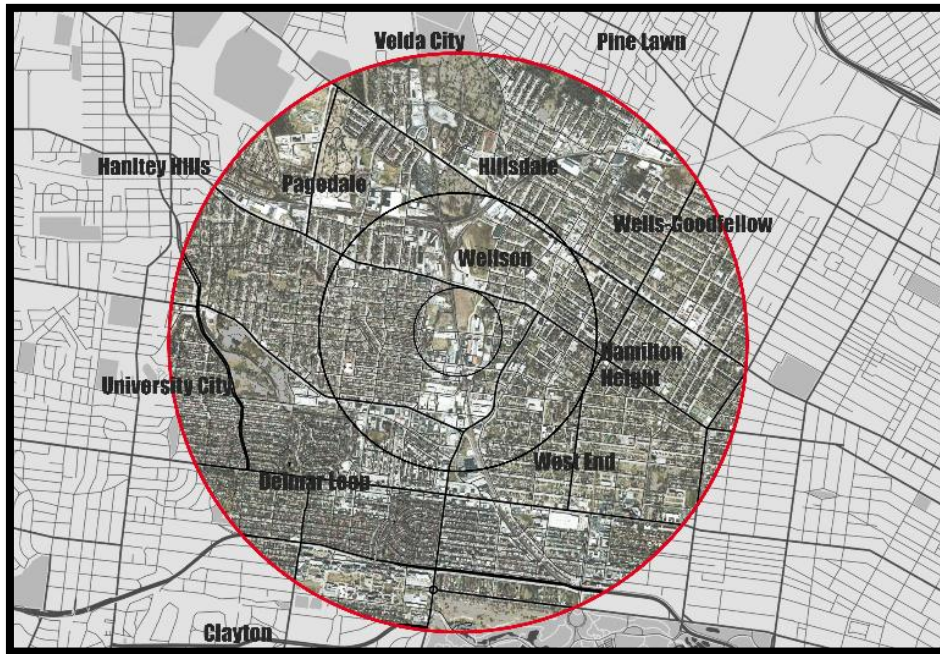
The final rendering below again shows the entire site plan, but inserts the above design ideas into the plan. Additional plans for industrial themed public spaces can be seen in the rendering below. Renderings for fireproofing and pedestrian access in the industrial/business area can be found in Appendix B.





### Connectivity

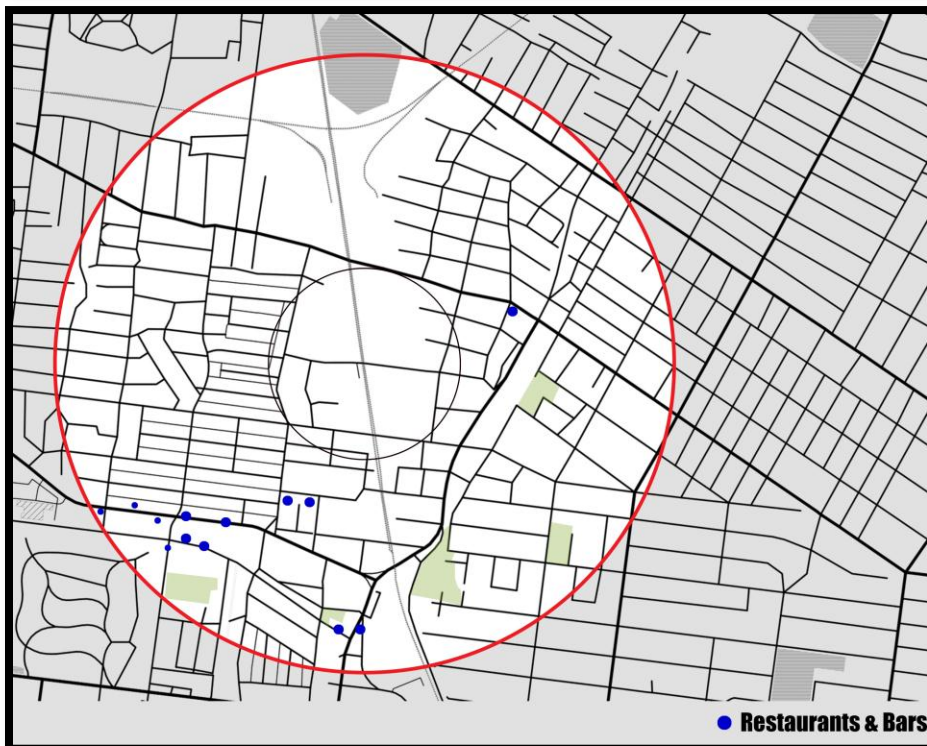
Connectivity in Wellston was assessed at multiple levels. Personal transportation connectivity such as traveling by automobile, bicycle, and by foot were assessed, as well as public transportation connections like Metro Bus and MetroLink. The red circle below indicates the driving radius of someone living in Wellston, the center ring a standard biking radius, and the inner ring the quarter mile walking distance, all center around the MetroLink station.



As indicated by the image below, there are few full service department stores within even the driving bounds of Wellston. The closest Wal-Mart is outside of the driving range for Wellston.



The images below show grocery stores, restaurants, and bars within biking range of the Wellston Station, with the red line representing the biking radius. None of these food outlets are located within walking distance of the station, and nearly all of the restaurants and bars are concentrated in the southern portion of the biking radius. Images depicting churches and schools within the defined biking radius can be found in Appendix B.





Within the quarter mile radius of the MetroLink station there are no commercial facilities. In fact, there is relatively little development around the station area. The pictures below offer different vantage points of what one sees when standing or walking at certain points near the station. Further images can be found in Appendix B.



A

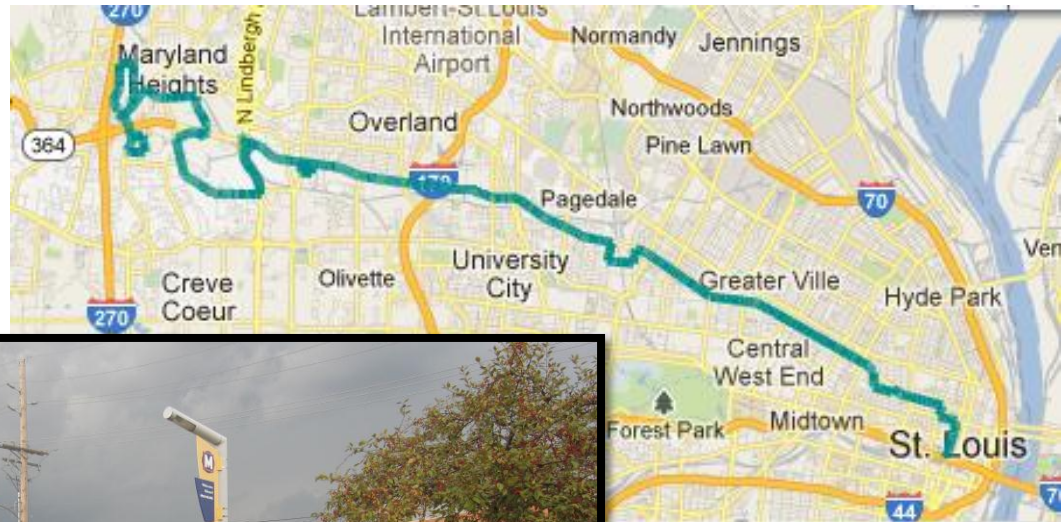
Standing on the tracks, looking east.



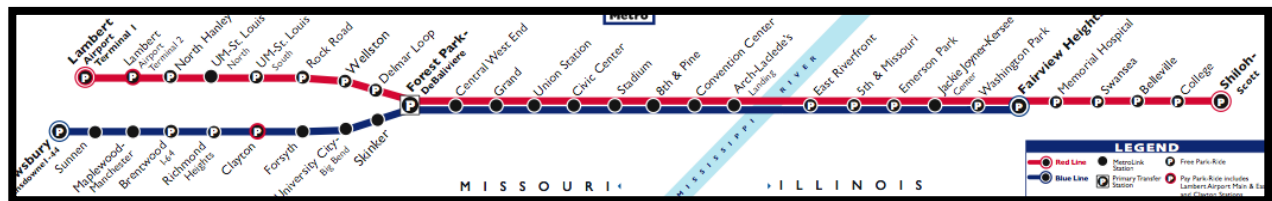
C

Standing near the tracks, looking west.

Metro Bus line 94 is a major line that stops right near the Wellston Station. The images below show the extent of bus route 94, connecting Maryland Heights with Downtown St. Louis, as well as the 94 bus pulling up to the Wellston MetroLink stop. According to Jackie Wellington of the SLCEC, the intersection of this major bus line with the MetroLink is one of the main reasons ridership is higher than one might expect in Wellston.



Finally, and most obviously, Wellston is connected to Lambert Airport, Downtown St. Louis, and the east side of the river by way of the MetroLink. Wellston is located on the Red Line, just two stops west of the Forest Park – DeBaliviere transfer station to the Blue Line.



While the limited amount of walkable and bikeable services in the Wellston area leaves the area less than well connected to needed resources, Wellston is well connected by public transit, being served by the MetroLink and a major bus route. The lack of services in the area surrounding the MetroLink station in Wellston makes it a prime candidate for TOD because the

need is great, and the potential to attract more transit users and active life around the station is high.

### **Environmental Issues**

**Brownfields.** Brownfields are “abandoned, idled, or under-used real property; the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant” (Williams, 2009). Brownfields often are the result of former industrial sites that leave behind hazardous waste and other contaminants. Brownfield redevelopment is vital to community development, because these sites are often “eyesores” in urban communities. The potential of developing often very large parcels of land can go unrealized, unless the lengthy and often expensive process of cleaning the land is planned. But undeveloped land can also be expensive, because abandoned brownfields cost cities in economic development potential, jobs creation, tax revenue, lost wages, and crime (Williams, 2009).

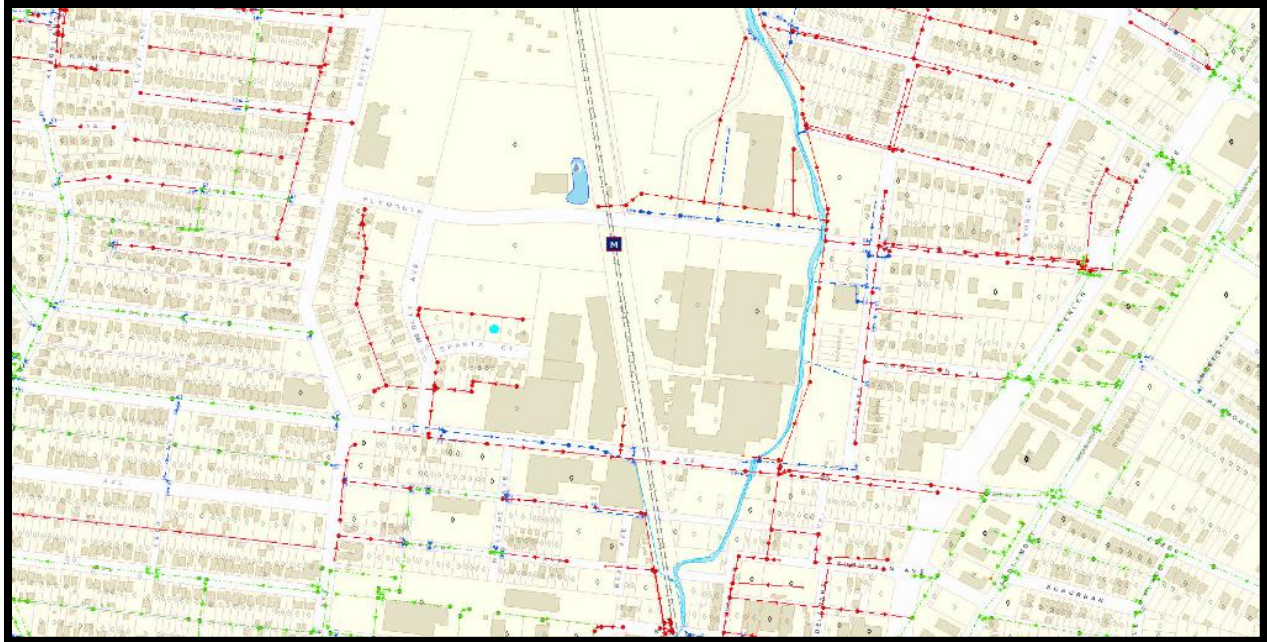
Because of its industrial past, Wellston is full of former or current brownfields. Fortunately, as discussed in the site analysis, much of the brownfield land in the quarter mile TOD radius has already been cleaned. The MET Center rests on this land. The MET Center/brownfield redevelopment is a testament to the wealth of funding and partnerships required of a brownfield development: the Missouri Department of Economic Development Brownfield Remediation Tax Credits, Department of Commerce- Economic Development Administration, Missouri Department of Economic Development /Missouri Department of Natural Resources Brownfield Redevelopment Program and the Industrial Development Authority of St. Louis County (St. Louis County Economic Council) funded this particular project. Many other funders were responsible for other parcels.

Zoning often must be changed when the brownfield cleanup process begins, as old zoning can be inappropriate after the parcels are cleaned. In the case of Wellston, all future uses are limited to “light industrial” uses, because the brownfield redevelopment standards for residential uses are much higher, and therefore prohibitively expensive (Williams, 2009).

This is an ongoing design issue that must be taken into account in all future planning. If the designs presented in this plan (taking into account brownfield zoning restrictions) are successful, more developers may be interested in expanding past the quarter-mile radius on which we have focused. But much of the land in Wellston is still brownfield, and must be cleaned to specific standards before any new development is added.

**Water Management.** Sewer connectivity is an important issue in Wellston. Correspondence with the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD) revealed that poor wastewater management may be an issue throughout Wellston. The map below clearly shows that the area immediately around the MetroLink station has a dearth of sewer connections. Red lines indicate wastewater, blue storm water, and green a combined line. The blue box in the center of the image is the Wellston MetroLink Station.





MSD - personal communication, December 12, 2012

Communication with MSD also revealed that many homes in Wellston may not be connected to MSD's wastewater management system and may in fact still be using outdated and faulty septic systems. MSD received grant funding in the 1990s to help individuals in Wellston connect to MSD's system. Usually connecting to the sewer system is a cost that homeowners must pay. However, this effort by MSD was resisted by the community, and in total only 100 homes in Wellston were connected, indicating that many homes are most likely still not connected, which is in violation of St. Louis County codes.

## Part 5: Policy Issues and Recommendations

### Zoning

According to Wellston's Zoning Map, the entire project area is zoned Light Industrial. As such, Wellston's ordinances completely eliminate the possibility of residential development in any proximity to the Metrolink Station. Additionally, the uses permitted within a Light Industrial district, absent obtaining a Special Use Permit, limit the vision for the development. Should a Special Use Permit be granted, the uses permitted are slightly more liberal; however, significant constraints still exist.

**Explanation.** Wellston's Zoning Code is embodied within their Ordinance Code under Appendix A of Ordinance Number 564, §§1 – 15. It was adopted, approved and effective October 15, 1980. It remains intact except for minor stylistic changes since its effective date.

- I. THE PROJECT AREA'S CLASSIFICATION AS LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PLACES LIMITATIONS ON THE USES OF THE SITE, THE DENSITY AND HEIGHT OF THE BUILDINGS, AND FRONTAGES.

Section 4-1 of the Code defines the various zoning districts instituted throughout the City of Wellston. As noted above, the Zoning Map of Wellston indicates that the project area for the Wellston MetroLink TOD is zoned entirely Light Industrial. According to Section 4-1, the purpose of a Light Industrial zone is to “create and protect areas for those light industrial uses which do not possess objectionable characteristics which might be detrimental to surrounding neighborhoods or to the other uses permitted in [the same district].”

Per the general provisions of the Code, set out in § 3-3, “every building or use erected or established shall be located upon a lot...and there shall be no more than one principal building or use upon any lot.” For purposes of the Zoning Code, a “lot” is defined in § 2-25 as “a tract of land in single ownership which has [adhered to the] lot area requirements which have been established by this ordinance.” A “use” is defined in § 2-53 as “the principal purpose for which a lot or the main building thereon is designed, arranged or intended, and for which it is or may be used, occupied or maintained.” A “building” is defined in § 2-8 as “any structure, except a trailer, which has a roof and which is designed for the shelter, support or enclosure of persons, animals or property of any kind.”

Section 4-5 of the Code specifically designates acceptable uses within a Light Industrial Zone. In relevant parts, §4-5.1 indicates that the following uses are permitted within a Light Industrial Zone: Food and Drug stores, personal service shops, automobile parking lots and Restaurants and Lounges. This list is not exhaustive, but rather is limited to the uses that are relevant to the vision of the development at the Wellston MetroLink stop.

Section 4-6 lists the minimum development standards for each zoning district. The following chart lists those standards. The row labeled I-L lists the requirements for Light Industrial zones.

District	Lot Area per Unit	Lot Width	Front Setback Major Arterial/Other Streets		Side Yard	Rear Yard	Maximum Height
R-A	7,000	70	60	45	10	30	35
R-B	5,000	60	40	**	**	**	**
R-C	5,000s	50	40	25	6	25	
	2,500dup	60	40	30	6	25	35
	1,500multi	75	45	35	10	30	
Bus. N	None	75	50	35	0 or 10*	**	35
I-P	None	75	50	35	0 or 10*	**	35
Bus. B	None	100	60	50	0 or 10*	**	35
<b>I-L</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0 or 10*</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>45</b>
Mfg	None	100	60	50	0 or 10*	**	45

\*Where abutting property is in an R-District, then 10 feet is required.

\*\*No rear yard shall be required, except where adjoining yard is in an R-District, then the rear yard shall be 20 feet and a suitable buffer shall be provided.

“Lot Width” is defined in § 2-28 as “the horizontal distance between the side lot lines of a lot measured at the building line.” A “yard” is defined in § 2-55 as “an open space on a lot situated between the principal building on such lot and the lot lines of such lot or situated between the principal building on such lot and the center line of an abutting street right-of-way.” A “side yard” is defined in §2-58 as “a yard extending along either side of a lot between the front and rear yard and lying between the side lot line and the principal building on the lot.” A “rear yard” is defined in § 2-57 as “a yard extending across the rear of a lot from side lot line to side lot line and lying between the rear property line and the principal building on the lot.” The term “height” as used in the Maximum Height limitation above, is defined by referencing the defined term “height of building” in § 2-19, which is “the vertical distance measured from the mean finished ground level adjoining the building to the highest point of the roof.”

Specifically applying these standards to the Wellston MetroLink stop project site, the minimum requirements dictate that the lot must be a minimum of 100 feet in width with no yard requirements. The general provisions of the Zoning Code indicate that only one principal building may be located on the lot and that only one use may be employed within that building. Furthermore, the principal building may only be a maximum of 45 feet in height. Understanding that commercial buildings story height is approximately 10-15 feet per story, the principal building on the project site would be limited to 3-4 stories tall. The project site is not in proximity to any major thoroughfare and thus, would be required to only setback from the street 50 feet.

These limitations run afoul of the basic tenets of Transit-Oriented Development, which requires higher density, mixed-used buildings in near proximity to mass transit. However, the zoning code provides for leeway if the development is classified as a “Group Development Project.”

## II. CLASSIFICATION AS A GROUP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT WOULD ALLOW SOME LEEWAY IN THE BUILDING DENSITY PERMITTED.

Section 5 of the Zoning Code details allowed exceptions to the restrictions set by the zoning districts. If a site is classified as a “Group Development Project”, the Code provides for higher density and moderately mixed-use. § 5-5 defines a “Group Development Project” as “two or more principal buildings devoted to a common or similar use and constructed on a single lot” approves their existence subject to approval by the board of appeals. However, § 5-5.1I requires that the buildings established as part of a group development project be not less than twenty feet apart and § 5-5.1(d) requires that they abide by the setback requirements explained above. Furthermore, it does not allow additional uses outside of the uses permitted by § 4-5 above.

Were the Wellston MetroLink development site to be classified as a Group Development Project, it would allow us to house multiple uses in the one principal building as is proposed. The phrase “devoted to a common or similar use” is not defined and thus subject to interpretation. As proposed, the project would include a convenience/grocery store and perhaps, some sort of local health clinic. It is somewhat doubtful that an argument could be made that these are in the same sphere of uses. The requirement that the buildings remain no less than 20 feet apart should not cause issue as currently, only one principal building is proposed.

III. ISSUANCE OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT WOULD PROVIDE ADDITIONAL USES BEYOND THOSE PERMITTED IN LIGHT INDUSTRIAL, BUT WILL REQUIRE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION.

Section 16 of the Zoning Code covers the purpose and process for obtaining Special Use Permits. § 16-2 defines a special use as

“those types of uses which are considered by the city to be essentially desirable, necessary, or convenient to the community, but which by their nature or in their operation have:

1. A tendency to generate excessive traffic;
2. A potential for attracting a large number of persons to the area of the use, thus creating noise or other pollutants;
3. A detrimental effect upon the value or potential development of other properties in the neighborhood; or
4. An extraordinary potential for accidents or danger to public health or safety.”

An application to obtain a special use permit is initiated by the owner of the land and is submitted to the planning and zoning commission or city council. Per §16-3, the owner has the burden of proof in establishing that the proposed special use meets the following criteria:

1. The proposed special use complies with all applicable provisions of the applicable district regulations.
2. The proposed special use at the specified location will contribute to and promote the welfare or convenience of the public.
3. The proposed special use will not have a deleterious impact on the value of other property in the neighborhood in which it is to be located.
4. The location and size of the special use, the nature and intensity of the operation involved in or conducted in connection with it, and the location of the site with respect to streets giving access to it are such that the special use will not dominate the immediate neighborhood so as to prevent development and use of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable zoning district regulations.

Per § 16-2(1), the application for a special use permit shall include the following:

1. Filing Fee.

2. Legal Description of the property.
3. An outboundary survey plat.
4. A site plan.
5. Project Report.

The “site plan” is to contain a site and landscape plan, which shall include the location, size and height of all existing and proposed structures on the site, the location and general design of all driveways, curb cuts and sidewalks including connections to building entrances, the location and proposed number of parking spaces and the proposed general use and development of all internal spaces.

The “project report” is to include “an explanation of the character of the proposed development, verification of the applicant’s ownership and anticipated development schedule”.

Assuming completion and issuance of a Special Use permit by the City of Wellston, the uses permitted at the Wellston MetroLink site would be broadened to include private or public elementary or secondary schools, clinics and institutions and financial institutions.

#### IV. APPEALING TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR INSTITUTION OF A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT OR OVERLAY DISTRICT, IF GRANTED, WOULD ALLOW FOR FLEXIBILITY FOR A LONG-TERM, PHASED DEVELOPMENT.

An overlay district is a specially zoned district that supersedes the requirements of the existing zoning district. They can be implemented by passing a law that appends existing land use regulations, without having to rewrite the existing zoning district requirements.

The current Wellston zoning code does not explicitly allow for the use of Overlay Districts or Planned Unit Developments; however, many of the neighboring municipalities have utilized them. Were the Wellston City Council to amend the zoning code to implement them, they would allow for the flexibility for long-term, phased development.

St. Louis County, the County in which Wellston is located, but not controlled by, does allow for a form of overlay district called Planned Unit Development Districts. Their uses in St. Louis County are governed by Ord. 26.80.050 and have a stated purpose as follows:

The planned unit development (PUD) is intended...to encourage the appropriate development of residential, or commercial uses. Specifically, the purpose of the district is for:

1. Provide for a scale and flexibility of development which could not otherwise be achieved through existing single use zoning districts, without detriment to neighboring properties;
2. Encourage site consolidation and planned mixed use development;

3. Allow for changes that may occur in building technology and changes in market demand for various building types; and
4. Provide for development of property while protecting the ecological, topographical, geological, and historic features that might be damaged by meeting fixed use district regulations.

Application to the City Council of Wellston for the implementation of a PUD at the site of the Wellston MetroLink Station would allow for our vision of a mixed-use, high density commercial hub at the MetroLink station that is currently prohibited by the existing zoning regulations.

### **Implementation**

Implementation of a TOD in Wellston will take a great amount of effort from numerous partners. This will not be a one phase, quick development, but will involve extensive planning, community building, and partnerships. Funding will be a huge issue to address and obtain, and several funding resources are identified in this section. The development of a sound plan with community buy-in, strong partnerships, and financial backing will all be necessary for the implementation of this proposal.

**Proposal phases.** The Wellston TOD is a three-phased proposal. Phase One involves engaging residents, establishing initial wins via small infrastructure improvements, and pushing forward on developments that are already in the works, such as the daycare. Most important in this phase is engaging stakeholders and residents. This will be done utilizing a community engagement model like the one Beyond Housing uses. This model can be found in Appendix B. Engagement might first occur by talking with municipal leaders, and having meetings with agencies that already are working in Wellston, and then trickle down to holding resident meetings. Engagement also means educating the public about TOD through exposure to Beyond Housing's plans for the Rock Road station, information booths at community meetings, the MetroLink Station, and the MET Center. Phase One will involve smaller objectives, primarily focused on increasing walkability, that can happen in a more timely manner to both engage residents, and allow them to see that things are actually going to happen in their community, thus keeping people interested in the process. Sidewalk improvements, pedestrian scaled lighting, and appropriate artwork around the station will all make the MetroLink more accessible and appealing to Wellston residents and others who get on and off at the stop. A necessary part of these improvements will be the development and enforcement of design standards by the City of Wellston. The organization of neighborhood wide trash cleanups is another way to get residents involved and actively participating in their community in this phase. Other proposed items to be address in this phase include: surveying MET Center students and Wellston residents to find out what can be improved to increase both MetroLink ridership and the rider experience, changing development permitting from Wellston's control to the St. Louis County Public Works Department's control, and working with the Wellston Police Department and residents to establish public crime data in order to identify and address hot spots for crime. Ensuring that the

daycare is established and that Wellston residents are connected to it if need be, will also be a part of this phase.

Phase Two will build off of Phase One by using resident support for projects, basic infrastructure improvements, and new developments like the daycare to entice funders and developers to come and see for themselves the needs and the potential that Wellston has. Catalytic public projects would be pursued in Phase Two. The design and construction of a commercial district, starting with one building to house a small grocer, a barber, or other small-scale services identified by Wellston residents would be first. The development of a health clinic with job training supports would also begin in this phase. Walkability improvements to enhance the connectivity of the MET Center and the daycare to the MetroLink would be a part of Phase Two. The park area between the daycare and the station would be a focal point of redevelopment efforts in this phase. Finally, housing and increasing density in the area around the station would be an essential part of Phase Two. While no new housing can be added to the area immediately around the station, there is an acute need to stabilize existing housing by repairing what can be repaired, and demolishing what cannot. Improvements to the existing housing stock will draw more people to Wellston, and may be an incentive for those currently in the area to stay, thus stabilizing existing residents and improving overall quality of life. Part of the housing improvements will be ensuring that all homes that are improved are connected to MSD's wastewater system. This process may involve tracking down absentee landlords, enforcement of code by St. Louis County, and connecting individuals with funding to have their homes connected to the system. A map of vacant parcels can be found in Appendix B.

Phase Three involves the long-term goals that will build upon the engagement of residents, partners, and funders established throughout Phases One and Two. Establishing a K-12 charter school in Wellston is a necessary link between the daycare and the services provided at the MET Center. If Wellston is going to be a place for educational and workforce development an accredited school serving the youth of Wellston is a must. Continued commercial or industrial development is planned for this phase, as is the construction of new homes in vacant housing lots near the station. Finally, as ascetic touches, the conversion of the burnt out factory next to the tracks into an open-air pavilion to serve as a community space, and the over-tracks building, will be part of this phase. This re-purposing of space will serve as one of many connections between Wellston's past as an industrial town, and its future where people's educational and career needs are served across the lifespan in changing economic and workforce conditions. The over-tracks building will serve as a hospitable environment for those waiting for the train, or who simply want to get a good view of the area.

**Key partners.** Partnerships will be an important part of each phase of development in Wellston. There are already several agencies working in Wellston, thus building off of the accomplishments and goals of these already existing agencies will be a central focus for future work and partnerships. The partners listed here serve only as suggestions and a starting ground for future work. As the planning process begins, more entities may need to be brought on board. Citizens for Modern Transit and Metro would be partners throughout all three phases of development. It is suggested that a non-profit such as Beyond Housing take the lead in the implementation of each phase, and the coordination of the necessary partners listed below.



Potential partners for Phase One include Beyond Housing, the City of Wellston, the Wellston Police Department, the MET Center, Washington University architecture students, and the St. Louis County Economic Council. Beyond Housing's role will be especially important in Phase One as they would take the lead on community engagement and getting all other partners to the table, and educating the community about TOD. The City of Wellston, with the help of Washington University architecture students and St. Louis County Public Works officials would be in charge of developing and implementing clear design standards for the station area, and Wellston as a whole. The Wellston Police Department would be integral in recording crime statistics and maintaining a public database so that all interested parties can learn about and address particular problem areas. The police department would also be asked to increase security and patrols around the station if residents deem this necessary. The MET Center could take the lead on the development of a survey to assess MetroLink ridership amongst its students. Washington University architecture and design students, perhaps as part of a class project, could be enlisted to design landscaped walkways, artwork, etc. for the area surrounding the station. Suggestions for design elements could come from residents, be rendered by students, and then presented back to residents to vote on to ensure community voices and visions are reflected in the final visual appearance of the station area. Finally, in conjunction with the MET Center, the St. Louis County Economic Council (SLCEC) would be a partner in the completion of a daycare, as well as be able to assist in securing funds for pedestrian infrastructure improvements, as they have undertaken such projects in the past.

Potential partners for Phase Two include many of the same partners as in Phase One, with the addition of area hospitals or medical schools, MSD, and RHCDA. SLCEC could assist in the acquisition of investors and attraction of business owners to open needed shops near the MetroLink. In partnership with the Enterprise Center, which is run by SLCEC, space in the new building could be rented affordably to those working in the Enterprise Center who want a market to test their products or services, which could then be offered to the Wellston community for free or at a reduced cost. Area hospitals or medical schools such as Barnes-Jewish Hospital or St. Louis University Medical School could be potential partners in the construction and establishment of the health clinic in Wellston, providing opportunities for these entities' interns and students, as well as those being trained as CNAs at the MET Center. RHCDA is already involved in the construction of housing in Wellston, but these projects could be continued and focused around the station as part of Phase Two. RHCDA, MSD, and St. Louis County would all be a part of ensuring proper systems for wastewater are installed and intact in Wellston homes.

Phase Three would again be a place where the MET Center and Washington University architecture and design students could shine. The MET Center could be a partner in using the Eskridge High School building as a charter school, and given the proximity of the school to the MET Center, it makes sense that this project could fall under their umbrella of services. Washington University architecture students have already shown skill in their design of the over-tracks building and the utilization of the burned-out factory; so continuing to tap into the potential of students until these aspects of the proposal are brought to fruition is again a logical extension of what has already been done.

## **Funding**

**Brownfield Credits.** Due to the site's classification as a Brownfield, multiple funding options are available. Chiefly, the Environmental Protection Agency offers the Brownfield Tax Incentive, the Brownfield Assessment Grant and the Brownfield Cleanup Grant to encourage developers to build upon contaminated sites such as the Wellston MetroLink site.

The Wellston MetroLink Station sits on land once occupied by the Wagner Electric Company. Due to the environmental contamination due to dumping of hazardous products by Wagner and various other industrial entities, the entire area is classified as a Brownfield. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in an effort to encourage the cleanup and revitalization of former industrial areas with environmental contamination, instituted the Brownfields Tax Incentive, which was signed into law under the Tax Relief Act of August 1997 ("The Act") and codified through §198(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Under the Act, expenses related to the cleanup of Brownfield sites may be fully deducted from a taxpayer's current income fully during the year in which the expenses are incurred. Without the act, the expenses would have to be capitalized and spread over a period of years. Because of the program, money is immediately saved because the taxpayer's taxable income is reduced in the current year, providing an immediate infusion of funds for further development.

According to the Act, a property is eligible for the tax incentive if "it is in an area at or on which there has been a release of a hazardous substance or disposal of a hazardous substance." By way of reference to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), the Act defines a release as including "spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, discharging, injecting, escaping, leaching, dumping, or disposing of hazardous substances into the environment. CERCLA defines the word "environment" as including "surface water, ground water, ambient air, and land, but does not include indoor areas." Though the list is too comprehensive to detail here, CERCLA defines those substances that are hazardous under 40 CFR §302.4, Table 302.4.

The Act allows a taxpayer to deduct any expenses that are "paid or incurred in connection with the abatement or control of hazardous substances." Typically those eligible expenses include: site assessment and investigation, site monitoring, cleanup costs, operation and maintenance costs, state voluntary cleanup program oversight fees and removal of demolition debris.

Due to the Wellston's sites historic use as a location to dump industrial waste by Wagner Electric Company, development of the site would necessarily lead to the incurring of a significant amount of eligible expenses that could be deducted from income. Therefore, strict adherence to the strictures of the Incentive Program would be necessary.

Additionally, the EPA conducts a program titled the EPA Brownfields program. The lynchpin of the program is the Brownfields grants. They offer four basic types of grants, all of which are competitive. Assessment grants provide funding for brownfields inventories, planning environmental assessments, and community outreach. Revolving Loan Fund grants provide funding to capitalize a revolving loan fund that provides loans and subgrants to carry out cleanup activities at brownfields. Cleanup grants provide direct funding for cleanup activities at specific

sites. Finally, Job Training grants provide environmental training for residents of brownfield communities.

Specifically, Assessment Grants provide funding for a grant recipient to:

- Inventory sites: Compile a listing
- Characterize Sites: Identify past uses
- Assess Sites: Determine existing contamination
- Conduct Cleanup and Redevelopment Planning: Scope and plan process
- Conduct Community Involvement: Inform and engage community.

Cleanup grants, intuitively, provide funding for a grant recipient to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. Each grant awards up to \$200,000 per site for a period of up to three years.

Though this is a simplification of the various funding programs available for brownfield sites, it illustrates the need for a developer of a brownfield program to be informed about the various programs. Each program requires a different set of requirements and steps to be followed. The potential applicant need be vigilant in ensuring that all steps are followed and all guidelines adhered to.

**Tax Increment Financing:** Tax Increment Financing (TIF) uses local property and/or sales taxes to help fund redevelopment in designated areas (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). It is assumed that if redevelopment occurs, increased property and sales taxes can be used to partially fund the redevelopment efforts (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). TIF tax dollars can be collected for up to 23 years (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). TIF funds pay for a variety of redevelopment related costs including studies and surveys, acquisition of land and structure demolition, rehabilitation of existing structures, construction of new infrastructure (sewers, parking, lighting), and others (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). All of these uses of funds fit in well with the proposed TOD in Wellston, so TIF seems to be a good fit for all aspects of the project. In order to utilize TIF funding, an area must be declared “Blighted”, “Conservation”, or “Economic Development” (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). Wellston already meets this qualification, as it was designated “Blighted” in 1999.

Municipalities, in this case the City of Wellston, must take a strong lead in establishing TIF. A TIF Commission must be established, comprised of certain members such as local taxing authorities, and this commission must then work with the municipal government to create a Redevelopment Plan (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). The coordination this would take from the City of Wellston would be great; however, the benefits in terms of accomplishing the goals of this TOD project would hopefully prove incentive enough to work towards establishing TIF in Wellston.

**Transit Development District.** Another source of financing (particularly in regards to the new station building) could be a Transportation Development District (TDD). A TDD may be created to “act as the entity responsible for developing, improving, maintaining, or operating one or more ‘projects’ relative to the transportation needs of the area in which the District is located” (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). Typical budget items in TDD serve to fund, promote, plan, design, construct, improve, maintain, or operate one or more projects, or to assist in such activity. Projects can include: street, highway, road, interchange, intersection, bridge, traffic signal light or signage; bus stop, terminal, station, wharf, dock, rest area, or shelter; airport, river, lake port, railroad, *light rail* or other mass transit and any similar or related improvement or infrastructure (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012).

Funding of TDD projects can be accomplished through creation of special assessments or property/sales tax with a required majority voter or petition approval. The plan must also be approved by the local transportation system (in this case, Metro), which becomes the owner of the project. While Metro continues to be an excellent TOD partner and leader, passing a new tax by ballot initiative presents several difficulties.

Primarily, major community and political support is required to pass a tax. At this juncture, we do not have the community involvement required. Trust must be built, and plans must be approved. A TDD must essentially be the community’s idea—developers and partners might plant it, but the community must make it grow.

**Community Improvement District.** A Community Improvement District (CID) could either function as a political subdivision or a non-profit corporation; CIDs are organized for the purpose of financing many public-use facilities and establishing policies and public services for the needs of the district. A CID must be organized by a request petition signed by property owners and presented for authorization to the governing body of the local municipality in which the CID will be located. A five-year plan for development, a list of purposes, services, improvements, estimated costs, and maximum property tax rates imposed on the district must be included in the petition (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012).

A CID is a distinct and separate entity from the municipality that creates the district. Some typical budget items are pedestrian or shopping malls, paintings, murals, and fountains, parks, trees, streetscapes, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, sidewalks, streets, traffic signs, child care facilities, and within a blighted area, a contract with any private property owners to demolish or rehabilitate any building or structure.

Funding can be accomplished through district-wide assessment, rents, and fees, grants, gifts, and donations. While charging Wellston to use its parks is an unlikely source of funding, there are numerous organizations in St. Louis that could be sources for large grants and gifts. CIDs could be an excellent source of development, since much of the plan for Wellston involves parks, lighting, paths, childcare, and shopping.

**CDBG Program: Water and Wastewater.** The Missouri Department of Economic Development established a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) specifically to address water and wastewater concerns. This program is authorized by 42 USC § 5301 et seq., 24 C.F.R. Part 570; and Missouri’s “Consolidated Plan” submitted to the U.S. Department of

Housing and Urban Development (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2007). Eligibility for this funding is determined by city or county size, as cities must be smaller than 50,000 people or counties smaller than 200,000 people (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2007). Additionally, 51% of the beneficiaries of this funding must be low to moderate-income persons (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2007). Wellston, with just over 2,000 residents, and with a 40% poverty level, does not have a problem meeting these eligibility standard. The maximum amount of funding that can be applied for is \$500,000 and this money can be used to improve water infrastructure, provide capacity for growth, and address health concerns (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012).

This funding could potentially be used to expand existing sewer infrastructure to connect to new developments in the TOD, or to help residents in the area get connected to MSD's system, as outlined in the proposal above. A proposal and engineering report would need to be completed for the application (Missouri Department of Economic Development, 2012). Developing these items could be part of Phase Two detailed above, where MSD, the City of Wellston, and other necessary parties come together to decide on the best use of these funds.

## **Part 6: Conclusion**

Wellston has several major advantages that many other TOD sites do not enjoy. Wellston's first and foremost asset is land. While many TOD sites are "concrete jungles," Wellston is full of open, green, undeveloped parcels. In addition, this is not the first development venture in this community. Much of the work to clean up Wellston's industrial past has already been done. While not all past plans were brought to fruition, they serve as lessons of the barriers for future development. Finally, Wellston has a wonderful community anchor and example in the MET Center. The MET Center's emphasis on workforce development breathed new life into Wellston, and serves as a model for further workforce work in this historic municipality.

Of course, a Wellston TOD is not without its challenges. Zoning, financing, political and community mistrust, and continued brownfield and plumbing cleanup are all issues of concern. The plan presented in this report attempts to address the first two concerns by working within the boundaries of the required zoning restrictions and available financing. This report also concedes that much work still needs to be done regarding community buy-in. We hope we have adequately expressed the importance of getting Wellston to trust and welcome new development in their city. Unique environmental concerns with plumbing and brownfields need to be addressed if the development is to be sustainable and usable in the future.

Citizens for Modern Transit's 10 Strategies for a Slow Growth Market, adapted to Wellston in the executive summary, served as our guide and inspiration. Our plan does not suggest filling Wellston with high rises and flashy shopping. This plan exists to provide vital services to a community that currently must go elsewhere to shop, get needed healthcare, work, and learn. It exists to build safe and well-lit sidewalks. It exists to provide parks for Wellston children to play in, safely and happily. It provides direct access to the MetroLink stop, which is a lifeline in any community it is in.

We have learned much about TOD, and the community and place called Wellston. The community's tenacity after years of strife is exceptional. Our plan is dedicated to those people who call Wellston home.

*Place is something the soul makes for storing images.*  
*-Albertus Magnus*

**Appendix A: List of Advisors**

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## Appendix B: Additional Resources

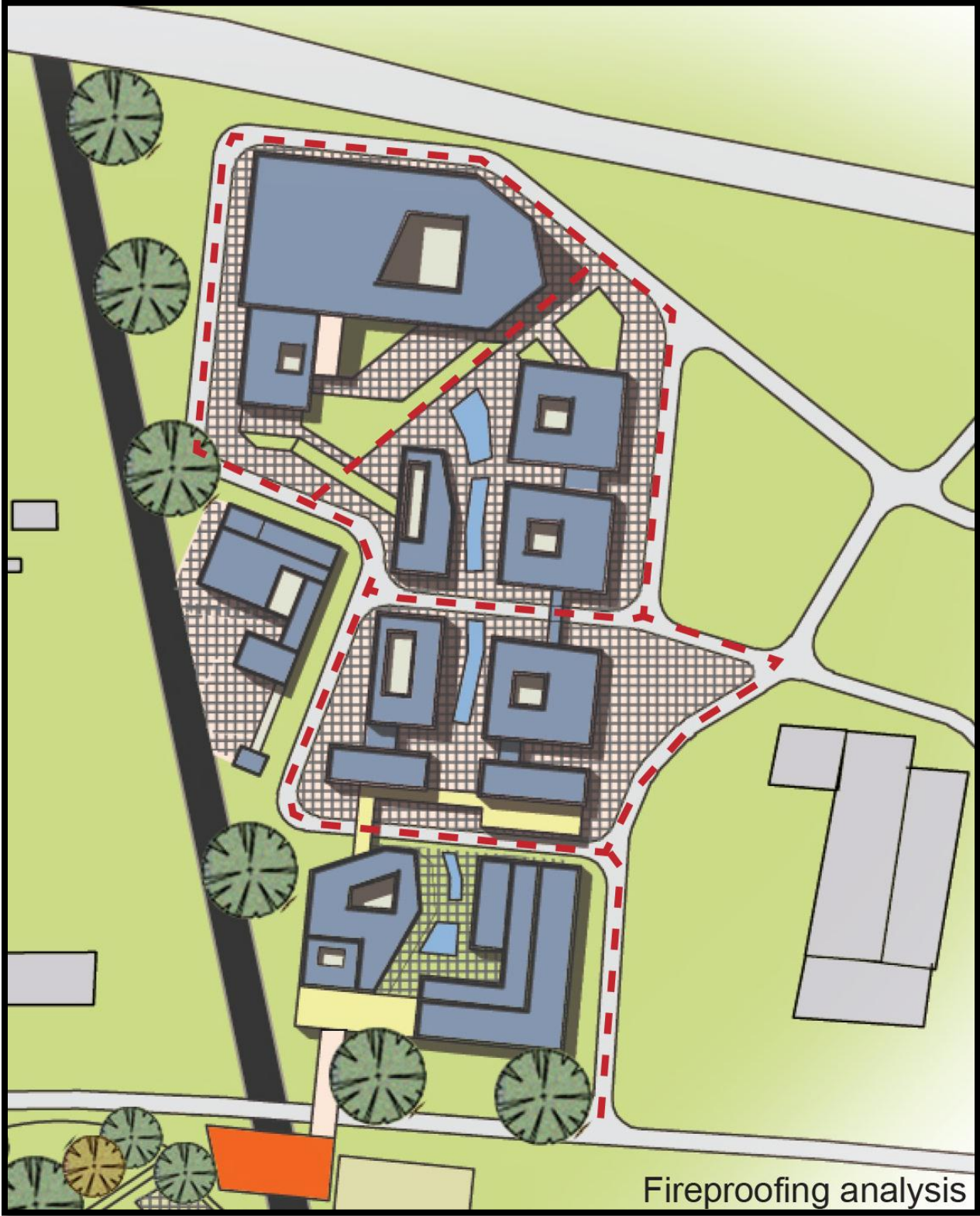
### Beyond Housing Community Engagement Chart

# Engagement Chart

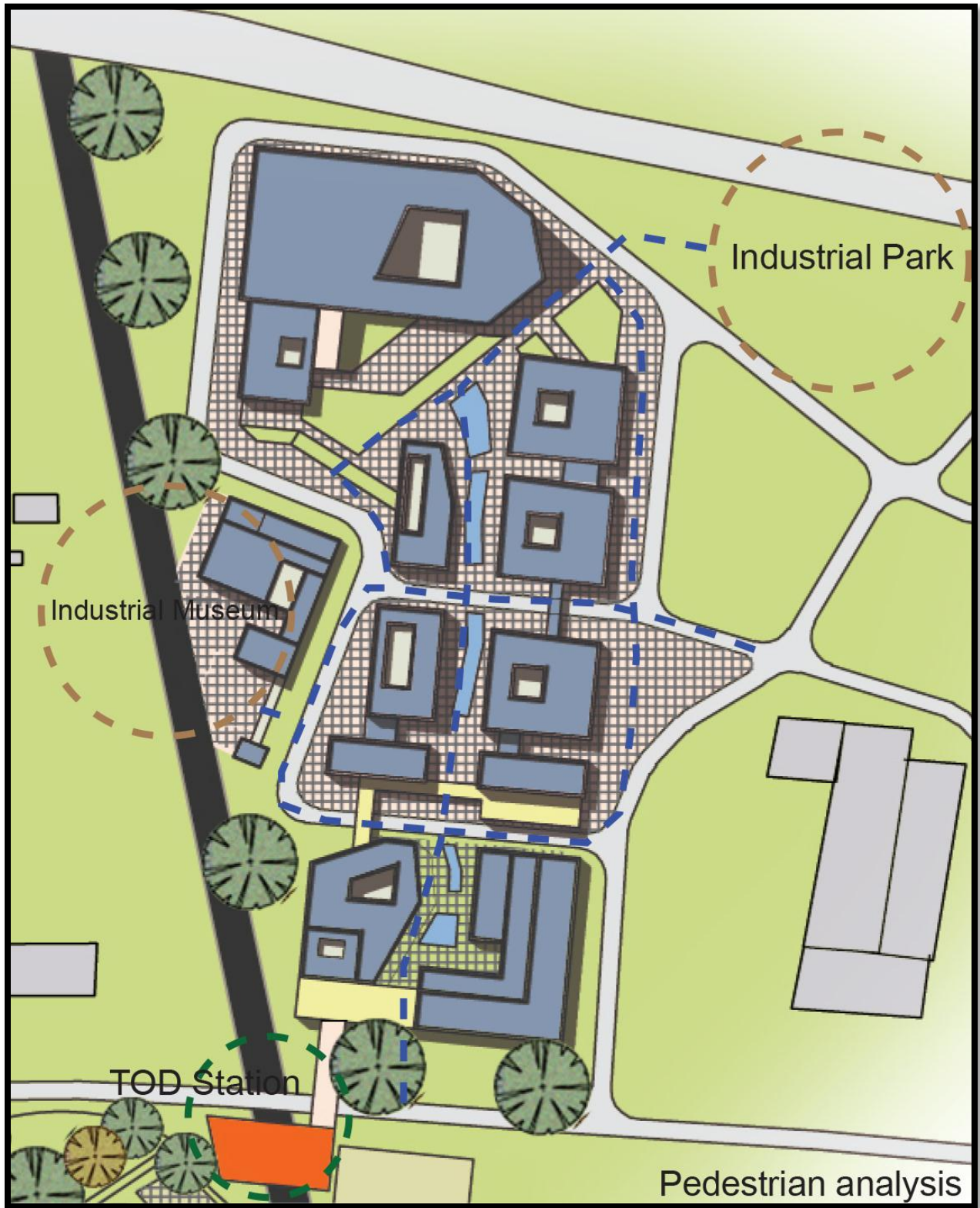
Engagement Method	Frequency	Numbers	Audience	Purpose
Executive Committee Meeting	Bi-monthly	6 Chairpersons	Committee Chairpersons	Community oversight
Planning Committees	Monthly	6 Committees 97 Members	Residents & stakeholders	To generate 241 plan
Partners Meeting	Quarterly	8 Agencies	Heads of service agencies	Collaboration & communication
Municipal Gov. Partnerships Committee	Monthly	15 Municipalities 20 Participants	Mayors and City Administrators	Service collaboration & cost savings
Community Meetings	Quarterly	6 Meetings 219 Participants	Residents & stakeholders	Community oversight
Municipal Meetings	Monthly	60+ attended	Elected officials & residents	Communication & community presence
Listening Sessions	Two Rounds	7 Sessions 110 Participants	Community residents	Plan input & feedback
Providers Breakfast	First meeting held	35 Agencies 67 Participants	Front line providers	Collaboration & communication
Youth Summit	Twice Yearly	45 Participants 25 Volunteers	Youth	Capture youth voice
Focus Groups with Seniors	Two Rounds	4 Sessions 40 Participants	Senior residents	Learn about service needs
Business Services Interviews	N/A	12 Interviews	Owners & Agencies	Gain business perspective
Tabling at School District Events	N/A	N/A	Students & Parents	Outreach
Various Meetings with Agencies	N/A	Many, many!!	Service Providers	Outreach & Service Alignment

Retrieved from <http://www.beyondhousing.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/24-1-Community-Plan-Final-7-18-11.pdf>

**Fireproofing Analysis**



**Pedestrian Analysis**

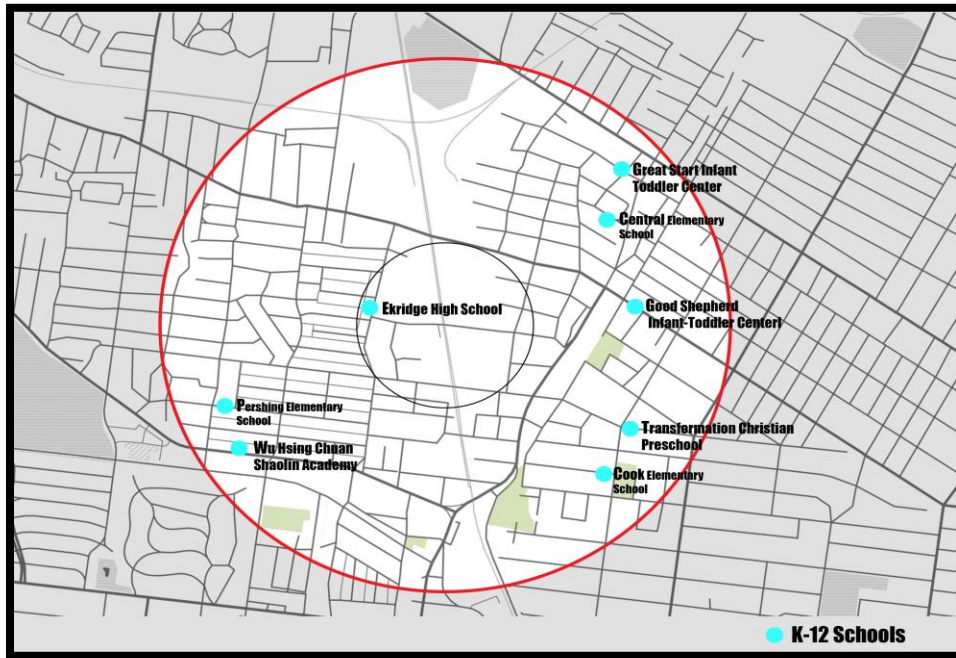




**Churches – Bike Radius**



**Schools – Bike Radius**



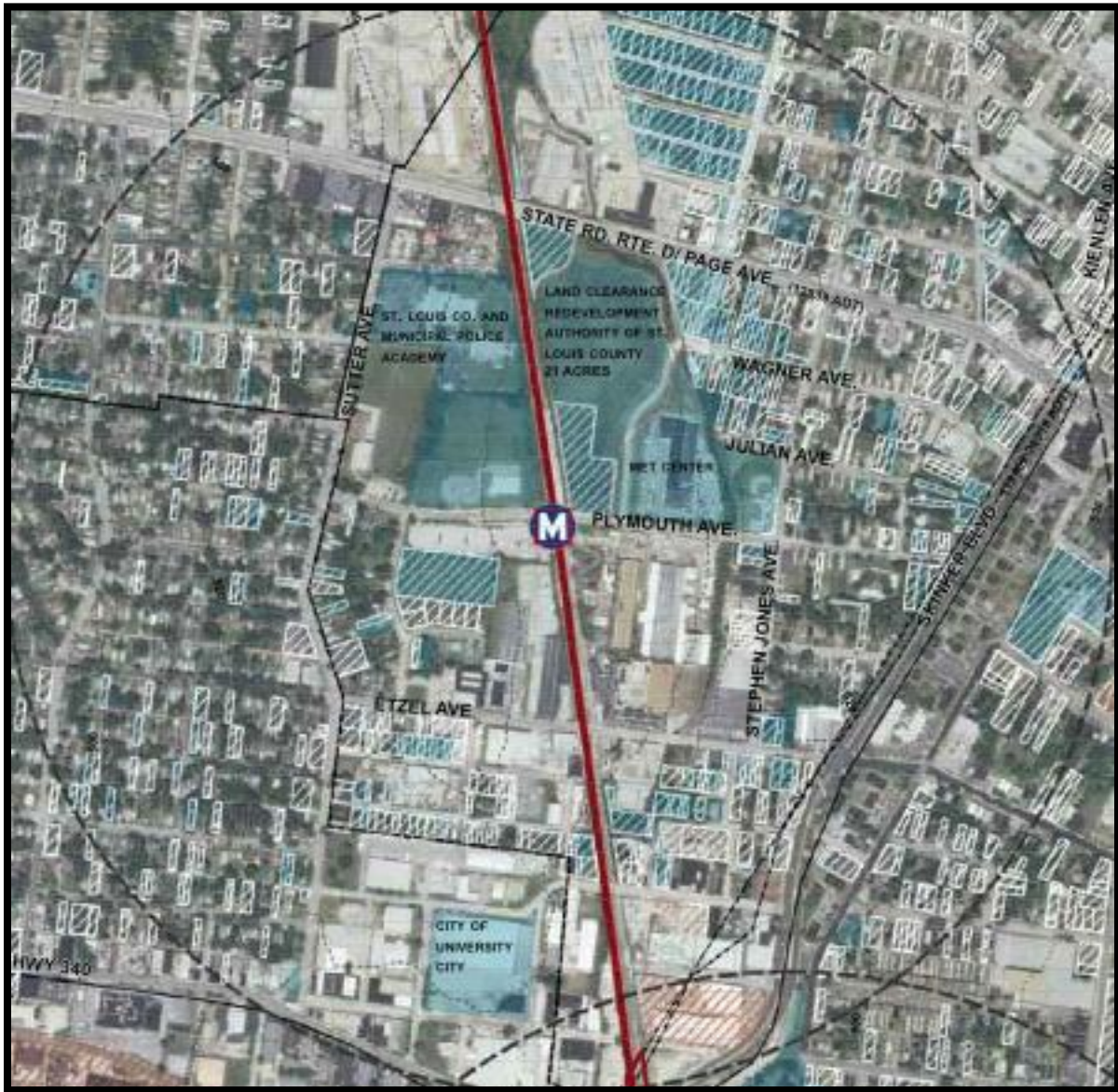
**Vantage Points – Pedestrian Radius**



**Vacant Parcels – Wellston Station Area**



Vacant parcels are indicated with white slashed lines in the image below.



St. Louis TOD Site Analysis, July 2012



### Appendix C: References

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