



Urban Land **St. Louis**
Institute

Redevelopment of City Hall Ballwin, Missouri

CITY OF BALLWIN, MISSOURI

MAY 8, 2019





ULI'S MISSION

The mission of the ULI is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

Technical Assistance Panel

- Objective, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues developed over the course of two days
- ULI St. Louis members from across the region volunteer their time to participate as panelists

An aerial photograph of Ballwin, Missouri, showing a dense residential and commercial area with a grid of streets and various buildings. The image is in grayscale and serves as a background for the text.

TAP Sponsor

City of Ballwin, Missouri



Panels' Charge

Question 1: Site + Adjacent?

What are the pros and cons of marketing the isolated property (14811 Manchester) versus marketing it in conjunction with the adjacent property (14819 Manchester)?



Question 2: As Is or Open Land?

If the property (or properties) is placed on the market for commercial use, is the property better used/marketed if the building(s) is retained or if it is a vacant piece of land?



Question 3: Highest & Best Use

What is the highest and best use if the property is retained for public use, again either singularly or in conjunction with the adjacent property?

TAP Panel Members

Panel Chair

- **Natasha Das**, Attorney, Stinson

Panel Members

- **Chris Beard**, Director of Traffic Engineering and Planning, Lochmueller Group
- **Scott Dunwoody**, Director, Cushman & Wakefield
- **Cristen Hardin**, Associate Planner, City of Collinsville
- **Sam Koplak**, Principal, Koplak Properties
- **Cara McKedy**, Principal, Eddy Design Group



Process

- Briefing documents by the City of Ballwin
- Stakeholder interviews and tour of site
- Full day of team discussions



Stakeholder Meetings

- City Leadership
- City Departments and Staff
- Adjacent Property Owners and Business Operators
- Additional Community Stakeholders



Insights from Stakeholder Interviews – General area

- Family-friendly city
- Traffic is key to health of businesses (retail drives revenue)
- Green spaces/parks are nice but remain unconnected
- Lacking many affordable housing, senior housing, and multifamily housing options
- No central gathering space or downtown to city



Insights from Stakeholder Interviews – Site-specific

- Do not want competing uses
- Keep green space
- Possible senior living site
- Reuse as video production and education site
- Require premium over market value to justify relinquishing control of the site
- Could be ‘front door’ to Ballwin





Study Area – Context

Design Drivers

- Highest & Best Use
- Site Lines
- Topography
- Traffic & Access
- Adjacent Uses
- Community Input
- City Goals



An aerial photograph of a city grid, likely St. Louis, with a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The image shows a dense network of streets and buildings. The text 'Pros & Cons of a Combined Site' is centered in white, sans-serif font.

Pros & Cons of a Combined Site

Pros of Combined Site

- Provides additional space, visibility, and access
- A developer would prefer the larger, combined parcel
- As is, current adjacent site detracts from the City's 'front door' vision for the site
- All uses considered benefit from a larger site
- Site doesn't need adjacent site but adjacent site is more marketable as a part of a larger, combined site
- Multi-family residential only works with the JB Auto property

Cons of Combined Site

- Remediation of the site next door needs to be taken into consideration
- If sites aren't combined, a stronger visual and physical separation is needed



Market the Site As Is or Demo First?

Market site with demo stipulation

- If pursuing private development at the site
 - Market the site with the building – why spend money on demo?
 - Stipulate demolition in the site purchase as the City may not want this building serving as its ‘front door’

An aerial photograph of a city grid, likely St. Louis, with a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The image shows a dense network of streets and buildings. The text 'Highest & Best Use' is centered in the upper half of the image.

Highest & Best Use

Highest & Best Use at this Site

- Informed by City leadership
- Responds to needs of the community
- Remains fiscally responsible
- Aligns with the City's recent Comprehensive Plan

Use Considerations

- Evaluated office, retail, multi-family, mixed-use for the site; parking requirements problematic
- City's fiscal health minimizes need for financial benefit of a sale
- If marketed for development, lose control of the site

Use Considerations– General Office

- Limited demand for Class A or B office space in this area (costar stats show less than 1% vacancy, though this is mostly Class C buildings and converted houses and doesn't reflect demand for new office space at new construction rates)
- Poor access to regional highways
- Traffic on Manchester limits appeal for workers commuting to the area
- Impacted views due to grade change
- Higher density parking for office user may be challenging due to site and grade changes

Use Considerations– Other

■ Retail

- Costar notes a 10% vacancy rate, but does not reflect recent moves in the area that have left other spaces (e.g. former Hobby Lobby site) vacant
- Needs to be at-grade with Manchester Road; needed parking would cut off from Kehrs Mill
- Strong potential for cannibalization of existing retail
- A focus on locally owned stores is not financially feasible
- Site is too small to build an anchor; would most likely be a strip mall or triple net tenant, assuming a developer could find one that wasn't already in the area

■ Medical Office Space

- Aging population may lend to medical office use
- Medical office wouldn't generate the revenue to support the ROI needed

Use Considerations– Multi-family Residential

- Multi-family Residential
 - Stakeholders did provide positive feedback on the aspect of rental housing (condos interested some)
 - Garden apartments with surface parking range from 16-40 units/acre; 3-4 story low-rise buildings can get up to 90 units/acre, however topography again poses challenges
 - Site does not lend itself well to surface parking, given grade change; building structured parking will make residential more of a challenge

Use Considerations– Monetizing the Site

- The hard corner at this site would generate strong interest
- Proposals not likely to add value to the City
- CVS or Walgreens may be the only uses that make sense at this hard corner
- Uses would likely involve gas station, car wash, fast food, or possibly bank branch (*each unaligned with City's or community's goals for the site*)
- Engage retail broker and multi-family brokers for further valuation exploration

Highest & Best Use: Civic Space

- Keep it a civic use and reintegrate this parcel into the park
- Comprehensive plan notes need for more green space – at present, the City is on the low end of park acreage for the current population
- Landlocked park – easy opportunity to expand and secure the park
- Potential for larger city center development plan – Proximate to Olde Towne Plaza, potential future city center redevelopment site

Civic Use Alignment

- Alignment with Comprehensive Plan
- Alignment with benefits listed by Stakeholders

An aerial photograph of a city grid, likely St. Louis, with a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The image shows a dense network of streets and buildings. The text 'Alignment with Comprehensive Plan' is centered in white.

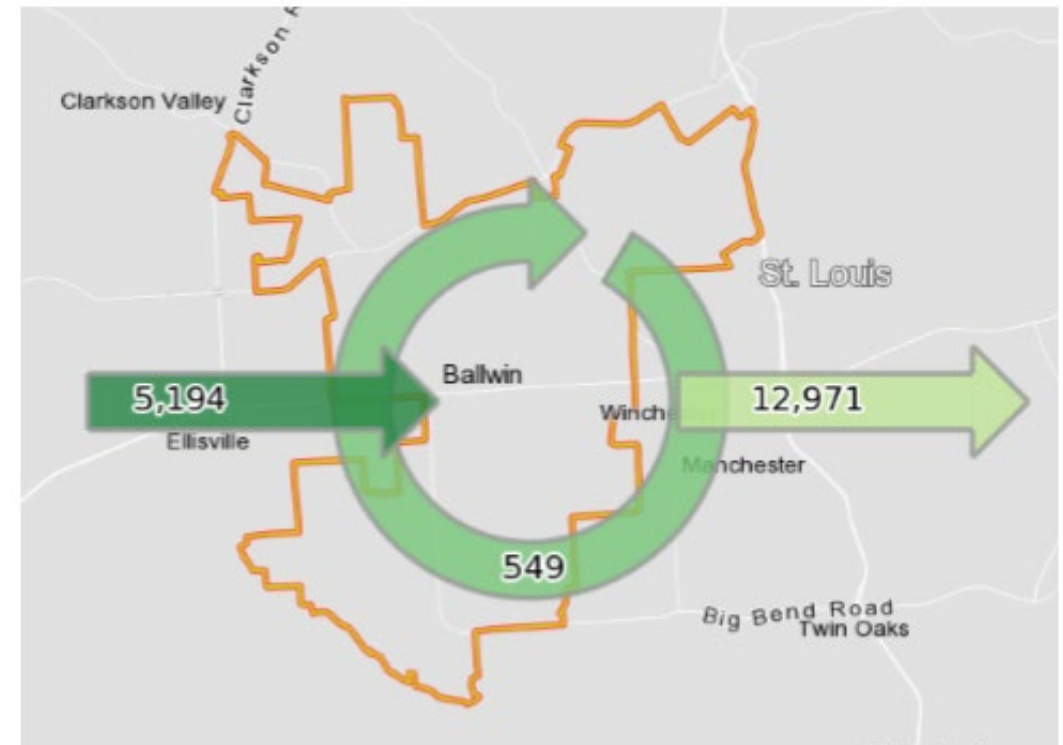
Alignment with Comprehensive Plan

Why not a Retail Use?

- **Business Profile (p. 28)**
 - “Significant fast food presence”
 - “Primarily chain restaurants”
- **Key Issues and Concerns (p. 69)**
 - “Shuffling of major retail tenants between commercial developments”
 - “Decline of Retail”
- **Biggest Issues over next 20 years? (p. 82)**
 - Decline of retail
 - Vacant and underutilized properties
- **Principal #3 – A Resilient Local Economy and City Revenues (p. 11-21)**
 - Redevelopment has not introduced significant net new retail to the community
 - Flat or declining sales tax revenue can negatively impact the City’s provision of high quality services

Why not an Office Use?

- **Employment Density (p. 30)**
 - Multiple higher density employment centers located East of Ballwin
- **Work Commute Patterns (p. 31)**
 - Most Ballwin resident commute outside of Ballwin for their jobs
 - Net loss in work commuter patterns

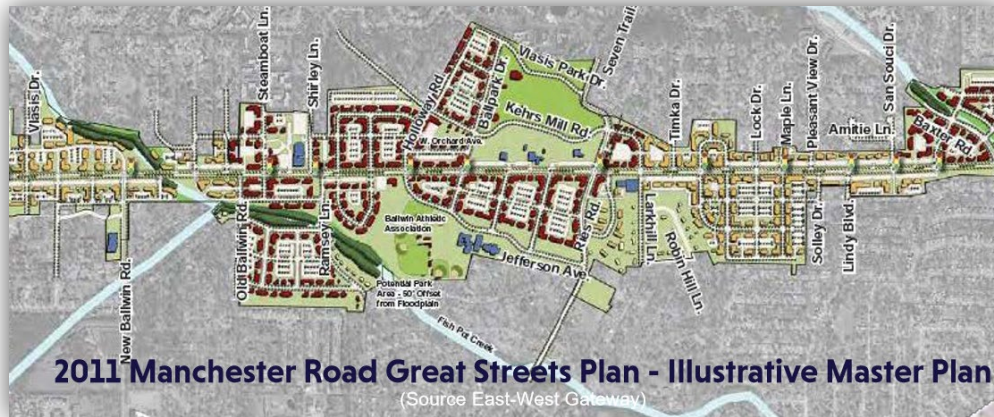


Why not a Residential Use?

- **Principle #1 – Strong Neighborhoods (p. 90-91)**
 - Diversify housing choices and universal design
 - Good schools and high quality of life in Ballwin putting increased pressures on housing options and affordability
- **Principle #3 – Resilient Local Economy and City Revenues (p. 112-121)**
 - Mixed-use developments that combine office, retail, and residential uses supported by public gathering/green spaces in appropriate locations
 - Mixed-use development creates built-in customer base for long-term retail viability
 - Diversify City revenues

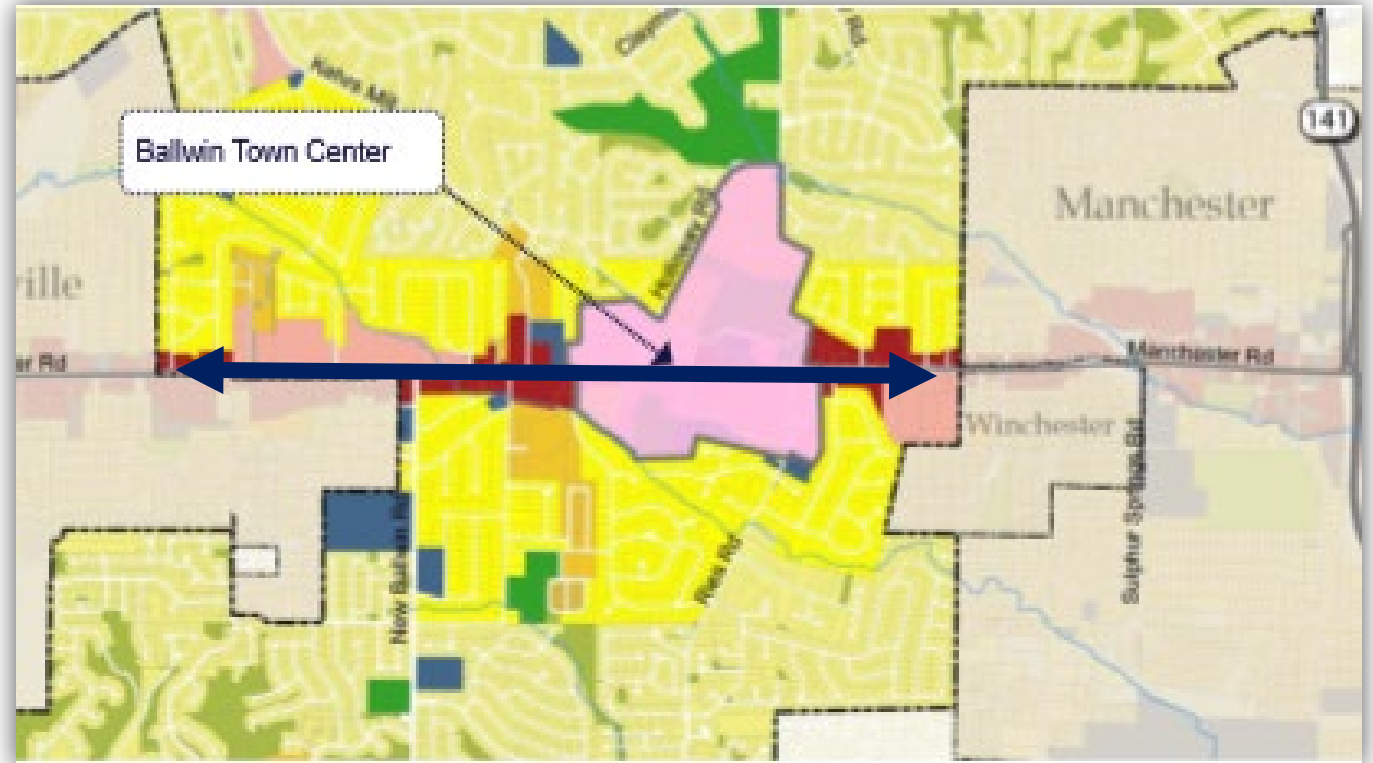
Why a Civic Use?

- **A Community STRENGTH (p. 40, 58, 81)**
 - Enhances the quality of a community asset available to residents
 - Parks & Recreation system cited by residents as top strength of living in Ballwin
- **Manchester Road Great Streets Project (p. 5455)**
 - Cluster existing and future developments to create Town Centers
 - By design, promotes traffic calming and pedestrian-friendly environment
- **Principle #4 – A Strong Sense of Place (p. 122)**
 - Gathering spaces that promote a variety of social experiences, and accommodates large and small groups



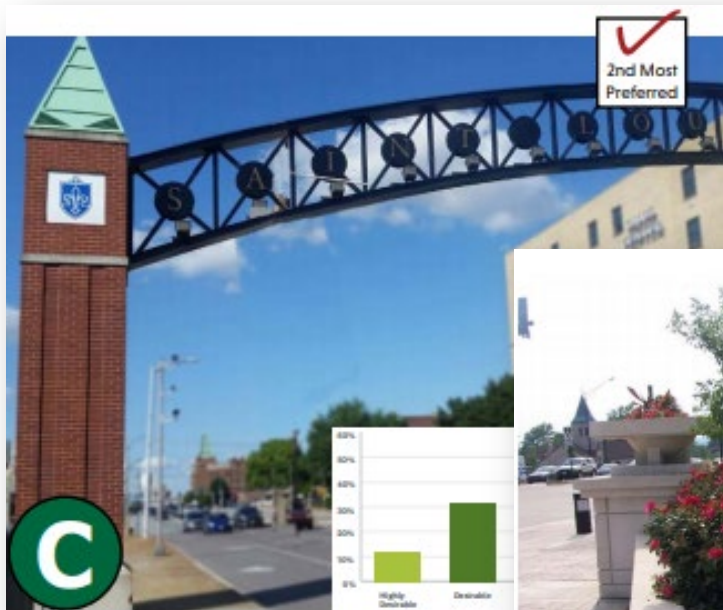
Why a Civic Use?

- Create welcoming entries to City and Town Center (p. 126)
 - Create distinction along Manchester Road
 - Streetscape enhancements



Why a Civic Use?

- **Vlasis Park Commons (p. 125)**
 - Welcoming entry to Vlasis Park
 - Enhances a high profile community asset
 - Unique programming ideas can create a destination-type civic space



Civic Space Activation

- Amphitheatre with flexibility for other uses
- Pavilion with indoor and outdoor multipurpose space
 - Leasable space for events
- Additional outdoor seating areas
- Open space
 - Food Trucks
 - Ballwin Market – farmers, craft vendor, and small businesses
 - Art Walk
- Kehrs Mill Road
 - Closed on event days to allow free-flow of pedestrians within the park
 - Additional crosswalks and signage to enhance awareness of pedestrians

Civic Space Activation

Destination Civic Space



Civic Space Activation



Destination
Civic
Space



Civic Space Activation

Unique Programming Ideas



Site Overlays: Bluebird Park, Chesterfield Amphitheater



Options for New Civic Space at Site

- Option A – City Hall site alone
- Option B – City Hall site and adjacent site

Amphitheater Inspiration



- Vast range of investment options for the stage/theater as well as the seating (utilizing topography/hillside versus fixed seats)

Option A – Amphitheater Amenity



Option A– City Hall Site, Amphitheater

- Amphitheater amenity (designed to serve dual-purpose as pavilion)
- Paulding Drive decommissioned and becomes grass
- Drop off from Kehrs Mill Road
- Add pull-off
- ADA paved ramp on east side of site; ADA parking on the far east side at corner of Seven Trails and Andrews Park Way
- Food trucks with ADA parking area
- New access road uses drop-off area and winds back to the cell tower
- New shed to house data center/IT infrastructure for cell tower (or incorporate under amphitheater)
- Hard sides to south, west and east; northern view corridor may be partially interrupted by service function space of ADA parking and shed access road

Option B – Amphitheater & Pavilion Amenities



Option B – City Hall & Adjacent Site, Amphitheater & Pavilion

- Amphitheater and Pavilion amenities
- Right In/Out access from Manchester on Paulding Drive – through to Kehrs Mill
- Building parking
- Parking at adjacent site with overflow into the church parking lot
- Improve pedestrian connection to church parking lot
- Pedestrian ADA ramps on west at current parcel division between City lot and JB Auto (possible switch-back)
- ADA parallel parking
- Shed to house data center/IT infrastructure for cell tower
- Service lane can also be food truck parking

Pavilion Inspiration



- Range of investment options
- Ideally the Pavilion could be a four-seasons, enclosed space for public meeting and event usage with revenue stream

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Civic Considerations

Civic Considerations

- Commercial uses would be difficult at the site and structured parking makes commercial development cost-inefficient
- Needed community uses not well-suited at site (senior, affordable housing)
- Tension and release along Manchester
- City would benefit from more green space
- City and Vlassis Park would benefit from grand central position, perhaps the ‘front door’ or ‘heartbeat’ of Ballwin

An aerial photograph of St. Louis, Missouri, showing the Mississippi River winding through the city. The image is dark and serves as a background for the text. The river is visible in the center, with various urban areas and parks on either side.

Recommendations

Recommendations

- IF there is a strong desire to monetize site, conduct a retail and multi-family valuation

Otherwise, choose to align with City, Community & Comp Plan goals

- Compliment the beauty and engagement of Vlassis Park with more green space and civic gathering opportunities at this site
- Consider expansion of site with acquisition of adjacent parcel
- Use the topography of the site for an amphitheater or dual amphitheater pavilion use; add pavilion on adjacent parcel if acquired
- Work with the owner of Old Towne Plaza to potentially acquire that site and turn it into a downtown/mixed use, walkable development that connects to the park

Q&A

ULI St. Louis Technical Assistance Panel