



**University City Community Vision
Listening Session Summaries
November 8-10, 2021**

**Listening Session #2
Monday, November 8, 2021
6:30pm – 7:30pm**

Key trends and drivers impacting University City:

- The reputation of the school district is the city's largest challenge. There is a disconnect between the reality and the perception. The bad reputation is unearned; the schools are good. Issue of 'white flight' after the elementary years.
- Lack of commercial tax base to support our schools is part of the problem. We need to attract businesses to shore up our tax base.
- Primary trend is lack of affordable housing in the cCity. Need to create more affordable housing throughout the city to make more equitable. This can be done with new zoning laws that can emerge from the Comp Plan.
- Trend: St. Louis County has lost population over the last 2 years.
- Delmare divide exists and the disparities in built environment need to be addressed.
- Crime is an issue for the City (car theft and guns)

Opportunities for redevelopment and economic development:

- Housing is an opportunity for redevelopment; a nationwide issue that is seeing a shift in what millennials and retirees are looking for – non-traditional options with an environmental awareness.
- Opportunity to redevelop Olive Boulevard is one that could rebalance investment in the community and reshape the community. Investment in social infrastructure is needed. Development needs to reflect and integrate Ward 3.
- COSTCO opportunity through TIF arrangement.
- Washington University is an issue for redevelopment because when they purchase a property, they don't pay property taxes and the City loses that income.

Future aspirations for University City/Visioning: Thinking of the future, what would be a delightful, aspirational shift for University City?

- Would like to see the school district issues addressed and racism dealt with. We need a future where we address our social problems as a society.
- We have a responsibility to address the societal/systemic issues that exist in UCity. This is our time to move forward.

- A vision for UCity that is truly integrated with more investment in our underserved areas. Diversity in the street is important because it is tied to income and opportunity for equitable outcomes. Diversity, equity and inclusion is an opportunity for UCity.
- Participant quote: *“How we feel as a community is how a community looks.”*
- To do a better job of mixed income housing in all 3 wards; provide incentives and encourage developers to integrate
- By 2040, address risk management around severe weather events. Climate change is starting to cause flash flooding esp. in the 3rd Ward. Flood insurance affects housing costs.

Question: What topic/topics would make people want to become involved in the visioning process?

- Parking
- Social justice and racism
- Need a ‘rile up’ factor (often don’t get involved if feel things are ok)
- Need to hear from voices not usually heard from
- Aspirations for UCity