



Chapter Two

EXISTING CONDITIONS

“To design a street according to its probable use is a reasonable but uncommon practice.”

– *Harland Bartholomew*
City of St. Louis Plan (1917)



CHAPTER TWO

existing conditions

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A HISTORICAL EXAMINATION OF WEST FLORISSANT AVENUE and its development over time reveals important development patterns, assets and challenges that are critical for planners and the community to understand in considering and crafting the corridor's future. This chapter gives an overview of the history, development and existing conditions of West Florissant Avenue and its bordering areas. It considers the challenges and opportunities that are particular to West Florissant Avenue and provides a full perspective of the corridor's regional and local context. A comprehensive summary of the primary assets, challenges, and opportunities is provided at the end of the chapter.



The Wabash Railroad system, showing Ferguson station



The construction of I-270, shown here in 1970, has had a profound and lasting effect on West Florissant Avenue

2.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1.1 PRE-AUTOMOBILE ERA

In 1876 a new spur was built onto the Wabash Railroad which connected the Ferguson area with the city of St. Louis for the first time, forever changing the nature of this area and resulting in rapid population growth. The rail line crosses West Florissant Avenue at the southern end of the Project area, just north of what is now the large Emerson Electric complex. With the development of the rail line, passenger rail became a major transportation mode, especially for commuting.

Ferguson was home to a depot that became a regular train stop, Ferguson Station, at what is now North Florissant and Carson Roads, west of the Project area. This stop catalyzed further growth and settlement in the area, primarily residential. Ferguson became a significant freight and passenger rail hub by the end of the 1800s, and it was incorporated as a city in 1894. In 1900, an additional connection with St. Louis came with the development of the Kirkwood-Ferguson streetcar line. At that time, the city limits did not include West Florissant Avenue, which was further east. West Florissant Avenue was built during the latter part of the 1800s, to facilitate non-rail travel between St. Louis and surrounding rural areas.

Automobile use began to increase in the 1920s, facilitated by paved roads. Automobile usage eventually led to the decline of passenger rail, which was discontinued in the 1930s. Along with this, buses replaced streetcars as the sole means of transit.

2.1.2 THE AUTOMOBILE AGE

After World War II, Ferguson, like many U.S. cities, experienced a population boom that was accompanied by strong growth of automobile usage. Emerson Electric Company was a major manufacturing presence at the south end of the Project area for many decades, starting in the 1940s, providing many local jobs.

The population of Ferguson nearly doubled between 1950 and 1960, from 11,500 to 22,000. It increased another 30 percent during the 1960s. Housing growth in the area reflected population growth during this time period, with about 40 percent of Ferguson's housing stock (mostly single family) added during the 1950s, and another 19 percent during the 1960s. Dellwood, to the east of Ferguson, was incorporated as a village in 1951, and in 1954 Dellwood was incorporated as a Fourth Class City. Dellwood grew substantially during the 1960s, from 4,720 to 7,137, a jump of 66 percent. In this period housing was almost exclusively small (approximately 1,000 square feet) single family home dwellings.

In its gradual transition from mostly rural land to residential neighborhoods and a commercial corridor, there was perhaps no more important event than the construction of Interstate 270 in the mid 1960s. Commercial uses boomed, and the Ferguson city limit expanded by the 1970s to include portions of West Florissant Avenue, which became a commercial corridor feeding traffic to and from I-270. Commercial development continued to change the character of the corridor through the 1990s, when the last of the horse farms at the northern end of the study area were replaced with major retail (“big box”) projects.

On the other hand, although single- and multi-family residential projects were added from the late 1960s through the 1980s, the inner-ring suburbs along the corridor began to decline during this period. The population of Ferguson declined 14 percent during the 1980s and 10 percent during the 1990s. Likewise Dellwood declined in size by 1990 to its current size of just over 5,000 people.

Together with the population decreases, the introduction of the larger regional shopping centers has impacted the older and smaller

commercial strips, resulting in their depreciation, numerous vacancies, and little diversity in the types of remaining businesses. Today as a corporate headquarters, Emerson Electric draws its employees less from the local area and more from the whole metro region.

Ferguson’s historic downtown and “main street area” around Florissant Road and Church Street, including the old Ferguson Station, has meanwhile undergone considerable revitalization and that area continues to draw new retail development.

A look at West Florissant Avenue over time reveals an area that grew rapidly after 1955, but has stayed largely unchanged since 1997



1955



1970



1997



2002



2010



West Florissant is designed primarily for automobiles



Strip commercial development is typical along the corridor



Dellwood Crossing is a more recently redeveloped property, with streetscape improvements like sidewalks and plantings

2.2 LAND USE EXISTING CONDITIONS

Today, West Florissant Avenue is an auto-oriented commercial street, with unique characteristics in its different segments and communities. The corridor’s urban design character is primarily a function of the street’s automobile orientation, combined with differences in commercial zoning regulations among cities along West Florissant Avenue.

2.2.1 EXISTING LAND USES

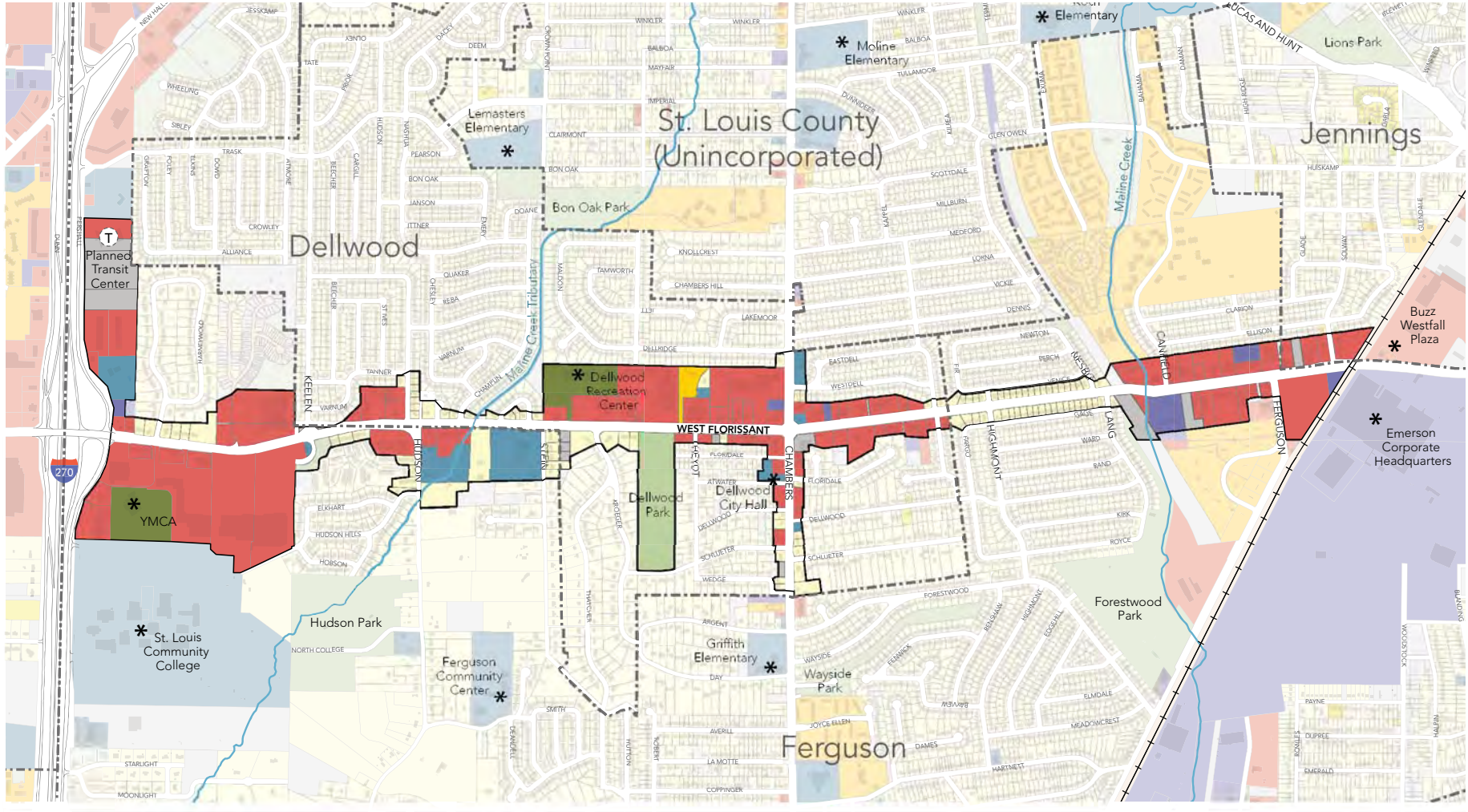
The corridor’s existing land uses are presented in Table 2.1 and Map 2.1. Commercial uses, including retail and office, make up 53.4 percent of the land use in the project area, with an estimated Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.14. Retail-oriented uses such as fast-food restaurants, beauty salons, and service-focused stores, are the predominant use. Typically these are set back from the street and fronted by parking lots. Major shopping nodes are located at the north end near I-270, in Dellwood near Chambers Road, and at the south end near Ferguson Avenue.

Although the areas that surround the corridor are overwhelmingly made up of single-family (and some multi-family) homes, strictly within the planning area residential uses account for only 15.8 percent of the land use (almost all of it single-family).

Parks and recreation spaces make up one-third of the land in the study area; Dellwood Park is among the key green assets. There are also stretches of street trees and green sidewalk buffers that are among the corridor’s greatest assets; typically, these green intervals are associated with residential areas that are interspersed between the commercial strip areas. A small area of the corridor will also be getting additional green space with the development of the Maline Creek Greenway over the next few years.

Table 2.1 Existing Land Uses in the Specified Planning Study Area		
	Area (Acres)	Percent of Project Area
Commercial	148.9	53.4%
Residential		
Single-Family Residential	41.9	15%
Multi-Family Residential	2.2	0.8%
Parks and Recreation	30.4	10.9%
Institutional	19.3	6.9
Industrial/Utility	6.9	2.5%
Vacant/Agriculture	28.1	10.1%
Common Ground	1.4	0.5%
Total	279.1	100%

MAP 2.1. EXISTING LAND USE



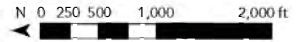
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City Limit	Commercial	Institution	Industrial/Utility
Planning Area	Multi-Family	Common Ground	Vacant/Agriculture
Creek	Duplex/Townhome	Park	
Rail Line	Single Family	Recreation	

**Existing Land Use
Map 2.1**

12.19.2013
Data Source:
St. Louis County GIS



2.2.2 COMMERCIAL ZONING AND LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Existing zoning designations are shown in Map 2.2. Commercial zones are of particular interest, as these areas are important to future economic development along the corridor and influence how the area is perceived and identified. Existing allowed land uses in these zones are summarized as follows and in Table 2.2:

Ferguson

Ferguson's zoning was updated as recently as 2011 and includes a downtown form-based code. Ferguson's guiding comprehensive plan document is the Vision 2015 Plan Update that dates to 1998. Ferguson has two commercial zones in the corridor area. At the north end, near I-270, commercial parcels are zoned C-2, Planned Commercial. Ferguson's parcels at the southern end of the corridor are zoned C-1, General Commercial.

- Ferguson's C-1 zoning (the southern end) allows most retail and service-oriented uses, including automotive dealers, apparel stores, furniture stores, laundromats, professional offices, libraries, educational services, health services, and government agencies. C-1 zoning also allows many conditionally-permitted uses.

- Ferguson's C-2 zoning (near I-270) has fewer permissible uses than C-1. Although the zone still allows retail and service establishments, some uses that are permitted in C-1 (gasoline stations and automotive dealers) become conditional uses in C-2. Moreover, C-2 does not allow uses such as veterinary services, liquor stores, funeral services, and repair services.

Dellwood

Dellwood's zoning ordinance dates to the 1980s and is without an accompanying map, nor is there a guiding vision or comprehensive plan. Dellwood has one commercial zone in the corridor area, identified as C-Commercial. Elsewhere in Dellwood, there is a second commercial zone, known as C-2 Planned District.

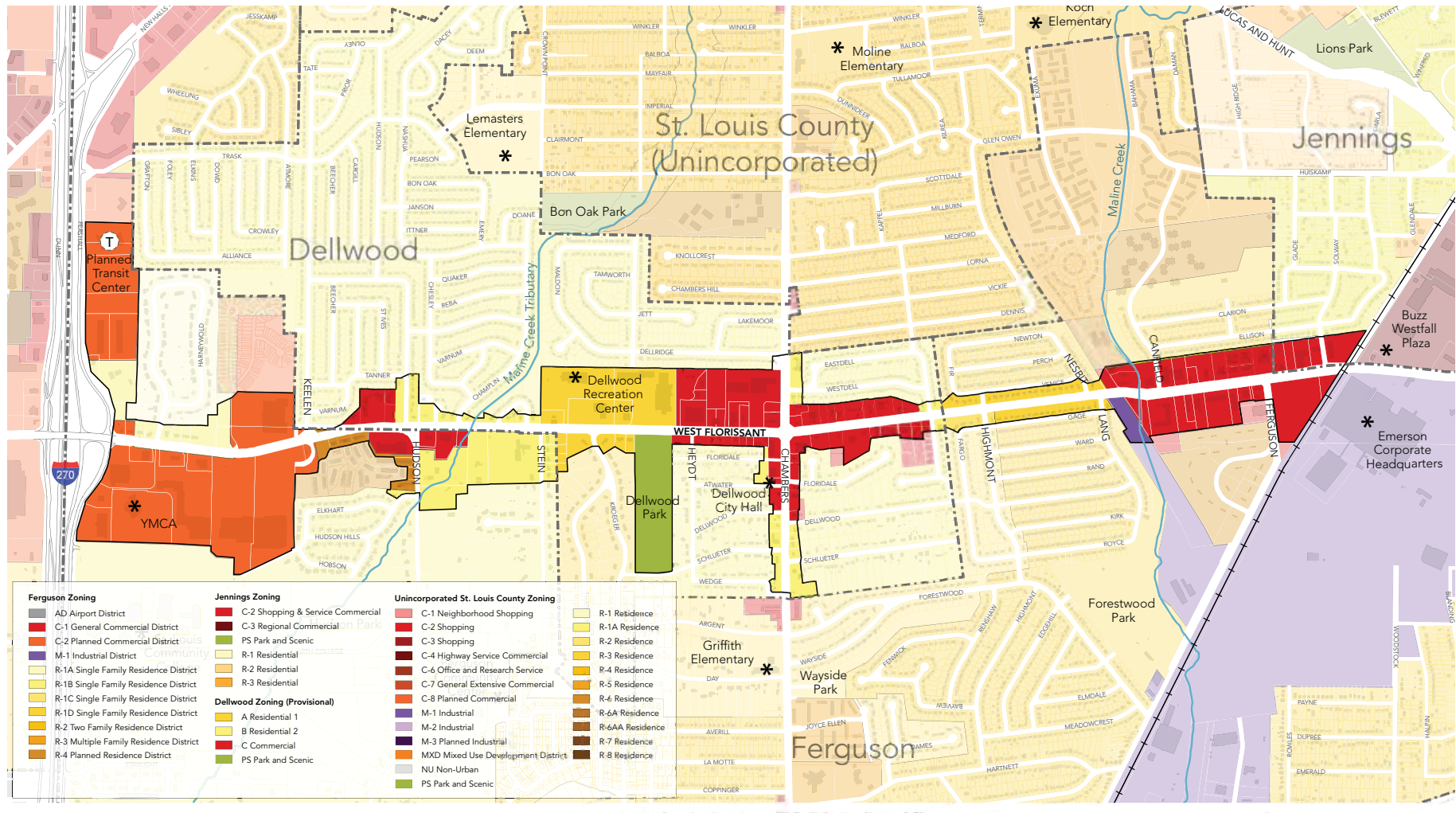
- C District zoning is defined by uses that are not permitted and uses that have certain regulations; other uses are implicitly permitted. Non-permitted uses include schools, libraries, museums/art galleries, botanical/zoological facilities, check cashing/pay day loan establishments, tattoo parlors, churches, and garages/parking uses. Regulated uses include spas and used vehicle sales.
- The C-2 zone in Dellwood is a planned commercial district that allows the same uses as Ferguson's C-2 zoning code.

Jennings

Jennings zoning ordinance and map originated in 1977 but has had regular updates up to the present. The city's comprehensive plan dates to the year 2000. There are several corridor parcels located in Jennings, at the southern end of the corridor. Jennings has one commercial zone which applies to these parcels: C-2, Shopping and Service Commercial District. In general, this zone tends to encourage smaller, free-standing commercial development.

- There are many uses permitted in Jennings' C-2 zone, including retail stores (apparel, furniture, automotive supply, general merchandise); retail services (dine-in restaurants, banking and lending institutions); other services (e.g., health, recreation and amusement); schools and vocational services; and general and governmental offices.
- The C-2 zoning does not allow the following uses, or only allows them conditionally: home improvement/garden supply stores, used merchandise stores, check cashing establishments, drive-through restaurants, drinking places, and grocery stores over 30,000 square feet (under 30,000 s.f. requires a conditional use permit).

MAP 2.2. EXISTING ZONING MAP



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Table 2.2 Existing Commercial Zones and Associated Land Uses				
USES	FERGUSON C-1	FERGUSON C-2	JENNINGS C-2	DELLWOOD C
Veterinary Services	P	NP	P (no outdoor kennels)	P (no kennels)
Bus Station	P	P	NP	P
U.S. Postal Office	P	NP	P	P
Communication Services	P	P	P	P
Home Improvement	P	P	NP	P
Garden Supply/Nursery	P	P	NP	P
Grocery/Deli/Food Store	P	P	C	P
Gasoline Station	P	C	C	P
Automotive Dealers/Leasing/Rental (New and Used)	P	C	C	P
Automotive Supply	P	P	P	P
Boat/Motorcycle/Recreation Dealers	P	NP	C	P
Apparel Stores	P	P	P	P
Furniture Stores	P	P	P	P
Site-Down/Dine-In Restaurant	P	P	P	P
General Merchandise	P	P	P	P
Liquor Store	P	NP	C	P
Banking/Lending Institutions (Depository)	P	P	P	P
Offices; Professional Offices (Licensed by the State)	P	P	P	P
Real Estate Agencies	P	P	P	P
Hotels/Motels	P	P	C	P
Laundry Services (Dry Cleaning, Coin-Op)	P	P	C	P
Barber/Beauty Salons	P	P	C	P
Repair Services	P	P	C	P
Funeral Service/Crematories	P	NP	C	P
Equipment Leasing/Rental	P	NP	P	P
Automotive Repair/Service	P	NP	C	P
Motion Picture Studio/Production	P	P	P	P

Table continues on next page

Table 2.2 (continued) Existing Commercial Zones and Associated Land Uses

USES	FERGUSON C-1	FERGUSON C-2	JENNINGS C-2	DELLWOOD C
Amusement/Recreation Services	P	P	P	P
Health Services (Clinics, Laboratories, Out-Patient)	P	P	P (no labs/diagn. imaging)	P
Hospitals; Nursing Homes (Skilled, Intermediate, Home Health)	P	P	C	P
Public/Private Educational Institutions; Vocational Schools	P	P	P	NP
Libraries	P	P	P	NP
Adult Day Care	P	NP	P	P
Museums/Art Galleries	P	P	P	NP
Botanical Gardens/Zoological Centers	P	P	NP	NP
General Government	P	P	P	P
Used Vehicle Sales (Used Only)	C	C	C	P
Used Merchandise Stores/Auction Rooms	C	NP	NP	P (no pawnbrokers)
Check Cashing Agencies/Pay Day Loan Institutions	C	NP	NP	NP
Spas	C	NP	C	C
Adult Services	C	NP	NP	P
Tattoo Parlors	C	NP	NP	NP
Automotive Towing	C	NP	C	P
Automotive Repair Shops	C	NP	C	P
Churches	C	NP	P	NP
Convents/Monasteries	C	NP	P	P
Mini-Warehouses/Self-Storage	C	NP	C	P
Communication Antennae	C	C	P	P
Communication Towers	C	C	P	P
Child Care Centers	C	C	C	P
Automated Teller Machines	C	C	P	P
Eating Places (Drive-Through Windows)	C	C	NP	P
Drinking Places	C	C	NP	P
Garages/Parking	NP	NP	P	NP



Parking lots in front characterize the commercial areas of the avenue



Single-family homes characterize the Project area's residential land uses

2.2.3 COMMUNITY DESIGN AND CHARACTER

There is little consistency of treatment or character along the corridor. Differences in development types, streetscape, and sidewalk connectivity leave a choppy impression, evident between the different municipalities but also even within one jurisdiction. Major differences in zoning between Ferguson and Dellwood contribute strongly to the impression of inconsistency along the corridor; among the most significant is the different set of dimensional requirements for Dellwood's Commercial (C District) zone, which has resulted in numerous small, closely-spaced commercial enterprises, each with its own access from West Florissant Avenue.

Most commercial buildings are one-story, with a few two-story structures. Combined with the scale of West Florissant Avenue itself, this has resulted in a public realm that is scaled more for driving than for pedestrian interest and comfort.

Although sidewalks are provided on both sides of West Florissant Avenue along most of the corridor, the pedestrian realm is generally uninviting and often unsafe. Buildings are spaced too far apart to walk, sidewalks are interrupted by frequent driveways and parking entries, and there are few pedestrian amenities or street trees.

The corridor's substantial inconsistencies are a significant challenge to overcome in the planning and development of this corridor-wide master plan. With the right interventions, however, the diversity of character along the corridor can also become a strength, with a more unified vision that accentuates key characteristics in commercial, residential, and open space areas, with appropriate adjustments to land use regulations.

2.3 TRANSPORTATION EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing transportation uses along West Florissant Avenue offer some of the building blocks for remaking the street into a true multi-modal corridor. Today, the street functions primarily as a Principal Arterial for automobile traffic. The avenue generally consists of two through lanes in each direction and a center left-turn lane, but there are exceptions to this. In the southern residential portion there is no center turn lane and the corridor has quite a different character as a result. In the northernmost section, near I-270 where traffic volume approaches 38,000 cars per day, one finds auxiliary lanes on each side to enable right turns, bringing the number of total lanes up to seven. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of West Florissant, however they vary enormously in quality and some are not compliant with ADA requirements. With Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes varying from approximately 25,000 to 38,000 vehicles per day throughout the corridor, it is apparent that this roadway is a significant route in north St. Louis County, and the street has been designed primarily for vehicles, presenting clear challenges to other users. Maps 2.3 and 2.4 provide existing

traffic volumes at major intersections along West Florissant Avenue within and adjacent to the Study Area. Additionally, the maps provide ADTs (from both CBB's November 2013 counts and counts provided by St. Louis County) throughout the Study Area. Differences in the ADT values may be a result of differing collection locations, as well as time of year. Additionally, some of the St. Louis County data are taken from 2007 counts. Traffic volumes in the corridor have likely fluctuated in recently years along with changing commercial uses.

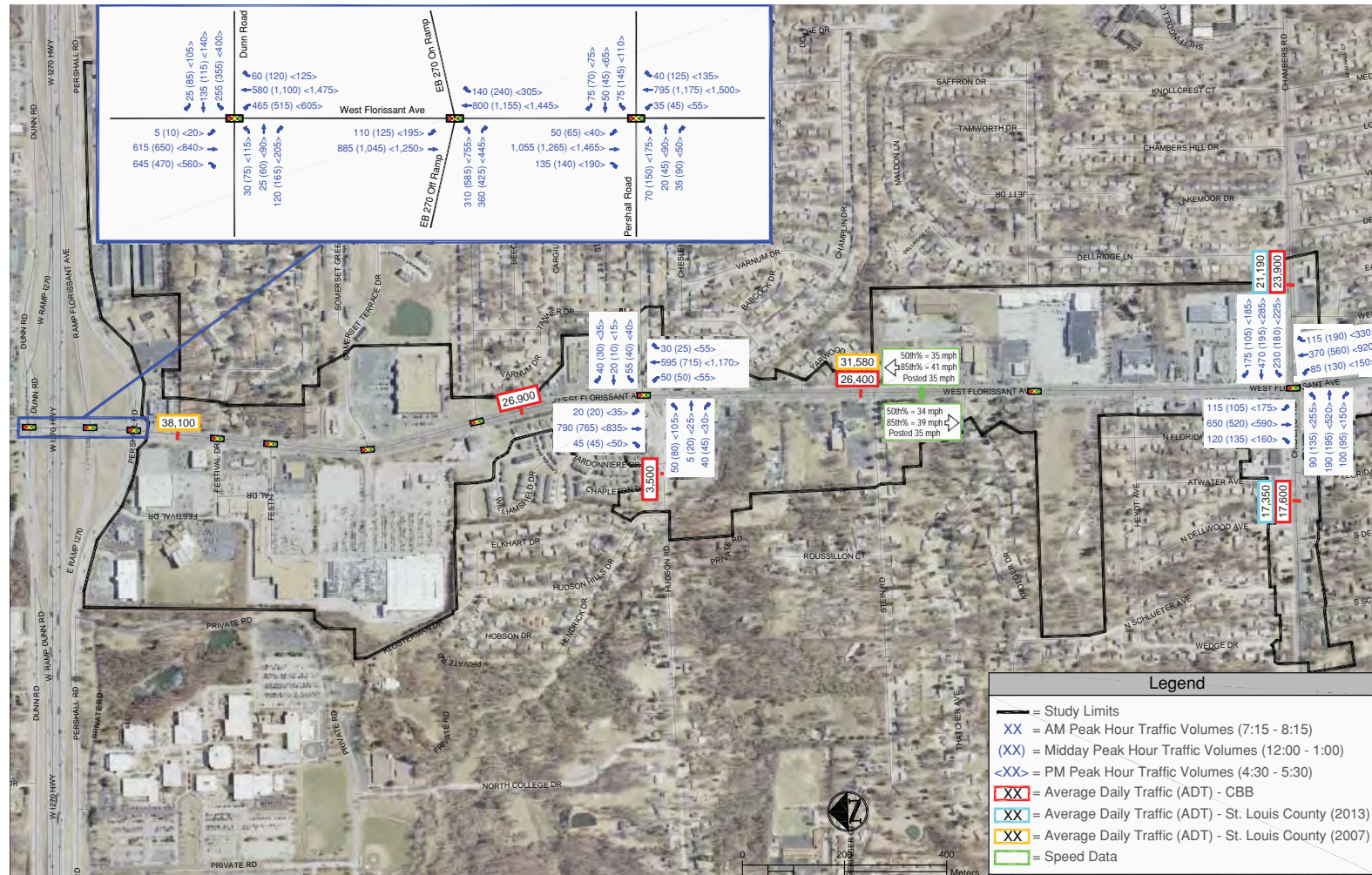
West Florissant also carries transit, specifically MetroBus Route 74 (Florissant line), and though the headways are long (30 minutes), Route 74 is one of Metro's heaviest-used lines, with over 1.1 million boardings in 2013. West Florissant is crossed by MetroBus Route 61 (also in Metro's top ten heaviest-used routes, with 800,000 boardings) at Chambers Road. The heavy transit use along the corridor results in a correspondingly heavy pedestrian demand. There is a clear opportunity to encourage transit- and pedestrian-oriented development at this intersection of West Florissant and Chambers Road.

While the current roadway configuration works relatively well for those traveling by automobile,

and offers a transit option, other modes and users are largely shortchanged. West Florissant Avenue's auto-dominated character and design, width, and traffic speeds, as well as the lack of any bicycle facilities, make it hostile to and unsafe for cyclists. Conditions for pedestrians are somewhat better, with the presence of sidewalks, but the pedestrian experience in many places along the corridor is unpleasant and unsafe.

Many local agencies have identified the need and opportunities for improvements. One such opportunity which offers the chance for potentially transformational change would be the addition of a future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route along the corridor, by Metro (see Chapter 5 for details). With new high-quality transit service given priority along the corridor, and with rush-hour headways of 10 minutes, the opportunity exists to remake West Florissant Avenue into a transit-first street, with transit-oriented, pedestrian-scale development clustered around some key stations along the corridor. The corridor has a relatively wide right-of-way, which will make allocating space efficiently to serve the multi-modal needs of all its users easier than if the street were narrower.

MAP 2.3. EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND SPEED (NORTH CORRIDOR)



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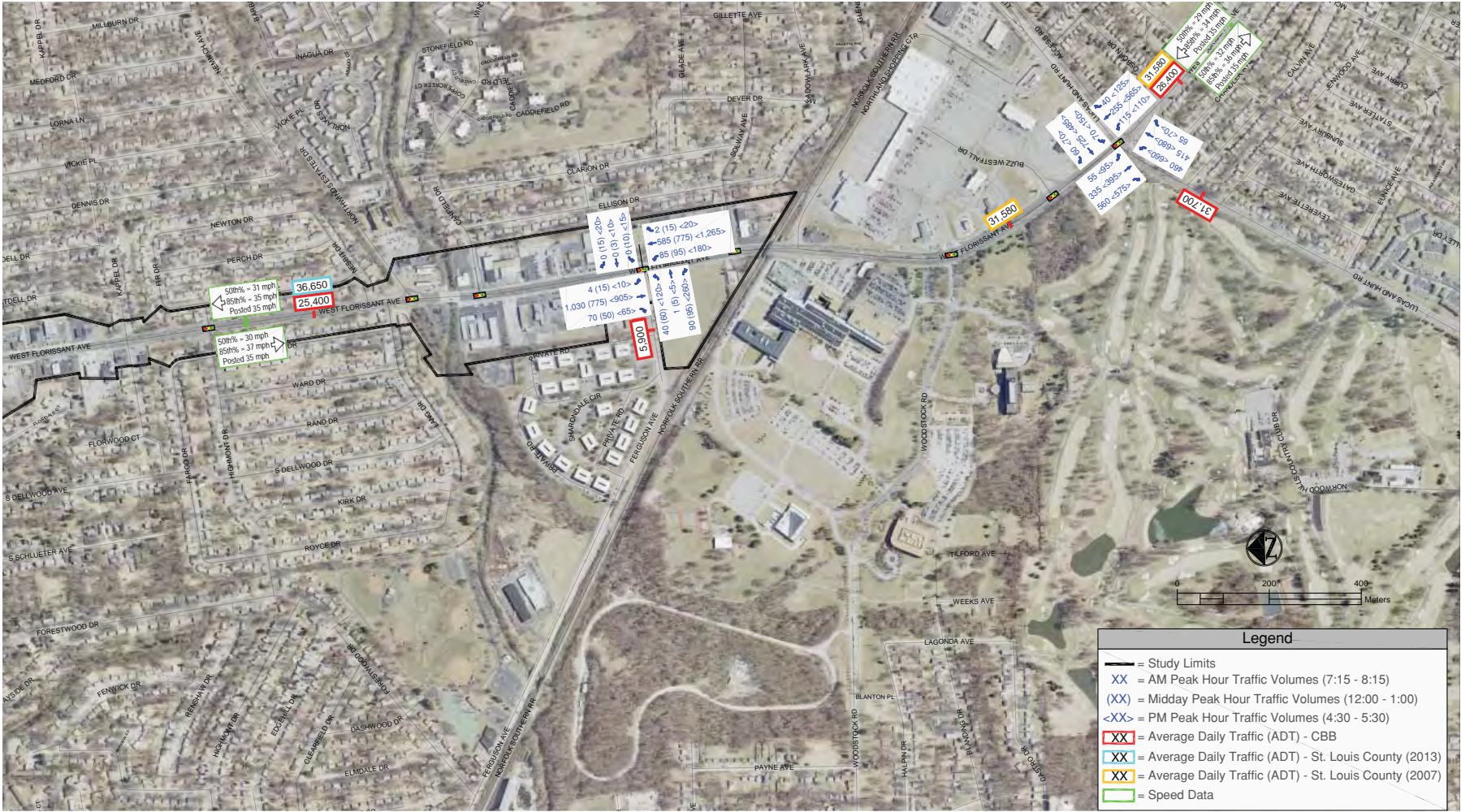
Project Sponsors:
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Maps 2.3-2.4 provide existing traffic volumes at major intersections using counts done in November 2013 and previous counts provided by St. Louis County. Differences in the ADT values may be a result of differing collection locations, as well as time of year.

Existing Traffic Volumes and Speed Data

Data Sources:
CBB field study; St. Louis County

MAP 2.4. EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND SPEED (SOUTH CORRIDOR)



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Existing Traffic Volumes and Speed Data

Data Sources:
CBB field study; St. Louis County



The space allocated to West Florissant Avenue's vehicle traffic could be reduced



The intersection of West Florissant Avenue and Chambers Road is a "hot spot."

2.3.1 KEY FINDINGS: AUTOMOBILES

The two existing through lanes in each direction along West Florissant Avenue provide sufficient capacity for current and future vehicle traffic volumes. In some areas for much of the day, one travel lane in each direction would be sufficient. The roadway has a large paved foot-print, and the space required for automobile traffic can likely be accommodated in a smaller paved footprint that retains the same number of lanes.

About 5.8% of the households in surrounding neighborhoods have no vehicle available, as compared to 2.6% for the state of Missouri and 2.4% for St. Louis County.

There are two traffic "hot spots" along the corridor: 1) Near the I-270 interchange; and 2) at the intersection with Chambers Road. The Chambers Road "hot spot" was confirmed by project stakeholders, who reported that this intersection can become congested at various times of the day (e.g., during the lunch rush and evening commute).

Excessive speed does not appear to be a major problem in the corridor. The posted speed limit on West Florissant Avenue is 35 mph. The majority

of observed speeds (85th percentile) were less than 42 mph.

Overall, the types of vehicle crashes along the corridor are typical for arterial corridor (mostly rear end and angle). However pedestrian crashes, at 21 crashes over 4 years, were fairly high. The crash data indicates that most occurred on good weather days and during the daylight. Maps 2.5 and 2.6 illustrates the number of crashes as related to location along the corridor. The largest percent of crashes were reported at Chambers Road with about 24% of total, the second most occurred at Pershall Avenue with about 19% of total, the third most at Ferguson Avenue (8.5%) and less 6% of the total at each of the other intersections. Moreover, one-third of the pedestrian crashes in the Study Area occurred at the Chambers Road intersection.

There were 736 reported crashes in the four years from 2008 to 2011. Of the total crashes reported, 0 fatal crashes, 228 injury crashes (31%) and 508 property damage only (69%) crashes were reported.

After analyzing the crash data over four years, it is evident that angle and rear end crashes are the most prominent type of crash, which is typical for a signalized corridor.

The pedestrian crashes were at 3% for the corridor with all but one pedestrian crash resulting in injuries. Of 21 pedestrian crashes over 4 years, one third of these occurred at the intersection of Chambers Road. It is apparent that this intersection has a higher safety risk. The physical features of the intersection include a general lack of access management and numerous transit stops. Any potential changes to the system should consider impacts to the non-motorized mode.

2.3.2 KEY FINDINGS: PARKING

Approximately 30% of the project area is paved parking, a large and visible presence, and much of it underutilized. This issue needs to be addressed in zoning changes and in shared parking agreements that make more efficient use of parking areas and reduce parking redundancy. Near I-270, parking is provided in large lots, typically with access provided to West Florissant Avenue at a traffic signal. Parking and parking lot access is adequate in this section. Closer to Chambers Road the lot sizes generally decrease. Some businesses have cross access and shared parking. Many of these larger parking areas have

unsignalized access to West Florissant Avenue, making left turn access difficult during peak traffic periods. Many of the smaller lots have parking that backs directly onto West Florissant Avenue, which can be hazardous for both business patrons and through traffic. Cross access can be improved in some instances, while the small lot sizes preclude cross access in other cases. Improved access management would help to facilitate safer and more efficient access in this section of the corridor, and additional cross access should be pursued where feasible. The southern section of the corridor has predominantly mid-sized lots with extensive parking to the front and in many cases the rear of the businesses. Cross access is provided between many, but not all businesses. Most driveways are provided at midblock locations making left-turn access difficult during peak traffic periods. Additional cross access and creation of a backage road system, in addition to other access management measures, would provide a tremendous benefit to provide for safer and more efficient access in this section of the corridor.

2.3.3 KEY FINDINGS: BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Pedestrian use and bicycle travel are considered to be equal in importance to vehicular and public transit use in the planning and design of a Great

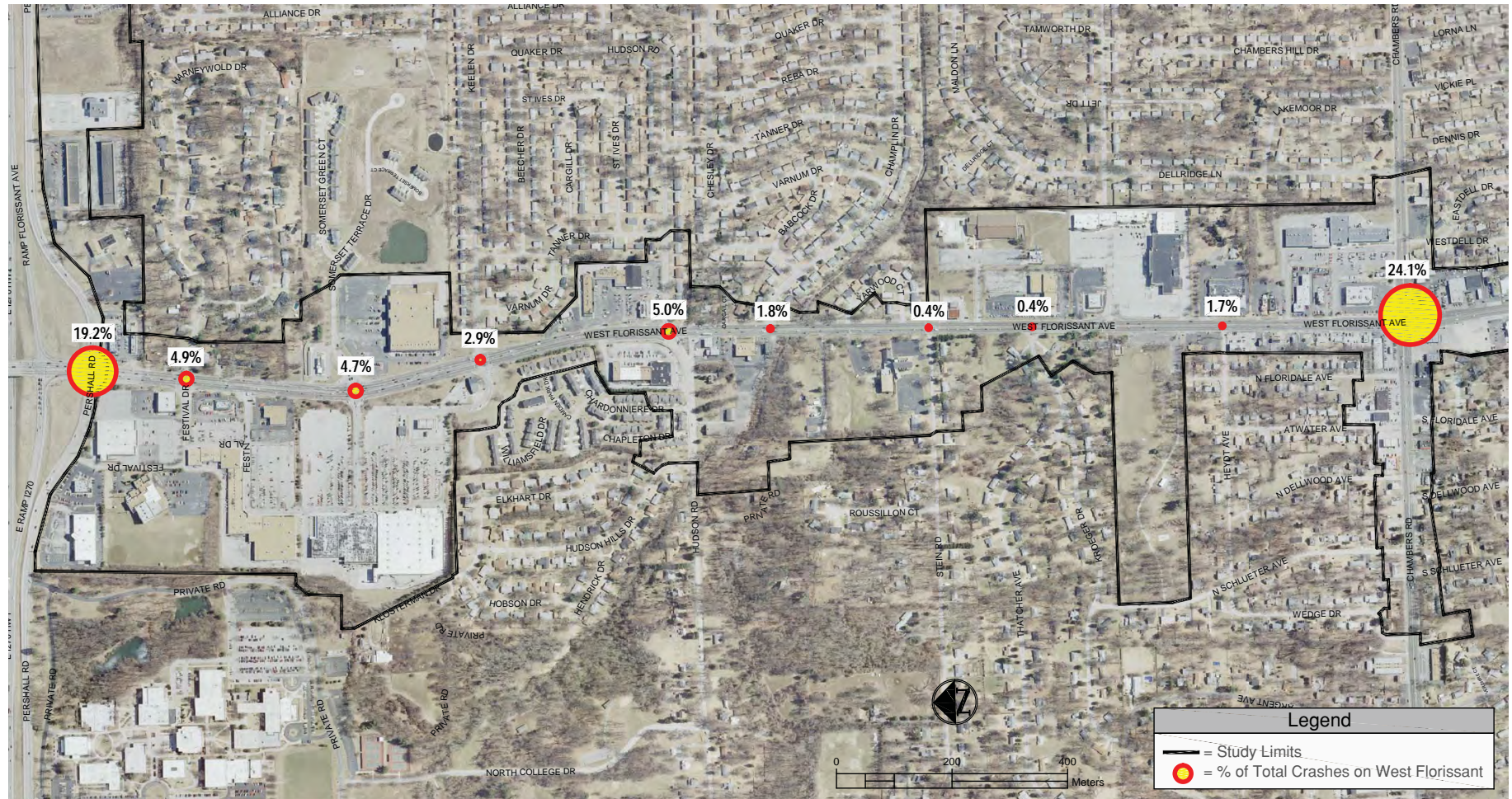


There are numerous access points directly from West Florissant Avenue to parking areas



Existing street conditions are not bicycle-friendly and lack bicycle facilities

MAP 2.5. VEHICLE CRASHES (NORTH CORRIDOR)



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Maps 2.5 and 2.6 illustrate the number of crashes as related to location along the corridor. The largest percentage of crashes was reported at Chambers Road, with about 24% of total; the second-most occurred at Pershall Avenue, with about 19% of total.

Crash Data

Data Source:
St. Louis County

MAP 2.6. VEHICLE CRASHES (SOUTH CORRIDOR)



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Crash Data

12.18.2013
Data Source:
St. Louis County



Due to an auto-centric street design, pedestrians often make unsafe street crossings in the middle of the block



Transit is a major presence on West Florissant Avenue

Street that best serves the population around the West Florissant Avenue Corridor. Worldwide, the interaction of all modes has been observed to be essential to healthy communities. Today, few bicyclists are observed riding along the corridor, which is predictable since no real bicycle facilities are currently provided along West Florissant Avenue. Those that are observed are primarily seen riding on the sidewalks. The Draft Ferguson Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan and Bike STL Plan provide various options to upgrade bicycle facilities along the corridor, to be considered in the range of context-friendly enhancements that serve all users. It is likely that bicycle ridership would be significantly higher in the corridor if safe bicycle facilities were provided, given the high volume of pedestrians along the corridor and low automobile ownership in the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Pedestrian conditions are only marginally better. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of West Florissant Avenue, and pedestrian crosswalks and push buttons are provided at all signalized intersections. However, the quality of the sidewalks and pedestrian crossings could be greatly improved. Specifically, many of the sidewalks are disjointed and some are not compliant with ADA requirements, pedestrian signals have not been

updated to include countdown heads, and some of the push buttons do not function. Lighting is poor throughout the corridor, and the presence of driveways, curb-cuts and unclear access points for vehicles, especially around commercial areas, significantly decreases the safety of all users, most critically pedestrians on sidewalks. Pedestrian crossing facilities are limited to occasional signalized intersections, which results in dangerous attempts by people to get across the street on their own. Strong pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods are also lacking. Twenty-one pedestrians have been hit by vehicles just in the past 4 years, indicating significant risk, and nearly one-third of these crashes occurred at the intersection with the highest need for pedestrian safety, at Chambers Road. The environment for pedestrians could be greatly improved by better connecting sidewalks, adding green buffers and shade, improving ADA compliance, creating more midblock crossing opportunities, enhancing some intersections, consolidating and removing driveways and vehicle access points, updating signalized pedestrian crossings, and lighting all parts of the corridor. Overall, given the number of people walking along the corridor, the pedestrian

facilities need to be considered with a level of care equal to that given to automobile facilities.

2.3.4 KEY FINDINGS: TRANSIT

The Project area has a much greater public transportation mode split as compared to Missouri and St. Louis County averages, which is explained in part by area demographics (mode split is the percentage of travelers using a specific mode, such as transit or walking or driving). 8.5% of the Project area's residents use transit as compared to 1.5% for the state of Missouri and 2.4% for St. Louis County. 13.5% of people in the Study Area are not using a car to get to work (according to the US Census, this compares with a figure of 8.1% nationally for workers who live outside a principal city but in the metro area). Transit mode share could likely be improved in the Study Area. For example, the layout of the local roadway system does not connect neighborhoods well with the transit stops on West Florissant Avenue. Maps 2.7 and 2.8 illustrate the differences between the one-quarter mile/one-half mile straight-line and walking distances to bus stops. Strategically located bicycle and pedestrian paths may shorten walking distances to transit stops for some local

residents. Transit access is especially high around the Chambers Road intersection, underscoring the importance of this node as a central community area. Destinations like St. Louis Community College also draw regional transit riders and have actually seen a decline in the use of automobiles among their students.

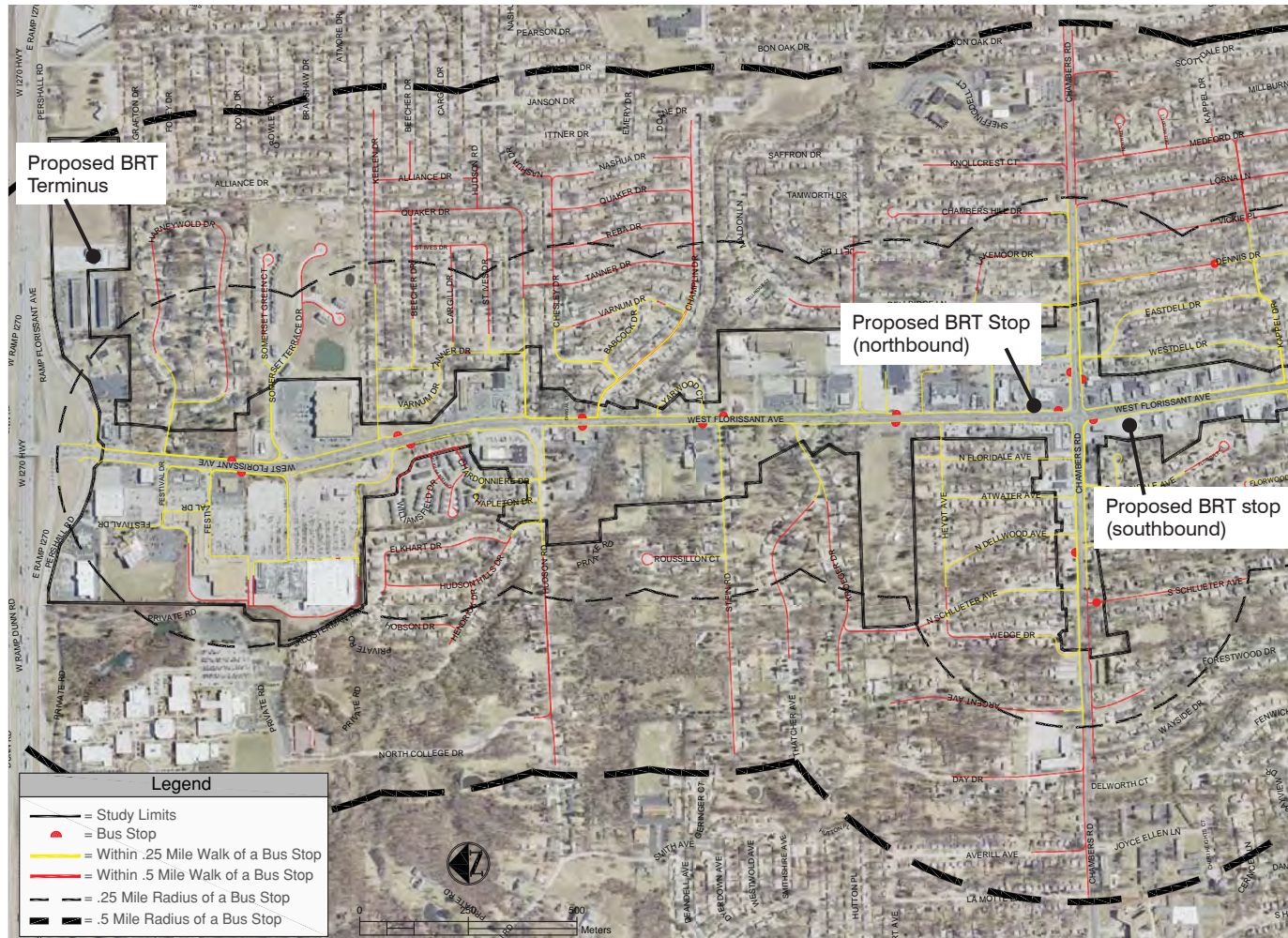
Three bus routes currently serve the Project area: Route 74 (Florissant), Route 61 (Chambers Road), and Route 64 (Lucas and Hunt). Many transit customers transfer buses (especially near the Chambers Road intersection), which results in a high number of mid-block crossings. Although pedestrian crosswalks are provided at all signalized intersections, the walking distance between these signalized intersections is high, and field observations revealed that many pedestrians are not using them. Most intersections with smaller roads along West Florissant have neither controls, such as signals or stop signs, nor pedestrian crossing facilities, such as crosswalks.

Transit mode share could be substantially improved in the corridor through a variety of strategies. Bus stops are already being improved with shelters and benches and some are being relocated to more convenient locations. Improved

and strategically-located bicycle and pedestrian routes and paths could shorten access distances and time, thus enhancing transit accessibility for some local residents. The general pedestrian environment should also be improved (with sidewalks, shade, and pedestrian amenities). The corridor also needs to incorporate public transportation facilities and services that meet the special needs of the elderly, low-income families, disabled, and those without access to private automobiles.

Metro has also selected the corridor as one of two routes to implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), which is a faster bus service with a signature design that will complement local bus service. The installation of a BRT route alone will be an enormous improvement not only to transit service but also to the whole image of the corridor. Metro is also designing a new North County Transit Center that will be located off Pershall Road to the east of West Florissant Avenue, at the north end of the project area. This facility, scheduled to open in spring of 2015, will serve the eastern North St. Louis County region (the Hanley Road transit center serves western North St. Louis County), providing transfer opportunities for 9-10 routes.

MAP 2.7. TRANSIT ACCESS (NORTH CORRIDOR)



Great Streets Initiative West Florissant Avenue Demonstration Project

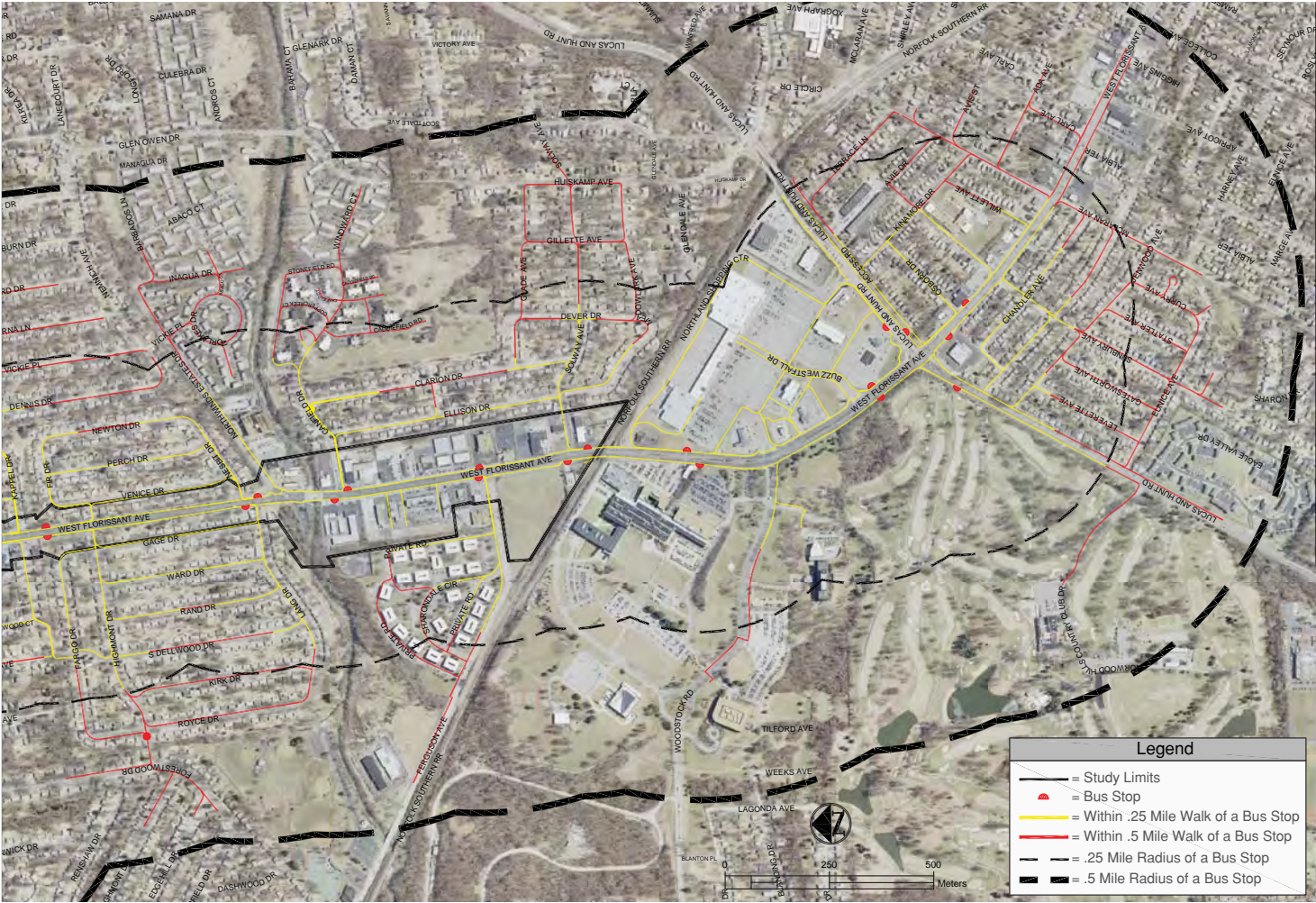
Project Sponsors:
East West Gateway | Cities of Ferguson and Dellwood | St. Louis County

The layout of the local roadway system does not connect neighborhoods well with the transit stops on West Florissant Avenue. Maps 2.7 and 2.8 illustrate the differences between the one-quarter mile/one-half mile straight-line and walking distances.

Bus Stop Locations with .25mi and .5mi Walking Distances

Data Source:
Field survey

MAP 2.8. TRANSIT ACCESS (SOUTH CORRIDOR)



Great Streets Initiative
West Florissant Avenue Demonstration Project

Project Sponsors:
East West Gateway | Cities of Ferguson and Dellwood | St. Louis County

Bus Stop Locations with .25mi and .5mi Walking Distances

Data Source:
Field survey

2.4 INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

West Florissant Avenue has typical infrastructure for utilities, such as storm drains and sanitary sewer facilities, power lines and communication transmission facilities, street lights, and conveyance of potable water and natural gas (Map 2.9).

For electrical power, Ameren Missouri, the area's power provider, has a substation located at the northeast side of the intersection of West Florissant Avenue and Chambers Road. Most overhead power is on the west side of West Florissant Avenue, generally inside the existing right of way. Power pole locations vary, but they are generally placed between the edge of pavement and sidewalk or are located on the west side of the sidewalk. There also is a stretch of overhead power and power poles located on the east side of West Florissant Avenue, from Northwinds Estates Drive to Kappel Drive.

Communication is suspended from power poles, which are mostly located on the west side of West Florissant Avenue. In addition, underground communications lines exist within the Project corridor.

Street lighting is owned and maintained by Ameren. Most of the street lighting on the west side of West Florissant Avenue is provided by suspension from power poles. The street lighting on the east side of the corridor is a combination of suspension from power poles and individual poles, and largely benefits vehicles. Pedestrian-scale street lighting is recommended along the corridor to improve lighting and pedestrian use.

2.4.1 STORM WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Much of the corridor is impervious surface: approximately 85% of the right-of-way and 55% of the project area is impervious; just over half of this impervious area consists of paved parking. Reducing this impervious area to the greatest extent possible will benefit water quality, improve storm water management, and reduce the heat island effect.

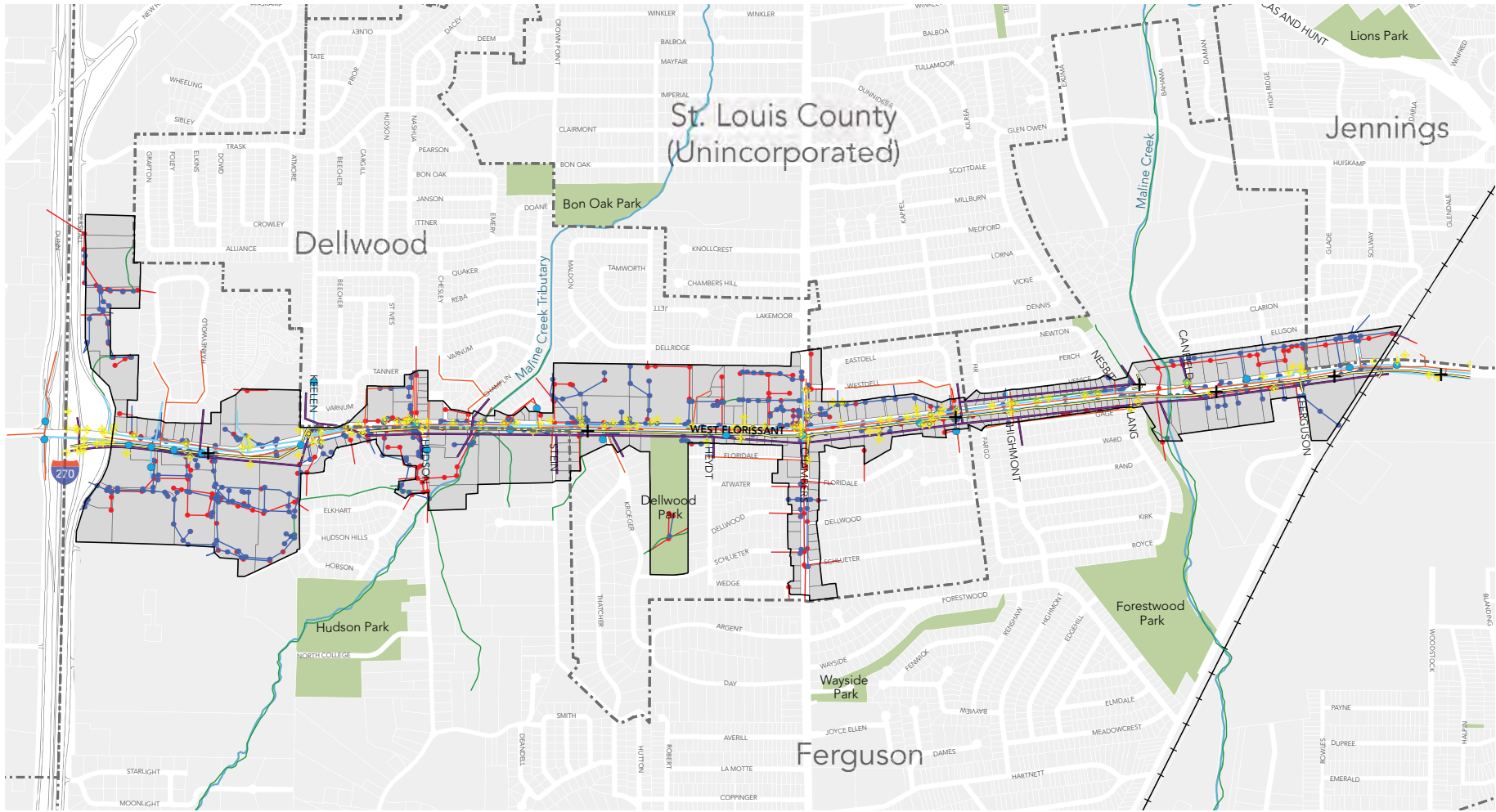
The Project area lacks vegetation and landscape; just 13% of the Project area has tree canopy coverage (Map 2.10). As an point of comparison, in 2010, Forest ReLeaf of Missouri (FRM), with funding from Missouri Department of

Conservation, and in partnership with the City of St. Louis, Metropolitan Sewer District, and St. Louis County performed an Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Assessment. In the area studied, UTC was recorded at 26%, which is considered far too low by national standards. American Forests provides a benchmark of 40% canopy coverage which many cities use as a target.

The lack of water-permeable space compromises storm water management efforts, and has resulted in disconnected habitat corridors, a visually uninviting corridor, and a less healthy environment.

Existing storm water infrastructure includes inlet structures and conveyance pipes and channels, forming two drainage areas in the West Florissant Avenue Corridor. All storm water for this project study area ultimately outlets into Maline Creek. Given the plans to develop Maline Creek as a green corridor, there is a need to clean as much of West Florissant's stormwater runoff as possible before it reaches Maline Creek, through advanced stormwater management interventions in the right-of-way.

MAP 2.9. EXISTING UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE (SEE ENLARGED MAP IN APPENDIX)



Great Streets Initiative
West Florissant Avenue Demonstration Project

Project Sponsors:
East West Gateway | Cities of Ferguson and Dellwood | St. Louis County

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| City Limit | Power Poles | Laclede Gas Line | Sanitary |
| Planning Area | Light Poles | Watermain | Sanitary Sewer Structure |
| Park | Power Lines | Storm Water Channel | |
| Creek | Charter | Storm | |
| Rail Line | Hydrants | Storm Sewer Structure | |

Utilities Infrastructure

12.18.2013
Data Source:
St. Louis County GIS

N 0 250 500 1,000 2,000 ft



Parks within the Project area have good tree coverage, but the street itself is lacking in green vegetation and landscape



The Project area has a high proportion of impervious surface coverage, especially in commercial areas

Storm water quality requirements will need to be evaluated with individual improvements in the future. Some water quality solutions that would be appropriate for an urban site such as West Florissant Avenue include bio-retention, rainwater harvesting, sand filters, permeable pavement, and proprietary solutions.

2.4.2 AIR QUALITY AND SOUND POLLUTION

Air quality in the study area is mostly affected by idling motor vehicles. Metro's plans for the addition of Bus Rapid Transit in this corridor and the introduction of a multi-use path are clear alternatives to car trips and may ultimately help make incremental improvements to the air quality of the corridor. In addition, any reduction in motor vehicle traffic will also result in a reduction in sound pollution. Bus traffic also affects air and sound pollution, but at this point it is unknown whether there will be an overall increase or reduction in the number of buses on the corridor as a result of the introduction of BRT.

2.4.3 HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

In an urban environment, heat gain can be as much as 20% higher due to the sun's exposure to surfaces such as pavement and roofs. Pavement reduction and the use of concrete will reduce the current levels of urban heat island effect in the

study area. The use of trees and vegetated areas, especially in parking lots and pedestrian zones will reduce peak summer temperatures by 2-9 degrees, lowering surface and air temperatures.

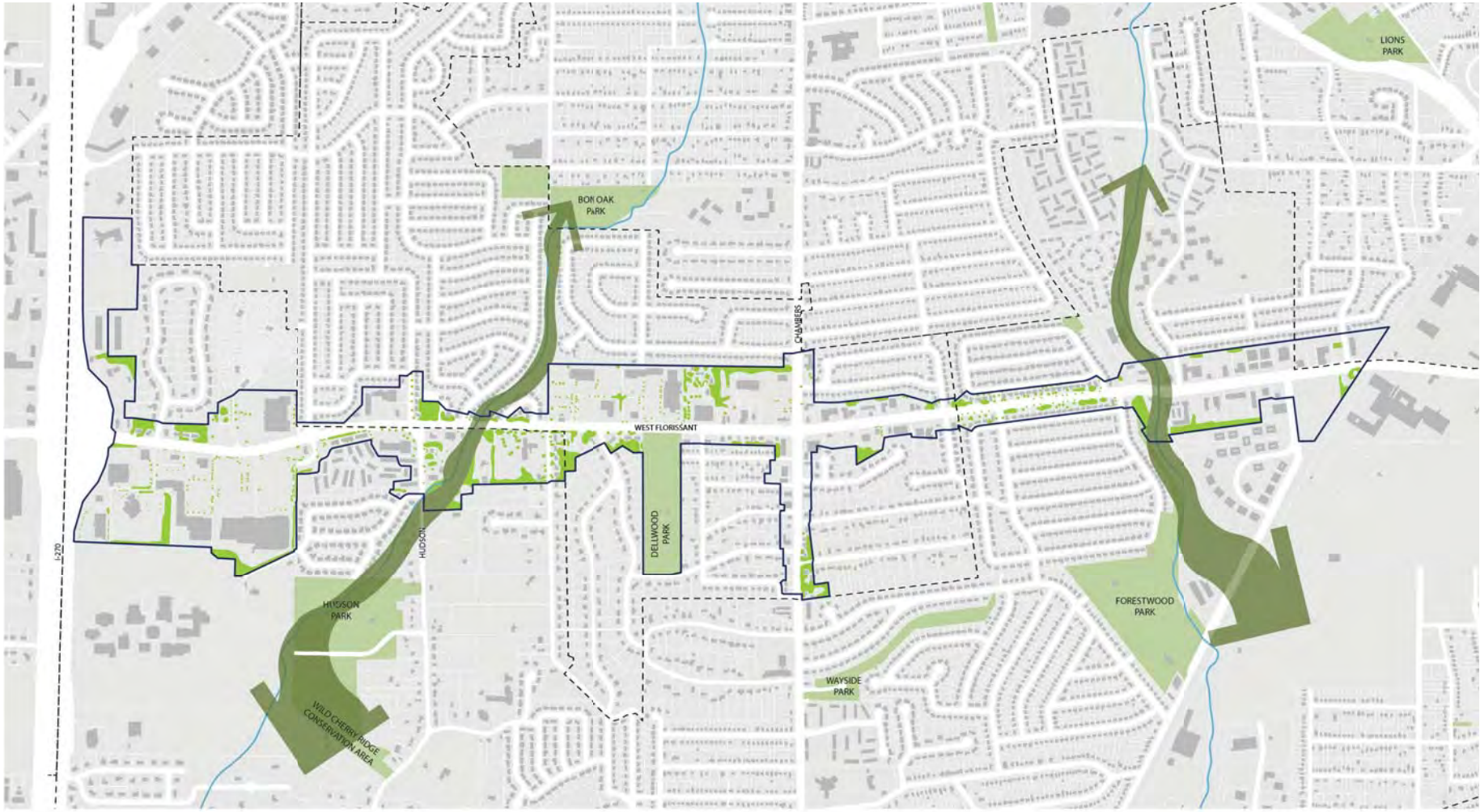
2.4.4 ENERGY CONSUMPTION

The existing street lighting is far less efficient than newer technologies of today, inflicting unnecessarily high yearly costs. Utilizing today's technology has the potential of reducing energy consumption for road lighting by as much as 50%.

2.4.5 NATURAL AREAS

There are 160 acres of open space or park land use within one mile of the West Florissant Corridor study area. Dellwood Park is directly adjacent to the corridor and within the study area, providing 14.2 acres of open space accessible to residents and local businesses. These spaces offer a variety of recreational and ecological services for the area and could be strengthened with more systematic connections to one another. The existing Maline Creek and hydrological systems provide natural corridors that are vital to the health of the study area. The two wildlife corridors that intersect the corridor are the Maline Creek on the southern end and one of its tributaries to the north. These natural areas provide wildlife habitat and passages for safe migration of indigenous species.

MAP 2.10. EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



Great Streets Initiative
West Florissant Avenue Demonstration Project

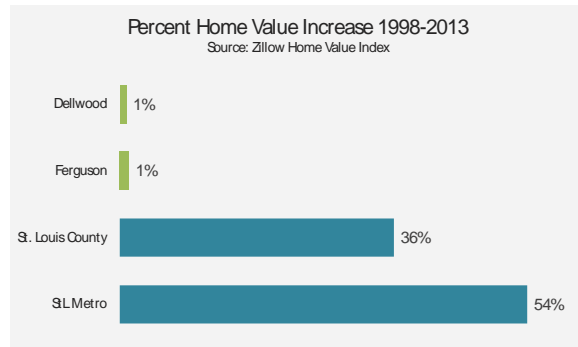
Project Sponsors:
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- City Limit
- Planning Area
- Existing Tree Coverage
- Open Space
- Wildlife Corridor

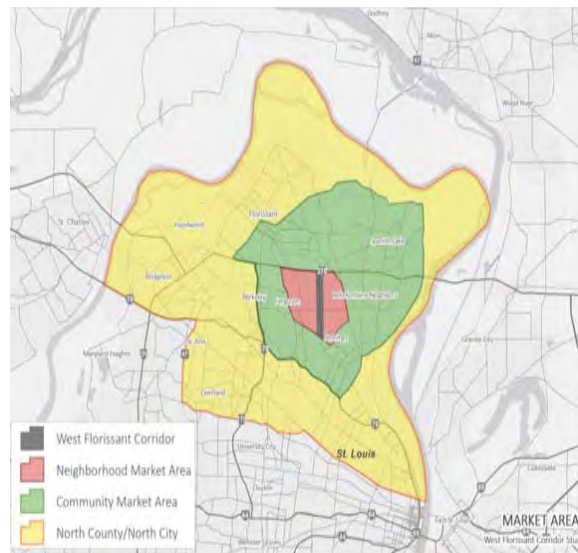
Existing Green Infrastructure

12.19.2013
Data Source:
St. Louis County GIS

N 0 250 500 1,000 2,000 ft



Comparison of home value changes in the Project area (green) and region



Market Areas for the Project vicinity

2.5 MARKET CONDITIONS

North County, in general, can be characterized as having incomes and property values that have not kept up with inflation and regional growth rates. This pattern has been particularly acute south of I-270, where the study area is located. North County—especially in and around the study area—is characterized by the lowest apartment rents and highest vacancy rates in the St. Louis region, making the use of subsidies like tax credits necessary in order to build quality replacement housing.

Single family rental housing is common and becoming more common. Since 1990, the homeownership rate in the Neighborhood Market Area (NMA) has declined from 68 to 58 percent.

Two very large apartment properties at the southern end of the corridor – Park Ridge and Northwinds – have some of the heaviest concentrations of very low income residents (defined as earning no more than 30 percent of Area Median Income) in the entire region, and are not performing well in terms of overall occupancy.

Although the NMA is not growing in terms of population, it is shifting demographically, creating opportunities for the development of affordable senior housing.

Homes in Ferguson and Dellwood have experienced some of the weakest property appreciation in the entire St. Louis region. Home values in the NMA tend to range between \$60,000 and \$70,000—well below the \$175,000 needed to construct quality single family housing.

Demographic analysis reveals a sizable minority of households in the NMA that are capable of affording new, market rate housing—be it rental or for-sale. Evidence indicates this population is migrating farther north into St. Louis County, as well as to St. Charles County, in order to find appropriately priced and quality housing.

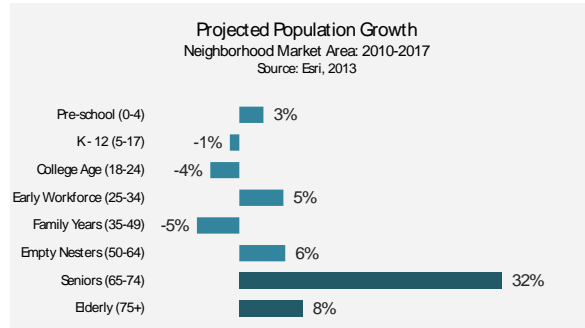
Nevertheless, analysis does show there will be future demand for apartment housing on the order of 400 to 500 units over 20 years, focused on senior and mixed income housing.

2.5.1 RETAIL

The corridor has over 1.2 million square feet of retail (Map 2.11). Retail supply is well defined in the corridor, with two community/power retail centers at either end that serve a broader region, a neighborhood center in the middle that serves the neighborhood market area, and a number of small/boutique/independent retailers in between that serve client bases from a very small and specific surrounding geography. Together, these centers provide most of the community's retail needs. There are few opportunities for additional retail. Paring back land devoted to retail is needed along the corridor to boost overall occupancy rates and correct a market condition of oversupply that leads to low rents and, as a result, insufficient funds for landlords to maintain their properties.

Office opportunities in the corridor are limited, with the possible exception of medical office space, and growth opportunities related to the St. Louis Community College and Emerson Electric.

These findings point to the need for market and economic strategies that guide public investments in place, enhance transit and active transportation routes, and improve functionality in ways that stimulate private investment, consumer attraction and population growth. Targeting nodes and areas of opportunity, capitalizing on specific market opportunities such as senior housing, and retaining higher income households in the market area while providing a better quality of life for all residents are all critical pieces of a successful market and economic strategy for the area.

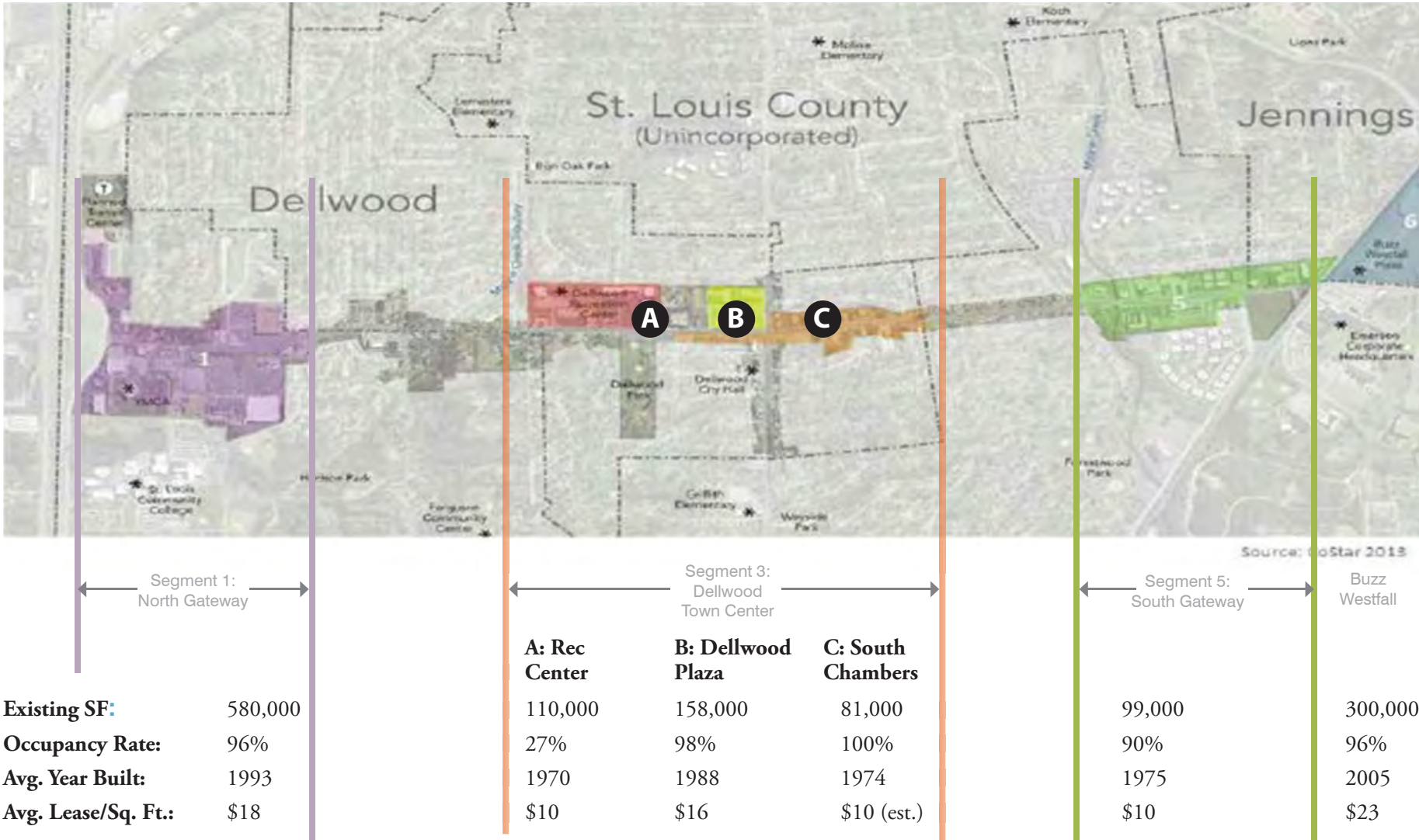


Projected demographic changes in the Neighborhood Market Area



Single family home dominate the market, leaving an open niche for development of mixed income and senior living apartments

MAP 2.11. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KEY RETAIL AREAS



Retail supply is well defined in the corridor, with two community/power retail centers at either end that serve a broader region, a neighborhood center in the middle that serves the neighborhood market area, and a number of small/boutique/independent retailers in between that serve client bases from a very small and specific surrounding geography.

2.6 ASSETS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Key assets, challenges and opportunities stand out that can be leveraged for positive change through this project. These issues and opportunities reflect both our analysis and what we heard local people say in various meetings, interviews and surveys.

2.6.1 ASSETS

1. Attractive green spaces like Dellwood Park and Recreation Center and Forestwood Park offer tangible benefits to residents and support the environmental systems of the area. Maline Creek and Hudson Creek (west of the corridor) are assets that have potential to do much more for the community in terms of public health, recreational opportunities and alternative transportation routes, and can play a larger role in providing wildlife habitat and corridors. These areas can play a crucial role as focal points for improvements in a way that improves values for the whole community.
2. West Florissant Avenue is easy to navigate in cars (community members often remarked that it is easy to get around by car) and provides the backbone for a critical transit lifeline that is among the most heavily-used routes in the metro area.
3. There are several active neighborhood groups in Dellwood and Ferguson (such as the Nesbit Newton Neighborhood Association and Dellwood Business Association) who are involved in making their communities better places to live and work.
4. Major community institutions like St. Louis Community College and Emerson Electric generate activity and interest in the area. With vested interests in the corridor, their assistance in improving the corridor is both greatly needed and important to their long-term investments in the corridor.
5. Major retail areas at the I-270 Interchange and Buzz Westfall Center provide many services to the area and generate taxes and income, some of which is captured by the local economy.
6. Affordable Housing: The low cost of housing in the area provides households of modest economic means an affordable place to live.



Dellwood Park and Recreation Center is a community node



Community institutions like the Emerson Family YMCA are strong



Neighborhood groups and residents are engaged in their community



It is unsafe and unwelcoming for bicycling and walking along West Florissant Avenue



The street lacks character and a strong identity



West Florissant Avenue has been left to deteriorate and decline

2.6.2 CHALLENGES

1. The corridor is extremely unpleasant and unsafe for walking and biking. Shopping and doing business on foot or by bike are not considered by most residents. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities need significant improvements to be able to offer viable active transportation choices to residents.
2. The area has “no sense of identity” - a refrain that summarized what many feel encompasses the set of problems that have led to the decline of the street and neighborhoods and have driven away quality businesses and residents. The abundance of paved areas, vacant lots, parking lots, unattractive power lines and utility poles all add to the unsightliness and visual disorder of the corridor.
3. There are few community gathering places where people can interact and socialize. Whether sit-down restaurants, farmer’s markets, or public plazas, some gathering places are needed to help generate a feeling of community.
4. Older generation retail centers and some multifamily housing in and around the corridor have deteriorated physically. If property values for single family housing continue to fall behind the market they too, may suffer from disinvestment and deterioration.
5. Conditions at both Northwinds and Park Ridge need to be re-evaluated and improved to encourage broader socio-economic diversity and better integration into the community in a manner that is economically sustainable and socially equitable. Best practice approaches in property management, mixing of incomes, and cooperative housing need to be explored.
6. While low rents and home sales have their advantages, poor rent growth and home appreciation are stifling investment in maintenance and new development in the market, particularly for housing.
7. Loss of the area’s wealthiest residents (in this case, largely middle-income households) to outlying areas has reduced the number of people able to invest in the maintenance of their properties, as well as those most able to pay property taxes that underwrite programs aimed at helping the area’s neediest citizens.

2.6.3 OPPORTUNITIES

1. West Florissant Avenue's existing through lanes provide sufficient capacity for current and future vehicle traffic volumes – in some areas more than sufficient. Yet the roadway has a larger than necessary paved foot-print. The roadway (space required for automobile traffic) can be accommodated using narrower lanes, opening up opportunities for transit, pedestrians and cyclists; trees and greenery; and medians in the center turn lane.
2. The designs proposed in Chapter 5 result in an increase in green space of up to 70%, with 34% less area devoted to impervious surface. The transformation of the corridor through such improvements will dramatically improve water quality, reduce flooding and piped stormwater, reduce the heat island effect, improve walkability, and raise property values.
3. Transit stations that are enhanced as part of a broader Bus Rapid Transit system will improve the lives of people and their access to jobs. BRT could also improve property values and drive development opportunities, particularly within a quarter-mile radius.
4. The area in and around Dellwood Park and Dellwood Recreation Center presents an opportunity for a true civic center, perhaps

with additional civic buildings and a mix of other uses. A new Dellwood City Hall could be part of this civic mix.

5. Given the expected growth in the healthcare industry, demand for service providers is likely to increase: and a new medical facility could be an important part of a development strategy.
6. As part of a public/private partnership, funds could be devoted to development of higher quality space for those existing retailers able to pay somewhat higher rates.
7. Senior housing is a niche market for which demand and development opportunities are likely to increase.
8. Best practice property interventions could be undertaken for Park Ridge and Northwinds, including cooperative housing and mixed-income housing.
9. Maline Creek and potentially Hudson Creek, west of the avenue, can be improved for public health, recreation, open space and habitat, enhancing east-west connections on foot, and adding to the attraction of West Florissant.
10. Leveraging limited public money at the right locations could stimulate private investment in a mix of uses in select areas.



Excess and poorly used of right-of-way can be reallocated



A new BRT line could be a transformative addition to the area



New greenways along Maline and Hudson Creeks could also bring dramatic improvements to area residents



The future of West Florissant Avenue will benefit from an integrated policy framework

2.7 MARKET STRATEGY

A market strategy ensures that the right types of products will be delivered to the right market, thereby reducing risk to developers and the public sector while increasing the likelihood of a lasting, sustainable development. Without a sound market strategy, market analysis provides little more than a program—an amount of supply that could be delivered to a market to satisfy unmet demand. But not all housing, office, and retail developments consist solely of commodity products. By leveraging investments in place and the public realm, sound urban design and architecture, anchors to drive traffic, and coordination of complementary uses, a development, district, or community can be created that is greater than the sum of its parts.

The constraints and threat analysis points to the need for a market strategy that leverages the corridor's assets, makes use of market

opportunities that are present, targets investment in key nodes where development can be most catalytic, locates or co-locates complementary uses, identifies traffic-driving anchors (both civic and private sector-driven), invests in placemaking and transit opportunities to maximize private real estate and public tax revenues, and leverages a significant amount of local, state, and federal incentives in order to realize catalyst projects.

2.7.1 A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE CORRIDOR

A holistic policy framework is needed for the corridor—one that not only improves the physical realm, but begins to address some of the root causes of economic deterioration, including access to jobs, education, stable and quality affordable housing, and the need for more grassroots community engagement. In other words, a market strategy is needed that makes targeted investments in people, places, and buildings in a manner that leads to real estate, economic, and community development.

2.7.2 PLACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

An important intervention in the physical realm that can lead to enhanced performance of private enterprise involves making portions of West Florissant Avenue (where feasible, in terms of traffic considerations) into a more walkable, livable, human-scaled street with a strong sense of place.

Over the past decade, a measurable positive market response has been well-documented in areas with great character and placemaking principles (i.e., main streets, town centers, walkable neighborhoods, historic districts, transit-oriented development) in the form of value appreciation for property owners, greater retail traffic, greater desirability as a location for employers and employees, and greater real estate revenues (which make quality development more economically viable).

- Street environment and retail: The quality of the street environment can boost retail traffic. Often, this can be accomplished by enhancing the streetside zone with sidewalks, street trees, and opportunities for outdoor dining. Traffic-calming measures and buffers should be employed. If traffic analysis allows, selected locations for on-street parking might be identified at nodes where walkability and storefront retail is desirable.
- Main street “model”: In the St. Louis area, many of the most rapidly-revitalizing communities, such as University City and Maplewood, are leveraging their historic main streets as assets that increase retail traffic and demand for housing (and thus retail sales and home values). Creating an inviting sense of enclosure with multistory buildings, narrow street lanes, and street furniture are value-creating efforts. Where architecture and building enclosure are not possible, mature street trees can be a practical placemaking tool that has benefits for economic development.



Successful St. Louis neighborhoods like Maplewood have a strong, pedestrian-friendly street environment



The main street model helps create core town centers and real community places



Streetscape improvements can foster a sense of place and promote a vibrant community

Property premiums for parks in new developments range from 2 to 50 percent, depending largely on urban design, park development, and access and visibility.

Source: John L. Crompton's research, M. Wetli

- Town centers: The 15-year retail trend of developers successfully leveraging placemaking principles to increase traffic and revenues, by building open-air town centers in the U.S., is noteworthy here because it validates many urban design principles. These include:
 - * Accessible, but hidden, parking behind buildings
 - * Storefront retail
 - * Inviting streetside zones
 - * Public plazas and village greens
 - * Attractive trees and landscaping
- TOD: Transit-oriented development, or TOD, has been demonstrated to create real estate value premiums for nearby property. Generally, the greatest benefit is experienced within 800 feet of a TOD station, with lesser, but positive benefits extending at least another 500 to 800 feet. This is often dependent on the design of the surrounding community; pedestrian-oriented development is most capable of maximizing the positive benefits of TOD. The places chosen for potential
 - Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations—a form of TOD—should therefore be located in areas supportive of dense, pedestrian oriented catalyst projects and future development.
- Parks: In many communities, parks can be enormous value-creating assets that improve property values. This has been amply demonstrated across the country where well-maintained and programmed public spaces attract high quality development or raise values of existing adjacent properties. Low-scale residential townhouses could be developed along Dellwood Park, and opportunities for plazas and activity areas in targeted nodes should be sought, in conjunction with private and civic building development.
- Greenways: Linear parks also can create real estate value. With efforts underway by Great Rivers Greenway to add greenways that bisect two parts of the corridor, real estate development strategies should be sought to maximize views of, and access to, these green amenities.

2.7.3 BUILDINGS AND REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Though little new development is likely to occur in the corridor without public-private partnerships, efforts should be made to leverage other sources of money to augment private investment to the full extent possible. Development should be focused in targeted areas (Segments 3 and 5) to create critical mass and improve surrounding property values.

- Senior and Mixed-Income Housing: market analysis shows that there will be demand for roughly 200 to 250 quality rental units over a span of 10 years. Projecting further out, this could translate into 400 to 500 units over 20 years, provided there is sustained political support and a persistent implementation entity. Rental housing is the land use for which the most state and federal incentives are available for development. This is generally due to the low-income housing tax credit program. If this and other investments are successfully made, it has the potential to serve, at minimum, three policy goals:

- * Stimulate the private market into adding additional housing—perhaps within 10 to 15 years and following sustained investment in people, places, and buildings.
 - * Provide quality affordable housing to replace some percentage of deteriorated housing in the area.
 - * Improve property values for surrounding neighborhoods by enhancing the marketability and image of its most prominent thoroughfare.
- Replacement Retail: Outside of the three strong retail concentrations, new retail development along this corridor is the most economically challenged development type, due to very low rents and returns, relative to development costs. This is true even when taking into account tax credit incentives. Still, a combination of local and federal incentives might be sufficiently leveraged to create some higher quality development—perhaps with two separate projects (one in each targeted node)—with each footprints of 30,000 square feet—that accommodate a mix of existing and new businesses in a manner that helps replace some deteriorated structures.



Desirable senior housing development recently completed in the St. Louis market



Mixed-use building with retail below and housing above showing local City of St. Louis example appropriate for its scale and development cost



Another pharmacy, together with health care services nearby, could anchor the idea of a Health and Wellness district

- Anchors: A combination of civic and retail anchors should be explored in the two targeted nodes to help increase traffic for shopkeepers. Some possibilities to pursue are:
 - * Library branch/library storefront
 - * A new city hall
 - * A pharmacy with resources to buy a corner location at Chambers Rd.
 - * A small hardware store
 - * A public square or plaza—designed and/or programmed to encourage frequent use
- Retail Tenancing: In addition to potential anchors, such as a hardware store and pharmacy, other potential retailers to pursue include: an ice cream parlor, pizza parlor, donut shop, coffee shop, and fitness center. Analysis indicates there is a shortage of these vendors in the market area, so assembling them as tenants in a new retail development is more likely than pulling together a group of tenants in retail categories that are already well-supplied in the area. To the degree some of these more leisure-oriented businesses (such as a coffee shop or ice cream parlor) can be incorporated into a concept with usable public space, success is more likely, because leisure uses benefit from being near inviting places that encourage greater frequency of use.
- Independent and distinctive retailers: while independent retailers and restaurateurs often cannot pay the higher rents that chains provide (and thus support the construction of new buildings and facilities), incorporating them into a mix of vendors can increase the attractiveness of an area. Independent restaurateurs, such as barbecue operators, help highlight local, authentic St. Louis cuisine in a manner that is authentic well-appreciated, and capable of drawing in outside money. Crown Candy is an excellent example of an authentic, local business that can serve as a neighborhood anchor.
- Medical Office: An opportunity exists for a healthcare facility. Currently, there is a lack of many such facilities in the vicinity of the corridor, and the new Affordable Health Care for America Act (AHCAA) is providing health insurance to those who previously lacked it. As a result, communities such as Dellwood and Ferguson will likely represent a growth opportunity for health care providers in the future. Though incentives may be required, such development is likely to be largely privately-financeable.

2.7.4 PEOPLE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A third and often-overlooked element of a corridor revitalization strategy is investments in people. Given certain socio-economic metrics present in the neighborhood, such as income and educational attainment, a sound community development strategy is highly warranted in the area. Organizations such as Beyond Housing, Rise, and the Carondelet Community Betterment Federation represent many local examples of efforts to develop property and community services simultaneously. While such investments cannot be necessarily tied to the corridor alone (after all, most people live in the adjacent neighborhoods), certain civic-oriented facilities and institutions could be introduced within the corridor that provide services to the surrounding neighborhoods. These could include:

- **Early Childhood Center:** Given some of the success stories of such centers, a location in the corridor for such an institution is highly justified. Funds from public, private, and/or institutional sources should be sought for the development and operations of the facility.
- **Community Garden:** Community gardens can be an excellent tool for stabilizing neighborhoods, particularly when they are formed by the community members themselves. A study by Gateway Greening showed greater stabilization of property values around many community gardens. In Dellwood, there is already interest from residents in establishing a garden, which we recommend should be co-located with a cluster of civic uses, such as a new library, childhood center, or City Hall. The need for civic spaces like this is evident in results from the workshops, survey, and observations of socializing along West Florissant.
- **Library:** Both a civic anchor that can drive traffic and an investment in people, libraries help further education and learning—two pillars to economic growth and access to employment.



Community gathering places like libraries and community gardens help build stronger communities



West Florissant's Emerson Family YMCA is an important community gathering place

