

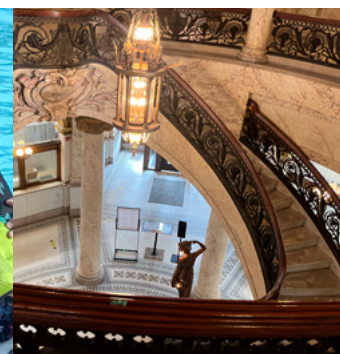


UNIVERSITY CITY

COMMUNITY VISION 2040
ROADMAP REPORT

MISSOURI, USA

July 2022



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This report presents the community vision that was developed following extensive community engagement undertaken during University City's Community Vision 2040 planning process. Beginning in July 2021 through to July 2022, the engagement process included two Community Surveys, four Listening Sessions, seven focus group sessions, on Student Survey, and two Think-Tank Workshops to explore the long-term future of University City. This engagement process was designed to provide an open, inclusive, and transparent platform for community members to help create a shared community vision.

This report represents Future iQ's analysis of the engagement outcomes, and how this data has informed the identification of a preferred future and strategic pillars. The analysis in this report builds on the preceding project report, meetings, and engagement analysis. The recommended Key Strategic Pillars have been developed from the community input gathered during the visioning process.

These reports and the associated data analysis are available on the project portal:

<https://lab2.future-iq.com/university-citys-community-visioning-project/>

Envisioning Project Hosted by:



Report Prepared by:



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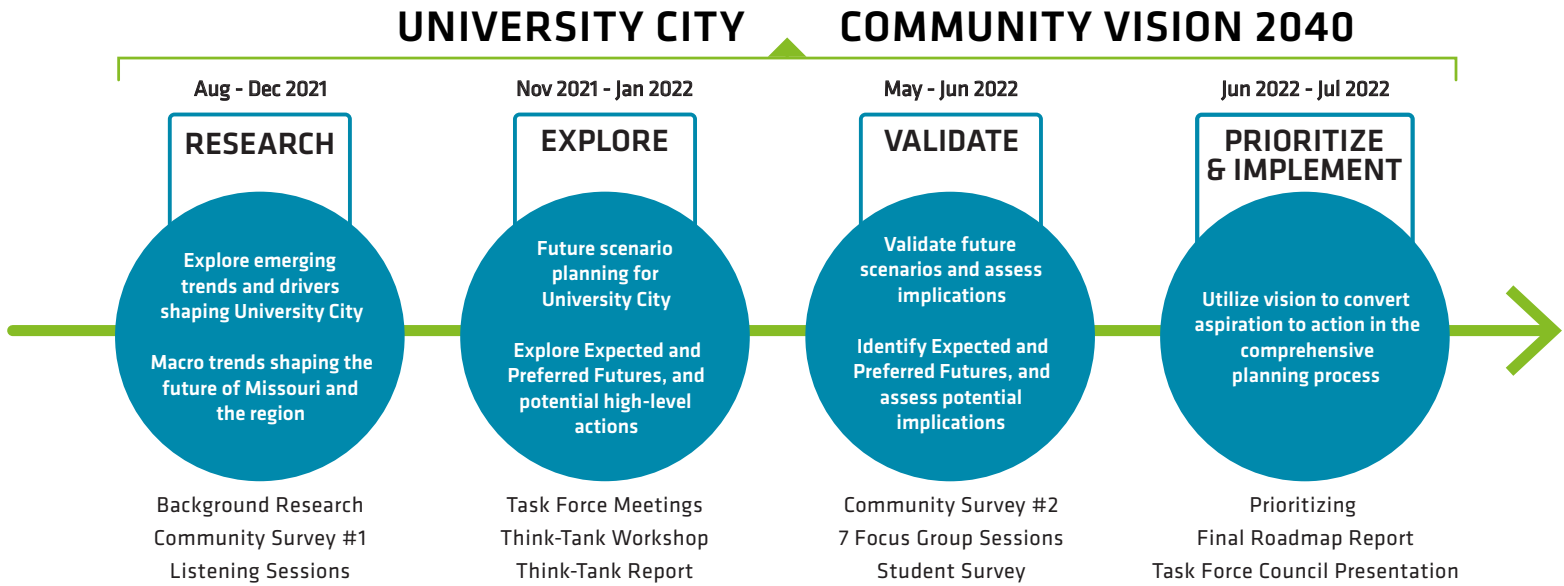


The University City Community Vision 2040 process offers a model for communities that are looking ahead to the future with an intentional equity lens. It emphasizes the importance of its historical context and looks ahead with optimism and hope for the future.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The University City Roadmap Report represents the final element in the Community Vision 2040 process. The analysis in this report builds on the preceding project report and identifies the vision that is important to this community. This report represents Future iQ’s analysis of the engagement outcomes and how this data has informed the identification of a preferred future and key focus areas for University City.

Community input and transparent, inclusive engagement was central to the visioning process. The comprehensive engagement and data-driven process progressively narrowed and focused the discussion on emerging key themes and community aspirations for the future. The purpose of the process was to arrive, as close as possible, at a “point of consensus” that represented the most widely shared vision for the future, and strategic pillars and action areas that guide the community towards that future.



This report examines the identification of the preferred future for University City, while discussing the stages of the overall visioning process. The key themes and aspirations that emerged from the engagement are included within the “strategic pillars” and further explored in the “key action areas” of the report.



1.1 SNAPSHOT - REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

This report lays out the findings from each step in the visioning process. The process identified key priorities for the future of University City. Community members imagined and considered possible directions and the impacts and consequences of those directions. The process, and the report, then drill down more deeply into what people saw as the preferred future for University City. This understanding helps lay the groundwork for figuring out “how we get there” and sets the City up for its comprehensive planning process to follow.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THIS REPORT



1. Strong desire to incorporate intentional equity into community planning

Throughout the visioning process, many community members expressed a desire to see amenities and services distributed more equitably across the City. Intentional actions that build more equity within the community, and especially in the 3rd Ward, is a primary feature of the preferred future for University City.



2. Support for a creative approach to economic and urban development

Many residents consider the upcoming comprehensive planning phase to be a critical opportunity to adopt a more creative approach to urban development. More walkability, green space, multi-modal transportation options, social infrastructure and funding options were consistent ideas discussed.



3. Seek strengthened partnerships with the school district and outside municipalities

University City residents highly value their school system and want to build an environment that enables local youth to thrive. Strengthening collaborative initiatives between the school district, our library, University City, Washington University, and outside municipalities is seen to be key to creating the support and wrap around services that youth need to thrive and grow.



4. Use Olive Boulevard redevelopment as an opportunity to effect social change

The homes and historical character of the 3rd Ward are unique elements of University City. Redevelopment along Olive Boulevard is seen as a wonderful opportunity to distribute more wealth and amenities to the 3rd Ward.



5. Desire for bold ideas in urban design

Many residents expressed the desire to implement new and bold approaches to designing the community and its urban landscape. Small Area Planning emerged as an idea to explore for the smaller scale development of neighborhood nodes and business districts.



6. Willingness to recognize and address environmental issues

Being a Tree City USA, residents indicated a staunch readiness to embrace new tools and processes to confront the various emerging challenges regarding greening, energy and climate change.



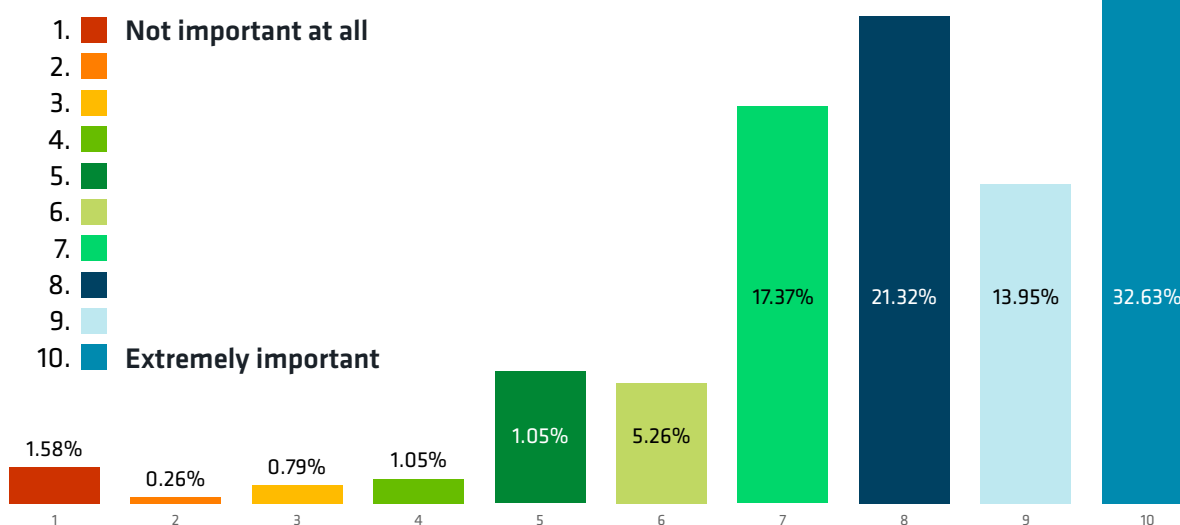
A shared vision for the future will be important for University City as it embarks on its comprehensive planning process. With most residents viewing a shared vision as important, this process is a foundational building block for the City's planning for the future.

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF VISIONING TO THE UNIVERSITY CITY COMMUNITY

University City's visioning process looked at how the community's evolution and what are the new trends and factors that are shaping the community's future. The visioning process was largely viewed as an opportunity to come together and shape the future trajectory of the community looking out to 2040. As the chart below shows, residents' belief in the importance of a shared vision was reflected in responses to Community Survey #1 which launched the visioning process in August 2021.

IMPORTANCE OF A SHARED VISION

Question: How important do you think it is to have a SHARED VISION (an agreed future plan) for the future of University City?



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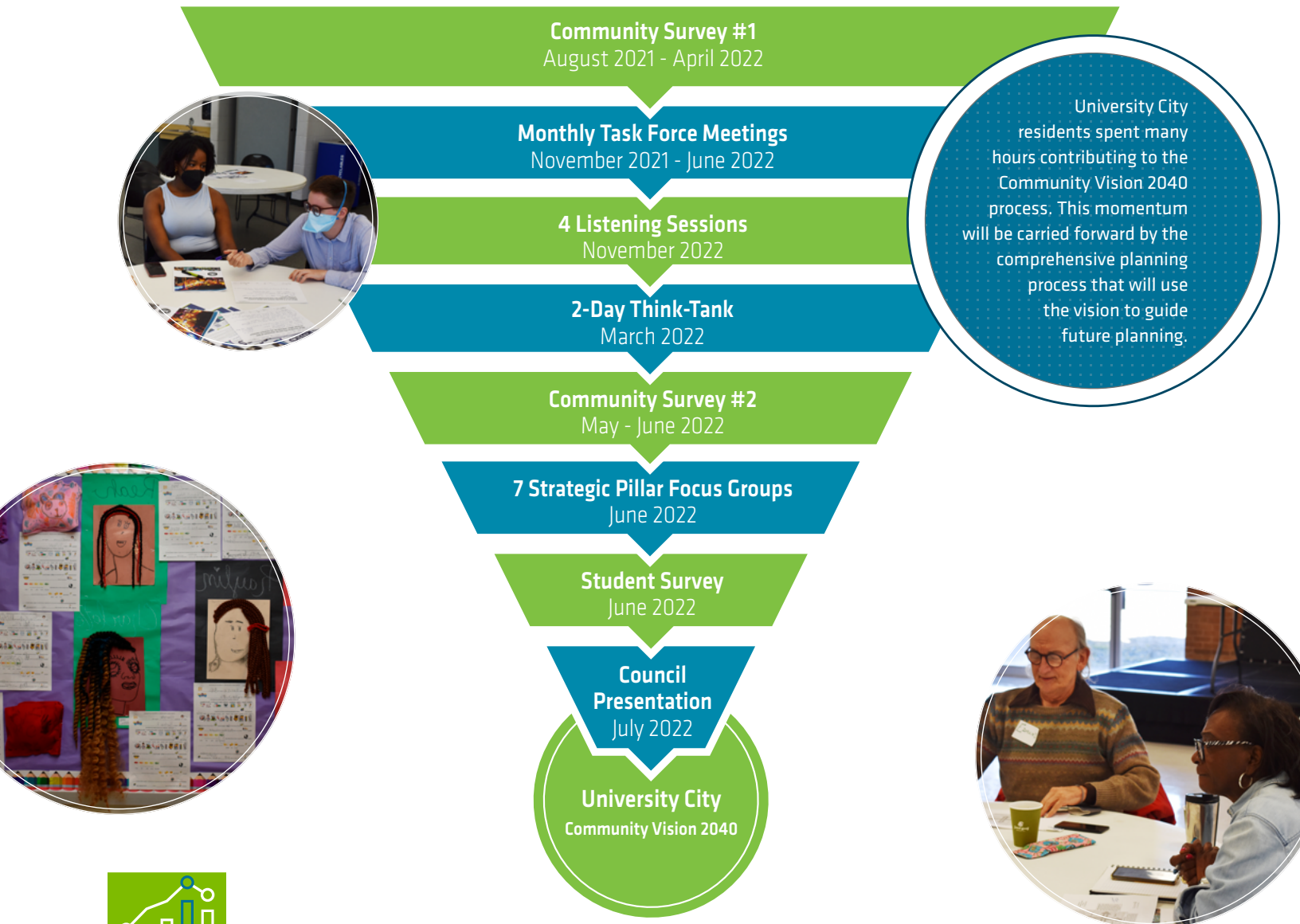
- Maintaining a shared vision for the community will involve clear and consistent communication that reaches all corners of the community, in various forms and formats.
- Applying the shared vision for the community will require regular check-ins with the City's Boards and Commissions to be sure to maintain an aligned approach to decision-making in the future.



2.0 THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFYING THE “PREFERRED FUTURE”

2.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The community of University City embarked on a participatory engagement process involving Community Surveys, monthly Task Force meetings, Listening Sessions, a Think-Tank, seven Focus Groups, and a Student Survey. This engagement was intended to create a unified community vision which will serve as the foundational support for the upcoming comprehensive planning process.



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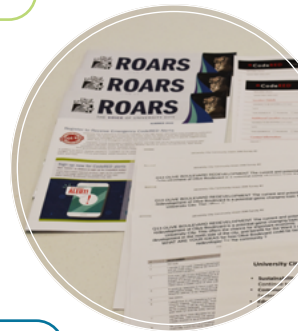
- The engagement process of the Community Vision 2040 project was extended because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The cumulative input from Community Survey #1, Listening Sessions, Think-Tank, Community Survey #2, Focus Groups and Student Survey all helped to inform the visioning process.
- A repeated theme throughout the visioning process was the desire of University City community members to plan for the future in a collaborative, unified manner. Tremendous goodwill and excitement for change exists in the community that should be leveraged and enhanced as the community plans for the future.



The community of University City did not allow the COVID-19 pandemic to deter their participation in the Community Vision 2040 process. This highlights their dedication to the future of University City.

2.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METRICS

Community engagement was a key feature of University City's Community Vision 2040 project. Efforts were made to ensure it was as easy as possible for residents to participate and provide meaningful input in a variety of formats. This allowed individuals to participate as much as they were able and to focus on topics of importance to them. The engagement was offered via two online community surveys, listening sessions, a Think-Tank, focus groups, and a student survey. Online, the project portal provided regular update information and will continue to serve as a central location where community members can go to view reports on the process.



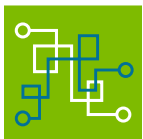
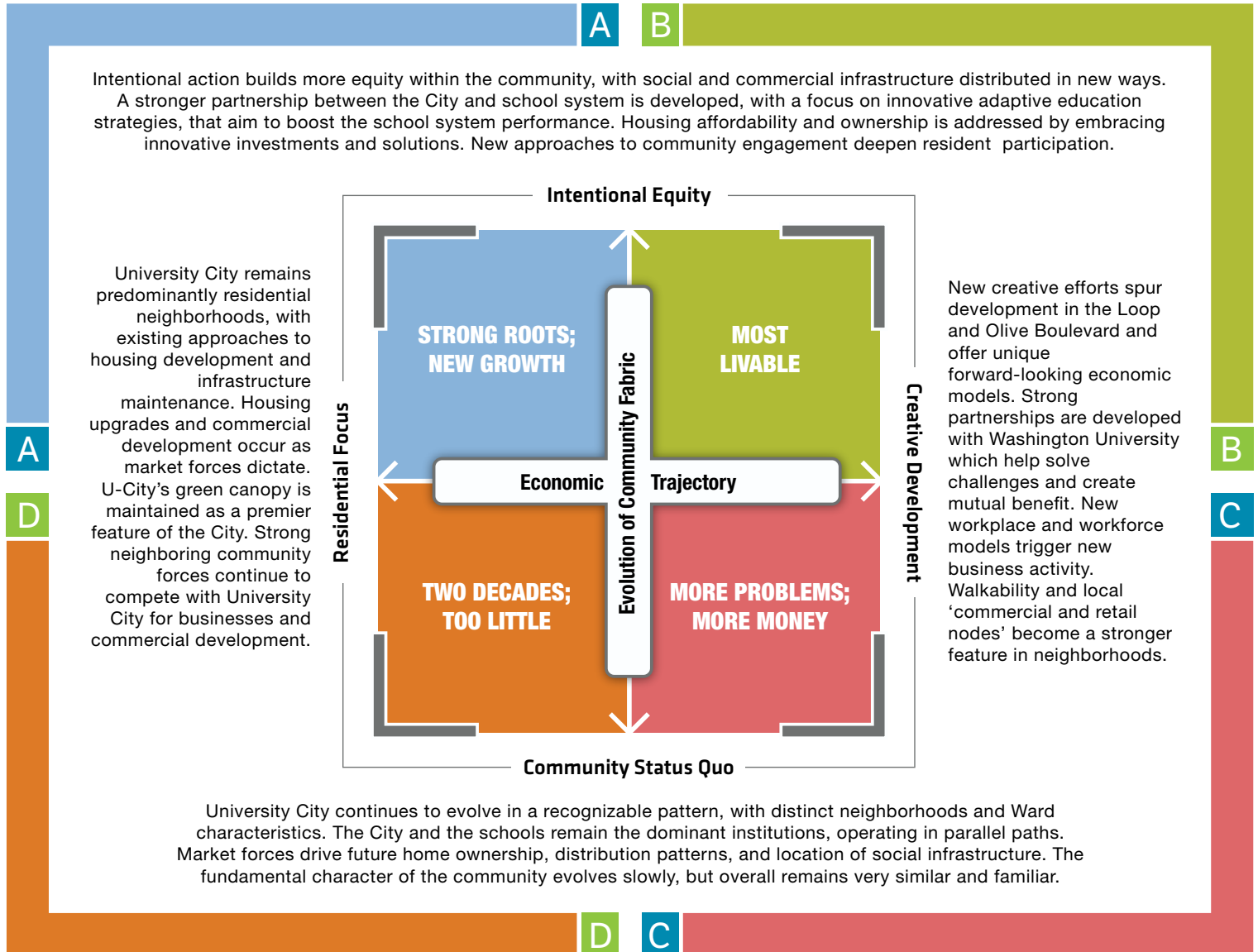
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- A standout feature of the Community Vision 2040 process was the response rate to the Community Survey #1, with 524 collected.
- One of the key community engagement features for Community Vision 2040 was the project portal. The portal served as a central location where community members could go to find updated project information, take surveys, view survey results and data visualization, reports, and register to participate in project events. To explore the project portal, please visit: <https://lab2.future-iq.com/university-citys-community-visioning-project/>.



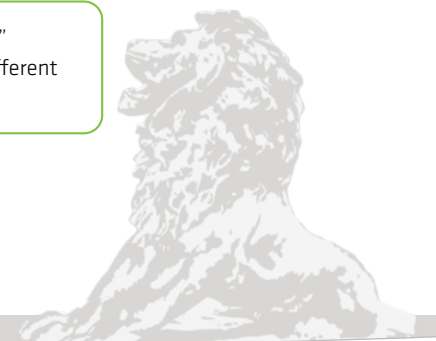
2.3 SCENARIO-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLORING THE FUTURE

The Community Vision 2040 process was built on a scenario-planning methodology. The Think-Tank held in March 2022, began with examining external and internal trends shaping the future of University City. More detail on the process is available in the *University City Community Vision 2040 Think-Tank Report*, March 2022. (For more information visit <https://lab2.future-iq.com/university-citys-community-visioning-project/> .



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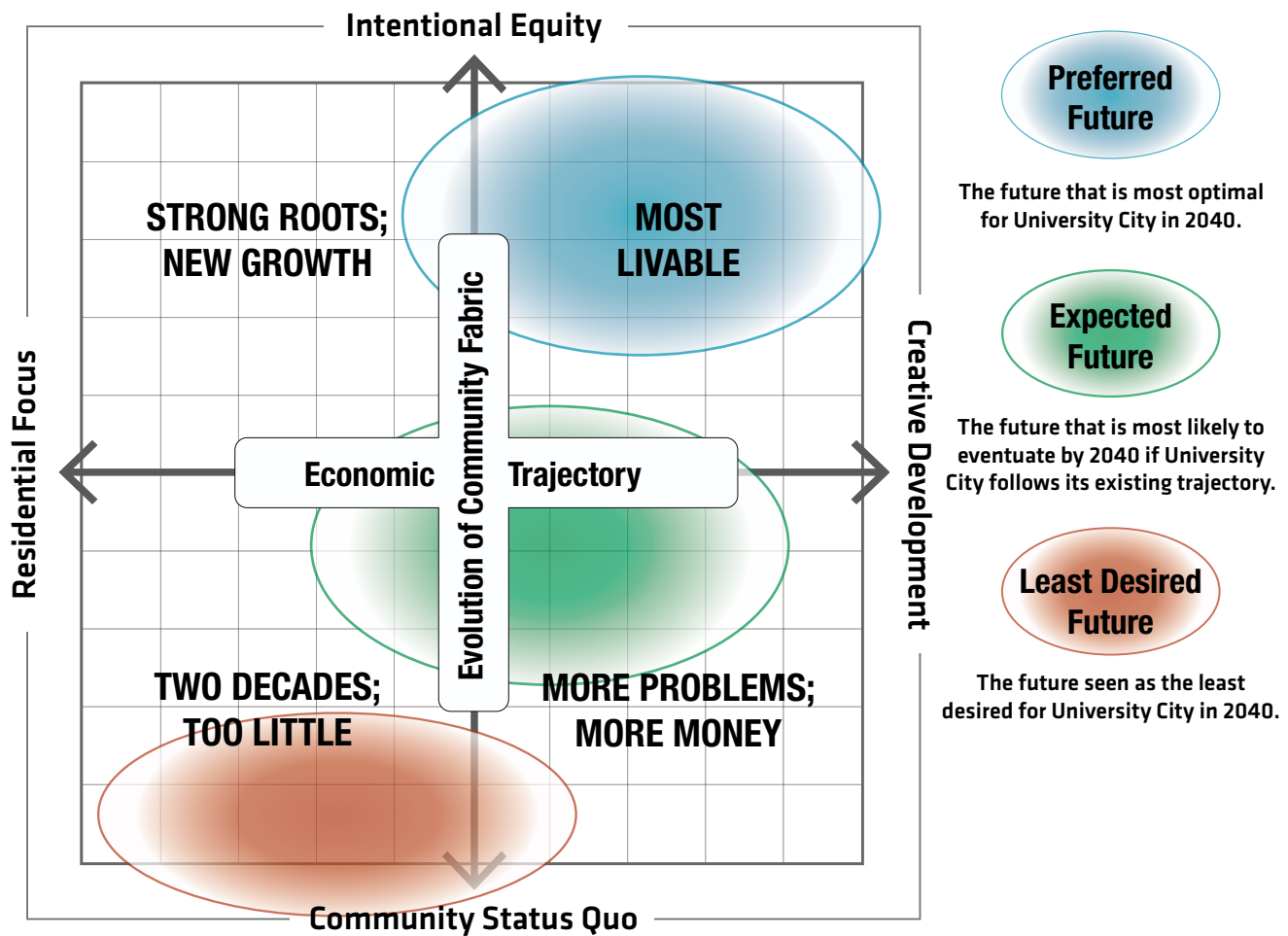
- The scenario-based planning methodology is based on two key "Future-Splitting Themes" represented by the axes in the scenario matrix. Each axis represents a continuum with different future directions and outcomes at each end.



2.4 IDENTIFYING THE PREFERRED FUTURE

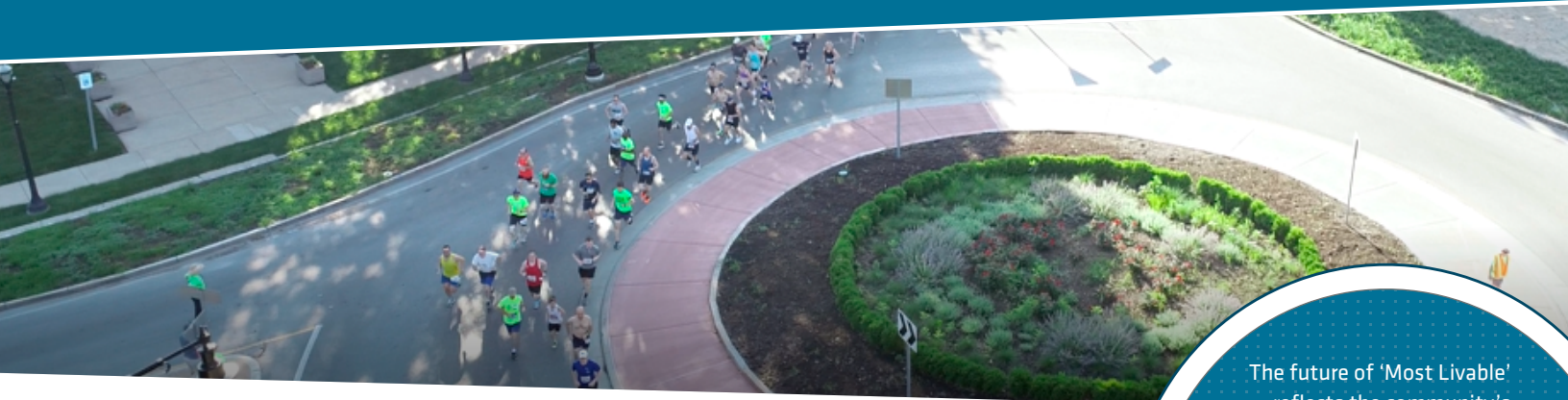
During the Think-Tank, participants were asked to consider what they thought was the preferred future for University City in 2040. This was derived by laying a 10x10 grid over the scenario matrix, creating the option for 100 slightly different versions of the future. The scenario matrix is defined by the main continuums (axes), the end point descriptions and the scenario narratives. The responses from the participants were grouped to create heatmaps, and the following diagram shows the main concentrations of responses.

THINK-TANK HEATMAPS



DataInsight

- The heatmaps showed significant groupings of responses to the different futures, and these are stylized in the above chart. These responses were also validated with the Task Force and during Focus Group discussions.
- The responses highlight a desire to create the 'Most Livable' future scenario, which requires significant movement on the 'Evolution of community fabric' axis, and the 'Economic trajectory' axis. This data laid the foundation for the creation of the community vision and Strategic Pillars.



3.0 COMMUNITY VISION 2040

The visioning process allowed community members to explore the future evolution of the community around the two main themes of 'Evolution of community fabric' and 'Economic trajectory'. These themes allowed the community to wrestle with the implications and responses to changing demographic makeup and needs of the community, and the emerging impact that technology and redevelopment is having on multiple aspects of the community.

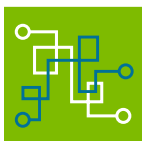
The preferred future identified for the community of University City is called 'Most Livable'. The preferred future was described as:

The future of 'Most Livable' reflects the community's desire to plan for a future that is equitable and inclusive of all University City residents. This Roadmap Report lays out a series of actions and ideas that can be incorporated into the upcoming comprehensive planning process to set the community on the path to its preferred future.

This scenario forecasts a future where there is a prevailing attitude of 'a rising tide lifts all boats.' Intentional action builds more equity within the community and new creative development in the Loop and Olive Boulevard serves to increase prosperity across the community. Care is taken to protect and grow housing affordability with new mixed-use, multi-family and condominium options. Absentee landlords are discouraged from operating in the city. Walkability and local commercial and retail nodes including adjacent services become a stronger feature in neighborhoods as new workplace models allow work from home. Connectivity is strengthened with new multi-modal transportation throughout the city. New partnerships between the city, public schools, local business, and Washington University are fostered, and families choose to locate in University City. The existing cultural diversity of the city is celebrated and promoted; community engagement in civic affairs increases.

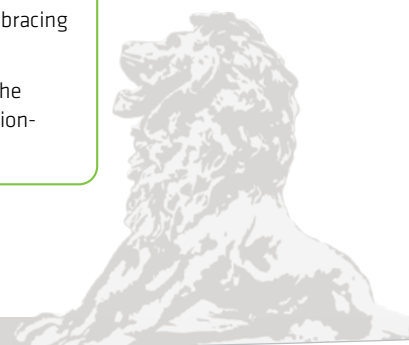


For more information on the Think-Tank and the description of 'Most Livable', please visit <https://lab2.future-iq.com/university-citys-community-visioning-project/>.



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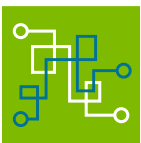
- University City is a historic community that shares a border with the City of St. Louis, Missouri. Its residents wish to maintain its special historical significance while at the same time embracing change and a forward-thinking approach to its development.
- The preferred future, 'Most Livable', reflects the community's ideal vision for the future. The vision was developed by community members and lays out the guiding principles for decision-making looking out to 2040.



4.0 STRATEGIC PILLARS FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Pillars of the Community Vision 2040 visioning process were developed from the community input and data that was gathered over the course of the entire engagement process. The 'pillars' represent the major themes or topic areas that underpin the preferred future for University City. The key action areas listed under each pillar are the building blocks to achieve the preferred community future. The community ideas are suggested steps by community members that could be taken to put the community on the path to its preferred future.

The strategic pillars help to organize future thinking into six important elements for University City. These are intended to be the foundational building blocks that support and guide the community towards its preferred future, 'Most Livable.'



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- The Strategic Pillars create a framework that draws together important elements identified by community members as being most critical in terms of the future.
- The Strategic Pillars are not intended to solve all of the community's challenges in the medium and short term. Rather, they represent a series of key focus areas that can guide future planning for University City.



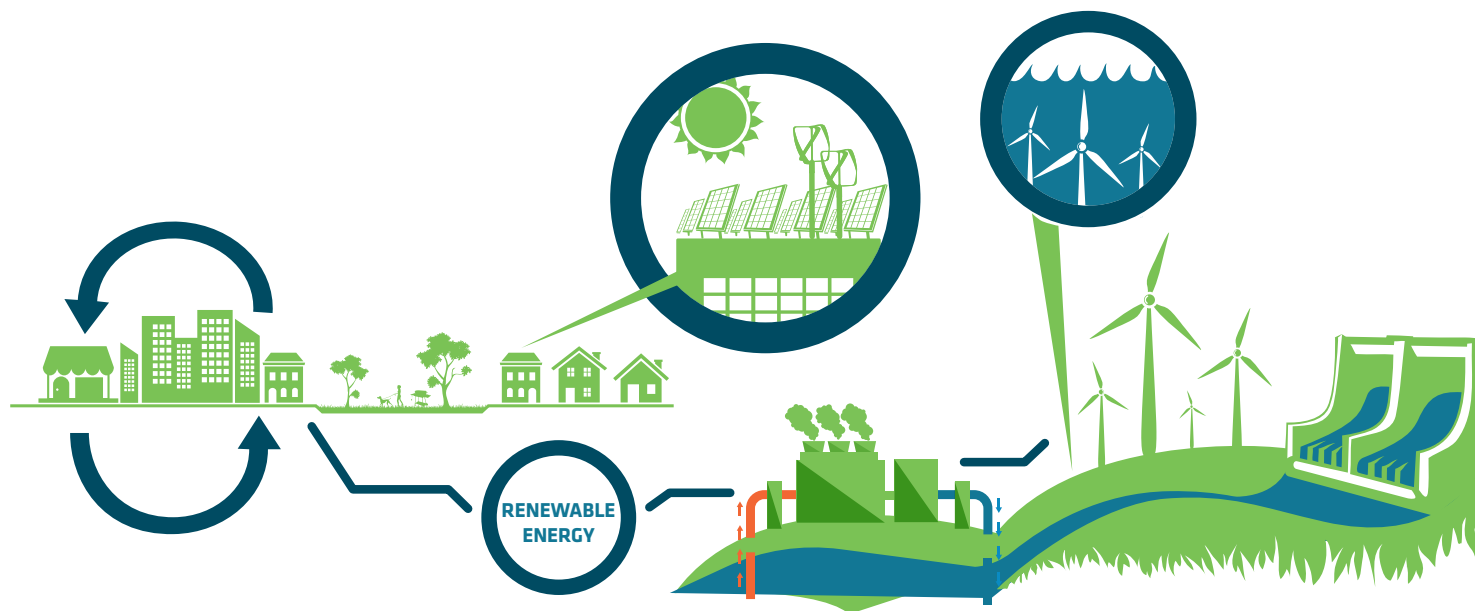
Community residents reflected a desire to adopt more sustainability measures, especially improved incorporation of modern urban design approaches that enhance the urban landscapes.

4.1 PILLAR 1: BUILD SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

There is a clear desire in the community to pursue environmental and sustainability practices. Adjustment to climate change, and mitigating impacts of extreme weather events, such as floods, was seen as a key planning priority.

4.1.1 IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE

Urban environments across the planet are beginning to wrestle with the impacts of climate change. In University City, the implications include increased flood potential, hotter urban landscapes, and more dramatic weather events. Building resilience will be a feature of future urban planning and embracing sustainability practices will be essential. Over the coming decade, there will be shifts in community expectations across a range of sustainability issues, such as renewable energy, electrification of cars, reduced waste and emissions, and more sophisticated resource management.



Value to Residents

- A sustainability approach in University City is fundamentally about creating and maintaining high quality living experiences in an urban landscape. Adapting this urban landscape to increase shade and pedestrian protection was seen as high priority.
- Embracing sustainability and building environmental resilience will require new thinking and change, however it has the potential to deliver multi-faceted benefits to the community and residents.
- With the support of community members, University City has the opportunity to lead by example in the explicit spirit of Tree City, USA, Greening, and Sustainability.





"University City can become a leader in sustainability (green) practices. We can capitalize on the diversity of our residential community by becoming a model of racial and ethnic harmony."

- Community Survey #1 Respondent

4.1.2 KEY ACTION AREAS

The following three key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Community Vision 2040 process.

1. Expand community education and communication

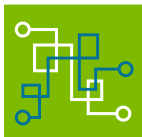
Educating the public about the importance of sustainability practices such as growing more trees, increasing green space, energy efficiency, recycling, and waste management are fundamental elements in building the City's resiliency in the future. Focus Group participants recognized the potential for resistance to change in these areas. This emphasized the need for increased City communications that raise awareness about the value of sustainability practices.

2. Update building codes to encourage sustainability

A key desire of University City community members is to incorporate environmental sustainability into City goals and to implement supporting initiatives. By updating building codes, the City could encourage LEED and ISO14000 certifications and green building, alternative energy use, codify sidewalks and concrete, and move to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040. The City itself could lead by example and by becoming LEED and/or ISO14000 certified. As more municipalities move towards electric fleets for City services, adding charging stations throughout the City would help transition the City to renewables.

3. Design infrastructure to enhance human mobility

Streets and public spaces are essential to our mobility, making them crucial aspects of how we get from one place to another. The increasing importance of all types of mobility is a global trend that accelerated during the pandemic. Community support for street design that emphasizes human mobility provides the opportunity to prioritize enhanced multi-use streets and multi-modal transportation. Examples include bicycling, walking, and micro-transit that enables safe access to services and amenities throughout the City.



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- Designing streets with a 'Complete Streets' approach is a trend in transportation that focuses on providing access and connectivity for all people who use streets, not just drivers of cars. Street networks using this concept are designed to provide better and safer streets for people walking, biking, driving, riding transit, and moving actively with assistive devices.
- Treating public space as key infrastructure increases cities' abilities to prepare for, address and recover from natural hazards. Designing open spaces and buildings to protect against disasters such as flooding helps communities become more resilient.



4.1.3 IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet points are ideas that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Most Livable.' Below are their original ideas.

Community ideas for pursuing environmental and sustainability practices





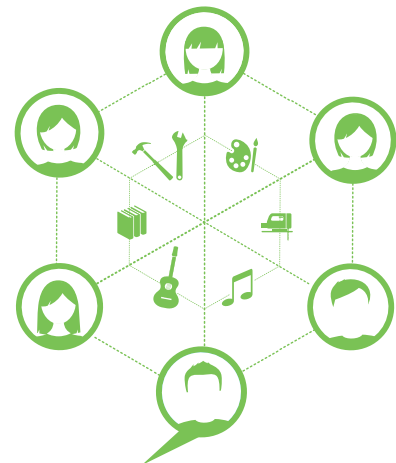
University City residents have expressed desire to take bold action to address equity in an intentional and creative manner. People believe it is time to address old issues, in new and collaborative ways to better serve our under-served areas and cohorts.

4.2 PILLAR 2: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY FABRIC & EQUITY

An outstanding highlight of the University City visioning work was the deep desire expressed by residents to foster a strong and vibrant social fabric.

4.2.1 IMPORTANCE OF STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY FABRIC & EQUITY

Participants in the University City visioning process highlighted the importance of diversity and inclusivity, and on many occasions, people discussed how proud they were of their community diversity. However, the historic inequalities between parts of the City are recognized, and still exist today. There was an especially strong desire to address community equity and find ways to bolster the prosperity and pathways to success for residents in the 3rd Ward. The appetite is to not merely make the 3rd Ward better; but to create new and ambitious models that help shape new 'neighborhoods of the future'. In these models, issues of home ownership, sustainable housing and affordability are addressed in creative new ways.



Value to Residents

- There is a desire to create a strong 'declarative statement' that reflects the importance and history of the 3rd Ward. This would aim to safeguard and to protect the heritage and cultural fabric, and ensure it is not the unintended victim of gentrification.
- This pillar has a primary focus on the 3rd Ward; however the benefits would be felt across the whole community.





4.2.2 KEY ACTION AREAS

The following three key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Community Vision 2040 process.

1. Distribute resources across U-City's Wards

Building the social fabric in a community happens on many different levels. Critical to success is providing equitable access to programs and services so that community members are cared for and nurtured. Throughout the visioning process, participants expressed a clear desire to improve access to resources such as healthcare, safety, and lending/financing opportunities in the 3rd Ward. This redistribution of resources will take intentionality and persistence over time.

2. Expand the range of available recreation and housing options

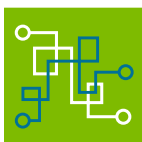
The livability of a community is significantly influenced by its recreation opportunities and housing stock. Throughout the visioning process, residents expressed a desire for increased recreational programming in the community to bring people together across the City. They also pointed to the real need to address housing that accommodates a broad set of current and future needs in the community. Focus Group participants supported establishing a City backed risk pool for home buyers in the 3rd Ward to increase purchasing opportunities and to reduce rentals and absentee landlords in the area.

3. Develop the community's social infrastructure

Social infrastructure are those elements of a community that enable people to come together for various purposes. Examples include schools, churches, libraries, barbershops, restaurants, social clubs, parks, trails, community gardens, green spaces, city sponsored events, as well as neighborhood get-togethers. There is a strong desire in the community to increase opportunities for University City residents to gather and to celebrate its rich history of diversity and inclusion. Increasing access to and developing the City's social infrastructure is a critical part of building the social fabric of University City.

"In 2040, I would like to U-City to be a better functioning community with more inclusiveness. U-City is home to so many different races and cultures that should all be celebrated!"

- Community Vision 2040 Student Survey Respondent



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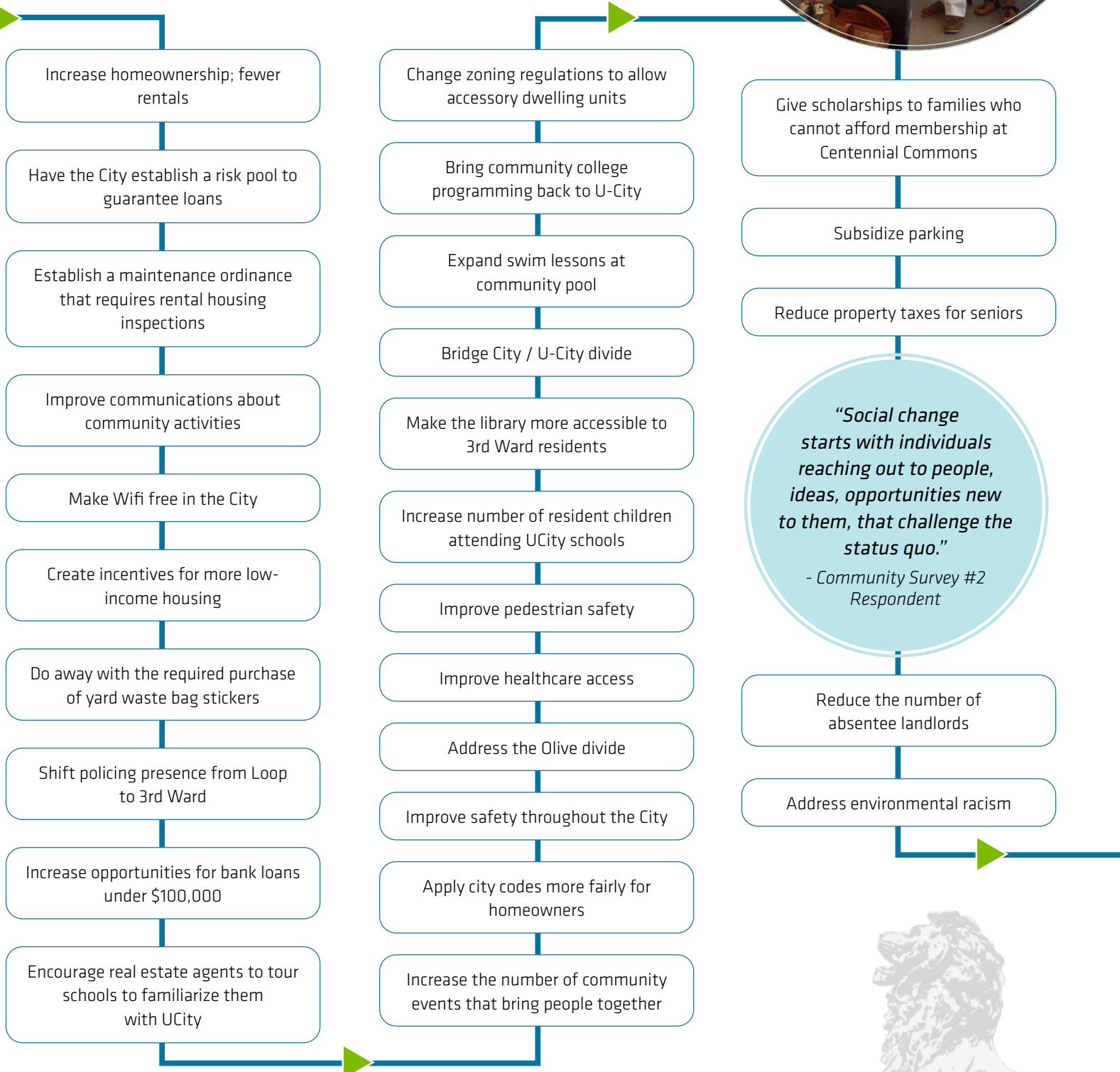
- Ensuring widespread accessibility to social infrastructure is an increasingly vital issue worldwide. As City demographics change, ensuring that public spaces remain inclusive and accessible becomes increasingly important to maintaining residents' qualities of life.
- A shortage of housing options in the U.S. is causing many communities to rezone City spaces to allow alternative housing options for current and future residents. Examples include accessory dwelling units (ADUs), senior living, tiny homes, and apartments. These additional options allow people to transition through their life and have housing available to suit their changing needs of life.



4.2.3 IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet-points are ideas that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Most Livable'. Below are their original ideas.

Community ideas for fostering a strong & vibrant social fabric





University City residents have suggested that a positive promotional program is warranted, that helps communicate the successes in the youth population, and the positive steps that are being taken.

4.3 PILLAR 3: CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE YOUTH THRIVE

The visioning process has highlighted the importance residents place on the education system and a desire to boost the school district performance. The relative strength of the school district is also associated with home values that would be raised by improved performance. By creating an environment in which young people can grow and thrive, school district performance will improve and home values will increase as people move here to send their children to University City schools.

4.3.1 IMPORTANCE OF CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE YOUTH THRIVE

Throughout the community discussions, the issue of education and performance of schools, was highlighted. There was considerable discussion about the interaction between the institutions of the City and School District. It should be noted that the School District boundaries are almost a perfect match for the City's boundaries. Overall, people saw advantage in a stronger collaborative approach, that would help build the total experience and environment for youth to thrive. For example, better integrating recreational programming and assets was seen as an area of opportunity. There was also a view that the current reputation lags reality, and that school and educational performance is improving. The perception of the quality of University City schools must be improved within the community and beyond.

"The thing that most excites me about the future is me pursuing my dreams."

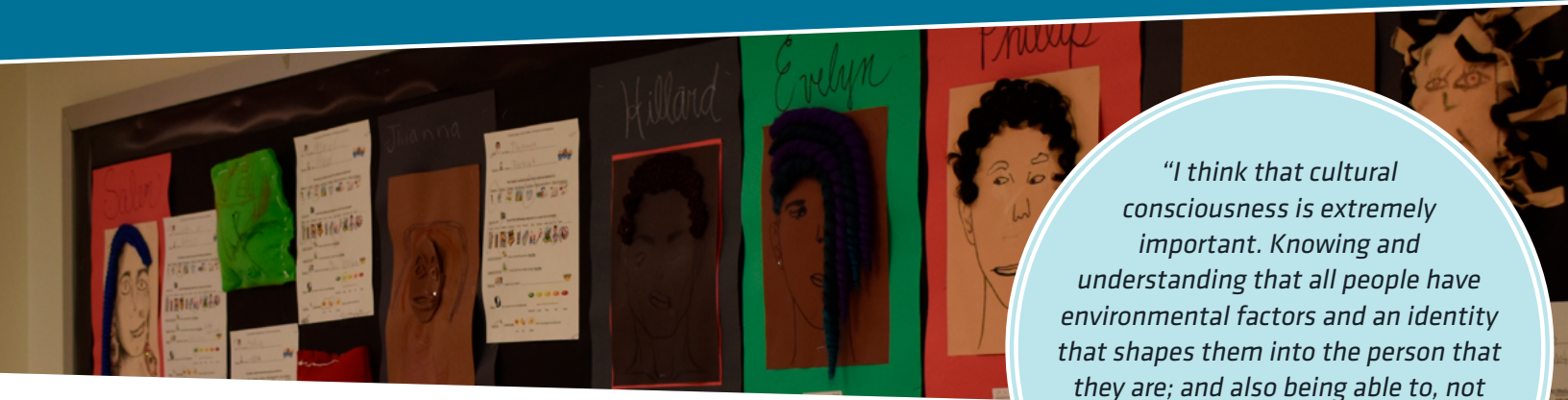
- Community Vision 2040 Student Survey Respondent



Value to Residents

- Education is a key value proposition for many residential communities. This can attract families, and build longer multi-generational stability in a community fabric.
- At first glance, the performance of the schools might not appear to be central to the City's visioning process, as they are separate institutions. However, the institutions both play critical roles in the broader infrastructure for youth and community development.





"I think that cultural consciousness is extremely important. Knowing and understanding that all people have environmental factors and an identity that shapes them into the person that they are; and also being able to, not agree with them necessarily, but to respect them."

- Community Vision 2040 Student Survey Respondent

4.3.2 KEY ACTION AREAS

The following three key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Community Vision 2040 process.

1. Focus on education by increasing enrollment and retention and creating a K-8 system

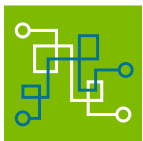
Community members are very aware that University City public schools are a critical glue in the community's social fabric. Perceptions vary widely about the existing quality of education and many students leave for private schools at the high school level. However, with high school student numbers recently on the rise, visioning participants proposed re-imagining K-8 to be a single system and eliminating the stigma of the middle school years. A Task Force of school district personnel, City staff, parents and students could be created to explore this possibility.

2. Lessen child poverty and improve nutritional outcomes

Key to providing a nurturing environment that enables youth to thrive is to address the many elements of child poverty and improving nutritional outcomes. Partnering with Washington University's social work programs, instituting home visit programs, healthy foods in schools, preschool beginning at infancy, and creating reading programs at the Library were identified as first steps for this action area.

3. Build on U-City's strong youth arts culture

A strong arts and culture environment is a critical element in building a sense of place, unity, and belonging in communities. One of the primary ideas that emerged from the visioning process was to create a series of unique 'draws' to U-City to rebuild its youth population. University City's youth arts culture is strong and is seen as an area that could be further developed to pursue this idea by celebrating youth.



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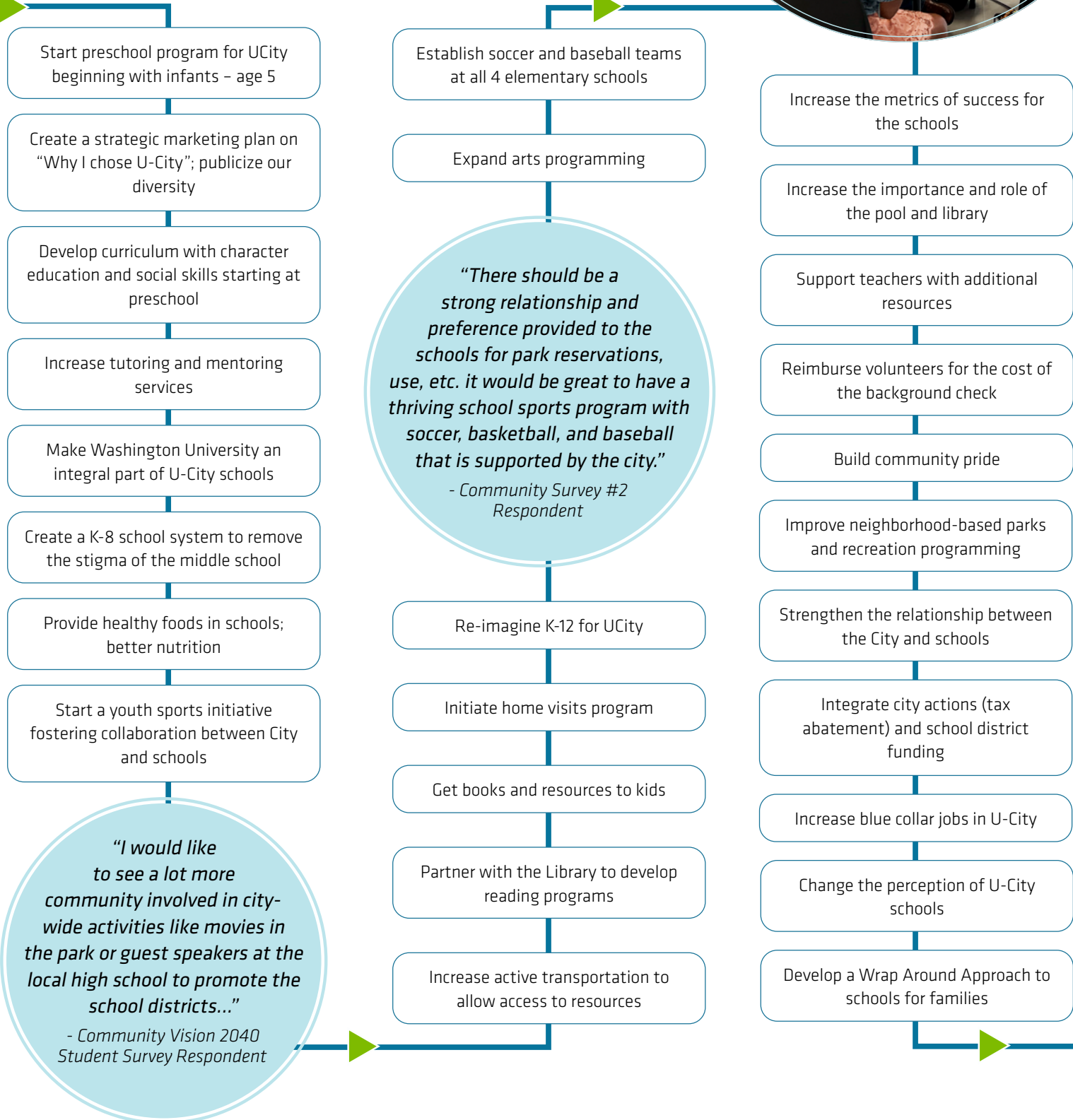
- One of the ideas generated at the Focus Groups was to actively seek out and recruit a community college to University City. This would increase the educational opportunities for local students and provide much needed trained talent that could be tied to area businesses with internships, mentorships, and apprenticeships.
- Like many communities, University City's residents are aging and there are more active retirees living in the community. As people live longer, research is showing that mentally active people enjoy a better quality of life. Intergenerational programs that support lifelong learning will deliver benefits at many levels and increase social connections and understanding for both young and old.



4.3.3 IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet-points are ideas that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Most Livable'. Below are their original ideas.

Community ideas for an environment where young people can thrive





University City is fortunate to have an overlapping interest with Washington University, one of the country's premier educational and research institutions. Leveraging this partnership could offer exciting new approaches for University City.

4.4 PILLAR 4: STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The visioning process has highlighted the need and desire to enhance the City's strategic partnerships with other key institutions. The purpose of these partnerships is to collaborate to solve some of the grand challenges and leverage new ideas in creative ways.

4.4.1 IMPORTANCE OF STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

University City is a community that is home to and is surrounded by many institutions. The obvious institutions include the School District, the University City Public Library, and Washington University, but it also includes the surrounding municipalities and business districts. The visioning process has identified a desire to be bold in addressing creative urban and economic development, and work intentionally on evolving the social fabric. These endeavors are likely beyond the immediate resources of the City and could become real life testing grounds for new ideas – which could offer a practical opportunity for institutions such as Washington University and others.



Value to Residents

- Leveraging partnerships is a clever way for communities to boost their access to best practice thinking, new resources and expertise. Enhanced collaboration also allows potential conflicts to be identified and resolved before they create friction.
- Residents in University City have expressed a desire to be 'best in class' in future community and urban development. Creating key partnerships will help achieve this ambition.





HEMAN PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

4.4.2 KEY ACTION AREAS

The following three key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Community Vision 2040 process.

1. Strengthen the City's relationship with the school district

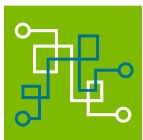
Throughout the visioning process, community members encouraged the integration of actions between the school district and the City. In an effort to build a stronger connection, the City requested that a school district representative join the Community Vision 2040 Task Force. This Task Force member's participation was critical to obtaining venues and guiding discussions about the school district throughout the community's visioning process. Suggestions for working together going forward include opportunities to collaborate on federal funding programs with entities such as the Federal Reserve and providing tax abatements for the school district.

2. Create new partnerships with outside municipalities, businesses, and organizations

University City has traditionally been self-sufficient with regards to City services. However, the impact of the pandemic emphasized the need for more amenities at home and in community neighborhoods. Sharing services and partnering with adjacent municipalities, businesses and organizations enables cities to save money and resources together.

3. Build collaborative initiatives with Washington University

Washington University is a tremendous resource to University City. Focus Group participants emphasized the need for increased public-private connections between the City, U-City public schools, and Washington University to develop career pathways for students and to assist with the development of community wellbeing programs. Additionally, the University is currently generating its strategic plan for the next 5-10 years. One of its strategic pillars is Community Engagement. Now would be a good time for the City to reach out to Washington University to get involved in the development of action areas for the Community Engagement pillar.



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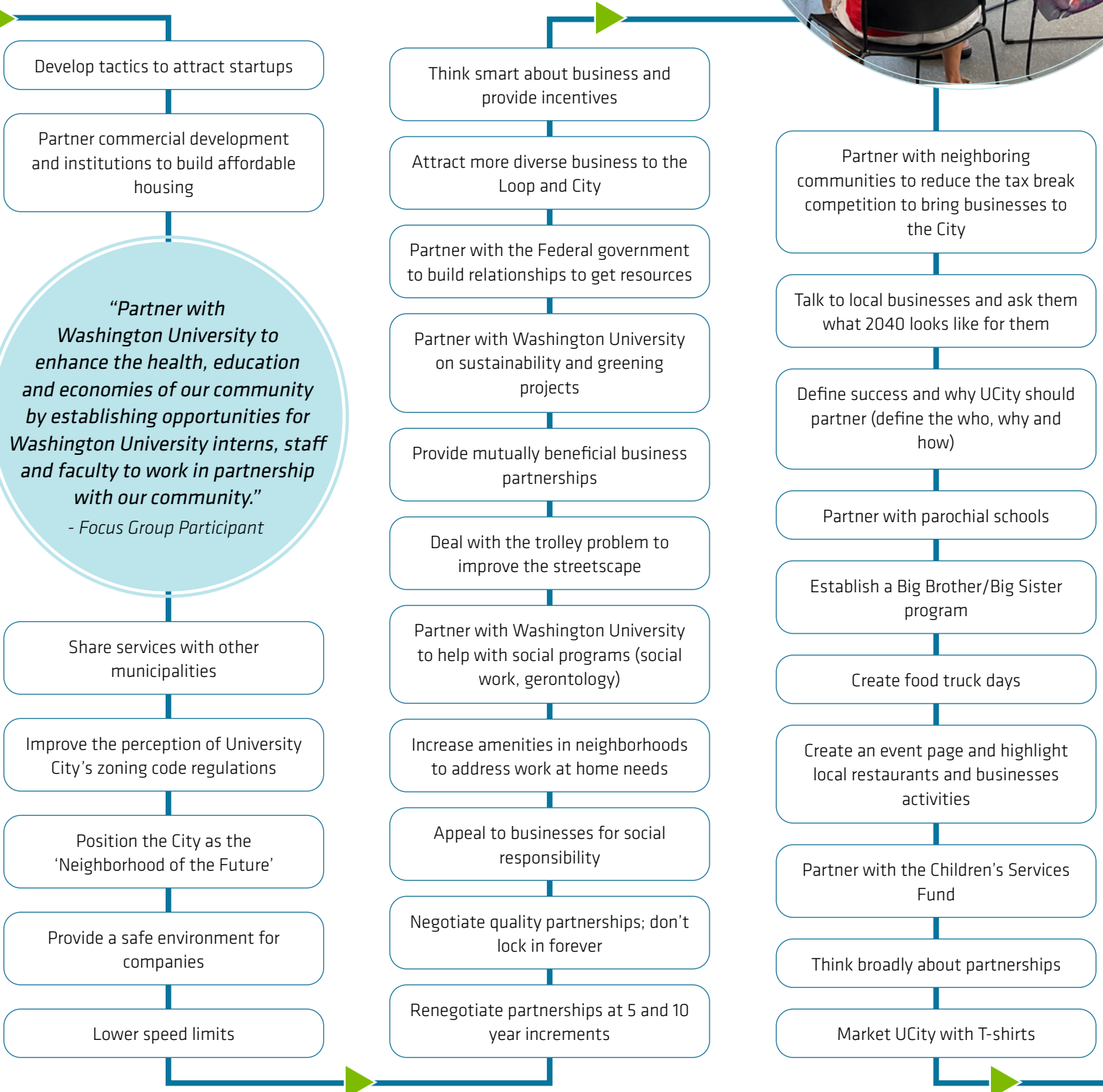
- Strengthening partnerships between the City and other entities was a recurring theme throughout the visioning process. In doing so, participants envisioned the creation of a 'Neighborhood of the Future' that relies on the contributions of multiple entities to support the needs of community members.
- Developing stronger partnerships requires flexibility, consistency, and dedication. Partnerships of the future may not look the way they do now. Focus Group participants emphasized the need to negotiate quality partnerships that are mutually beneficial and can evolve over time.



4.4.3 IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet points are ideas that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Most Livable'. Below are their original ideas.

Community ideas for how to strengthen strategic partnerships





University City has the potential to reinvigorate its traditional neighborhood nodes by using new urban design models and walkable routes. These nodes can provide important connection points that help build community fabric.

4.5 PILLAR 5: ENCOURAGE NEIGHBORHOOD NODES

University City has a unique residential fabric that still retains some neighborhood nodes and local business districts. These types of features are assets that can be built on to recreate walkable neighborhood experiences.

4.5.1 IMPORTANCE OF ENCOURAGING NEIGHBORHOOD NODES

Modern urban trends include a return to walkable neighborhoods, and the intentional recreation of community connectivity around small local business and retain nodes. This is often complemented by community amenities such as recreation infrastructure. These concepts are being developed in new planning approaches such as 'small area plans' that look to create intimate community connection points, often with unique urban design and character. This trend is being further amplified by the shift to greater 'work at home' models, where people occupy and use residential neighborhoods for more time each day.



Value to Residents

- Many people in the visioning process have expressed a desire to create more intimate neighborhood experiences and connections. This reflects larger urban living trends of more innovative use and redevelopment of shared public spaces.
- Over the next decade, transportation is likely to evolve to provide more abundant multi-modal systems, as people look for healthier outdoor living. This offers the opportunity to enhance the residential experience across University City.





4.5.2 KEY ACTION AREAS

The following three key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Community Vision 2040 process.

1. Enhance development of key nodes in the City

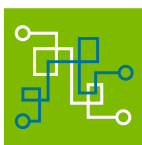
Neighborhood nodes are identifiable by the intersection of streets or central square that host local businesses and services in a neighborhood. They are the essentials that connect people to where they live. Development of these areas will be key to providing equal access to services and businesses for University City residents. Focus Group participants proposed the mechanism of small area planning for each neighborhood node to plan for better livability for all sectors of the City. Small area plans can help identify and plan for the best mix of businesses, services, green space, and residential options in the City's neighborhoods. They can also be used to address current inequities in livability that exist between the Wards.

2. Provide greater walkability within and between neighborhoods

Current trends show that connectivity around mobility and transportation are highly valued amenities that are sought out by community members of all ages. Providing greater walkability within and between neighborhoods will provide a healthier, safer environment for walkers of all age groups. Of particular importance to visioning participants was providing safer 'walk to school' routes and improving accessibility to City streets.

3. Improve access to amenities and green spaces

Visioning participants recognized that access to amenities is not uniform across University City's three Wards. The preferred future created by participants envisions improved conditions and access to amenities for the under-served, and a more equitable distribution of amenities for all residents. U City in Bloom is an example of a local volunteer organization that highlights the community's value of public gardens and planters throughout the City. Green spaces that function as viable habitats also provide important ecosystem services, such as filtering dust, absorbing carbon dioxide from the air, improving air quality, infiltrating, and filtering stormwater runoff, and reducing the urban heat island effect.



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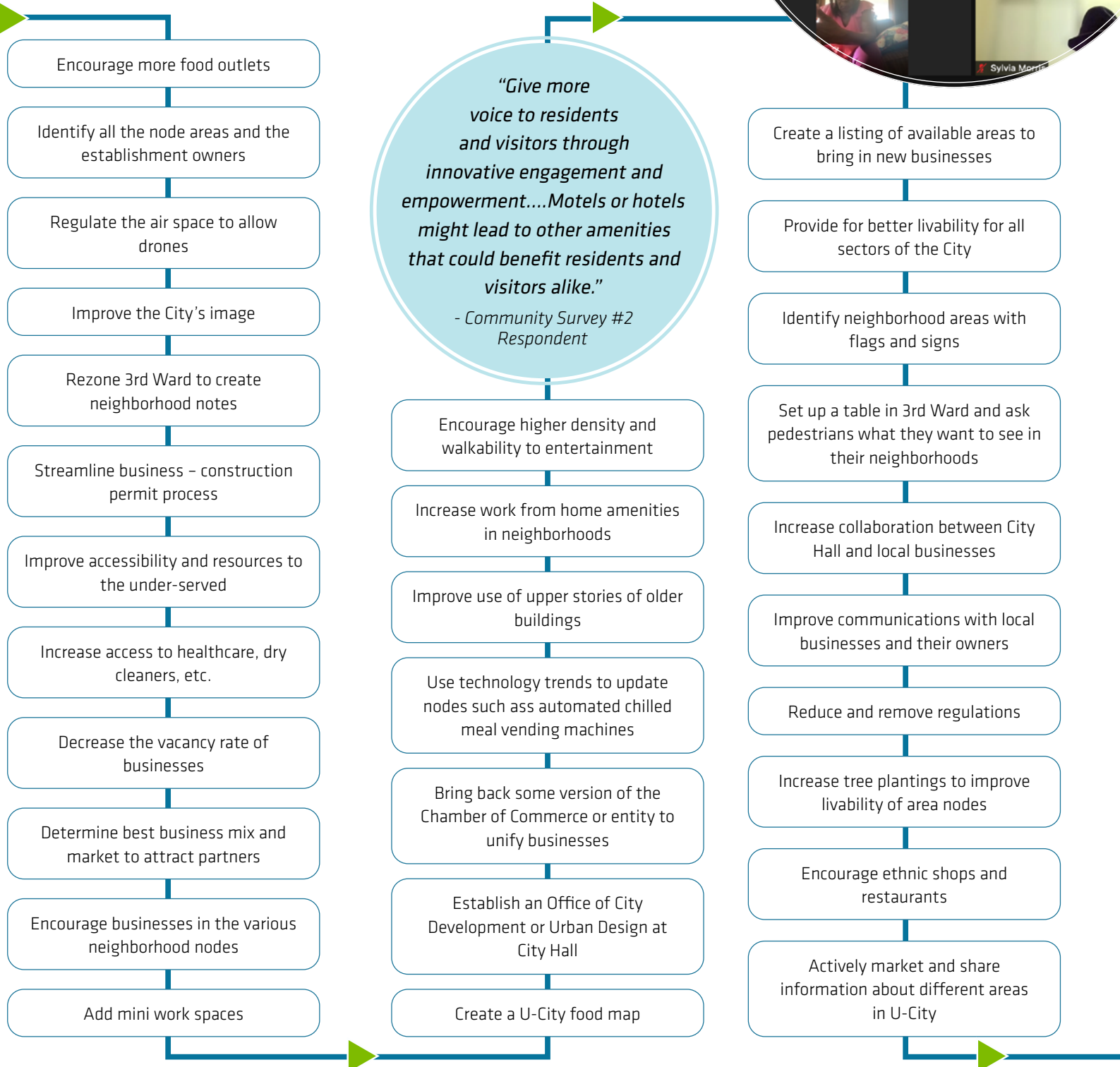
- Initiatives to re-purpose vacant lots or warehouses are becoming more frequent as cities age.
- Attracting start-ups to cities is important to the renewal of many aging city areas and brings innovative thinkers to a community. A successful model that could be considered for University City is the Venture Café in St. Louis. The Venture Café is a nonprofit organization and global network that seeks to further local innovation ecosystems.
- Integrating urban farms and community gardens into cities can help to minimize sprawl and spark economic growth.
- Shade equity (lack of tree canopy) is an increasingly important issue in cities worldwide. Focus Group participants highlighted this as a problem in certain neighborhood areas that should be addressed.



4.5.3 IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The following bullet-points are ideas that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Most Livable'. Below are their original ideas.

Community ideas for encouraging neighborhood nodes





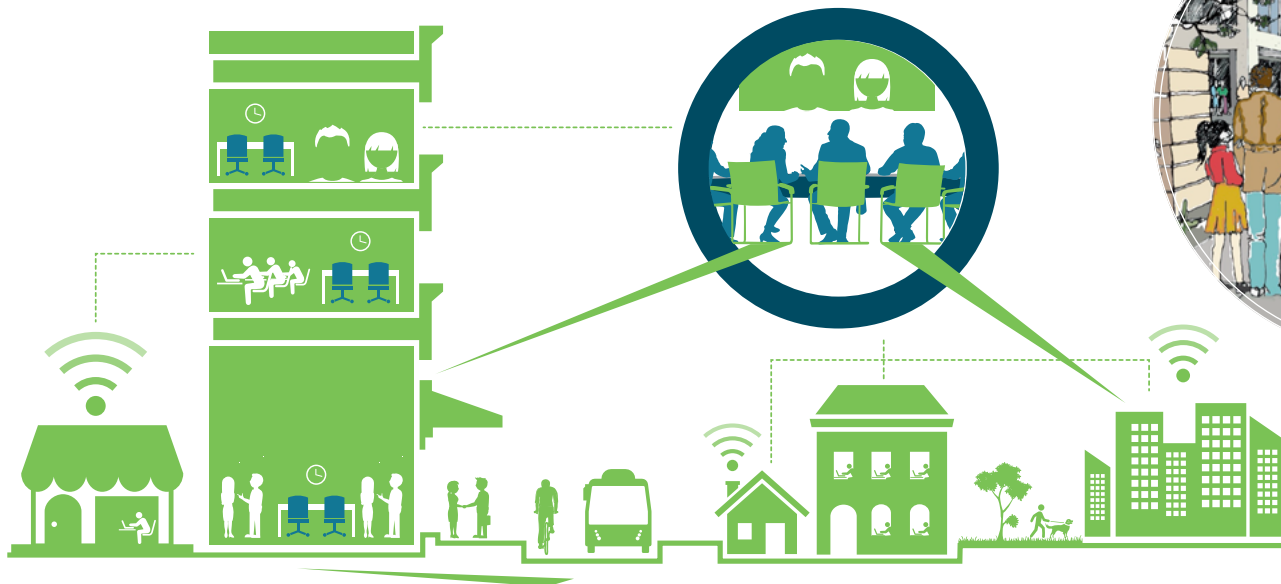
It is recognized that significant planning has already been done toward Olive Boulevard redevelopment. This visioning process is intended to expand and build on that thinking.

4.6 PILLAR 6: GUIDE OLIVE BOULEVARD REDEVELOPMENT

The redevelopment of Olive Boulevard is viewed by many as a ‘once in a lifetime’ opportunity to guide beneficial economic development and urban renewal in the 3rd Ward. How this corridor develops will have lasting impact on the community and surrounding neighborhoods.

4.6.1 IMPORTANCE OF GUIDING OLIVE BOULEVARD REDEVELOPMENT

Throughout the visioning work, there was a repeated desire to see an intentional, thoughtful, and purposeful approach to further redevelopment along Olive Boulevard. Of particular importance is how this development interfaces with, and impacts, the surrounding neighborhoods. The desire is for development that enhances the neighborhood experience and includes social and community amenities. In addition, there was considerable discussion about the type of development, with a desire by some to maintain the multicultural feel, and that it retains unique dining and retail options. It was also recognized that mixed use development could provide new housing options, and sympathetic commercial development.



Value to Residents

- The creative redevelopment of Olive Boulevard would establish a new center of economic growth and community opportunity, in the north side of the community. This would produce numerous benefits, including boosting the tax base for the City.
- The Eastern end of Olive Boulevard also has the potential to grow as a base for small scale manufacturing, commercial and start-up businesses.





»»»» 4.6.2 KEY ACTION AREAS

The following three key action areas consolidate ideas and priorities identified by the community during the Community Vision 2040 process.

1. Focus on improving street appeal and making West and Central Olive Boulevard a destination location

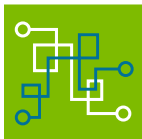
Destination locations are places that attract residents and visitors seeking certain features or amenities. The opportunity exists to re-imagine and redevelop West and Central Olive Boulevard as a destination location that can both serve the needs of residents and provide added commercial and environmental amenities to attract visitors. The economic impacts of this redevelopment have the potential to redistribute wealth and commercial heft to the 3rd Ward where it is much needed. Increasing street appeal by consistent branding, more green space, streetscaping, updated storefronts, and walkability would contribute to the creation of a destination location.

2. Retain unique stores and international character

It became clear throughout the visioning process that area residents love the unique stores and international character of West Olive Boulevard. Although there is excitement around the potential rejuvenation of the area by the construction of the new Costco, residents are concerned about the loss of small businesses and the potential for 3rd Ward gentrification. Careful consideration for the mix of businesses and commercial development along the Boulevard is desired by area residents. The establishment of an Olive Boulevard Business District Community organization was recommended to work with the City in the planning of Olive's redevelopment.

3. Develop the residential-facing side of Olive Boulevard businesses as part of neighborhood

In addition to the Boulevard-facing side of Olive Boulevard, visioning participants highlighted the importance of the residential-facing side of the Boulevard businesses. This is an opportunity to expand neighborhood nodes into innovative mixed-use live and work areas. Neighborhoods could be potentially protected from increased commercial traffic by innovative solutions such as the creation of cul-de-sacs and road diets, with added pedestrian access to the commercial activity on Olive Boulevard. This type of planning will require unique urban design features that focus on increased livability and placemaking.



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- Increasingly, cities are looking to placemaking to develop specific areas within their boundaries. Placemaking means creating places and focuses on transforming public spaces to strengthen the connections between people and those places. (see Resources Section 10.0)
- Olive Boulevard redevelopment will require sensitive planning that incorporates the needs of area residents looking out to 2040 and beyond. For example, the 15-minute city strategy re-imagines streets and public space in a way that benefits local people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities. It involves reclaiming space for people not driving to build thriving neighborhoods with vibrant main streets, where walking and cycling are the main ways of getting around.



4.6.3 IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

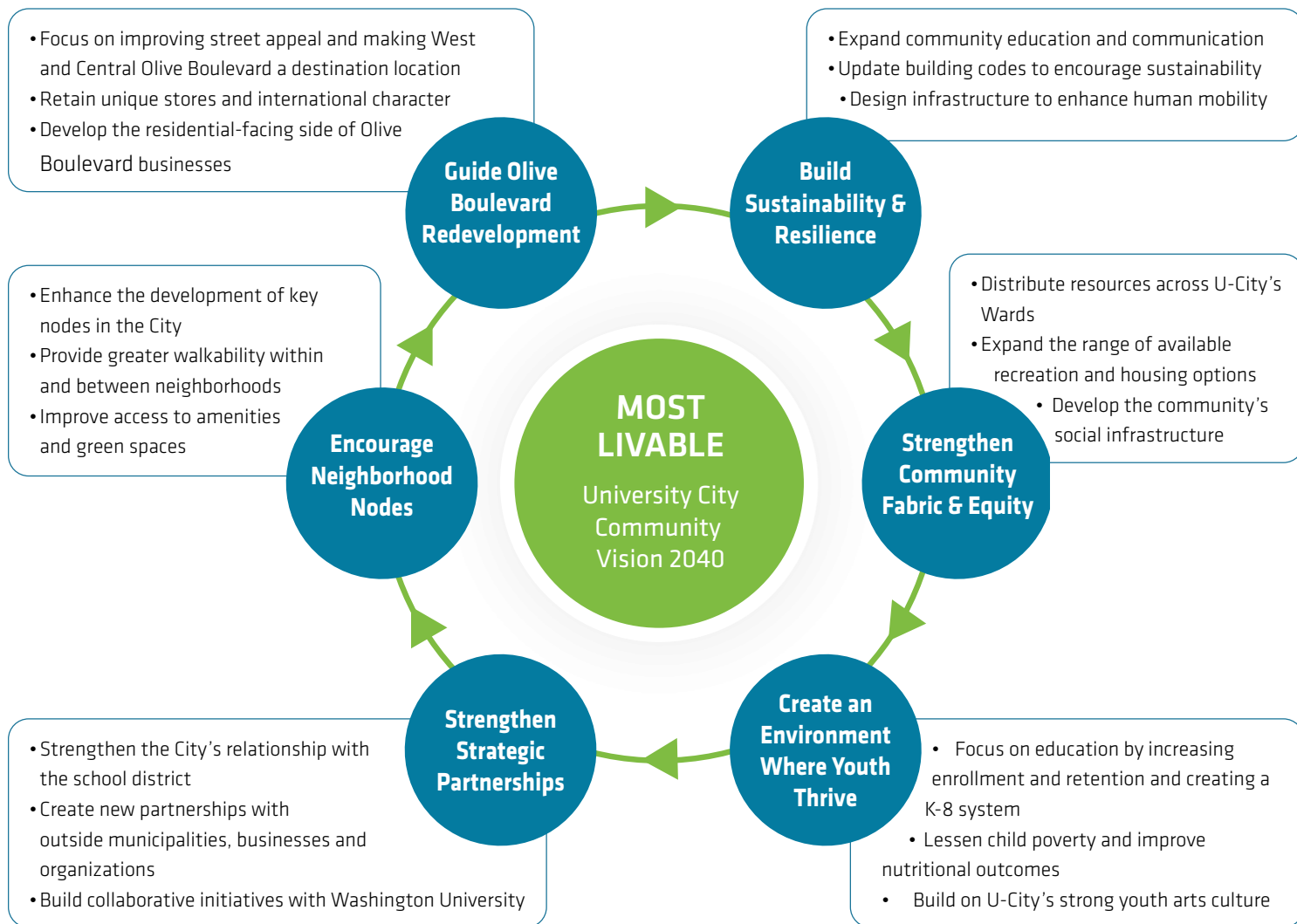
The following bullet-points are ideas that emerged during the community engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions the community could take to achieve the preferred future, 'Most Livable'. Below are their original ideas.

Community ideas for Olive Boulevard redevelopment



5.0 COMBINED STRATEGIC ACTION FRAMEWORK

The framework for action developed through the visioning process has identified a set of 18 key actions that will help University City pivot its trajectory towards the 'Most Livable' future. This framework is the culmination of community input, surveys and deliberation by the focus groups. The resulting overall framework creates the basis of the roadmap to the future and the guiding vision that will inform the upcoming comprehensive planning process for University City.

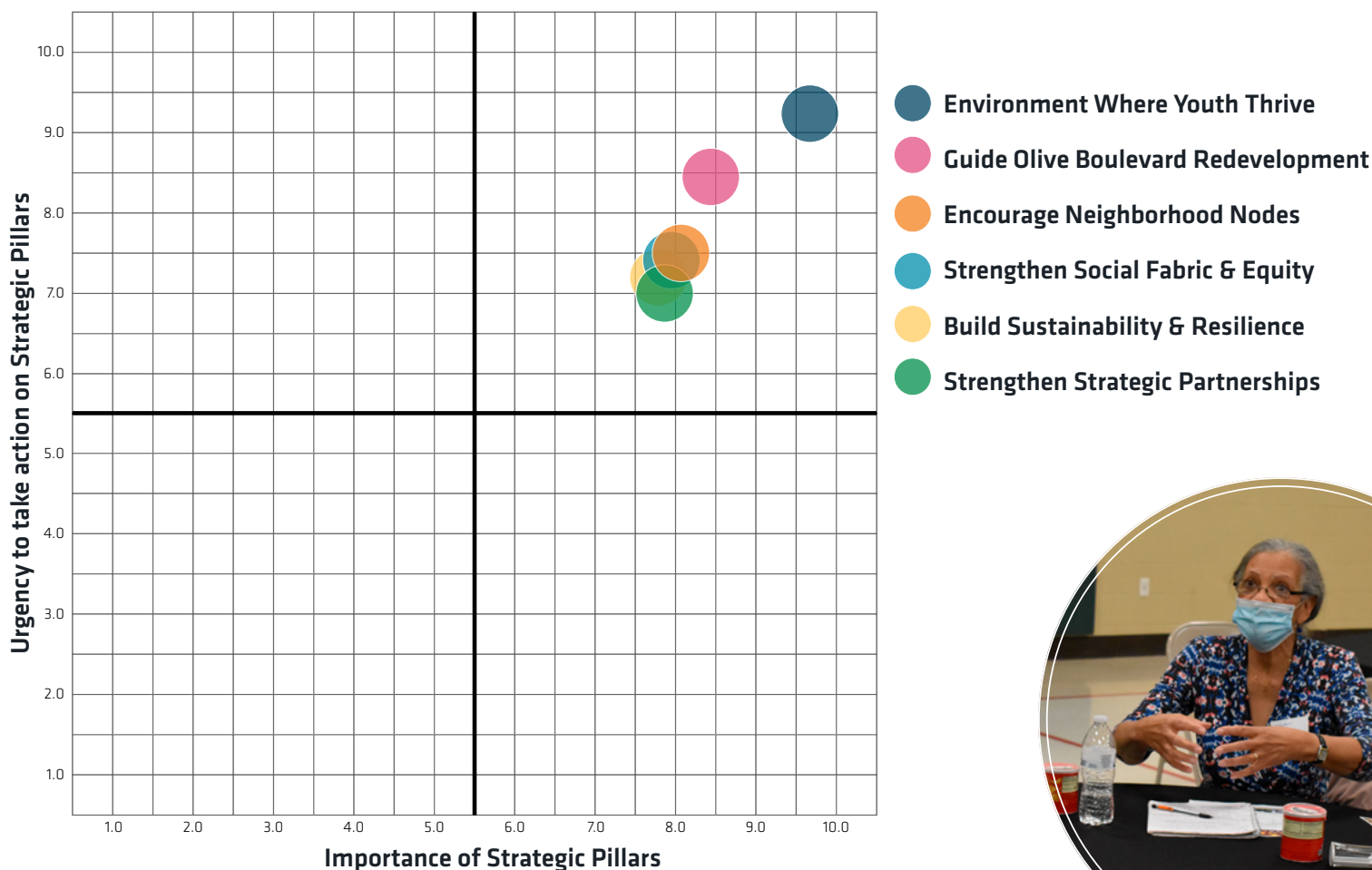


5.1 IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY TO ACT ON THE STRATEGIC PILLARS

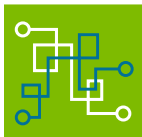
In preparation for the Focus Groups in June, community members were asked to consider both the importance and sense of urgency to act on the six key focus areas (strategic pillars) that emerged from the visioning process up and through the Think-Tank. Where all of the strategic pillars were considered important and urgent, three of the areas were deemed more critically important and urgent: Education and schools (later to become 'Create an Environment Where Youth Thrive'), Olive Boulevard redevelopment, and Social fabric and equity.

IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY TO ACT - BY STRATEGIC PILLARS

X axis is Importance of the Strategic Pillars (1 = Not important; 10 = Critically Important)
Y axis is Urgency of take action on Strategic Pillars (1 = Not urgent; 19 = Critically urgent)



With all six of the strategic pillars of the vision identified as both important and urgent to take action on, the City has been given a mandate to pursue initiatives in these areas.



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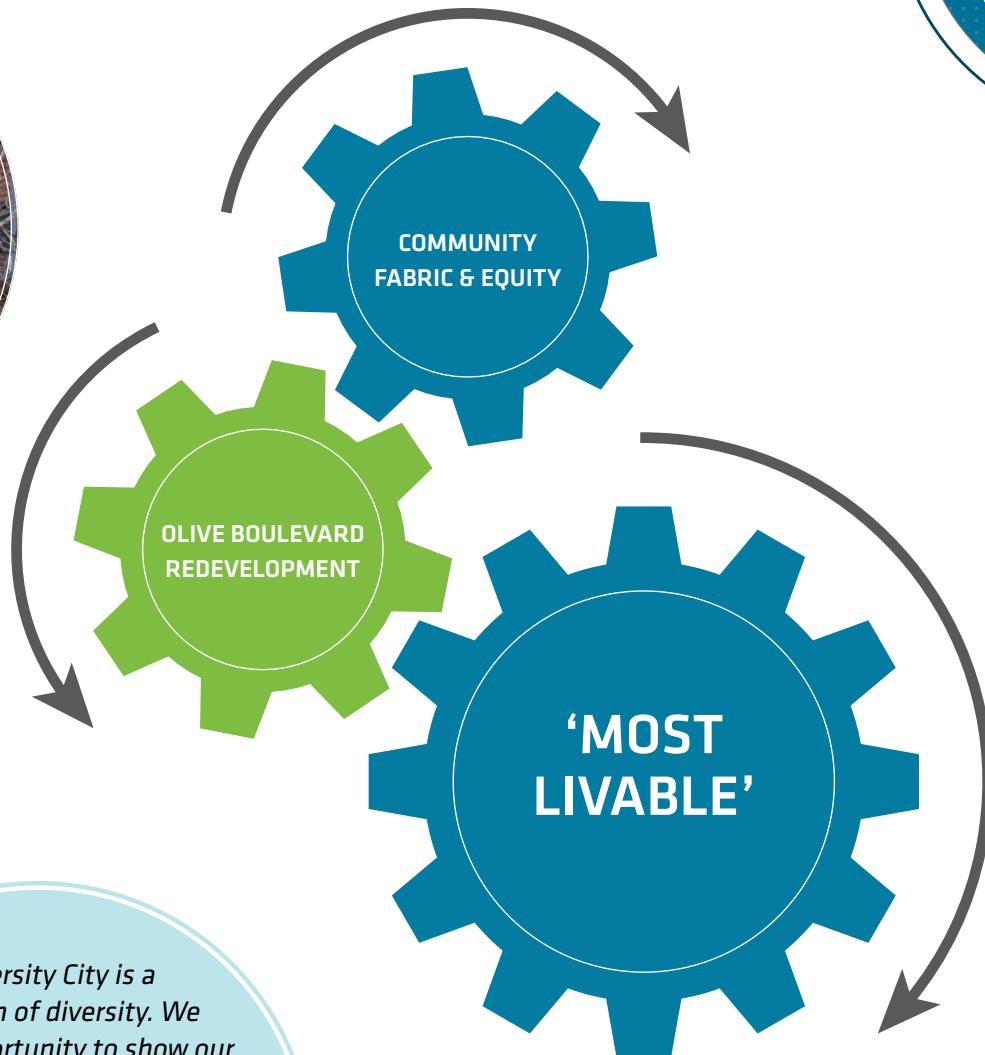
- Community members are eager to see the preferred vision for the future, 'Most Livable', come to life in University City. There is a definite sense of urgency to 'get going now' and to seize the opportunity that presents itself with the upcoming comprehensive planning initiative.
- The next 10 years will present significant 'future-splitting questions' to the community of University City that are yet to play out. The community's vision will serve as a compass that will guide the community towards the preferred future, 'Most Livable'.



6.0 DYNAMIC SYSTEMS-THINKING APPROACH

The framework for action developed through the visioning and planning process has identified a set of 18 key actions that will help University City pivot its trajectory towards the 'Most Livable' future. This framework is the culmination of community input, surveys and deliberation by the focus groups. The resulting overall framework creates the basis of the roadmap to the future and the guiding vision that will inform the upcoming comprehensive planning process for University City.

University City is at a tipping point in its redevelopment. There is an opportunity to leverage the community vision and utilize the upcoming comprehensive planning process to redistribute resources and create a more equitable and inclusive community environment.



"University City is a microcosm of diversity. We have an opportunity to show our larger metropolitan area of St Louis, the country and the world that a diverse city is the best city to live in. The variety of cultures living and working together add so much value and reward to both residents and businesses."

- Community Survey #1 Respondent





The community of University City has shown a healthy appetite for change going forward. This is the first step toward the preferred future 'Most Livable', that will guide the City's next planning phase to develop a new Comprehensive Plan.

7.0 NEXT STEPS - ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

University City has undertaken an extensive community visioning process that has produced the following outcomes:

- Documented a detailed understanding of the community's views across a range of important topics and future shaping factors.
- Allowed detailed examination of plausible future scenarios, explored expected, least desired, and preferred futures, and built an understanding of the implications of these future options.
- Identified a vision for the future, acknowledging that there are a variety of viewpoints, with the majority in a central range.
- Identified key strategic pillars, action areas, and community ideas.

This work has been built on extensive public participation and open and transparent dialogue. The vision looks out to 2040.

Now, the next phase of work needs to begin. The following immediate next steps are recommended:

- Consideration and acceptance of the **Community Vision 2040 Roadmap Report** by the City Council.
- Incorporation of the key elements of the community vision into the City's upcoming **Comprehensive Planning Process**.



"U-City has a real opportunity to build on the educational (public school) reputation they've built through their handling of the pandemic. They've done an excellent job for students, staff, and caregivers alike. There's also room for growth in affordable home ownership, particularly among BIPOC homeowners. We're riding the edge of gentrification in Ward 3, so it's a great time to focus on community led initiatives in regard to development."

- Community Survey #1 Respondent



8.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

City staff, City Council, Task Force Members, and community members have engaged in the visioning process with great enthusiasm. Their passion and interest ensured the discussions were thoughtful, and the outcomes reflective of the myriad of perspectives that exist within University City. This dedication is reflective of the deep commitment participants have to the future of University City. Future iQ would like to acknowledge the substantial background support from City staff. We would also like to thank Community Vision 2040 Task Force members for the many hours they have given to this project. Besides monthly meetings and helping to get the word out about the project, many attended the Listening Sessions, Think-Tank, and Focus Groups. Your time and dedication is very much appreciated.

COMMUNITY VISION 2040 TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Peggy Holly

Chair of Task
Force, Chair of Plan
Commission

Dianne Benjamin

Urban Forestry
Commission

Sandra Hewitt

Commission on Senior
Issues

Joan Suarez

Commission for
Access and Local
Original Prog (CALOP)

Adam Staudt

Green Practices
Commission

Richard Massey

Municipal Commission
on Arts and Letters

Ed Nickels

Historic Preservation
Commission

Joseph Miller

University City School
District

James Wilke

Park Commission

Dennis Fuller

Traffic Commission

Edmund Acosta

Library Board

Garry Aronberg

Commission on Storm
Water Issues

Bobette Patton

Economic Development
Retail Sales Tax Board
(EDRST)



9.0 FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on University City's Community Vision 2040 project, please contact:



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To read all reports and to explore the Community Vision 2040 visioning process, please visit the project portal <https://lab2.future-iq.com/university-citys-community-visioning-project/>.



UNIVERSITY CITY
COMMUNITY VISION 2040
THINK-TANK REPORT - MISSOURI, USA
March 2022



University City Think-Tank Report
March 2022



UNIVERSITY CITY
COMMUNITY VISION 2040
ROADMAP REPORT
MISSOURI, USA
June 2022



University City Roadmap Report
June 2022



University City Lab Portal



10.0 RESOURCES - LINKS TO FURTHER READING

Placemaking

<https://www.archdaily.com/961333/what-is-placemaking>

Complete Streets

<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/what-are-complete-streets/>

Accessory Dwelling Units

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2019/accessory-dwelling-units-adus.html>

Urban Design

<https://www.udg.org.uk/about/what-is-urban-design>

Urban Land Institute

<https://uli.org>

ISO 4000

<https://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html>

LEED Certifications

<https://www.usgbc.org/leed>

Example of Small Area Planning: Minneapolis

<https://minneapolis2040.com/small-area-plans/>

15-Minute City

https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/15-minute-cities-How-to-develop-people-centred-streets-and-mobility?language=en_US

U City in Bloom

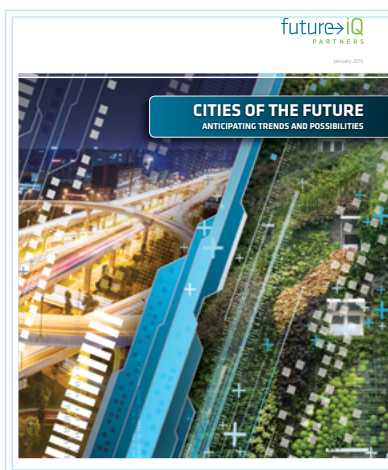
<https://www.acityinbloom.org>

Example of Small Area Planning: Baton Rouge

<https://www.brla.gov/2641/Small-Area-Plans>



Future of Urban Living



Cities of the Future



The Next Industrial Revolution



»»»» 11.0 ABOUT FUTURE IQ

Future iQ specializes in applying innovative tools and approaches to assist cities, organizations, regions and industries shape their economic and community futures. With nearly two decades of experience, the company has a global clientele spanning three continents.

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