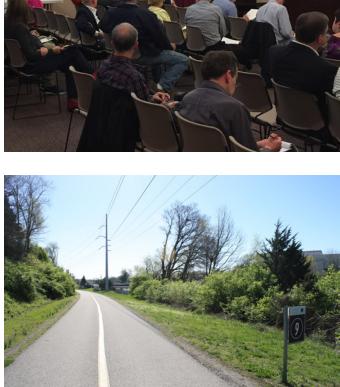


CITY OF CRESTWOOD, MISSOURI

# 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Houseal Lavigne Associates  
Adopted March 1, 2017

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# 1

# INTRODUCTION

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The City of Crestwood is a well-established inner-ring suburban community within the St. Louis metropolitan region. Developed primarily during the 1950s and 60s as a residential community, today Crestwood aims to navigate redevelopment and reinvestment across its neighborhoods and business districts. In an effort to be proactive about addressing its future, the City initiated the creation of its first city-wide Comprehensive Plan.

The multi-step process started in autumn of 2015 and included extensive community outreach. The Plan establishes a clear community vision and offers policy regarding land use and development, transportation, community facilities and infrastructure, parks and recreation, and community image and identity.

# INTRODUCTION

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## THE ROLE OF LONG-RANGE PLANNING

Long-range planning is a compliment to the daily operations of a municipal government, which seeks to identify and address demographics shifts and projected trends which could occur in the future. The crux of this approach is to anticipate major policy issues and work to address them proactively, rather than respond reactionary or in a time of crisis. Proactive planning includes recognizing new changes the community would like to see and establishing long-term goals which can be worked toward over periods of 5, 10, or even 20 years. Long-range planning allows a community to develop a vision for its future and offers the necessary objectives to make that vision a reality through consistent, measured, and incremental progress.

For many municipalities, long-term planning can be overwhelmed by the short-term and day-to-day operations of a city. However, long-term planning should not be seen as in competition with the day's immediate tasks, but rather a compliment to improve long-term agency efficiency, address major community trends more effectively, and prepare for potential shifts in strategy. For example, the short-term action of filling potholes after a harsh winter can be complimented by long-term planning to inventory deteriorating roadways and optimize resources via a capital investment response. Long-range planning often takes the form of dedicated documents, such as Strategic Plans, Comprehensive Plans, Parks & Recreation Master Plans, Subarea Plans, or Corridors Plans. This Comprehensive Plan is an important investment in the City of Crestwood's proactive and long-range planning management.

## PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Comprehensive Plan offers long-term guidance for community growth, real estate development, and physical improvements within a municipality. The document is reflective of the local community, utilizing community outreach to identify a vision for the future supported by key stakeholders. Based on foundational analysis, the Comprehensive Plan is able to identify tangible actions that can be enacted to achieve this vision.

At its most basic, Crestwood's Comprehensive Plan is a "how-to" guide, assisting with land use patterns, business growth, mobility and accessibility, maintenance of community facilities, and management of parks and recreational opportunities. Opportunities were offered throughout the planning process for residents to voice their opinions, provide feedback, and share ideas. Both in-person events and online tools were employed throughout the planning process to gather invaluable public opinion, ensuring the Comprehensive Plan is representative of the community it serves.

## USING THE DOCUMENT AS DECISION-SUPPORT TOOL

The Day-to-Day use of the Crestwood Comprehensive Plan will be primarily as a decision-support tool for the Board of Alderman, Planning & Zoning Commission, and City Staff. The document acts as a guide for private investment within the community and can be utilized to review and evaluate future development. The vision established within the Comprehensive Plan will provide direction, not only for the City itself, but for the numerous stakeholders who will help to shape Crestwood in the future. In addition, the Plan will have a direct role in obtaining desired grants and funding as well as serving as a promotional tool for the community and its unique assets.

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

With the aim of developing a community-driven, realistic, and implementable Comprehensive Plan, the planning process was specifically designed to involve local residents, business owners and operators, community stakeholders, key service providers, elected and appointed officials, and City staff. The seven step process was structured around gathering of community outreach, analysis of existing conditions, and formation of recommendations and strategies. The complete planning process includes the following seven steps:

- **Step 1:** Project Initiation
- **Step 2:** Community Outreach
- **Step 3:** Existing Conditions Analysis
- **Step 4:** Community Vision, Goals & Objectives
- **Step 5:** Industrial Subarea Plan
- **Step 6:** Community-Wide Plans & Policies
- **Step 7:** Plan Documents & Adoption



# 2 COMMUNITY PROFILE

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Crestwood is one of St. Louis's "Route 66 suburbs," developed primarily during the 1950s and 60s as a single-family residential community with high-quality schools and open space. Today, the City is an established community that is navigating redevelopment and reinvestment across its neighborhoods and business districts.

In this section, Crestwood's regional setting, history, past planning efforts, existing land use, current zoning are outlined to provide a foundational understanding of the City. Also included are executive summaries of the demographic and market study and outreach conducted throughout the planning process.

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# CRESTWOOD TOMORROW...

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Every comprehensive plan aims to capture the character of the community within a distinct moment of time that tells a story about where the community has been and where it will likely go. Sometimes these plans and visions occur at points in a community's life cycle where not much has changed, and not much is expected to change. Other times the community is approaching a critical crossroads and its leaders will address decisions that will have a defining impact beyond the life of the plan and shape what life is like in the community for generations.

Nearly two decades into the 21st Century, Crestwood finds itself navigating these types of era-defining transitions while it envisions how the community will reinvent itself for the next generation. The decisions, investments, and actions taken over the life of this plan will likely establish the foundation for what Crestwood looks like and who it is as a community for the majority of this century, carrying implications well beyond the 10 to 15 year life of the document itself.

Crestwood is a well-established and well known community in the St. Louis region. Its history is closely tied to the Route 66 and the suburbanization of St. Louis County. Crestwood stands today as an archetype of a classic Midcentury suburb and has remained a desirable, vibrant community fifty years beyond when most of its housing stock was built. The City has been landlocked and built-out for many years and it is now fully transitioning to an era of infill construction, community reinvestment, and market trends pushing for more density and mixed-use development.

Two of the fundamental questions this plan and its policy-makers will need to address is how does the community provide programs that serve residents that want to age-in-place and maintain their quality-of-life? And how does the community do so while also reinvesting and updating Crestwood in ways that appeal to young families and emerging generations over the next 20 years? This transition will be acutely felt over the next decade more than it has to date thus far in Crestwood's history.

Part of this reinvestment strategy will require new types of housing products, new modes of transportation, new types of outdoor recreation and public facilities, new uses and events in the parks, and a renewed, vibrant business and commercial sector. The City's policy frameworks and toolboxes will need to respond to global and national trends that are impacting the way people live, work, shop, dine, play, and travel in ways that are shifting what life looked like even 20 years ago. In these ways, this comprehensive plan will ultimately serve as Crestwood's reinvestment strategy to continue to be a desirable community for the next generation – a business model and playbook for the 21st Century.

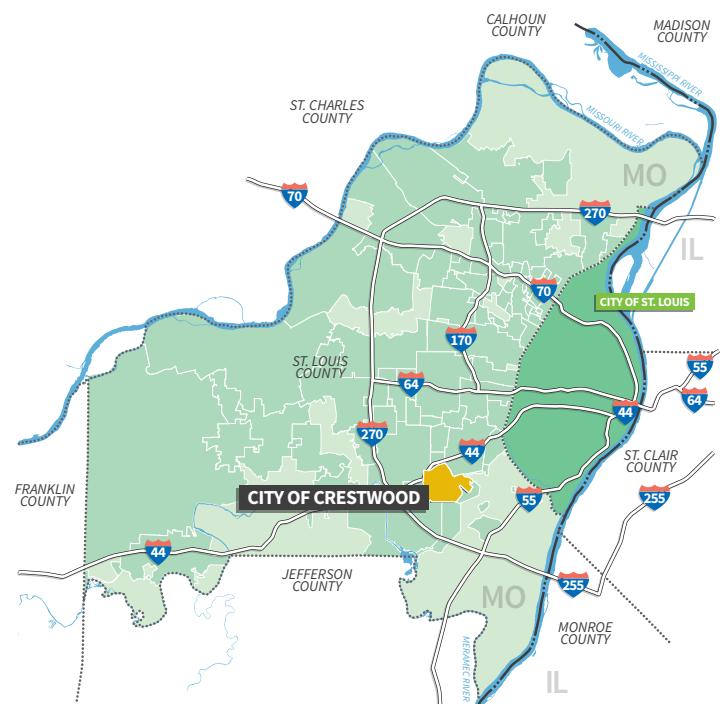
# REGIONAL CONTEXT & SETTINGS

The City of Crestwood is located in southern St. Louis County, commonly referred to as "South County." Located approximately 10 miles southwest of the City of St. Louis, Crestwood is bordered by the Cities of Oakland and Kirkwood on the north, the City of Sunset Hills on the west, the Cities of Marlborough and Webster Groves on the east, and Grantwood Village on the south. Grant's Farm is located in Grantwood Village and is immediately adjacent to the City.

Major highways and roads travelling through Crestwood offer residents easy access to the greater St. Louis region. Interstate 44 runs along the northern border of Crestwood, while Missouri Route 366 (Watson Road) runs east-west through the community. These roadways provide quick access to Downtown St. Louis to the east, numerous inner and outer ring St. Louis suburbs, Castlewood State Park to the west, and many other regional locations and amenities. Crestwood's location in the St. Louis suburban fabric will greatly limit outward expansion, placing emphasis on internal growth and development in the future.

The Greater St. Louis metropolitan area contains approximately 2.8 million residents. St. Louis County is the largest individual county in the region at approximately one (1) million residents, featuring the highest per capita income in the state of Missouri. As such, the County is an important center of economic activity not only for the St. Louis region but for the state as a whole.

Nearly half of the metropolitan area's jobs and a quarter of Missouri's jobs are located in St. Louis County. With a population of around 11,950 residents, Crestwood is one of the smaller communities (by square mileage) within St. Louis County but generally reflective of its suburban landscape. Crestwood's regional location allows it to boast a small town, suburban landscape but still centrally located within a larger metropolitan area.





Crestwood in 1990. Source: Google Earth / NASA / USGS

## COMMUNITY HISTORY

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The City of Crestwood has a rich Native American heritage, and a diverse settler's population, including Scottish, Irish, French, and Germans. The Sappington House, a historic site which has been described as the community's "front porch", was built in 1808 just after the Lewis and Clark exploration and is believed to be the first brick home in St. Louis County.

The community of Crestwood was incorporated in 1947, and shortly thereafter evolved into a high-traffic community because of its location along the famous Route 66. Bringing about motels, restaurants, entertainment, shopping, and industry, the community grew rapidly from 1,645 residents in 1950 to 11,106 residents in 1960.

While Crestwood's population peaked in 1970 at 15,000 residents and experienced contraction in the 1980s and 90s. Today, the community is relatively stable, as population has only declined slightly over the past five (5) years. Today the community has evolved into a mature suburban community of almost 12,000 residents. The community also boasts a fantastic greenway featuring Grant's Trail, connecting itself directly to Grant's Farm. The farm features the first house that Ulysses S. Grant ever owned, and is owned by the Busch family.

# PAST PLANS & STUDIES

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In order to align the Comprehensive Planning process with existing documents and past planning efforts affecting the City of Crestwood, a review of past plans and studies has been prepared. This understanding helps guide Comprehensive Plan strategies and unite existing planning efforts and documents. The following plans include both local and regional efforts that may have an important impact on Crestwood.

## LOCAL PLANS

### 1999 Whitecliff Park Master Plan

The 1999 Whitecliff Park Master Plan addresses the community's concerns, and provides short and long-term recommendations for the park, pool, and community center. The plan also provides an estimation of future park, trail, and recreation needs based on national, state, and local standards tailored to meet the needs of Crestwood residents.

The Plan identifies six focal points in the park for more specific recommendations. These include a quarry area, a community center, an aquatics center, an active area, a parks operations area, and a lower pavilion area. Each of these areas is given a visualization in order to best show how the park could be utilized for these various purposes.

### 2005 Retail Market Study: Watson Road Commercial District

This study was intended to evaluate the Crestwood area market, analyze trends, and determine the market for redevelopment of the District. The study identifies four alternatives for the Watson Road Commercial District; recommendations vary in intensity from doing nothing, to adding major big boxes should certain conditions come about.

### 2006 Watson Road Streetscape Plan

This master plan identifies improvements for the Watson Road Corridor between New Sappington Road and Grant Road. The plan recognizes the existing condition of this area, followed by a plan for enhancing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improved landscaping, lighting, and signage, and bus stop and trail amenities.

### 2015 Watson Road Commercial District Plan

This district plan is the city's current comprehensive plan for the Watson Road Commercial District (WRCD). The plan was first implemented in 1984 and has been amended 4 times since. The main purpose of the 2015 amendment was to reevaluate the future land use designation for the Crestwood Plaza to ensure the maximum use based on an assessment of current and future strategies and to ensure long term vitality of the Watson Road Commercial District Corridor, Crestwood's primary commercial corridor. This plan now identifies the Crestwood Plaza as Planned Mixed-Use in the future

and use map, as opposed to Planned Commercial use.



## REGIONAL PLANS

### OneSTL

The OneSTL plan encourages the combined efforts of individuals, governments, organizations, and the private sector to ensure that the region continues to grow and prosper economically while improving the environment. The plan includes a vision, goals, strategies, practical tools, resources and plans to encourage regional collaboration and local action.

In its implementation strategy, OneSTL identifies various reference materials that local government can use to incorporate sustainability into their development codes and regulations, including 'The Environmental Sustainability Roadmap,' and 'The Sustainable Development Code Assessment: How-To Manual.' By putting these resources at the fingertips of local governments and stakeholders, OneSTL hopes to enable communities to work together to implement sustainable strategies that are collaborative, prosperous, distinctive, inclusive, green, prepared, connected, efficient, and educated.

### Imagining Tomorrow

Imagining Tomorrow for St. Louis County was adopted in 2013 and is a strategic plan for the county. This plan was designed to be impactful, and to develop a strong foundation of data, research, and public policy analysis. The plan also identifies the larger context of the county and demographic changes occurring, establishing a framework for policies to enable a thriving and prosperous county. In addition, it identifies measures by which the county can follow its performance and implement the policy framework. Furthermore, many of the policies discussed in the plan aim to address issues facing communities like Crestwood, today. Some of these strategies include preparing for an aging population, investing in youth, promoting a variety of housing and neighborhood options for all ages, revitalizing commercial areas for changing markets, and building on economic strengths and assets.

## Regional Greenway Plan

The St. Louis River Ring is a substantial greenway network that serves the St. Louis region, with 17 greenway corridors spread between the City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County. The Regional Greenway Plan was developed by the Great Rivers Greenway District to guide high-impact investments through land acquisition and greenway facility construction. The efforts of the Great Rivers Greenway District are complimented by the Metro East Park and Recreation District which serves the similar greenway located across the Mississippi in Illinois.

The Regional Greenway Plan provides long term planning goals to build, promote, and sustain the greenway between 2000 and 2060. The plan was first developed to establish initial guidance in 2004, with a subsequent update in 2011. The 2011 Updated Plan identifies the Gravois Greenway, which flows through Crestwood from the northwestern to southeastern edge, as one of 17 active greenway corridors that will remain the focus of the District's efforts in the near-term.

The Plan identifies a few specific strategies pertinent to the Crestwood community Greenway Corridor, including completing the Gravois Greenway from Kirkwood Park to River des Peres, and evacuating property value increases overtime within close proximity to the Gravois Greenway.

## Gateway Bike Plan

Approved in 2011, the Gateway Bike Plan was developed by the Great Rivers Greenway to provide a coordinated vision for bicycle transportation within the St. Louis region. The plan focuses on developing the necessary systems for convenient bicycle mobility and encouraging citizens to utilize bicycle amenities. Acting as a resource for the development of the Regional Bicycle Network, the document aims to connect key destinations throughout St. Louis, St. Louis County, and urbanized St. Charles County with a continuous bicycle pathway. As of 2013, the Gateway Bike Plan has led to the construction of 215 miles of bikeways in the St. Louis region.

The Gateway Bike Plan identified four recommended on-street facility improvements in Crestwood. These included:

- Accommodating a bike lane along Watson Rd;
- Including a wide outside lane along New Sappington Rd; and
- Adding shared lane markings along Eddie & Park Rd east of New Sappington Rd, and along Pardee Rd.

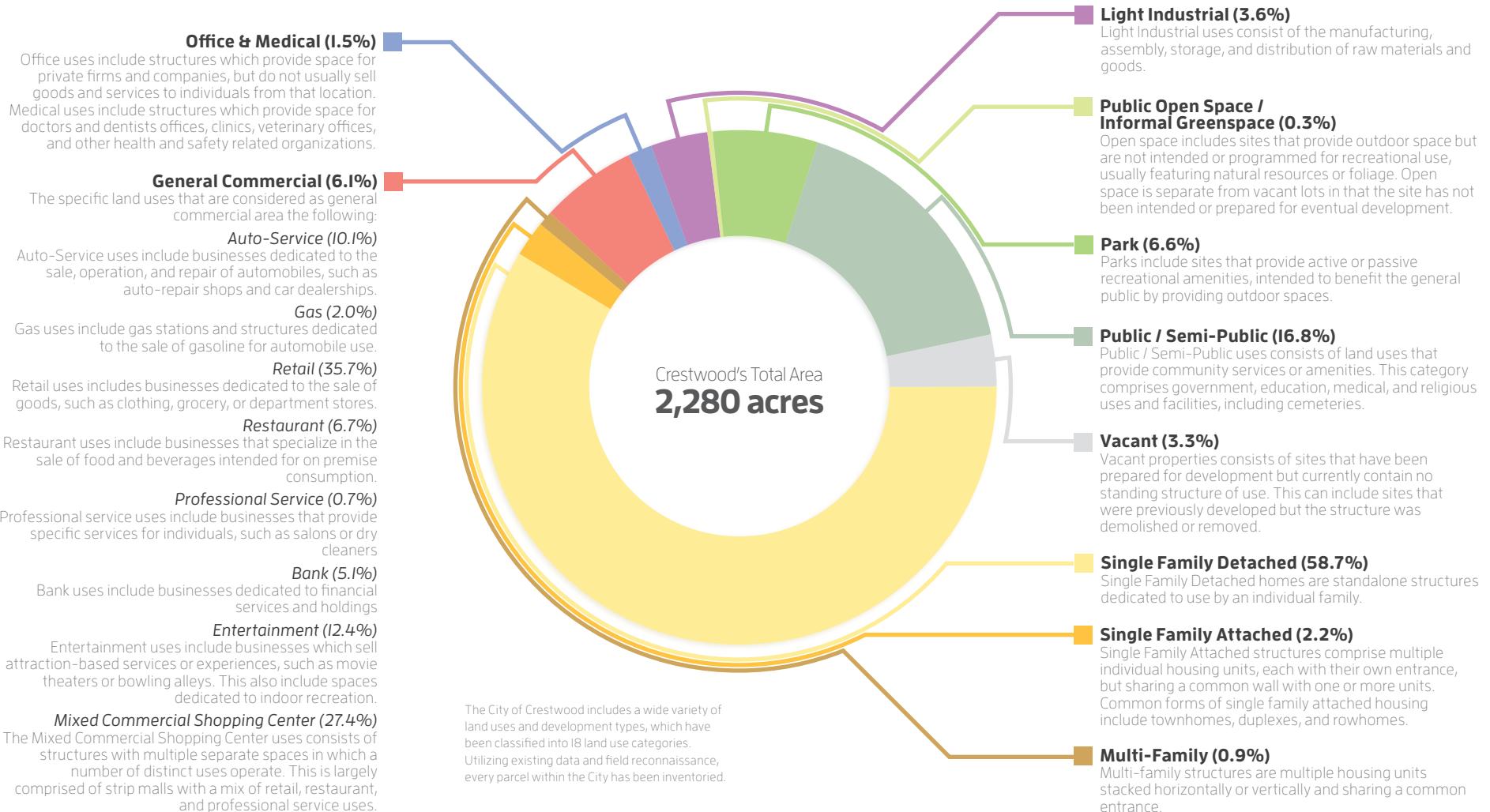
## Missouri Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The Missouri Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a 5 year document intended to guide the development and funding of outdoor recreation and ensure state eligibility for federal Land and Water Conservation Funds. The 2013-2017 SCORP identifies six important issues that will face the state of Missouri in the upcoming years:

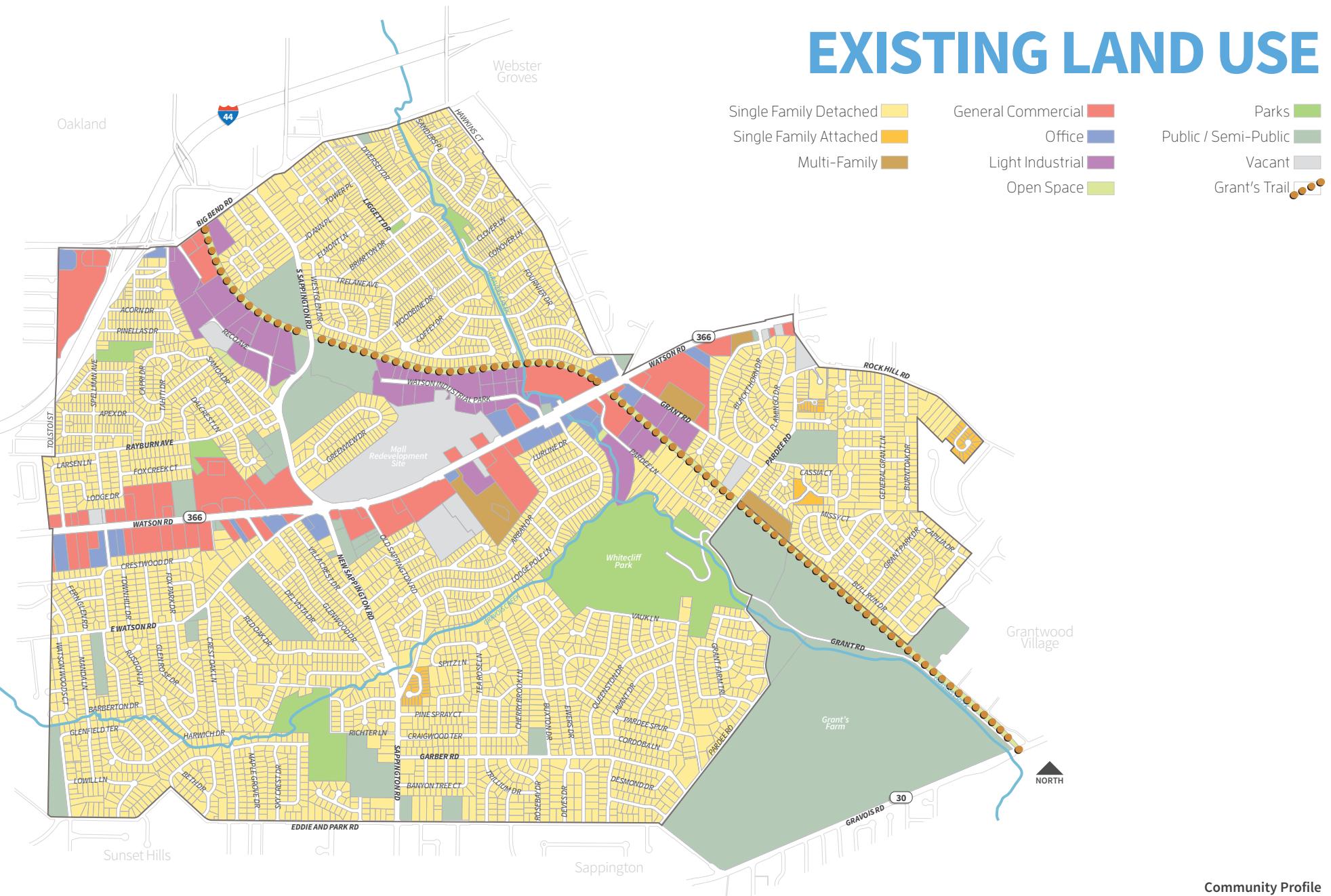
- Sociodemographic Shifts
- Funding and Economics
- Demand for Trails and Walkable Communities
- Educating the Public on the Value and Benefits of Parks and Recreation
- Health and Wellness
- Youth, Technology, and Nature Deficit

While the plan does not directly address the City of Crestwood, it acts as a vital resource for state-wide and regional trends regarding outdoor recreation and a tool for enabling and encouraging greater recreational activity in residents.

# EXISTING LAND USE



# EXISTING LAND USE



# CURRENT ZONING

The Crestwood Zoning and Subdivision Regulations is chapter 26 of the City Code, adopted in 1965. This chapter regulates the usage and density of land, intended to guide the nature of development within the City. Crestwood Zoning includes the following 11 zoning districts:

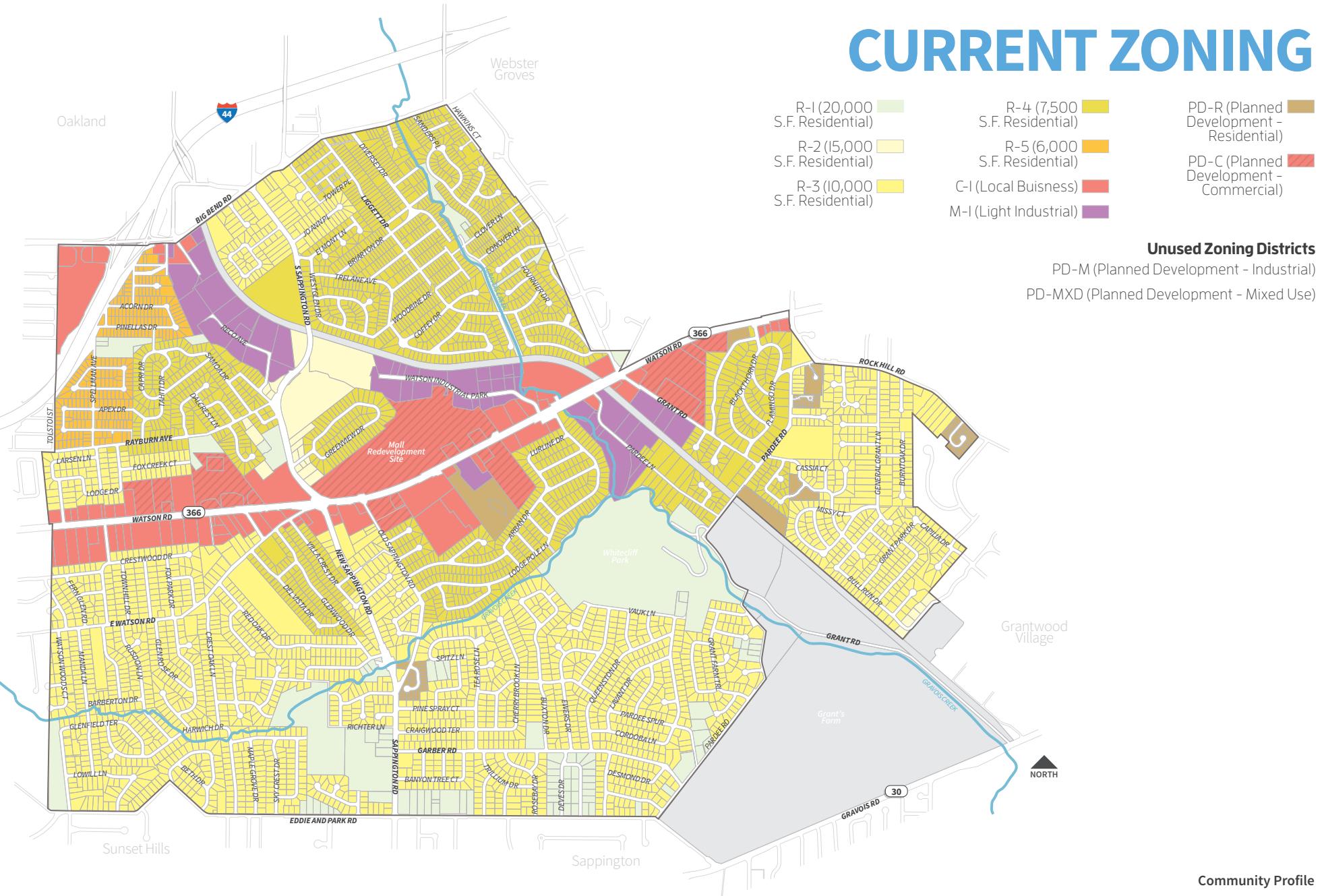
- R-1 Single-family Residential (20,000 s.f.)
- R-2 Single-family Residential (15,000 s.f.)
- R-3 Single-family Residential (10,000 s.f.)
- R-4 Single-family Residential (7,500 s.f.)
- R-5 Single-family Residential (6,000 s.f.)
- C-I Local Business
- M-I Light Industrial
- PD-R Planned Development-Residential
- PD-C Planned Development-Commercial
- PD-M Planned Development – Industrial (Unused)
- PD-MXD Planned Development – Mixed Use (Unused)

Current Zoning Designations	Nature of Permitted Uses	Min. Lot Area	Min. Lot Width	Min. Lot Depth	Max. Lot Coverage	Max. Height
R-1 Single-family Residential (20,000 s.f.)	Single-family dwellings on very large sized lots	20,000 sq. ft.	100 ft.	150 ft.	30%	2.5 stories or 35 ft.
R-2 Single-family Residential (15,000 s.f.)	Single-family dwellings on large sized lots	15,000 sq. ft.	80 ft.	125 ft.	30%	2.5 stories or 35 ft.
R-3 Single-family Residential (10,000 s.f.)	Single-family dwellings on moderate to large sized lots	10,000 sq. ft.	75 ft.	125 ft.	30%	2.5 stories or 35 ft.
R-4 Single-family Residential (7,500 s.f.)	Single-family dwellings on moderate sized	7,500 sq. ft.	60 ft.	125 ft.	30%	2.5 stories or 35 ft.
R-5 Single-family Residential (6,000 s.f.)	Single-family dwellings on small sized lots	6,000 sq. ft.	50 ft.	100 ft.	30%	2.5 stories or 35 ft.
C-I Local Business	General retail, service, and repair business activities	5 acres, unless abutting an existing commercial or industrial zone	150 ft.	-	No Limit	2.5 stories or 35 ft.; Buildings max exceed such height as long as the gross floor area does not exceed 1 to 1.5
M-I Light Industrial	Light manufacturing, warehousing, and other limited industrial uses	5 acres, unless abutting an existing industrial zone	75 ft.	-	80%	3 stories or 45 ft.
PD-R Planned Development - Residential*	Residential uses as part of a planned development	2.5 acres**	-	-	-	-
PD-C Planned Development - Commercial	Commercial uses as part of a planned development	2.5 acres**	-	-	-	-
PD-M Planned Development – Industrial (Unused)	Industrial uses as part of a planned development	2.5 acres**	-	-	-	-
PD-MXD Planned Development – Mixed Use (Unused)	Mixed uses as part of a planned development	2.5 acres**	-	-	-	-

\*Planned Development District require a development review and approval process, thus many regulations are reliant on the type of development. This is intentional to the nature of Planned Developments

\*\*This minimum site size may be waived by the board of alderman upon recommendation

# CURRENT ZONING



# DEMOGRAPHIC & MARKET SUMMARY

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The population of Crestwood has seen some decline but has remained fairly stable over the past five years. This trend of stability is expected to continue over the next five years. While this population is stagnant, it is also aging. The 60+ years old population is seeing growth while younger cohorts are expected to decrease by 2020. Crestwood's composition in race is less diverse than the rest of St. Louis County. The Hispanic population is expected to increase slightly by 2020. Income levels are expected to rise faster than the rate of inflation between 2015 and 2020.

These projections were made between decennial censuses, which limits their accuracy. Local knowledge would suggest that the population of Crestwood is actually expected to see a slight increase in the 2020s. Although not captured by the 2020 U.S. Census yet, there is reliable local analysis that young families are moving into the community. School enrollment data appears to support the qualitative analysis as well. The analogy used is that as existing residents age-in-place, for example a widowed individual living along, as they relocate to a senior housing development, a new, young family moves into that same house. If that family has three children, 1 resident in effect becomes 5 residents – a net increase of population. Household size is the critical factor in demonstrating this trend quantitatively. Although the City does not use occupancy permits and does not have real-time data on this residential turnover, it does appear to be contributing to an increase in population in certain areas. In order to better understand the real-time conditions of the community and how to address any issues, the City of Crestwood should begin to issue and implement a housing occupancy permit system.

## EMPLOYMENT

The number of jobs in St. Louis County has increased since the job market hit its lowest point in 2009. In 2009, St. Louis County had an unemployment rate of 9.1%, which decreased to 5.9% in 2014. The residents of Crestwood are well-educated with over 50% of residents in the workforce possessing a college degree. This has likely contributed to residential employment in a diverse range of industries, most notably, healthcare/social services, retail trade, education services, professional/scientific/tech services and manufacturing.

Locally, Crestwood lost a number of jobs between 2009 and 2013. The largest losses were found in other services, health care and social assistance, education services, construction, and accommodation and food services. With the majority of employees who work in Crestwood living elsewhere, there is an opportunity to capture sales from people who would be commuting into Crestwood each day. There is some anticipation that with the mall redevelopment and the potential to fill vacant storefronts along Watson Road, the City will experience a net increase in employment over the next 5 years.

## HOUSING

The housing stock in Crestwood is predominantly single family detached. Around 85% of the housing units in Crestwood are owner-occupied. The housing stock was overwhelmingly built in the 1950s and 1960s. The housing values have returned to about where they were before the Great Recession. Crestwood's median home values were estimated at \$187,000 in 2015, which is generally comparable to its peer communities. New home construction has been stagnant since 2009, but has shown signs of picking up.

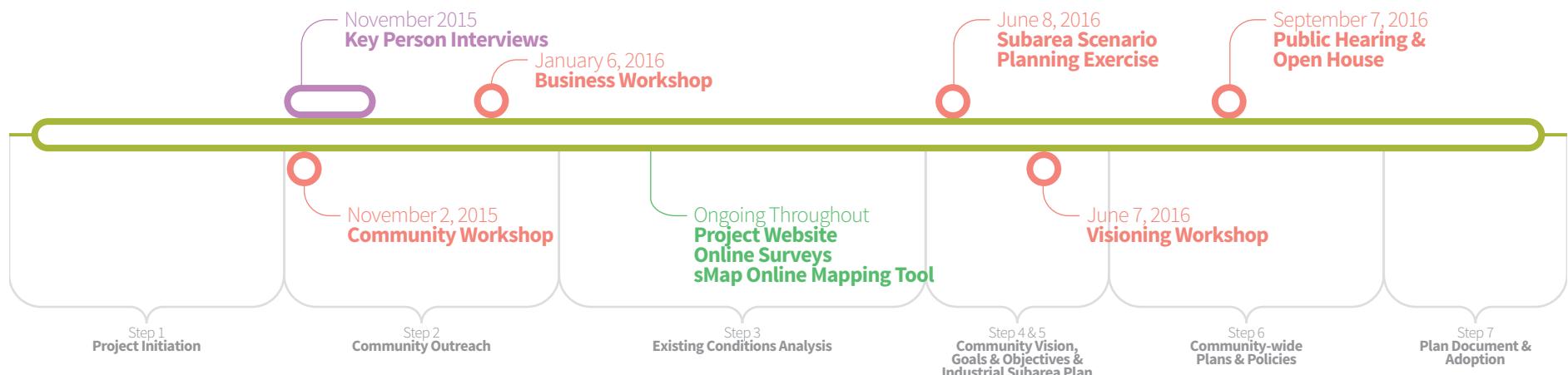
## RETAIL, OFFICE & INDUSTRIAL

The primary concentration of retail in Crestwood is centered at Watson Road and Sappington Road, near the former Crestwood Mall. Within a 15 minute drive time, the area is oversupplied by \$747.1 million. Crestwood and its surrounding area has a 2015 retail vacancy rate of 13.2% and an average rent of \$13.40 per square foot. This would suggest that the retail space in this part of the region is overvalued, which could be why absorption of vacant retail space is slow.

Office rent rates are higher in some of the newest office product in comparison to the rest of the region. The industrial market in and around Crestwood is expected to see a decrease in vacancy in 2016. This follows a slight increase in the cost per square foot. This is inline with several other trends that show a strengthening industrial market. Crestwood is in a desirable area for industry because of its highway access.



## OUTREACH TIMELINE



# OUTREACH SUMMARY

Crestwood's Comprehensive Plan is the product of a planning process that actively sought input from a variety of stakeholders, including residents, neighborhood groups, business owners, developers, service providers, elected and appointed officials, and City staff. A variety of ongoing outreach efforts, both in-person and online, have been used to gather the concerns, ideas, and aspirations of residents. The timeline below shows the outreach effort involved.

## SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The following is a summary of those issues that were most consistently raised and discussed at outreach events. While this does not include every comments received, it provides an understanding of the issues and concerns most important to residents of Crestwood. For a full summary of all outreach, including summaries of individual workshops and events, see the Existing Conditions Report.

### Lack of a “Central Hub”

Crestwood residents expressed a desire for a “central hub,” such as a downtown, lifestyle center, town center, or some other type of activity generator. While the City has many of the individual ingredients required for such an area, they are spread out along several miles of Watson Road. Residents would like to see a blend of residential, dining, entertainment, and civic uses within a concentrated area, which could serve as both a community gathering spot and regional destination, as well as a source of pride.

### Support for Small Businesses

Residents are proud of Crestwood's small businesses and would like to do a better job of attracting and retaining small businesses. It was expressed that resources and attention should not be given to large chains or employers at the expense of local Crestwood businesses. Residents would also like other residents to support local businesses more.

### Generate More Tax Revenue

Residents believe that Crestwood has excellent city services, including parks, schools, police, and fire. However, concern was expressed that the demand for services (including maintenance) could outpace the tax revenue collected by the city. This is of particular concern given the closure of the Crestwood Court Mall. Residents would like to see more new businesses in Crestwood that could increase the tax rolls.

### Crestwood's Identity

The community's Route 66 heritage is seen as a significant asset and important community identifier. However, residents would like the Comprehensive Plan to articulate Crestwood's identity and answer “what is Crestwood's brand and role within the region?” Residents see identity as multi-faceted: social and civic (e.g. community events, city marketing, etc.) as well as physical (e.g. design of buildings, community gathering spots, etc.).

## **Watson Road**

Watson Road is the community's main artery and central place of business. Residents are concerned about the placement of medians which can obstruct visibility of shops and make navigation difficult, as well as the need for more viable businesses and attractions along the corridor that can make it a destination. It was also noted that Watson Road lacks a unifying design theme or "feel."

## **Need for Activity Generators**

Business leaders expressed a desire for activity generators along Watson Road that can bring new consumer dollars into the community as well as a critical mass of activity. Entertainment, retail, and/or recreation were expressed as desired future uses.

## **Access Management**

The business community felt that medians along Watson Road can make it difficult for motorists to access local businesses. If traveling in the opposite direction, drivers cannot make direct turns into businesses and instead must take a more circuitous path. Workshop participants expressed a desire to see them removed. They believe this will make it easier for motorists to patronize businesses.

## **Improved Sense of Place**

Participants expressed that they felt the Watson corridor lacked a "sense of place" and distinct identity. This included both the composition of businesses as well as the marketing of the district and design of its buildings and signage.

## **The Pedestrian Environment**

Most participants acknowledged that Crestwood was built at a time where the pedestrian and walking was not emphasized, but there was desire expressed to improve the pedestrian environment in the City going forward. In general, many pedestrians stated that it is really difficult to walk places as a pedestrian and cited a variety of factors, ranging from difficult crosswalks on major arterials, to a lack of sidewalks, to dead end streets, to in some cases night lighting. Some participants suggested that the City should conduct a walkability assessment and identify opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment as part of a Bike-Ped Plan.

## Grant's Trail, the Sappington House & Cycling

Virtually all interviewees cited Grant's Trail as a major regional St. Louis asset and one of the main traffic drivers bringing visitors to Crestwood. In general, participants expressed really positive reviews of the trail, ranging from its condition and overall management in the City, to providing a great healthy living asset for local residents. Related, some participants also noted the Sappington House as an asset, and really the "front porch" for Crestwood and felt the trail and the historic property interrelate and support each other well.

Further, many participants felt these two amenities should be a focus for public investments, economic development strategies, and establishing Crestwood's identity and image throughout the St. Louis region. Participants stated they want to see local trails and bike lanes serve Crestwood's neighborhoods and connect to Grant's Trail. There was some interest in more special events anchored by the trail and engaging the Sappington House. And in general, there is a vision to establish Crestwood as one of the most bicycle-friendly, "cycling towns" in the St. Louis region.

## Crestwood Plaza Mall Redevelopment

Every interview discussed the vacant mall site and the importance of a successful redevelopment. In general, participants expressed they do not anticipate the property to be as major of a retail destination again because of the emergence of online sales and other shifts in the region; one individual stated, "in 2016 St. Louis has 8 malls in a 5 mall town." Other participants stated there are new businesses interested in investing in the community, but they are waiting to see what happens with the mall site. Regardless, everyone stressed that the mall site is the big economic catalyst that could build momentum for Crestwood and were anxious to see a project move forward.



# 3

# VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The vision & guiding principles chapter incorporate the main ideas and reoccurring themes discussed throughout the community outreach process in support of the City of Crestwood Comprehensive Plan, including key person and stakeholder interviews, community workshops, online questionnaires, and sMap online community mapping tool.

The vision statement is written in a retrospective voice; in the year 2035. It identifies how the community has changed for the better; describing Crestwood as it exists 20 years in the future following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The vision statement is accompanied by the goals and objectives, which provide more specific direction as to how the City of Crestwood can achieve their desired outcomes and form the framework for planning recommendations, policies, future projects, and actions.

- 24      **20 Year Vision Statement**
- 26      **Philosophy on Incremental Progress**
- 27      **Guiding Principles**

# 20 YEAR VISION STATEMENT

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**The City of Crestwood is the hub for cyclists and craft-scale “makers” across the St. Louis Region.** The City’s prime location in the Great Rivers Greenway trail system provides easy access from Crestwood to the City of St. Louis for young persons who want to live an active lifestyle. The City’s residents and businesses have a strong sense of local pride for their community, which boasts a rich history, bustling retail and business centers, and excellent public facilities and services.

**Crestwood’s well-maintained residential neighborhoods represent a range of housing opportunities for families of all sizes and income levels.** The City of Crestwood has a desirable home for every person in every stage of life. From young professional apartments near transit and trail, to single-family homes for growing families, to senior housing; Crestwood has a place for everyone. Regular code enforcement and community development programming by the City of Crestwood ensures these residential neighborhoods remain stable.

**The Crestwood business community is thriving with attractive, well-planned, and accessible commercial districts.** Small businesses provide unique everyday service needs for neighborhoods throughout the City, while large, regional retail establishments flourish along Watson Road. The former Crestwood Plaza mall site has been revitalized, while placemaking strategies have brought new life in and around neighborhood commercial centers. The Watson Road corridor now features a series of “park once” walkable nodes of mixed-use developments to complement the mall site.

**Industrial businesses in the City provide quality, well-paying jobs.** The City has worked closely with the industrial business community and the Crestwood-Sunset Hills Area Chamber of Commerce to recruit and retain commercial and industrial businesses. Where Crestwood was once known as a retail center it has now broadened its identity and functions as a major jobs hub for South County.

**Crestwood has a dynamic transportation system that provides safe and efficient options for all users.** In the past 20 years, the City has implemented the recommendations outlined in the Gateway Bike Plan to ensure that Crestwood is easily accessible by bike, and worked with the Metro to promote transit ridership in the community.

**Crestwood is a safe place to live and work with effective and dedicated police and fire protection services.** The Crestwood Police Department has continued to enhance public safety throughout the community, while the Crestwood Fire Department continues to have quick response times and provides excellent first responder care.

**Crestwood residents have access to many parks, recreational facilities, and natural areas.** With direction for the City's Park and Recreation Department, the City is strategically creating and enhancing recreation activities throughout the City, and maximizing the community's existing park and recreation facilities. New greenways along Gravois Creek, and natural areas provide residents with relief from the urban environment, while serving a critical role in stormwater management and providing needed habitat for local wildlife.

**Crestwood draws visitors for its wealth of historical and cultural offerings.** Residents and visitors have access to a variety of well-maintained and celebrated historical and cultural amenities such as the Sappington House, and Father Dickson and Sappington Cemeteries, all within close proximity and with easy access to Grant's Farm.

**Crestwood is a unified city with a strong identity and a sense of local pride.** With all its amenities, history, events, attractions, and prime location in the region, the City of Crestwood exudes a vibrant and diverse feel enjoyed by all who live, work and visit. Regardless of where residents and businesses are located, all are invested in the future growth and development of Crestwood, and harbor a sense of pride in their community. Crestwood is a city where people from all walks of time come to meet, imagine, help, build, and prosper. The City is well-known and heralded as a premiere suburb in St. Louis.

# PHILOSOPHY ON INCREMENTAL PROGRESS

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Having a big vision is important. And proactively planning for the future is an effective decision-making and management system. But it is equally important to understand how to get from A to B – where do you start and what incremental steps are needed to build momentum.

Incremental progress takes long-term goals and objectives and breaks them down into clearly defined and measurable short-term actions. The short-term goals help community actors manage change and feel advancement and momentum. Newton's first law of motion, proves that an object in motion wants to remain in motion. While Newton's law is referring to the physics of an object in motion, our human tendencies are the same; if we can see progress beginning, no matter the task, we have more motivation to continue that momentum, and small and consistent actions tend to create small and consistent improvements.

Success breeds success.

This approach should be taken throughout plan, and through implementation to make the vision discussed previously, a reality. The Subarea plan, for example, is given a three stages (short-, medium-, and long-term) through which the community can see the full vision materialize. The short-term actions are those that should be addressed first and foremost, and that will set the foundation moving forward. The medium-term actions are those that will take some time to implement, but once the short-term goals have been accomplished, they are much more easily tackled, and the long-term are those that take the vision home. In likeness, the implementation chapter splits goals into short-, medium-, and long-term actions.

Further, many of the strategies and recommendations listed throughout the plan chapters also feature incremental options that respect both the long-term nature of the City's goals as well as different scenarios. The intention is to provide a document that can anchor deliberation in the City of Crestwood and help act as a decision-support tool over time.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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**Target Strengths.** We can't have it all, as much as we want to. The Crestwood community needs to be strategic and play to our strengths through targeting actions and maximize our potential.

**Modernize.** Crestwood was largely developed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and while this plays to many of our strengths, like our history and location, the community needs to update and reinvest in some of its infrastructure and urban design to more effectively compete in today's marketplace.

**Take Pride.** Take pride in Crestwood for everything that it is. Let's tell our story to the St. Louis region. And let's create new traditions that give the next generation ownership of the community too.

**Differentiate.** Crestwood is not a traditional suburb and we do not want to be. We are an established community, steeped in history, and we have been presented with an opportunity to reinvent ourselves at the nexus of catalyzing change. We need to harness our energy and drive for change that will differentiate us as the progressive community we are.

**Maximize.** The City of Crestwood is lucky to have interstate access, be in close proximity to a regional amenity like Grant's Farm, and have access to an established and growing bike-trail system. We need to maximize our location by promoting and drawing people to the community who regularly use these major amenities.





# 4 LAND USE, DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

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Crestwood includes a diverse range of land uses that accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial users. The City's residential neighborhoods are primarily defined by iconic Midcentury housing and have continued a family-oriented character and tradition for generations. The City's residential areas are wrapped around the Watson Road corridor and it too carries a post war American heritage, once serving as Route 66 through the St. Louis region.

Finally, although the railroad has been replaced with a premiere bicycle trail, the City retains a narrow light industrial corridor through the heart of the community. The Land Use, Development, and Growth Management Plan serves to guide future growth and development by providing a framework for decision making.

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- 30 Land Use Categories
- 32 Growth Annexation
- 35 Residential Areas Plan
- 49 Commercial & Industrial Areas Plan
- 71 Subarea Plan

# FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

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Each parcel has been designated under one of 9 land use categories. The descriptions below indicate the type of development that falls under each category.

## **Single Family Detached**

Single family detached homes comprise the majority of residential land use within the City of Crestwood and should remain the predominant housing type in the future. Single family detached homes are stand-alone structures for individual families that are typically owner-occupied, although some may include rental homes.

## **Single Family Attached**

Single family attached structures are individual housing units that are attached horizontally with separate entrances. Examples of single family attached structures include townhomes and duplexes. There are few examples of such housing product in Crestwood today.

## **Multi-family**

Multi-family residential structures include multiple housing units stacked vertically and horizontally. These buildings have a single point of entry, with common hallways and shared amenities. Apartment complexes and senior housing facilities are included under the multi-family land use designation. Multi-family land uses can serve as a transition land use between single family home neighborhoods and commercial areas.

## **Core Commercial**

Commercial land uses provide retail and commercial services that meet the needs of local neighborhoods as well as the larger region. Uses include large retail centers, big box stores, standalone retailers, small retail strip centers, auto dealers, restaurants, hotels, and entertainment venues, among others. Core commercial uses within Crestwood may include office and neighborhood commercial uses. These are described in more detail in the Commercial Areas Plan.

## Regional Commercial

Regional commercial land uses provide retail and commercial services that serve a regional market and offer a mix of conveniences shopping and more specialized goods and services. Uses include large retail centers, big box stores, standalone retailers, restaurants, hotels, and entertainment venues. These businesses rely on easy access to the larger regional market, such as close proximity to an Interstate highway. Regional commercial uses within Crestwood are concentrated directly west of the I-44/Big Bend Road interchange. These are described in more detail in the Commercial Areas Plan.

## Light Industrial

The Light Industrial category is intended to accommodate low-impact manufacturing, warehousing and distribution uses, and other light industrial business activities. Uses may include material assembly, storage and distribution, low intensity fabrication operations, and contractor offices. These uses are generally buffered from other uses, with operations contained within a closed setting. Access management and truck routing are key elements that should be considered with regard to the warehousing and distribution land use category. In Crestwood these uses are contained within the general Camera Avenue, Reco Avenue, and Watson Industrial Park corridors. Some additional uses are clustered along Pardee Lane.

## Public / Semi-Public

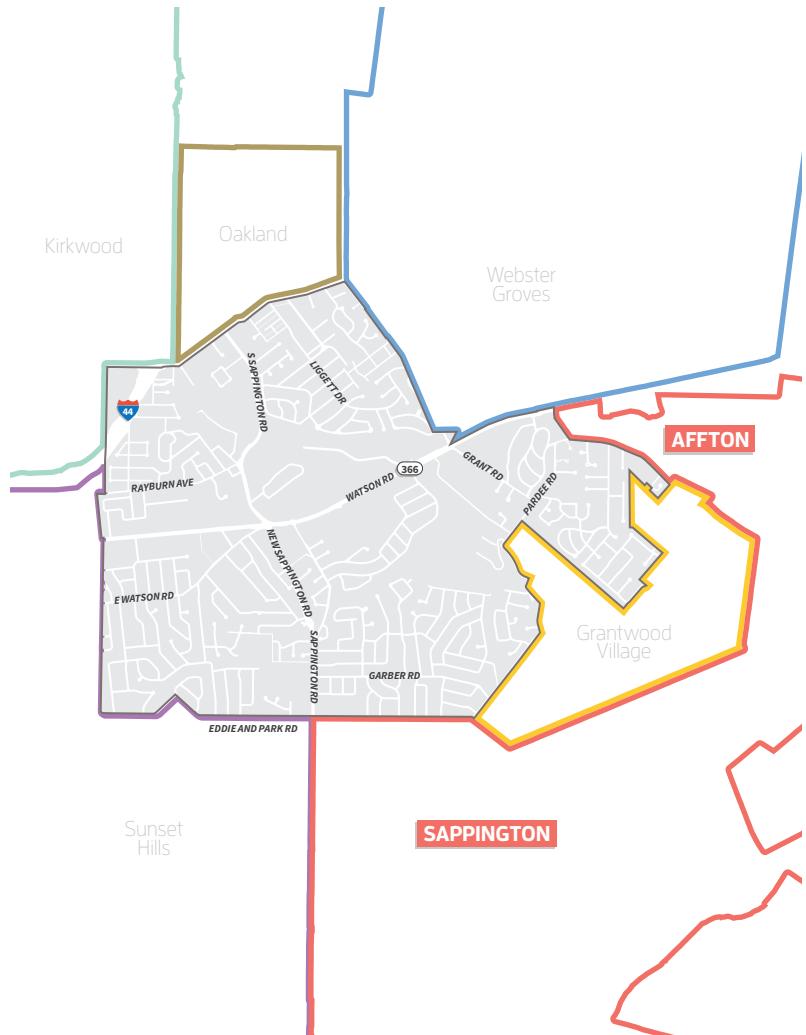
Public/Semi-public land uses include public-access elements and consist of government, education, medical, and religious uses. Government uses include municipal facilities, police and fire protection, and other government-related uses on the local, state, or federal level. Educational uses include local schools and libraries. Medical uses includes large hospitals, small medical offices, and private practices. Finally, religious uses include facilities where congregations gather for worship.

## Parks & Open Space

Parks include public or private sites and facilities that provide active and passive recreational amenities. Open space areas include land that has not been designated as active parks, but may contain environmental features such as large tree stands, streams, and wetlands; Gravois Creek and other waterways in Crestwood would qualify. In addition, cemeteries and land associated with trail rights-of-way are included in the open space land use category.

## Utilities / Infrastructure

Utility uses include sites and facilities that accommodate critical infrastructure, wastewater treatment sites, water towers, power generation and substations, and electric support towers.



## GROWTH & ANNEXATION

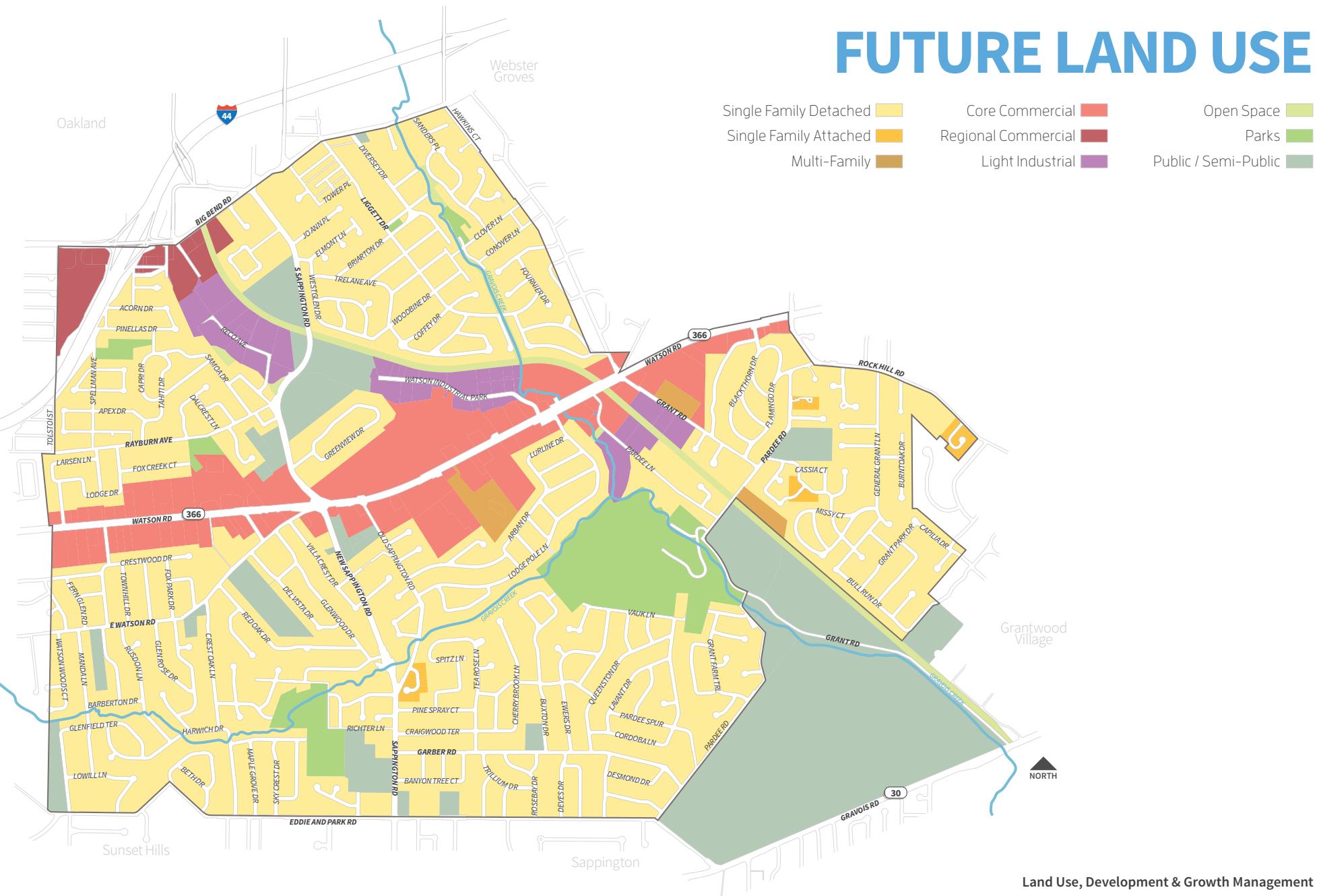
The City of Crestwood is virtually entirely landlocked and built out. The municipality is bordered by the City of Oakland, the City of Sunset Hills, the City of Webster Groves, the Village of Marlborough, the Village of Grantwood Village, and unincorporated areas in St. Louis County, such as Sappington and Affton. It is anticipated that over the next 10-15 years the City of Crestwood will not annex any new land. If the City does evaluate such an application, it should do so strategically using fiscal impact and cost-benefit analysis. The City is shifting from a period of growth and annexation to redevelopment and reinvestment. As a result the City's policy emphasis should be on redeveloping existing areas.

### POTENTIAL ANNEXATION EVALUATIONS

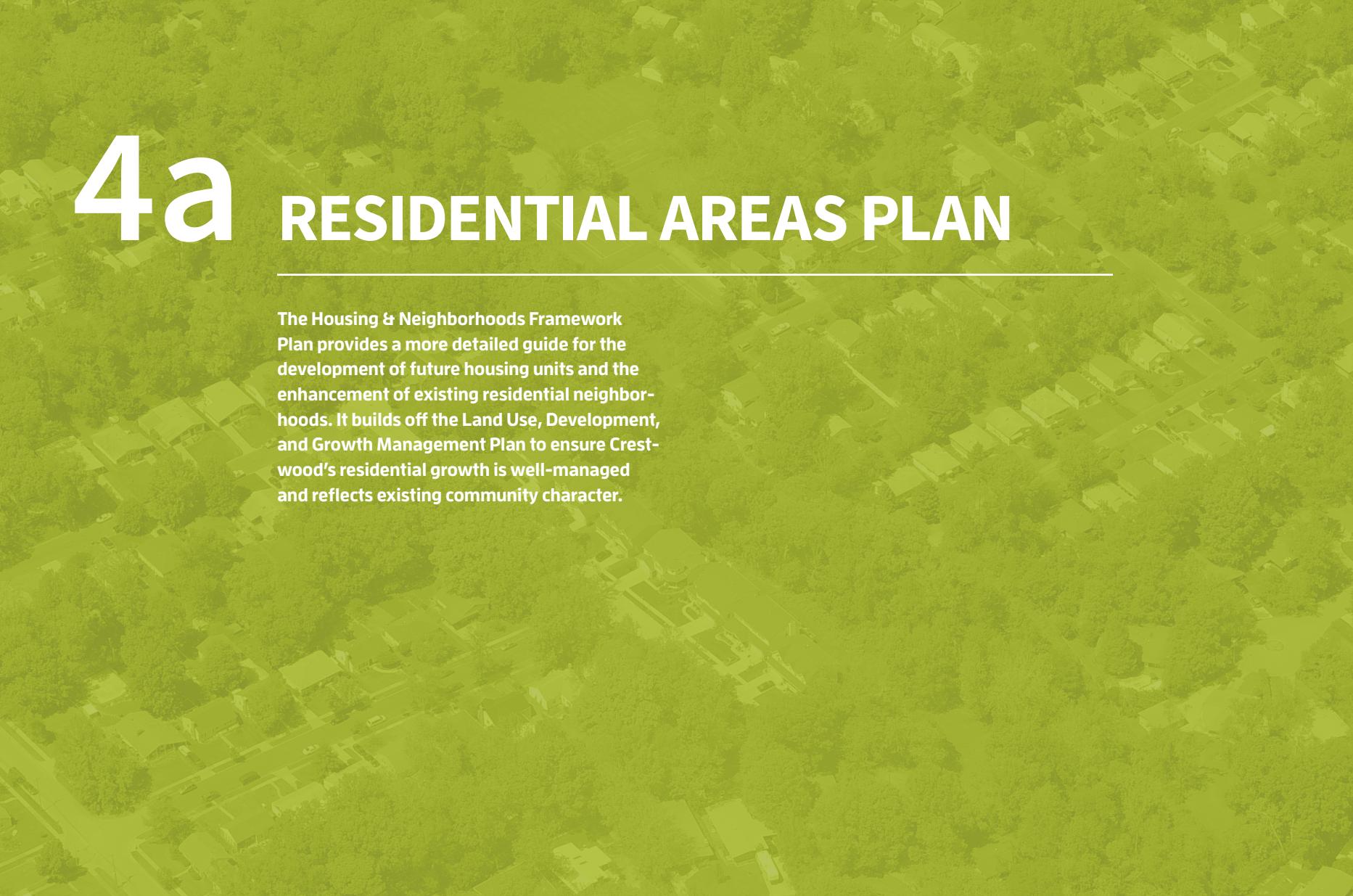
In St. Louis County, all annexation must be proposed to and approved by the St. Louis County Boundary Commission. If approved, a vote is held in both the annexing municipality and in the area to be annexed. To be adopted a simple majority of residents must support annexation.

Annexation in St. Louis County has been limited in recent years, with most municipal boundaries remaining unchanged. Recently, there have been few municipal annexations of developed parcels, particularly in the South County where a large population lies in unincorporated areas, such as Affton to the east, and Sappington to the south of Crestwood. The City should continue to monitor any potential annexation applications, and maintain a dialogue with St. Louis County to anticipate opportunities for annexation in these areas.

# FUTURE LAND USE







# 4a RESIDENTIAL AREAS PLAN

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**The Housing & Neighborhoods Framework Plan** provides a more detailed guide for the development of future housing units and the enhancement of existing residential neighborhoods. It builds off the Land Use, Development, and Growth Management Plan to ensure Crestwood's residential growth is well-managed and reflects existing community character.

# CRESTWOOD'S SIGNATURE RESIDENTIAL APPEAL

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Throughout the planning process a variety of residents and stakeholders reported that Crestwood's signature residential appeal is the nexus of three factors. First, Crestwood is in close proximity to major employment hubs, regional destinations, and adjacent to desirable communities, but still features high-quality affordable housing. Secondly, compared to some of its neighbors like Kirkwood and Webster Groves, it has low property tax rates. Finally, Crestwood has fantastic school quality through the Lindbergh District.

These three factors combine to create in Crestwood one of the most desirable, family-oriented suburban communities in the St. Louis region. Other suburban municipalities may offer two of the three conditions – such as great schools and reasonable taxes, but the housing is outdated and unappealing, or affordable housing and moderate tax rates, but the public school quality suffers. Further, some suburbs in St. Louis County actually feature expensive housing and expensive tax bills, but offer local education quality that is still lower than the Lindbergh District.

It is clear why young families are moving into Crestwood and building the foundation for the next generation's experience in the City. However, from a public policy and planning standpoint, the City needs to work closely with Lindbergh schools to monitor and manage these conditions. If any one of the three factors in this dynamic slides askew it could carry meaningful implications for Crestwood's stability as a residential community.

If the school quality suffers it will lower the appeal for many families. If the community's property taxes increase significantly, it will shift the "return on investment" evaluation of homeowners and families comparing Crestwood and Lindbergh schools to other suburban communities. And finally, although increasing property values is a commonly held goal, if the housing stock becomes unaffordable (despite reasonable taxes and great schools) it would still impact the character of Crestwood.

The City should work with the school district to create a brief, annual report that acts as an index to track, monitor, and report on these three factors. This index would help inform coordinated public policy making between the two agencies.

# ADDRESSING RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

Although Crestwood has not yet been significantly impacted by the residential teardown trend, the City should anticipate addressing this issue in the next 10 years. Neighboring communities in the St. Louis region are already experiencing this trend and other municipalities across the Midwest, with neighborhoods and housing similar to Crestwood, are also navigating this trend.

Simply, new residents purchase existing ranch-style, Midcentury residential structures and either demolish and rebuild, or significantly modify through additions and expansion, and build a multi-story, larger home. This activity is often allowed under existing zoning and building codes and the financial realities of the market often mean a homeowner can build an infill teardown home cheaper than buying an existing estate home in another city.

That said, many current residents often express frustration at this trend. Infill homes can feature more contemporary architectural styles, be considerably out of scale, massing, and height of existing structures, and in essence, impact the character of the neighborhood. The City should consider developing a toolbox of strategies to anticipate the market driving teardown and infill home construction in Crestwood.

The City should consider developing a "patternbook" which offers architectural and building concepts to expand and add onto existing Crestwood homes in a more seamless and complimentary manner. Although this is a passive approach that relies on the voluntary action of private property owners, it can still assist existing homeowners and their architects generate ideas that better reflect the local context and history of Crestwood's neighborhoods.

Beyond that policy approach, the City can evaluate adopting formal development regulations. The City could incorporate residential design standards into its existing zoning codes. Such standards would address a number of site design and architectural features in greater detail than a traditional Euclidean zoning code, although it would still allow for general flexibility. An emerging option would be to consider form-based codes. In contrast to Euclidean zoning, form-based zoning is very specific to the built-form and design elements like massing and scale; however, some form-based codes can be very prescriptive on even architectural elements and building materials.



## MODERNIZING & RENOVATING MIDCENTURY

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The vast majority of Crestwood's residential housing stock was built during the 1950s and 60s. While the housing stock and style remain competitive in today's marketplace, there are certain elements that undermine its competitiveness. Kitchens and bathrooms are the major transformations between Midcentury homes and contemporary 21st Century options, but there are other considerations too. Ultimately the investment and initiative to modernize these homes needs to be private activity. However, the City could use other strategies outlined in this plan, such as a marketing campaign and a patternbook, to promote how appealing an updated, renovated Midcentury home can be as well as provide home design ideas to stimulate that energy. Regardless, it is essential that over the next generation Crestwood's housing stock is maintained, modernized, and renovated to remain competitive.

## SANDERS DRIVE INFILL HOMES

The residential area east of Gravois Creek and west of Grant Road is generally aligned along Sanders Drive. This section of Crestwood is somewhat isolated from the rest of the community and ties into a part of Webster Groves. This area has seen some reinvestment and home expansion in recent years and it may be appealing for teardowns and infill home construction. The City's zoning currently requires a low-density residential product, but it could evaluate zoning modifications that would encourage teardown home construction in the area.

## FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT & WATERWAYS

The City of Crestwood's proximity to Gravois Creek presents some of the community's residential areas with issues related to floodplain management and open space conservation. Because the City does not maintain any easements for waterways in the community, the residential lots that abut the creek are owned by those lot owners and the City can do little to mitigate the effects of development on the creek, or the creek's effect on residences. The City of Crestwood should consider establishing a conservation easement program to preserve these natural areas as discussed in **Chapter 7: Parks, Open Space & Environmental Features**.



## ADJACENT TO WATSON ROAD PARCELS

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Watson Road is the major commercial thoroughfare of the community, and provides Crestwood with many benefits, including regional and local goods and services, and tax dollars, among others. This type of intensive commercial use along a major thoroughfare, which also cuts through the center of a community, can detract from the adjacent residential uses.

The City of Crestwood has been effective in ensuring that the buffers between commercial and residential are substantial, however the connectivity between adjacent neighborhoods and commercial may require residents to drive to a business that they could reach walking or bicycling. For example, the homes along Madeira Drive, behind the Aldi shopping center, have no method of accessing the shopping center without going to Brookview Drive and back-tracking. The City should look for signs of informal points of entry to all commercial amenities, keeping an open discussion with local residents, to decipher if the neighborhoods would benefit from strategically located access points to these commercial amenities.

## CONNECTIVITY

Many of Crestwood's neighborhood areas tend to include curvilinear layouts with larger blocks, limited through-connections, and fewer access points to the major street network. In addition, the presence of the Gravois Creek through many areas of the community has naturally broken up the street grid, requiring a bridge to connect local streets; this can be expensive and the benefits must be weighed against the cost to the community. This approach to local street development exacerbates the need for residents to use major roadways to make local trips, and increases congestion with traffic that could otherwise be accommodated on local routes.

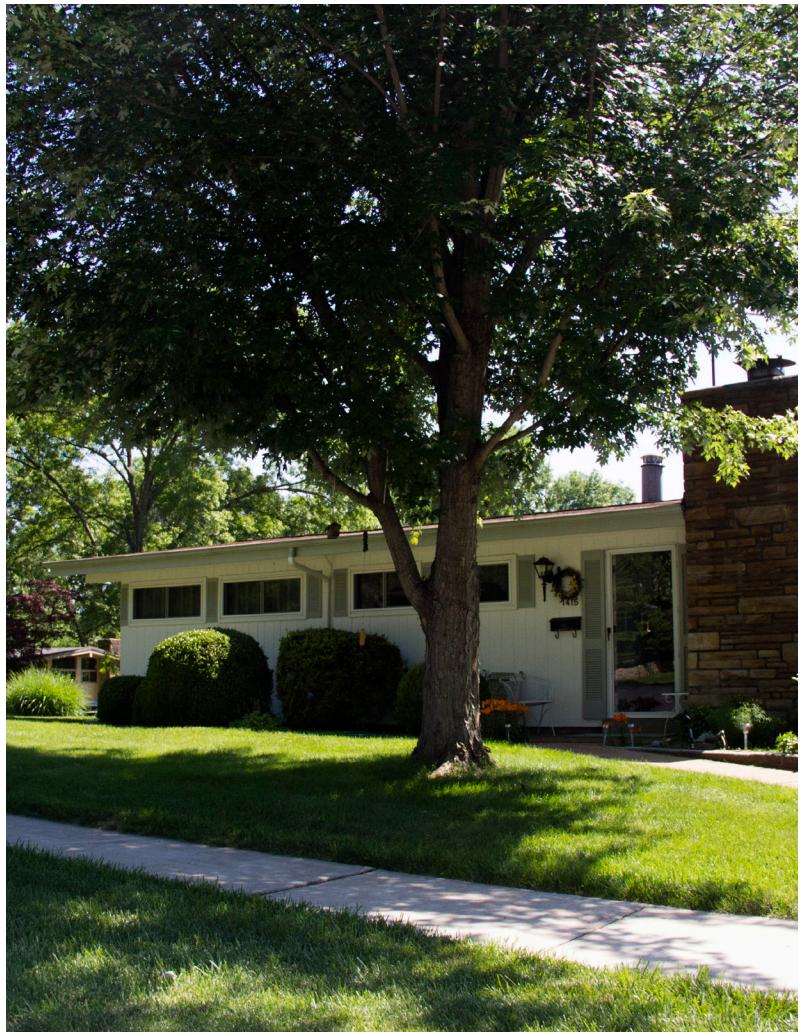
A high degree of connectivity should be encouraged between residential areas to limit congestion and promote healthy lifestyles. Enhanced connectivity between adjacent neighborhoods can also foster greater community identity wherein residents begin to identify more with Crestwood, than their particular subdivision. The City should identify locations where it is feasible to connect local streets, prioritizing those that do not require a huge investment in land and don't prove difficult due to topography or waterways.

## NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Many of Crestwood's residential neighborhoods would benefit from additional capital investment. This investment could add neighborhood amenities such as sidewalks, street lights, parkway trees, bike lanes, landscaped medians, traffic calming measures, and multi-use recreation trails. These investments could better connect Crestwood's residents to amenities throughout the community, as well as raise the appeal and property values of the housing stock.

The City should evaluate what percentage of the City's multi-year capital improvement program (CIP) is dedicated to residential investments. Part of that CIP analysis should include fiscal impact and cost-benefit implications that demonstrate how the value of a CIP dollar generates new property tax increment over a 10 or 20 year timeline. The City could consider establishing parameters for CIP investment based on such ROI assessments, as well as set a mandatory minimum for residential investment as part of the total CIP by formal fiscal policy.

Further, the City should evaluate using special tax levies, special service areas and assessments, and Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NIDs), and Transportation Development Districts (TDDs) to finance such improvements.



## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

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The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Design Division administers federal and state funding to Missouri municipalities to improve their transportation systems, one of which is Safe Routes to School (SRTS). The purpose of the SRTS Program is to "enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make walking and bicycling to school more appealing; and to facilitate the planning, development and implementation of projects that will improve safety, reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools."

The program offers municipalities 80% of project funding costs, up to \$240,000. Since SRTS was brought to Missouri, MoDOT has administered over \$20 million to municipalities in the state of Missouri. While Crestwood already has a well-integrated system of sidewalks, The City of Crestwood should create an inventory of existing sidewalk conditions, and work with MoDOT to prioritize improvements and ensure that all sidewalks meet ADA compliance, and remain in good condition.

Once an inventory is complete, the City should prioritize areas for infill and sidewalk repairs in the following order:

1. Schools
2. Parks
3. Public Transit
4. Commercial areas
5. Other neighborhood streets

# NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS & NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

While the City doesn't currently have any officially active neighborhood or homeowners associations, these groups can provide valuable links between the City and members of the community. The City of Crestwood should consider working with members of the community to facilitate the formation of these groups. These groups can then work with the City to identify and assist property owners that may be unable to maintain or improve their properties.





## INCREASING HOUSING PRODUCT OPTIONS

The majority of Crestwood's housing stock is comprised of single family detached homes. Further, most of this housing stock was built during two decades in the middle 20th Century and are generally similarly styled Midcentury ranch homes. While this housing type largely defines the community and will likely remain the predominant housing type, the City should encourage the development of a more diverse housing stock.

This includes the development of townhomes, multi-family, and mixed-use products that are both owner- and renter-occupied. These uses are best placed near commercial areas to encourage walkability and to serve as a land use transition to single-family residential neighborhoods. These housing products would appeal to young families, downsizing retirees, senior citizens, and others that do not want to maintain a single-family home.

Should the City desire to take a more active approach to ensure this type of housing is developed, the City could consider amending its zoning ordinance to include a housing diversity requirement. Such an ordinance would apply to specific residential zoning districts to mandate a specified variety of housing types (duplex, townhouse, apartment, etc.) depending upon the size of the development (i.e. the more acres included within a project, the greater the number of housing types required).

## AGING-IN-PLACE, YOUNG FAMILIES, STARTER HOMES

Like many cities across the nation, Crestwood is experiencing an aging population. Between 2010 and 2020, the median age of the Crestwood population is expected to increase by 1.5%, and seniors will make the largest gains in the population share. The City should take proactive steps to support its aging population. This approach means providing leadership and identifying private providers for programs and facilities that cater to this demographic. The City should consider the following strategies to promote an age-supportive community:

### Community Services

- Work with public safety providers to ensure they are attentive to the needs and issues affecting older adults, such as senior abuse or neglect, performing well-being checks, etc.
- Foster social capital and inclusion while leveraging existing assets and finding opportunities for the joint use of community facilities, such as schools.

### Transportation

- Increase pedestrian safety through the use of shorter crossing distances, high visibility crosswalks and signalization, and crossing signal timing that accommodate the slower rate of travel for older adults.
- Adopt a complete streets policy to increase mobility for people of all ages, abilities, and transportation modes.
- Ensure roadways and walkways are well-maintained to promote safety.
- Provide a Senior Ride Program to ensure older adults have easy access to healthcare, goods, and services.

### Housing

- Evaluate incentives for age targeted development, particularly for lower income households, to ensure that viable housing options are provided to Crestwood's senior population.
- Support housing diversity and affordability through increased density on or near the City's main commercial corridor, Watson Road, institutional uses, and public transit to increase access to goods and services.
- Review and amend building and related codes to ensure they adequately address universal design principles and ADA standards.

# CODE ENFORCEMENT & PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

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Throughout the outreach process, Crestwood residents cited a need for better code enforcement and property maintenance to improve residential neighborhoods. Crestwood's code enforcement officer currently offers their direct line to the community via the city website, and a code violation report form is available to the community. During the comprehensive planning community outreach process, however, many residents were not aware of these services. The City should actively promote and advertise these options, and ensure that all complaints and requests are addressed in a timely and efficient manner. The City should also assess whether the City's existing code enforcement operations has adequate staffing and funding to meet desired level of service standards.

# LINKING ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

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Two critical factors to maintain a quality housing stock in Crestwood is maintain low crime rates and well-maintained residential areas. The City should emphasize both law and code enforcement in its residential areas; further, it should assess current funding and levels of service and identify if there is any demonstrated need to enhance existing levels.

Additionally, the City could consider more closely linking enforcement operations. One such model is to "district" the municipality in shared service areas between police patrol and code enforcement operations. The municipal agency then creates formal opportunities within regular operations for police officers and code enforcement officers to interact and discuss shared issues and specific properties in particular neighborhoods. This information exchange has proven beneficial in addressing problematic households that are detracting from the neighborhood more generally.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Today, Midcentury modern architecture is aging. As previously discussed, the City of Crestwood was largely built in this era and some of these homes may be at risk of redevelopment. While not all of the buildings in this era can be preserved due to the changing needs of demographics and housing demands, the Crestwood community has put a high value on its historical amenities and identity. Ultimately, Crestwood is a vintage Midcentury suburb. That character comes from its classic ranch-style housing stock. The City's neighborhoods thoroughly present this identity and character, and their value should be evaluated from a historic preservation standpoint.

The City should consider identifying a neighborhood(s) in the community that might be worth preserving to ensure that this era remains an emblematic piece of the community's rich history. Local residential historic districts could be established, which could also apply for a national register district. The City, state, and federal government could then offer historic preservation tax credits and other incentives to both preserve the character of its neighborhoods while encouraging reinvestment.

## MARKETING CRESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOODS

Crestwood has attractive housing and healthy neighborhoods – it is a community strength. But the City could evaluate partnering with neighborhood associations and area realtors to directly market Crestwood's housing more broadly throughout St. Louis. The City could create a "Crestwood Neighborhoods" website that acted as a clearinghouse for information about the community for potential new residents and homebuyers. Further, the City could partner with realtors to direct market Crestwood's housing to major employers within a reasonable commute of the City, such as Webster University, Panera Bread, the hospitals along I-270, or office-based companies in Clayton. Generating additional demand would have a positive impact on property values and ensure stability and turnover in Crestwood's neighborhoods.



# 4b

## COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS PLAN

Although Crestwood's housing and residential quality-of-life are the attributes that have brought many citizens to the community, the City's commercial and industrial areas also serve an important function. Crestwood's history along Route 66 shaped much of its community character and many St. Louis area residents know the City for its Watson Road business district.

Crestwood's commercial and industrial areas have been mostly contained in two linear corridors – one along Watson Road and the second along the former Union Pacific railroad. Later, the I-44 and Big Bend Road interchange was developed and a small retail node formed in this area.

These areas encompass virtually all of the City's commercial and industrial districts and there is no anticipated growth via annexation. The core focus of this plan is to strategize to reposition and repurpose the City's commercial and industrial real estate in a manner that aligns with emerging and future trends.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on the different commercial and industrial areas of the community and identifies recommendations as growth and investment in each of these areas is considered.



# COMMERCIAL AREAS

Crestwood's commercial areas are largely contained within the Watson Road corridor and adjacent to the I-44 interchange. They can be categorized by five classifications: regional commercial, interstate retail, neighborhood commercial, professional office, and automotive-related use.

## Regional Commercial

Regional commercial areas include large-lot stores that serve a market beyond the boundaries of Crestwood. They are generally on lots with areas of eight acres or more, and include multiple tenants located in big-box retail centers. Primary buildings are typically set back, and large parking areas serve patrons arriving from throughout the region. Outlot development includes restaurants that support shoppers. These businesses are often the destinations and anchors that support the remainder of a business district, or an adjacent neighborhood commercial node. Kohl's and Schnuck's are local examples of this land use in Crestwood.

## Interstate Retail

Interstate retail businesses share many commonalities with regional commercial uses, which cater to and draw from a large, regional trade area. Interstate retail businesses are differentiated because of two primary characteristics. First, due to their adjacency to an interstate exit, they draw from an extremely large, potential retail trade area in a metropolitan area. Secondly, their urban design and architecture embraces their visibility and prominence adjacent to the interstate.

Retail businesses that are prominently located on interstate frontage also often include a large amount of surface parking, tall pole signage, intricate circulation and signalization to manage traffic coming on and off the interstate, and often times feature high-volume, big box retail stores. Sam's Club on Big Bend Road is an example in Crestwood.

## Neighborhood Commercial

Local commercial areas include small retail, restaurant, and office uses on lots with a depth of 125-200 feet. These lots are generally too small to host multiple tenants, and often rely on individual curb cut access to the public street. Given the size of the lots, development often cannot accommodate landscaping, buffering from adjacent uses, or other characteristics found in other place types. They primarily serve the immediately local population, operating within a 5-10 minute drivetime. Fast food restaurants, Walgreens, banks, and services like nail salons and dry cleaners are local examples of this land use in Crestwood.

## Professional Office

Professional office areas include single-tenant or multi-tenant buildings that support corporate operations and professional services. Office uses are sometimes co-located together in a master planned office or business park. In Crestwood, most of the office uses are stand-alone, individual properties; there is no established "office district" along Watson Road. Crestwood Executive Center is an example of an established office use that represents the typical, existing office product in Crestwood, Sunset Hills, and the general suburban South County area.

## Automotive-Related

Automotive-related businesses are service-based commercial activities that perform service work on motor vehicles. They can vary in size, scale, orientation, and design. These uses typically include a large ingress/egress to the property, staging areas, maintenance garages, outdoor parking and storage, and a variety of accessory functions or structures. In Crestwood most of the automotive-related uses are interspersed throughout the Watson Road commercial district and typically reflect the size, scale, and character of the adjacent retail, restaurant, and office properties. These uses can impact the character and built form of Watson Road by emphasizing automobile service and movement over pedestrian mobility and attractive design.

## Entertainment

Entertainment businesses provide a variety of entertainment and leisure-based activities and services for residents and visitors to Crestwood. This includes restaurants and cafés which support community interaction and provide lunch options for local employees, as well as larger destination businesses such as movie theaters and bowling alleys which draw from a regional market. The size, scale, and design of these uses varies greatly depending on specific businesses and their target customer; however, businesses are generally consistent with other adjacent uses.

## THE ROLE OF RETAIL

Crestwood was long-defined by the presence of Crestwood Plaza, developed by Louis Zorensky in 1957 as the St. Louis region's first major indoor shopping mall. The mall was featured vintage St. Louis department stores like Scruggs, Vandervoort & Barney, Famous-Barr, and Stix, Baer & Fuller, as well as modern innovations for its time, such as featuring multiple anchor stores and split-level parking decks with access to multiple floors. This iconic property largely set the character of Watson Road and established Crestwood as a major, regional retail destination for the next 50 years.

Since the late 20th Century, however, regional and national trends have challenged the stability of retail within the City. Mall developments have struggled as consumer's preferences have shifted, particularly toward urban and pedestrian-oriented shopping experiences. This transition means the City must re-evaluate the prominence and role of retail within the City and particularly along Watson Road, which was primarily designed and developed as a retail highway. Recent economic development activity in Crestwood has seen proposals reflective of national trends, such as movie theatres, health clubs and recreation centers, fast casual restaurants, and entertainment venues that emphasize experience over retail shopping.



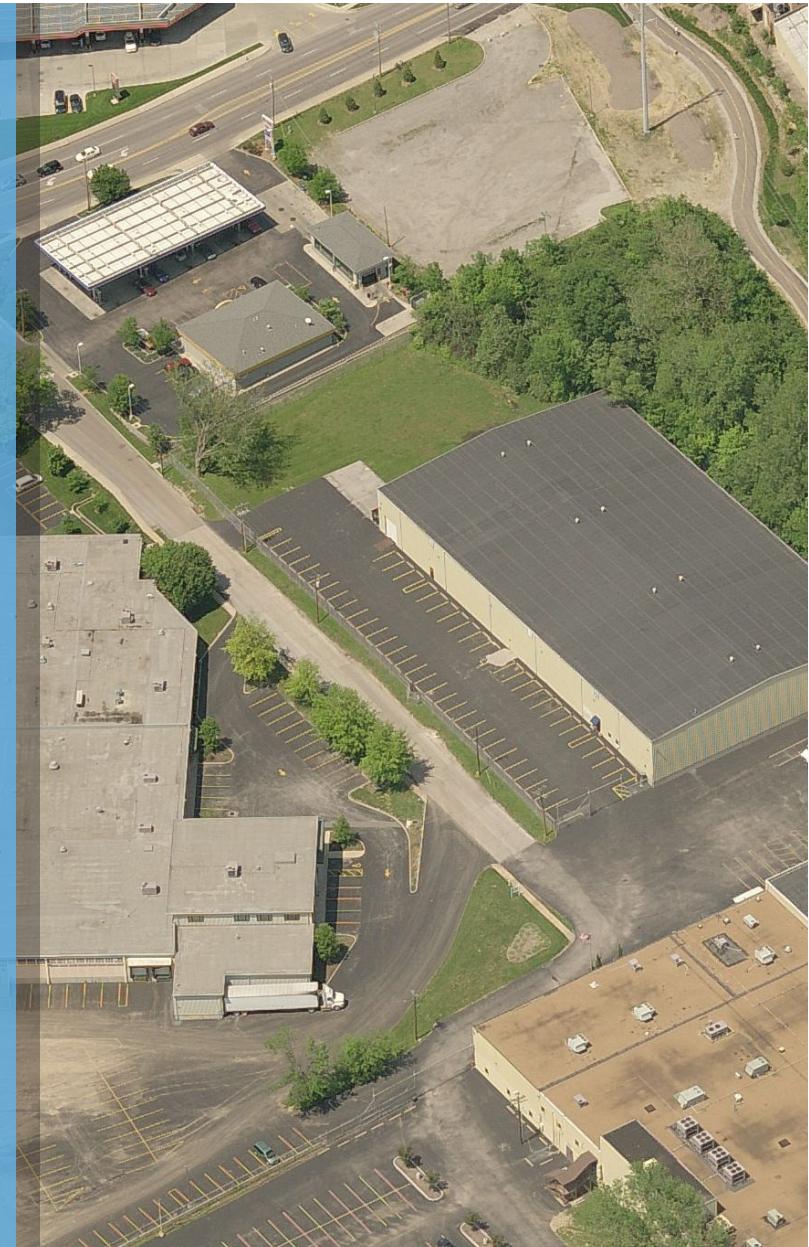
## COMMERCIAL AREAS PLAN

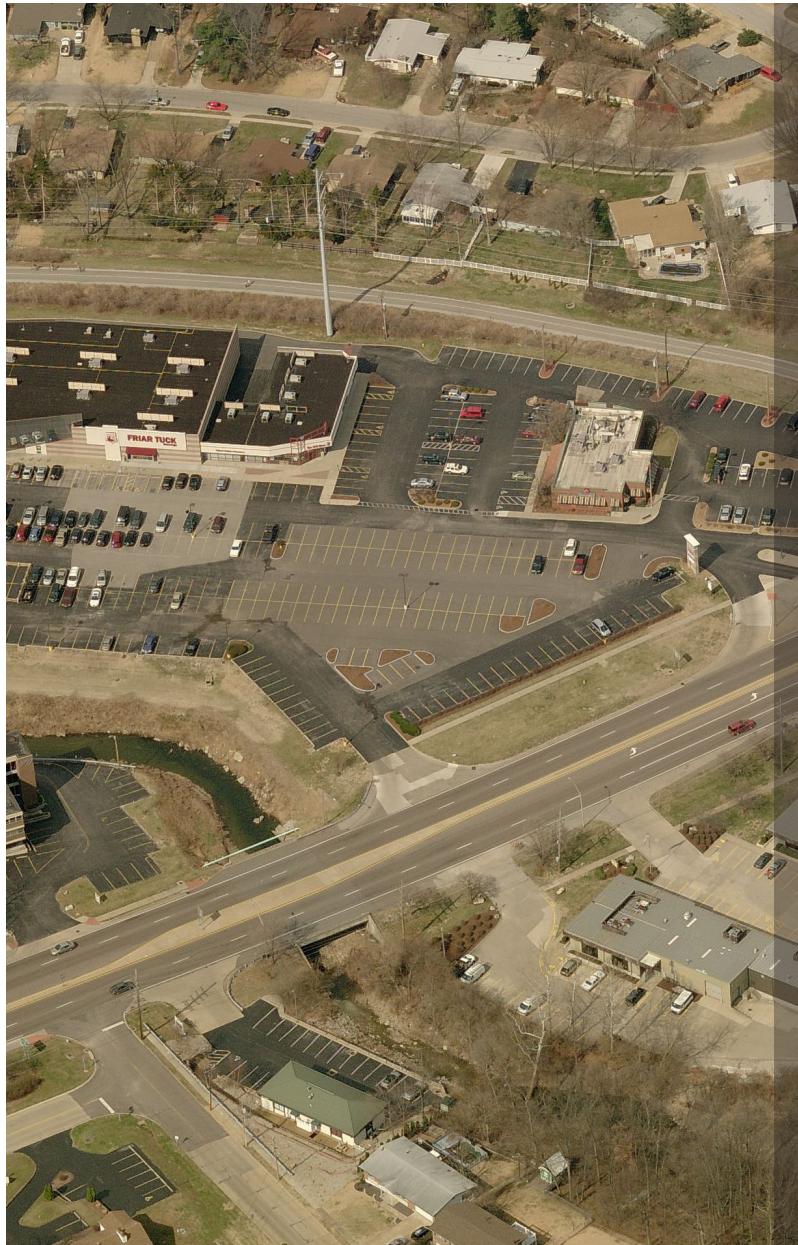
In the future, Crestwood's commercial areas will largely continue to be located in the same areas they historically have been, while also providing a similar land use function within the community. Watson Road is the heart of Crestwood's commercial areas – long anchored by the mall site but now being stimulated for redevelopment by the UrbanStreet-led project. Additionally, the I-44 interchange will also play an important role in the City's commercial development, with the potential for expansion and new investment. This section of the Plan focuses on the different commercial areas of the community, and identifies recommendations as growth and investment in each of these areas is considered.

## COMMERCIAL AREA PLAN I-44 INTERCHANGE & SPELLMAN PARK

Due to the City's development history, I-44 was aligned and constructed along residential neighborhoods. Interstate frontage and access is advantageous for economic development, particularly office and retail uses that thrive on these features. In Crestwood, the I-44 interchange at Big Bend Road features some typical interstate commercial uses, such as Sam's Club, but much of the area could be repositioned to better leverage I-44. Existing uses include self-storage facilities, light industrial businesses, and automotive services. The City should consider a Subarea Plan for this interchange area and evaluate transitioning these types of land uses out of the business district and repositioning the interchange for more retail and office uses.

Further, the interchange is directly adjacent to a residential neighborhood north of Spellman Park. Today, the neighborhood features low vacancy and is generally well maintained. However, the City should monitor reinvestment and occupancy in this area to identify any potential negative trends over time. Developers may also evaluate this area for commercial development and the City could engage such land use planning efforts. The real estate could be redesigned to connect into the traffic signal at Camera Avenue while creating a frontage road along I-44 that connects into Spellman Avenue. This site would create sufficient acreage to pursue a big box retail development with outlots, or a mixed-use development that included office as well.





## COMMERCIAL AREA PLAN WATSON ROAD

Watson Road represents the majority of Crestwood's commercial areas, and in effect acts as its "Main Street." The business corridor features a wide range of land uses, business types, buildings, and site designs. Once functioning as Route 66, and still serving as a major highway in the St. Louis area, Watson Road's character reflects a traditional postwar suburban retail corridor. The district was once anchored by the landmark Crestwood Plaza mall, and once it became closed and vacant, the remainder of the district similarly suffered. Losing other major anchors, such as Best Buy and OfficeMax, may grab the headlines, but a number of smaller retailers and restaurants have also closed in the corridor. Shopping and strip centers once designed and developed for retail and restaurant uses now feature professional services, back office spaces, and educational, religious, and other institutional uses due to a lack of market demand.

This Comprehensive Plan, however, aligns with the major catalyst that is the ongoing redevelopment of the former mall site by UrbanStreet Group. The beginning of demolition work has triggered the announcement of other new businesses locating in Crestwood and the potential to build on this momentum exists. The City needs to emphasize the redevelopment of Watson Road over the next 10 years because of the timely opportunity to capture market interest and attract private dollars to the community.

As the corridor redevelops it may be beneficial to plan for Watson Road in three clear segments. The area between Gravois Creek and Sappington Road is a clear mid-block, anchored by the mall site. This in effect is Crestwood's "town center" and the busiest node of activity and major businesses. From the mid-block there is a western stretch of Watson and an eastern section. Western Watson features deeper lots and more recent reinvestment; it is a more contemporary suburban commercial district and its character continues into Sunset Hills up to the retail node around Lindbergh Boulevard. Eastern Watson is shorter, the roadway is narrower, the parcels are smaller and feature lot depth challenges, and the business mix tends to be more diverse.

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The vision for the mid-block area has largely been established by the City's approval of UrbanStreet Group's redevelopment plan for the Plaza mall site. It introduces mixed uses and entertainment destinations in a manner that could transform this section of Watson Road and transition its role in Crestwood as more of a "town center." The City's land use and development strategy for the remainder of the area should be to fill existing vacancies and evaluate opportunities for redevelopment on adjacent properties, particularly those on the south side of Watson Road.

This section of Watson Road was developed as a regional retail and shopping node and that land use strategy is appropriate for the near and medium term future. The City can also work with potential developers to evaluate opportunities to introduce additional mixed-uses to the area. Ultimately this area should support the redevelopment of the mall site and create a center of economic activity, visitor traffic, and retail sales that functions as the heart of Crestwood's commercial area.

## THE MALL MID-BLOCK

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The western section of Watson Road transitions from the regional retail node adjacent to the former mall site via the Kohl's and Crestview Executive Center. From the Watson Road and Sappington Road intersection, the western section becomes a neighborhood retail corridor that serves, generally, Sunset Hills, Crestwood, and residential areas south of I-44. The district includes a grocery store, a drug store, and a series of family-friendly sit-down restaurants. In general, each individual parcels developed in a self-contained manner, with virtually all properties featuring their own ingress/egress from Watson Road, their own dedicated off-street parking, and limited if any cross-access between businesses.

The City should work in the near-term to address access management and cross access issues in the corridor. One example is the Schnucks Plaza and San Jose Plaza, which could benefit from direct access to reduce the potential for automobile conflicts along the corridor. Further, the City should evaluate the ability to address signage and landscaping requirements in the corridor as part of a zoning code update. Alongside these efforts, the City should focus its economic development efforts on filling vacancies in existing shopping centers and encouraging private property owners to reinvest in existing buildings.

Long-term, the City should evaluate the infill redevelopment of the major shopping centers and/or potential parcel consolidation of adjacent lots that also feature depth. The City could pursue the creation of walkable, "park once" nodes along Watson Road that feature mixed-uses and function as little "neighborhood centers." These commercial developments could also enhance connections to the residential neighborhoods both north and south of Watson Road to better accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. These redevelopments could include multi-story buildings and parking garages to accommodate additional density.

## WESTERN WATSON

## EASTERN WATSON

The eastern section of Watson Road is an eclectic neighborhood district that features churches, schools, and medical offices alongside senior housing, auto repair services, and a major indoor recreation destination. In general, this section of Watson Road serves a purpose to transition away from the larger, more intense regional commercial sites near the mall into residential neighborhoods located along Elm Avenue and Rock Hill Road. The area is occupied, well maintained, and serves a productive role for the community. There are no anticipated major changes to the area's character, land use pattern, or development approach.

One potential opportunity would be for the City to engage the existing businesses and private property owners to consider a redevelopment of the "triangle piece" that is generally bound by Watson Road and Grant Road. An infill project could incorporate Crestview Senior Living as part of a walkable, mixed-use node, but evaluate the surrounding commercial property for demolition and redevelopment. The area could feature building heights and densities that mirror the senior housing property, but could include office, retail, restaurants, and entertainments uses.

## MANAGING THE WATSON BUSINESS DISTRICT

From a market standpoint, the Watson Road business district spans from the I-270 and I-44 interchange adjacent to Panera Bread's world headquarters and travels through Sunset Hills into Crestwood, continuing through to the City's eastern edge. The Plaza & Shoppes at Sunset Hills and the Crestwood Plaza mall site act as two "bookends" or anchors that frame the length of the corridor and business district. Consumers, real estate developers, investors, and business owners will evaluate the strength of the corridor with at least some appreciation of the area's surroundings and the business mix along Watson Road throughout. In these regards, this is one business district.

The City of Crestwood should engage the City of Sunset Hills and evaluate coordinating efforts to manage this business district. A potential partnership could include sharing the cost of a corridor study and economic development strategic plan for Watson Road. Further, it could include coordinating urban design standards, zoning controls, and infrastructure planning for the length of the corridor. Improvements like streetscaping and district branding could be financed through a jointly managed Transportation Development District (TDD). Further, both municipalities could evaluate the creation of a Special Business District or Community Improvement District (CID) for the area, working in a public-private partnership with business and commercial property owners.

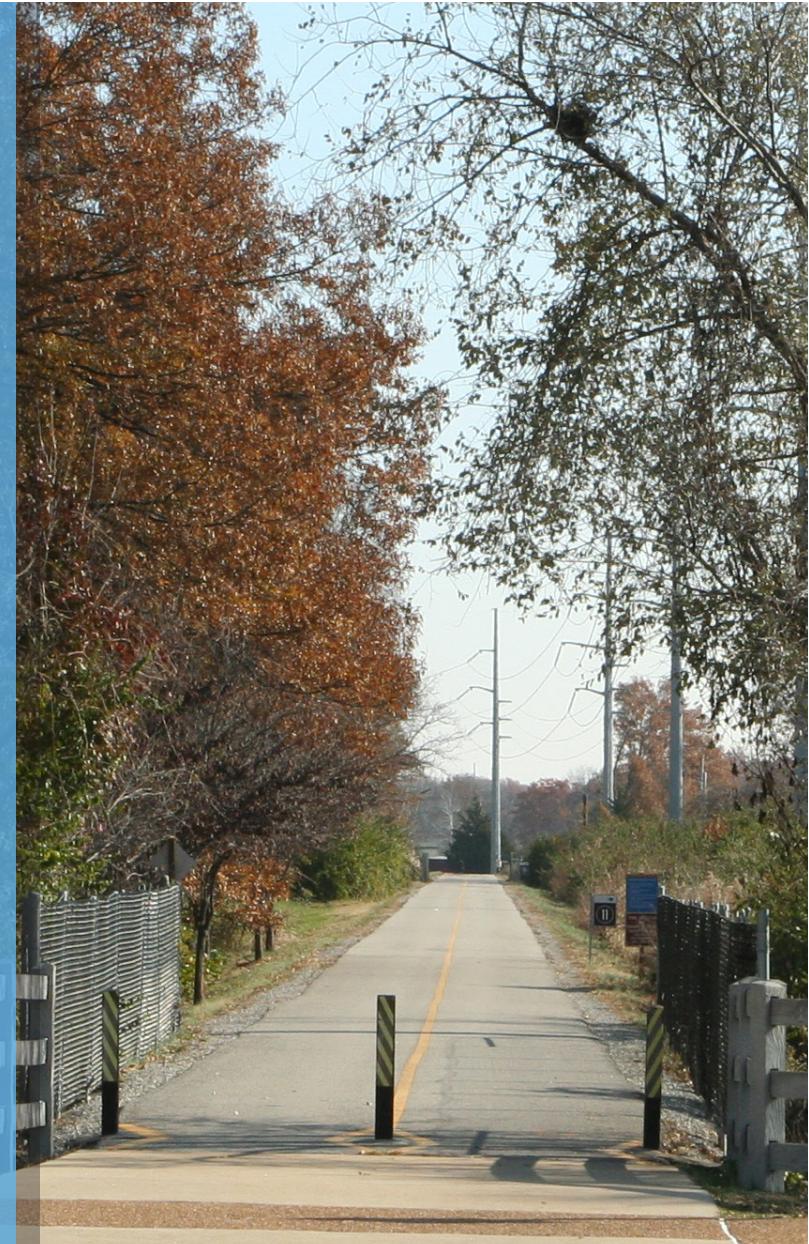
## COMMERCIAL AREA PLAN **GRANT'S TRAIL REDEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR**

The community is presented with a unique opportunity to leverage a few trends to transform a part of the City and establish not only a “town center” for Crestwood, but truly create a new type of neighborhood within the St. Louis region. Across the Midwest, communities are starting to experience suburban infill development that creates mixed-use villages or nodes where Midcentury shopping centers once stood.

In some cases, these real estate projects are tapping into new demand for live-work units and new types of housing products. Communities are also experiencing the market-driven clustering of “makers” and emerging “craft manufacturing” districts in older, once vacant, small-scale industrial properties – breathing new life into those communities through job creation and the attraction of young families. And finally, cities across the Midwest are embracing cycling, walking, and access to transit in unprecedented ways.

These three larger trends are all intersecting near the former Plaza mall site and Watson Industrial Drive, directly adjacent to Grant’s Trail. Crestwood is presented with the opportunity to transition the area to a neighborhood that blends access to high-quality cycling alongside a creative business startup environment and new, unique types of housing.

The result would be a neighborhood that is not only new for the St. Louis region, but would be distinctive throughout the Midwest. Unlike other types of more conventional “downtown redevelopment” projects in cities across St. Louis, a reimagined Crestwood town center, developed in this way, would truly be a destination. There is early, growing momentum around these trends, and this vision and approach would position Crestwood to capture these emerging markets early while achieving a number of long-range goals.



## TRAIL-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Trail-oriented development takes advantage of adjacent local and regional trails, meeting the growing demand of communities that desire direct access to active transportation and recreation options. With a national rise in bicycle commuting and demand for recreational trails and safe pedestrian facilities, trail-oriented development encourages car-free lifestyles. Located adjacent to regional trail networks, these residential and mixed-use developments cater to residents' active lifestyles, many including secure bicycle storage, bicycle repair, cleaning stations, and extra wide corridors and elevators.

## LIVE-WORK

With the rise of telecommuting and entrepreneurship, live-work units provide an opportunity for a resident to both reside and maintain a business in the same property. Live-work units are flexible and typically include four types of configurations: (1) Live-Within, where workspace and living areas overlap; (2) Live-Above, where the residential use is located above the business; (3) Live-Behind, where the business has street frontage and the residential dwelling unit is located to the rear of the lot; and (4) Live-in-Front, where the residential use fronts the streets and the business is operated behind home. Nevertheless, the type, size, and intensity of live-work units are subject to local zoning and health codes.

## MAKERS MANUFACTURING

A craft district is an urban area that is defined by a cluster of small-scale, craft-related retail and manufacturing businesses. Businesses include those that produce goods requiring particular skill and knowledge, created by craftspeople and artisans. The co-location of similar businesses generates a critical mass that helps define the district as well as creates a unique, cultural hub. Many of these businesses also feature an internet sales presence, which helps bring dollars into the community from outside the immediate trade area.

## WATSON & GRANT'S NODE REDEVELOPMENT

Although the redevelopment focus will likely be concentrated on Watson Industrial Drive, there is potential at the intersection of Grant's Trail and Watson Road. The corridor has been designed and functions around two corridor alignments. Some buildings and lots are oriented to Watson Road, and others are aligned with the former railroad corridor. Most of the buildings on Watson are suburban retail in design and character, whereas the railroad alignment features industrial buildings. Historically, this is logical.

Over the next generation the opportunity could exist to transform the intersection of Grant's Trail and Watson Road into a node of infill development projects that complement each other and establish a "town center" node. Further, this node could better emphasize the trail as the common linkage. This area would leverage its access to Grant's Trail for cyclists and pedestrians, as well as the convenience of Watson Road as a regional arterial highway. The real estate adjacent to this intersection may be redeveloped over time regardless; if it is, there are two clear categories of parcels. The properties on the same side (north) of Watson Road as the industrial area should be infill redeveloped in a manner that most complements a trail-oriented and mixed-use character. The second category, the properties on the south side of Watson Road and east of Grant's Trail, will likely remain auto-oriented, shorter, and less dense. However, the site design of each of these properties should tie-into Grant's Trail and provide multi-modal accessibility. Although this approach may be long-term, the City should be mindful of these urban design and transportation infrastructure considerations as these properties potentially redevelop over time.

## RETROFITTING SUBURBIA CONCEPTS

One of the defining characteristics of Crestwood's main commercial corridor, Watson Road, is the suburban strip-shopping center. While these types of development are great for auto-oriented design, they provide ample parking and are designed to get people in and out as quickly as possible, they do not provide the community with a sense of character, or an atmosphere one would like to stay and spend time. There are many ways to intervene and approach this moving forward, the most drastic being tear down and rebuild, bringing the building footprint closer to the street and providing a more walkable atmosphere. Another option, however, is to retrofit the building by adding stories, providing the building with a facelift, adding human-scale detail, and enclosing the strip mall with a mirrored building that encloses the space and provides a courtyard or pedestrian corridor.

While the first option would provide a drastic change in composition along its major commercial corridor, Watson Road is unlikely to be fully transformed into a pedestrian-friendly corridor due to its role as a regional transportation corridor that will still need to move vehicles quickly and efficiently. The second option would be ideal for providing the City with unique and vibrant commercial nodes, likely to provide both anchor regional commercial where they already exist, but may also bring in more local businesses.

## ROLE OF A ROAD DIET & BOULEVARDING

A road diet entails the reduction and reuse of existing travel lanes to accommodate additional modes of transportation and other uses. Road diets are designed based on existing traffic counts, local land uses, transit services, connections to surrounding bike and pedestrian networks, and parking demand for local businesses. While the Watson Road corridor plays a big role in the City's commercial front, Watson Road will never be a downtown-style road because it plays an even bigger role in the region's transportation network. The road, however, is a candidate for a road diet because the carrying capacity is significantly higher than the average daily traffic counts.

As the City considers the Watson Road corridor as a candidate for a road diet in Crestwood, the City should weigh all the possible road section options, including multi-modal transportation capacity, the integration of a boulevard, or some combination of the two; providing a more walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented atmosphere would not only distinguish Crestwood as passers-by drive through Watson Road, but would greatly augment to the quality of life in the community.

## GRANT'S FARM SITE

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The Grant's Farm historical site is located just south of Crestwood, in Grantwood Village, a small town of about 531 acres and a population of under 1,000 people. Grantwood Village is mostly composed of Grant's Farm, encapsulating 281 acres of the community. While the Grant's Farm historical site is currently under the ownership of the Busch Family, it has been determined that the trust manager, Wells Fargo, will decide whether to sell the property and who buys it. At this point it has not been determined what the future of the wildlife attraction is, but the City of Crestwood should stay engaged and closely monitor the current events of the Grant's Farm to ensure that the City of Crestwood's interest is well communicated should any development plans come to light.

Implications to consider are the impacts of any new residential development on school district capacity, and transportation infrastructure and traffic capacity should the property be developed any more intensely than its current state.

## TOURISM

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Currently, the City of Crestwood draws people into the community and immediate region for a number of reasons, including the Sappington House sometimes noted as the "front porch" of the community, The Barn, Grant's Trail, and nearby is the Grant's Farm historical site and wildlife attraction. The City of Crestwood is currently in a position to maximize on the number of visitors that come to the area for these amenities. For example, by providing a trailhead as recommended in the Subarea Plan, the City of Crestwood could give Grant's Trail users a reason to stop in the community for an extended period of time. Additionally, the City could encourage the Grant's Farm visitors to head north and stop at one of their shopping destinations, restaurants, or outdoor amenities and make it a full-day excursion. The City should identify opportunities to maximize its potential as a touristic draw in the St. Louis Region.

# SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Small businesses are a key component of a community's diverse economic tax base, and it could be argued one of the most important because money spent at small businesses goes right back into local communities, and boosts community identity and local involvement.

Throughout the comprehensive planning outreach process, the Crestwood community identified a desire to see more local businesses come into town. They noted that while Watson Road does a great job of providing regional commercial options, the City of Crestwood could do a better job of providing small-business-friendly options and processes that incentivize locally owned retail and restaurants. The City of Crestwood should work with existing business owners and managers to identify ways that the City of Crestwood could improve their licensing or permitting process and incentivize small businesses in the Crestwood community.

# SIGNAGE

The City may want to evaluate its current sign code as part of a zoning review and update. While signs in a community may seem like a minuscule detail, they can become cluttered with utility lines and can be detrimental to the community's visual identity, especially along corridors, such as Watson Road, that people outside the community tend to drive through.

In general, Crestwood permits and features a number of conventional suburban pole signs which are typical of suburban highway corridors. There are examples of contemporary monument signs along Watson Road, and the City may want to transition to a monument sign-driven set of design requirements and regulations. Any such evaluation should coordinate with business owners and also be a part of a larger assessment of urban design and form-based strategies within the City's commercial areas, particularly along Watson Road.

# MANAGING PARKING

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Parking regulations in Crestwood are currently inflexible and overly generous. In many situations, it is possible to allow parking standards to better reflect the parking demand and cost at a particular location, taking into account uses, economic, and management factors. This allows parking requirements to be reduced in exchange for implantation of parking management strategies such as shared and/or overflow parking plans to deal with occasional peaks.

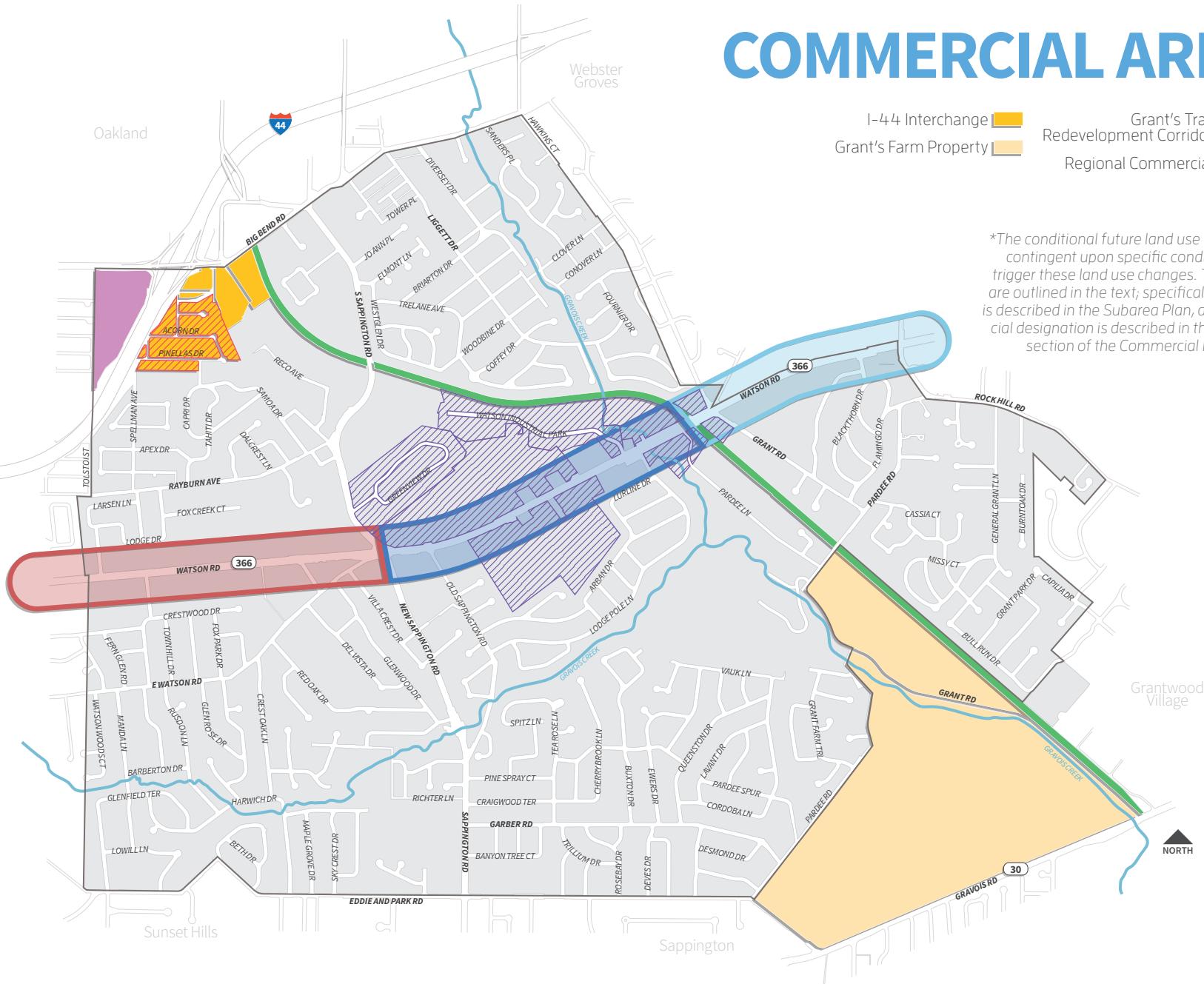
## SHARED PARKING

Shared parking is when parking spaces are shared by more than one user, allowing parking facilities to be used more efficiently. While there are various degrees of shared parking, parking that is shared by customers at a variety of businesses located in a mall, or arrangements by one facility to use another facilities parking at certain times, can help to reduce sprawl and give communities the space to incorporate out-lot buildings in existing strip commercial centers.

## OVERFLOW PARKING PLANS

Some regulations require excessive parking to meet infrequent peak demands that occur during special events or other limited time periods. Parking requirements could be reduced by developing an overflow parking plan that could include shared parking arrangements during peak periods, the use of remote parking facilities with a shuttle service, promotion of alternative modes such as public transit and ridesharing, improved walkability between destinations and nearby parking facilities, and/or encouraging employees to use remote parking sites or alternative modes during peak periods.

# COMMERCIAL AREAS PLAN



- I-44 Interchange
- Grant's Trail
- Redevelopment Corridor
- Grant's Farm Property
- Regional Commercial
- Western Watson
- The Mall Mid-Block
- Eastern Watson

## Conditional Future Land Use\*

\*The conditional future land use designations are contingent upon specific conditions that would trigger these land use changes. These conditions are outlined in the text; specifically, the mixed use is described in the Subarea Plan, and the commercial designation is described in the Spellman Park section of the Commercial Framework Plan.

- Commercial
- Mixed-Use



## INDUSTRIAL AREAS PLAN

Crestwood is not historically one of the major centers of manufacturing and heavy industry in the St. Louis region, but has long featured a defined light industrial corridor that ran along the former Union Pacific railroad line. Today that alignment is Grant's Trail, but the light industrial uses by-and-large remain. These properties and businesses still provide property tax benefits, a supply of local jobs, and make productive use of otherwise challenging to development real estate.

There is a future for industrial uses in Crestwood going forward, but they should be repositioned and redeveloped to best leverage their potential in today's market. Further, Crestwood could be proactive and position the community to capture a share of the St. Louis economy that is growing in new, emerging job sectors and technologies that require small-scale industrial real estate. This section of the Plan reflects the potential investments and development strategies that could spur new industrial investment in Crestwood.

# EXISTING INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The existing industrial development in Crestwood tends to be older and aging 1-story, small to medium footprint, light industrial structures with surface parking. Much of this historic development occurred in the floodplain along Gravois Creek, and many of the existing buildings remain impacted by floodwaters. Current uses include food distribution, metal works, fabricators, paint and chemical companies, tool and machine shops, and contractor-related businesses, for example. The properties tend to lack site landscaping, screening, buffering, and other contemporary industrial urban design standards. There is limited wayfinding signage and other business district amenities, typical of contemporary industrial or business park developments.

# RECO AVENUE ALIGNMENT CONCEPT

A series of large industrial properties are located on Camera Avenue, with direct access to Big Bend Road and the I-44 interchange. However, the properties located on Reco Avenue directly to the south do not have cross access via the parking lot at 1000 Camera Avenue. Generally, the site is at-grade with properties to the south on Reco, although there is a security fence and vegetation.

The City should engage the private property owners and current businesses and evaluate the potential to construct a roadway connection between these two properties. A new roadway alignment connecting Camera and Reco avenues would incorporate the existing signalized intersection on Sappington Road and allow for direct travel from these existing industrial businesses to the signalized intersection at Big Bend Road. This would benefit the entire industrial area by improving access to I-44, attracting new tenants, encouraging upgrades to existing facilities, and allowing for more effective marketing of the area as a single industrial park. This could include investment in placemaking and site improvements to the area as a dedicated business park.

Further, the realignment would help increase safety in the area by removing industrial traffic from Sappington Road. This would reduce transportation impacts and help to better protect pedestrians, cyclists using Grant's Trail, and students traveling to Crestwood Elementary.

# REPOSITIONING & TRANSITIONING LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USES

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There is currently little vacancy in Crestwood's industrial areas. The community's central location within St. Louis County, access to a qualified workforce, and access to the interstate system positions the area well to continue to compete for similar light industrial uses. However, there are certain structures that feature some instances of obsolescence, such as loading docks and ceiling heights that may limit potential tenants.

Over time the City may want to work with private property owners to identify which buildings need major renovations, or may simply need to be demolished and replaced with new real estate product. As a result, the City should consider the long-term, market-driven replacement of the light industrial uses in the area with a mix of commercial, office, and residential uses. In general, this reinvestment would occur through infill redevelopment that provided new buildings and new real estate products that catered to a different market than the existing light industrial tenant base.

## THE SUBAREA REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The central strategic approach in repositioning the City's light industrial properties through the redevelopment of its existing building stock is outlined in the Subarea Plan within this Comprehensive Plan. The Plan envisions transitioning properties currently used solely for light industrial businesses into properties that feature new types of emerging small-scale industrial uses, such as live-work units and craft manufacturing (or "makers spaces"), alongside mixed-use commercial and residential infill projects. Please reference pages 75-91 in this document for additional detail in specific investment strategies to pursue this vision.

# PHYSICAL PLANNING TOOLKIT

In the near-term, the City's existing industrial areas would benefit from investments that enhance and elevate the quality of Crestwood's industrial development. In general, this can be achieved through a mixture of physical site improvements, which can be implemented by either the City, the businesses, private property owners, or a public-private partnership.

The City should examine each individual parcel in greater detail and identify potential improvements. The City should also engage existing owners and businesses in the opportunity to make such improvements, including providing incentives and/or codifying new requirements, when appropriate in each respective case.



## BRANDING & SIGNAGE

Crestwood's existing industrial areas are poorly signed and do not feature any consistent branding. The City should work with existing ownership groups to create a branded and marketed industrial district, which could be facilitated as a public-private partnership through legal entities such as a Transportation Development District (TDD), Special Business District, and/or a Community Improvement District (CID). Such improvements could include more prominent gateways and wayfinding signage, as well as consistent brand for the area.

## SCREENING & BUFFERING

Many of Crestwood's existing industrial areas lack high-quality and contemporary screening, particularly between industrial and residential uses. The City could examine its existing screening and buffering development requirements to ensure it addresses current best practices from an industrial zoning standpoint. Any improvements could be voluntary by existing owners, or addressed through redevelopment.

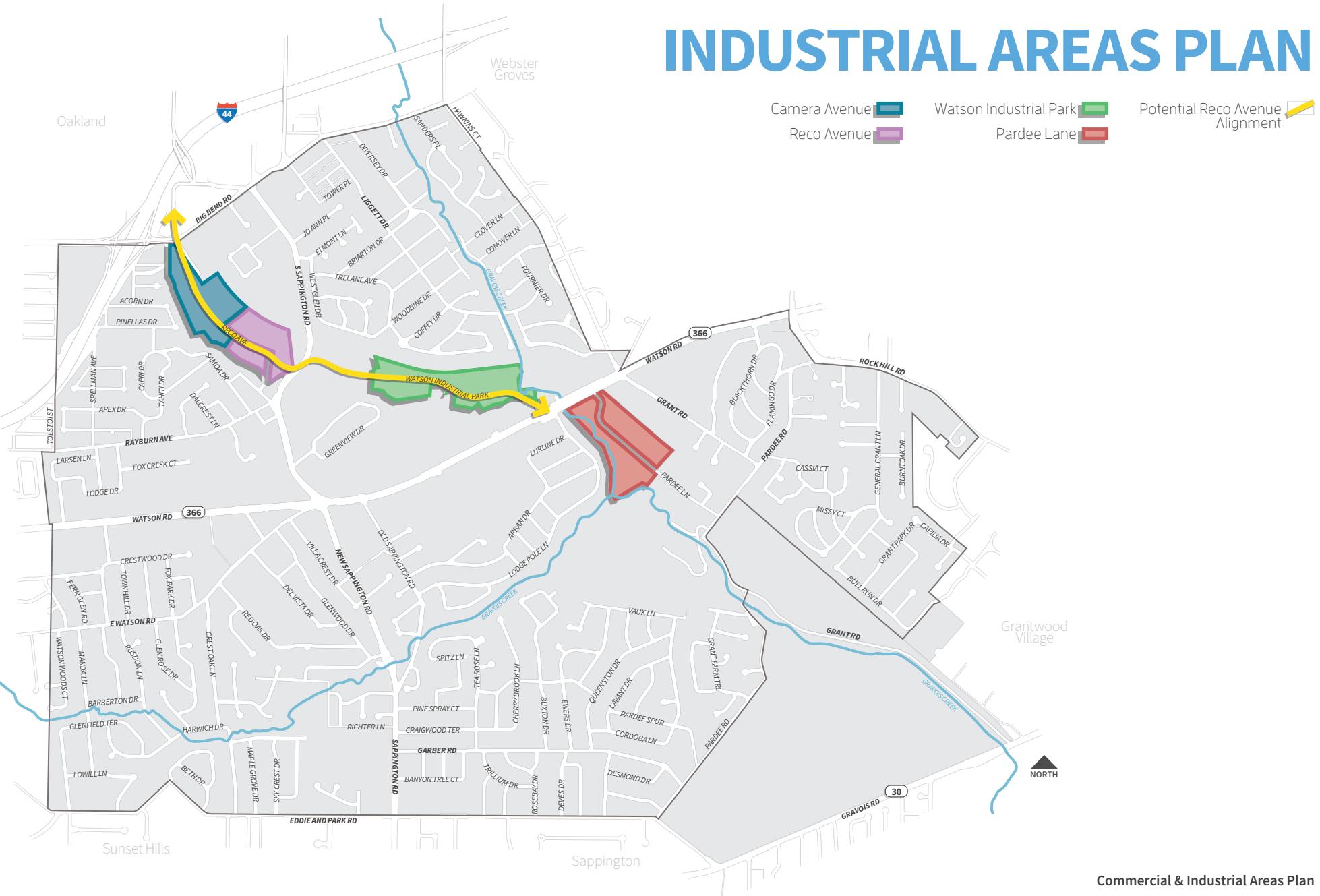
## LANDSCAPING & PARKING LOT DESIGN

Many of the existing industrial sites lack any site landscaping. This is particularly true of the parking lots, which are often contiguous asphalt surfaces with no landscaping islands or other vegetation. Although historically such treatments were not considered necessary for industrial development, there are newer recent developments that address these design elements in a similar manner to other commercial uses. The City could examine its existing development requirements to ensure it addresses current best practices from an industrial zoning standpoint on this topic. Any improvements could be voluntary by existing owners, or addressed through redevelopment.

## CROSS ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Served by Camera Avenue, Reco Avenue, and Watson Industrial Drive, there is a certain level of cross access and site connectivity in Crestwood's industrial areas. However, many adjacent industrial sites lack connectivity and do not share parking or site access. This is particularly true attempting to travel the corridor, which is addressed earlier in this section along Reco Avenue, as well as within the Transportation & Mobility chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The City should work with property owners to identify areas to improve cross access and also consider such design as part of future site plan review.

# INDUSTRIAL AREAS PLAN





# 4C SUBAREA PLAN

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The purpose of examining a targeted Subarea is to provide more specific recommendations for an area of the City that is most likely to change, face increased redevelopment pressure, and have significant vacant or underutilized properties.

The Subarea Plan presented in this section provides more detailed and site-specific recommendations for these unique and important parts of the City. The Subarea Plans are intended to provide a framework for the improvement, redevelopment, and revitalization of each area, and to establish policies for the City moving forward. The Subarea Plan itself will be incorporated into the final Comprehensive Plan as its own chapter and inform the other chapters, in regards to land use, development, transportation, infrastructure, and other topics.

# IMPORTANCE OF WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA

Watson Industrial Drive was selected as a Subarea in the scope of work for the City of Crestwood's Comprehensive Plan. The City is interested in studying, assessing, and planning for a number of policy objectives:

- The transportation and infrastructure needs of the area.
- The long-term competitiveness of the area's industrial properties in the larger St. Louis real estate market.
- The benefits of the area's proximity to Grant's Trail.
- The benefits of the area's proximity to the former Crestwood Plaza mall site, and its current redevelopment plan.
- The potential need to address the area's adjacency to established residential neighborhoods.
- The area's relationship to Watson Road and its long-range commercial redevelopment potential.

Within this planning context and framework this Subarea Plan is intended to provide a general assessment of the Subarea, and provide a potential short- to long-term phasing implementation guide to give the City of Crestwood an idea of how this Subarea Plan could come into fruition.

## IMMEDIATE CONDITIONS

The Watson Industrial Subarea was developed as a light industrial district and has long served Crestwood in this manner. This cluster of industrial buildings and businesses was once part of a linear corridor that ran along the railroad tracks, linking the Subarea with similar areas on Rico Road and Camera Avenue to the northwest. These areas still provide the community with property tax base, employment, and economic activity.

However, the light industrial market in the St. Louis region is beginning to shift and transform, and a core economic development goal for the City of Crestwood is identifying strategies to ensure its industrial properties and districts remain competitive in this new landscape.

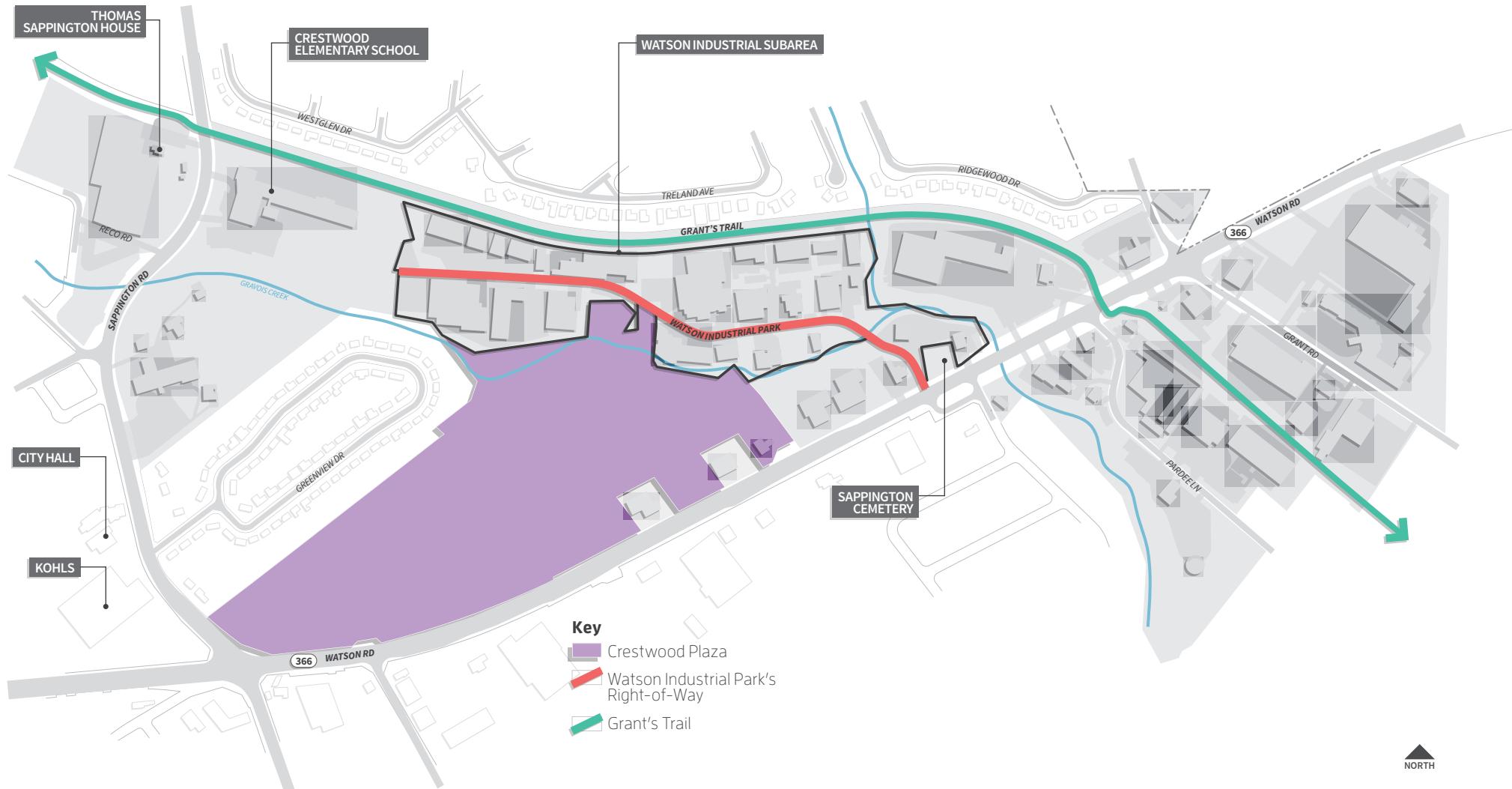
The Subarea in particular stands out among the other industrial areas in Crestwood. The primary reason is because three major investments either already are, or have the potential, to transform the area into a new type of district.

- **Crestwood Plaza.** First, the redevelopment of Crestwood Plaza is a major transformation for the Watson Road corridor and the community more broadly. This is a massive opportunity to trigger a wave of new investment in the immediate area. The project is a meaningful shift because it will now include a mix of uses, including retail, restaurant, and even housing. This transforms the character of the area and opens up new options for developers.

- **The Roadway.** Second, is that the Watson Industrial Park Road right-of-way is due for some maintenance and reinvestment, and the potential exists that the City of Crestwood could accept jurisdiction over this roadway. Such an action would also open up potential opportunities to expand and/or extend the roadway, and address a variety of infrastructure improvements to elevate the access, mobility, and character of the right-of-way that serves this district.

- **Grant's Trail.** Lastly, the Great Rivers Greenway Project will soon be extending Grant's Trail eight miles to the River des Peres Greenway along the I-55 right of way; this connection will connect the existing (and heavily used) Grant's Trail with a much bigger network of trails, as well as the Bike St. Louis network within the city. This positions the Plaza mall redevelopment site, the Subarea, and this section of Watson Road for opportunities to better leverage this expanding, regional network of cycling trails as an economic development asset.

# WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA POSSIBLE TRIGGERS



# GENERAL PLANNING STUDY AREA ORIENTATION

## CRESTWOOD PLAZA REDEVELOPMENT SITE

The Crestwood Plaza redevelopment site lies just south of the Watson Industrial Subarea and its parcels often border, generally near Gravois Creek. Further, the redevelopment site is elevated and looks down into the Subarea. The site is under active demolition, which began in May 2016 and is expected to be completed in 2017. The long-term redevelopment of the site will be mixed-use, including new housing alongside retail and restaurant uses.

## COMMERCIAL

Commercial uses line Watson Road, and are adjacent to the Subarea on the eastern and southeastern portions. Commercial uses are mostly retail, including Guitar Center, Applebee's, and Ace Hardware, but also include office uses, auto repair, grocery, and banks.

## TRAIL

Grant's Trail runs along the northern portion of the Subarea and separates the industrial park from a residential neighborhood. The Trail itself connects the Subarea to amenities in Crestwood, such as the Sappington House, as well as those outside of the neighborhood such as Grant's Farm and Clydesdale Park. There is also a planned extension of the trail that will connect the trail to the River des Peres Greenway; gaining access to the street trail system in St. Louis. This will further transform Grant's Trail from a local amenity into regional transportation infrastructure.

## RESIDENTIAL

There are two residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Watson Industrial Subarea. First is along the northern edge, separated by the Grant's Trail and screened by trees, shrubs, and fencing. Another residential neighborhood is located near the southwestern portion of the Subarea, and is well screened by trees, shrubs, and fencing, but is also grade-separated by Gravois Creek.

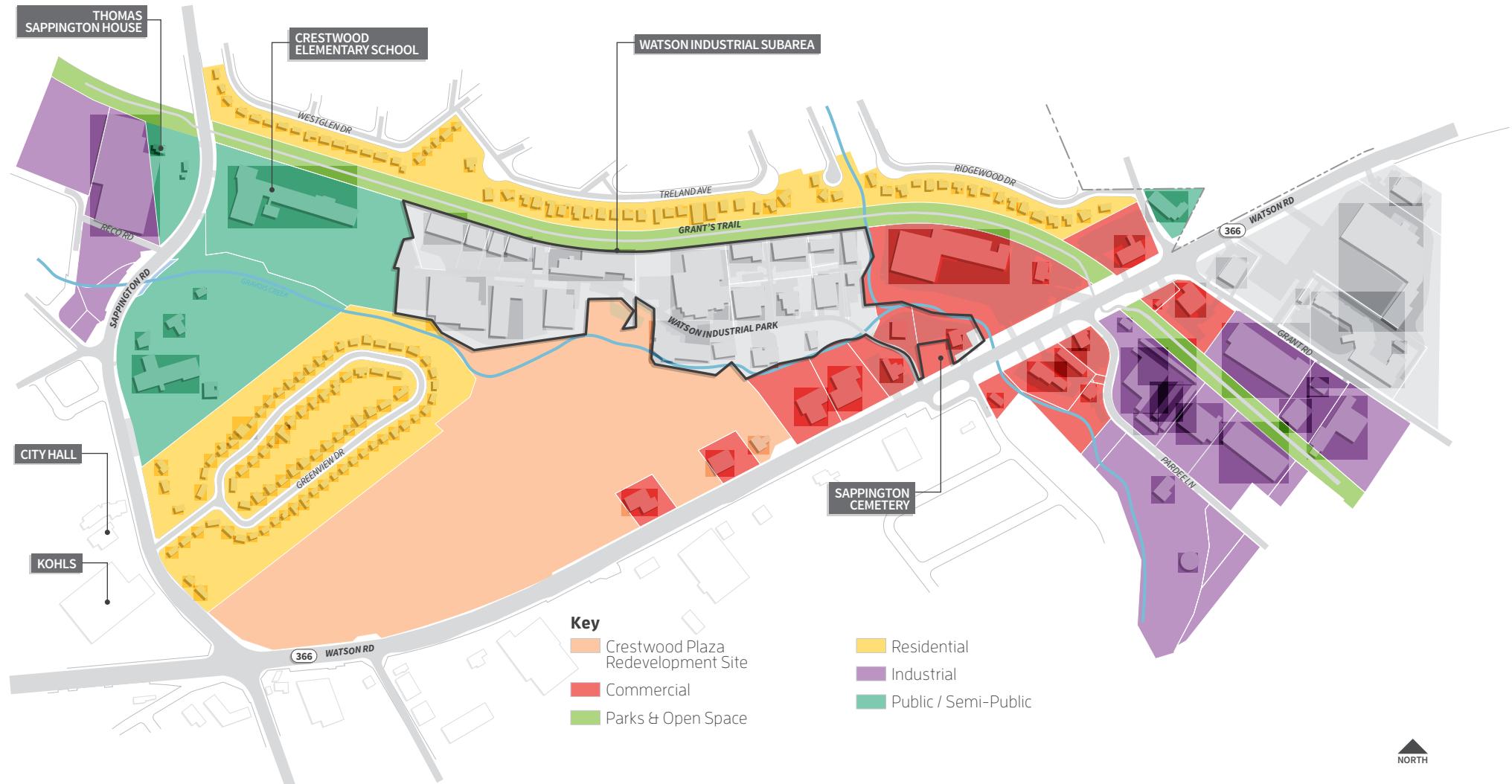
## INDUSTRIAL

While there are no industrial uses adjacent to the Subarea, there are industrial areas just east and west of the area, previously connected by the rail corridor that has been repurposed as Grant's Trail. Today, there are three small industrial areas along Grant's Trail; although none of them are connected, the first is a Reco Road off of Sappington Road, and the other at Camera Ave off of Big Bend Rd.

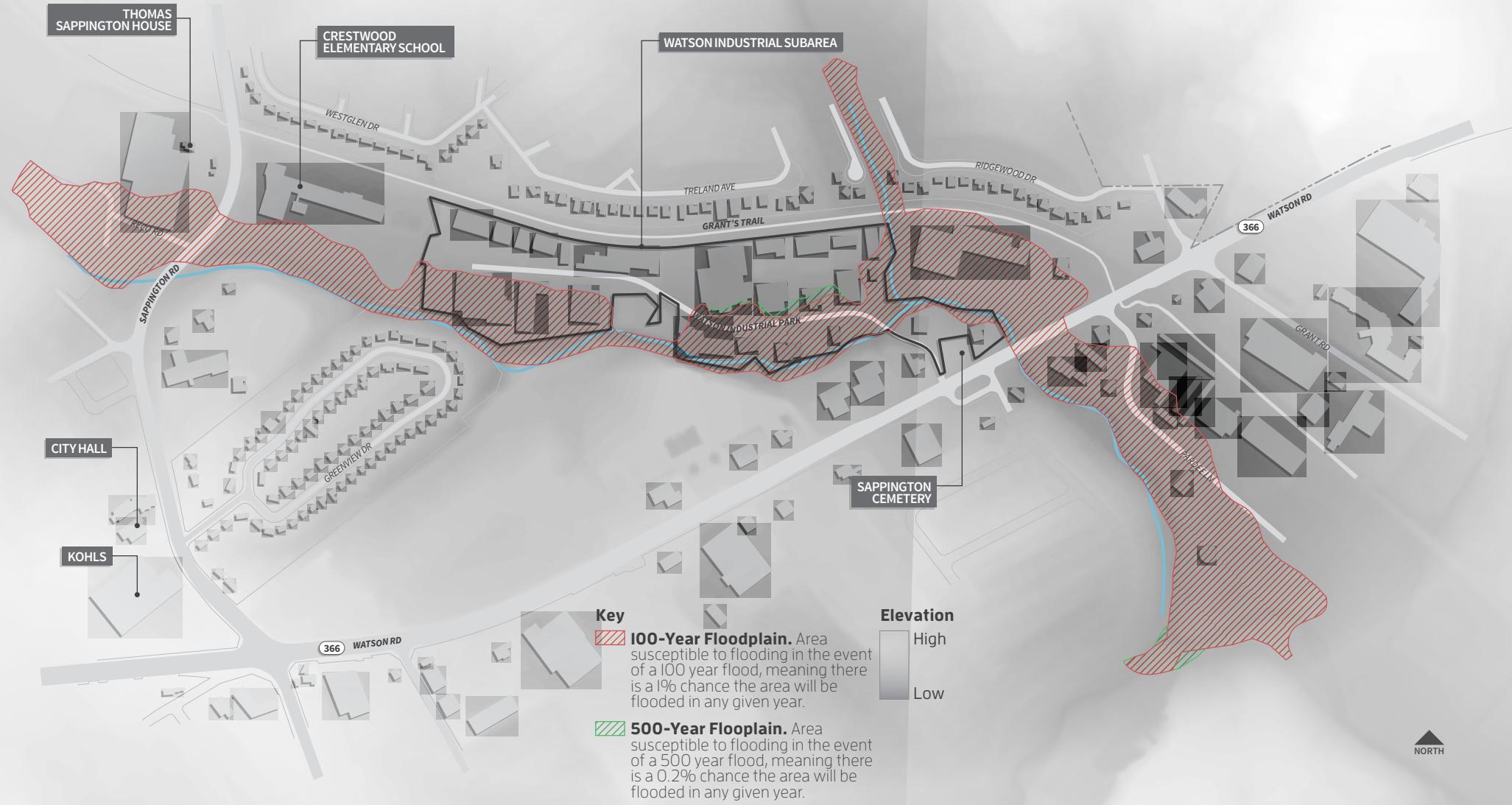
## SCHOOLS & PUBLIC USES

The Watson Industrial Park Subarea is near three public uses: Crestwood Elementary School, St. Elizabeth's of Hungary, and the Sappington House and Barn. Both the Sappington House and Barn, and the Crestwood Elementary School are accessible to the Subarea via Grant's Trail.

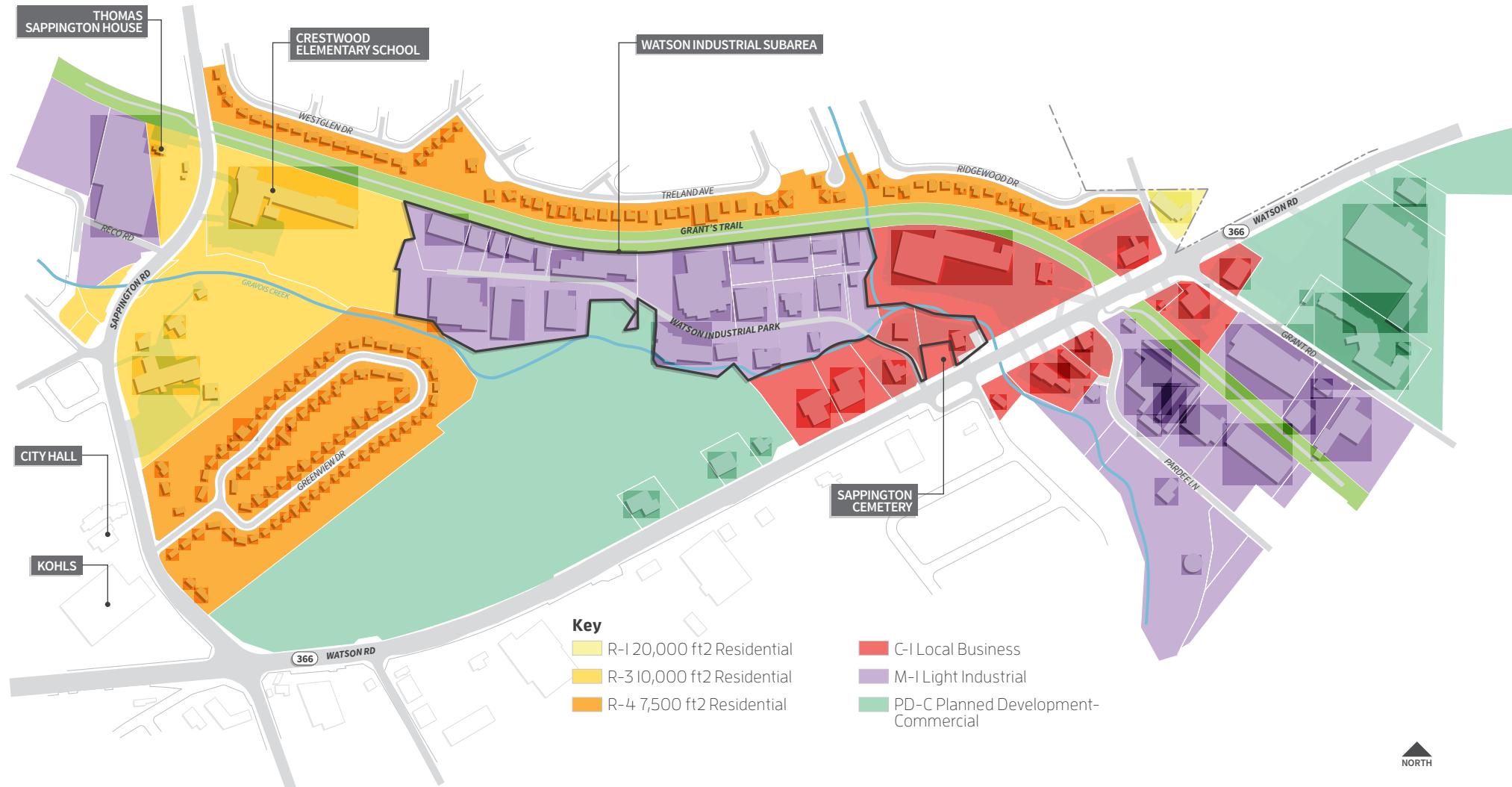
# WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA LOCAL CONTEXT



# WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA **EXISTING NATURAL FEATURES**



# WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA CURRENT ZONING



# A NEW TYPE OF DISTRICT FOR ST. LOUIS

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There are many different types of communities in the St. Louis region. Crestwood is working to better identify its niche and market within that landscape. Residents have stated during public outreach that they desire a "town center" for Crestwood, similar to those in communities like Kirkwood and Webster Groves; there are other examples of streetcar and railroad downtowns in the region, including Maplewood, University City, and Belleville, Illinois.

There are also river towns, like St. Charles, Missouri and Alton and Columbia, Illinois. There are even new downtown districts being built from scratch, such as in Wildwood; and historic central business districts, such as Clayton, that are being reimagined through Metrolink light rail transit.

These communities are experiencing reinvestment and infill redevelopment in a variety of ways alongside long-established suburban communities that were designed around highways and interstates, the automobile, and large shopping centers.

## WHERE DOES CRESTWOOD FIT INTO THE MIX?

The community is presented with a unique opportunity to leverage a few trends to transform a part of the City and establish not only a "town center" for Crestwood, but truly create a new type of neighborhood within the St. Louis region. Across the Midwest, communities are starting to experience suburban infill development that creates mixed-use villages or nodes where Midcentury shopping centers once stood.

In some cases, these real estate projects are tapping into new demand for live-work units and new types of housing products. Communities are also experiencing the market-driven clustering of "makers" and emerging "craft manufacturing" districts in older, once vacant, small-scale industrial properties – breathing new life into those communities through job creation and the attraction of young families. And finally, cities across the Midwest are embracing cycling, walking, and access to transit in unprecedented ways.

These three larger trends are all intersecting near the former Plaza mall site and Watson Industrial Drive, directly adjacent to Grant's Trail. Crestwood is presented with the opportunity to transition the area to a neighborhood that blends access to high-quality cycling alongside a creative business startup environment and new, unique types of housing.

The result would be a neighborhood that is not only new for the St. Louis region, but would be distinctive throughout the Midwest. Unlike other types of more conventional "downtown redevelopment" projects in cities across St. Louis, a reimagined Crestwood town center, developed in this way, would truly be a destination. There is early, growing momentum around these trends, and this vision and approach would position Crestwood to capture these emerging markets early while achieving a number of long-range goals.

## WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

The immediate task is to shape a vision for the area. Part of determining that vision is making critical decisions on a handful of core factors. These core factors will dictate some of the major components of the Watson Industrial Drive Subarea and its long-range potential. The City needs to determine what it aims to achieve in the area, not only from a local business district perspective, but also through evaluating its citywide goals and objectives. The policies should align with the City's overarching goals. Therefore the critical first step is defining those goals, and secondly executing policy decisions on a series of core factors in the area. Those factors are further outlined later in this memorandum.

## LIVE-WORK

With the rise of telecommuting and entrepreneurship, live-work units provide an opportunity for a resident to both reside and maintain a business in the same property. Live-work units are flexible and typically include four types of configurations: (1) Live-Within, where workspace and living areas overlap; (2) Live-Above, where the residential use is located above the business; (3) Live-Behind, where the business has street frontage and the residential dwelling unit is located to the rear of the lot; and (4) Live-in-Front, where the residential use fronts the streets and the business is operated behind home. Nevertheless, the type, size, and intensity of live-work units are subject to local zoning and health codes.

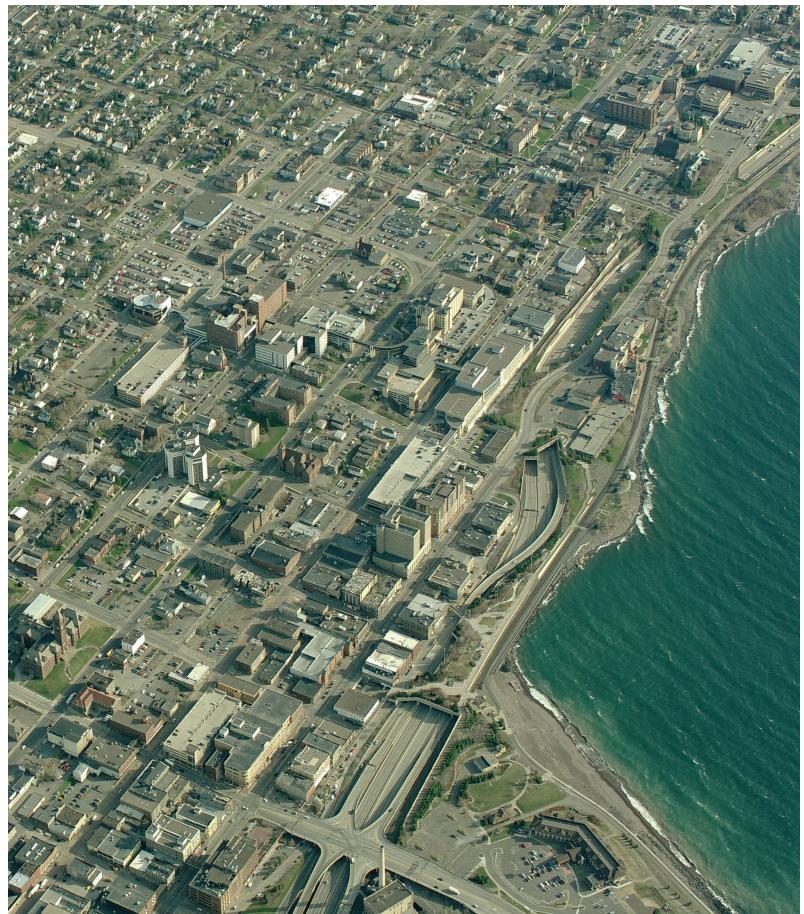
### 249 A Street Artists Cooperative, Boston, Massachusetts

The 249 A Street Artists Cooperative in the Fort Point neighborhood of Boston is Massachusetts' first art-oriented, cooperative live-work project. Completed in 1980, the project includes 43 live-work units and two commercial spaces. The limited equity cooperative allows the units to remain affordable, and subsequently, has resulted in a wait list of more than 100 applicants.

Development of the former commercial printing building at 249 A Street required a live-work zoning variance from the City of Boston. Further, after amending its zoning ordinance, the City permits artists to live in industrial districts. The combination of city regulations, coupled with a development model that preserve affordability, has contributed to longevity of the Fort Point Arts Community for more than 40 years.



249 A Street Artists Cooperative  
Source: <http://www.249astreetcoop.com/>



Aerial imagery of Duluth, Minnesota  
Source:Pictometry

## CRAFT DISTRICT

A craft district is an urban area that is defined by a cluster of small-scale, craft-related retail and manufacturing businesses. Businesses include those that produce goods requiring particular skill and knowledge, created by craftspeople and artisans. The co-location of similar businesses generates a critical mass that helps define the district as well as creates a unique, cultural hub. Many of these businesses also feature an internet sales presence, which helps bring dollars into the community from outside the immediate trade area.

### **Lincoln Park Craft District, Duluth, Minnesota**

Located 150 miles northeast of the Twin Cities, Duluth is a former industrial port boom town on the shores of Lake Superior. Following the decline of the local steel industry, the City was left with vacant commercial and industrial buildings built in at the turn of the 19th century, including several along Superior Street in the City's Lincoln Park neighborhood.

In 2014, the owners of several local businesses developed a vision for a craft-based neighborhood. With existing businesses including a rugged outdoor pack manufacturer, craft brewery, specialty restaurant, handcrafted bag maker, and motorcycle apparel manufacturer, the neighborhood could build upon the momentum to encourage a craft-centered hub. In 2015, a local community organization secured a \$10,000 grant from the NeighborhoodWorks America Stable Communities Initiative to brand the Lincoln Park neighborhood, create a custom logo, and market the neighborhood. The grant funds are aimed at restoring market demand and creating a unique identity for the neighborhood.

As of May 2016, the neighborhood logo was still under development; nevertheless, the area is already generating investment interest. Local craft-makers such as a custom shoemaker and homebrew store will be locating along Superior Street, occupying space in former commercial and industrial buildings. A southern-themed restaurant and healthy coffeehouse and café are also set to open shop in the neighborhood.

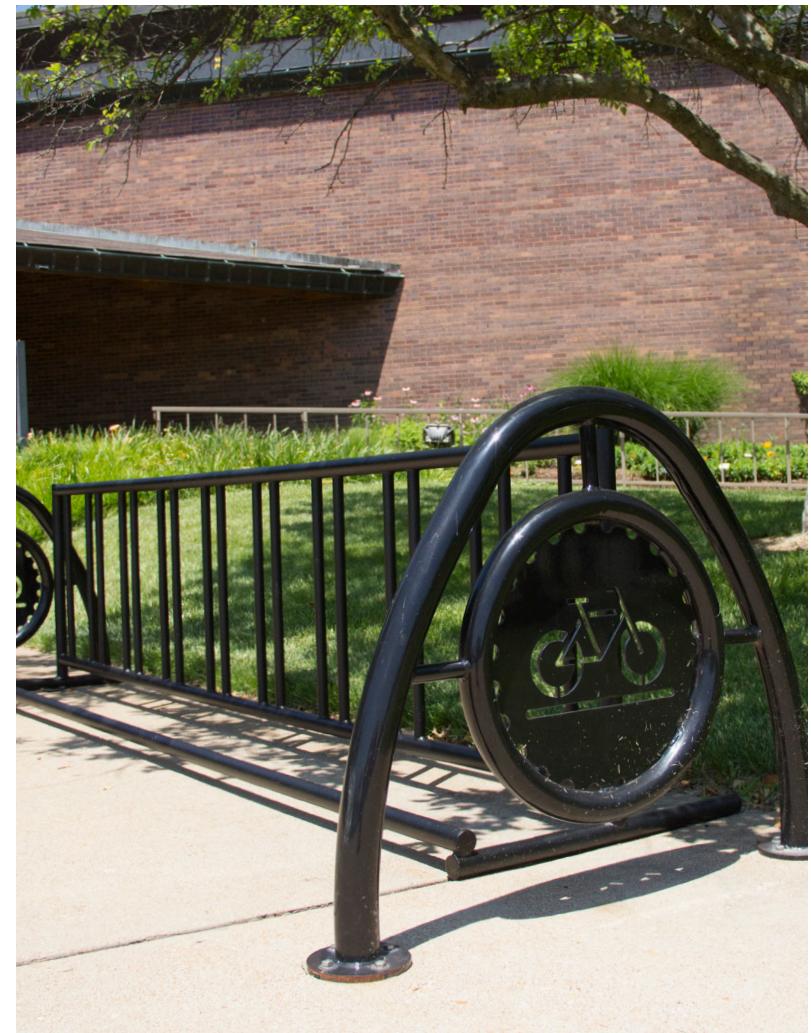
## TRAIL-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Trail-oriented development takes advantage of adjacent local and regional trails, meeting the growing demand of communities that desire direct access to active transportation and recreation options. With a national rise in bicycle commuting and demand for recreational trails and safe pedestrian facilities, trail-oriented development encourages car-free lifestyles. Located adjacent to regional trail networks, these residential and mixed-use developments cater to residents' active lifestyles, many including secure bicycle storage, bicycle repair, cleaning stations, and extra wide corridors and elevators.

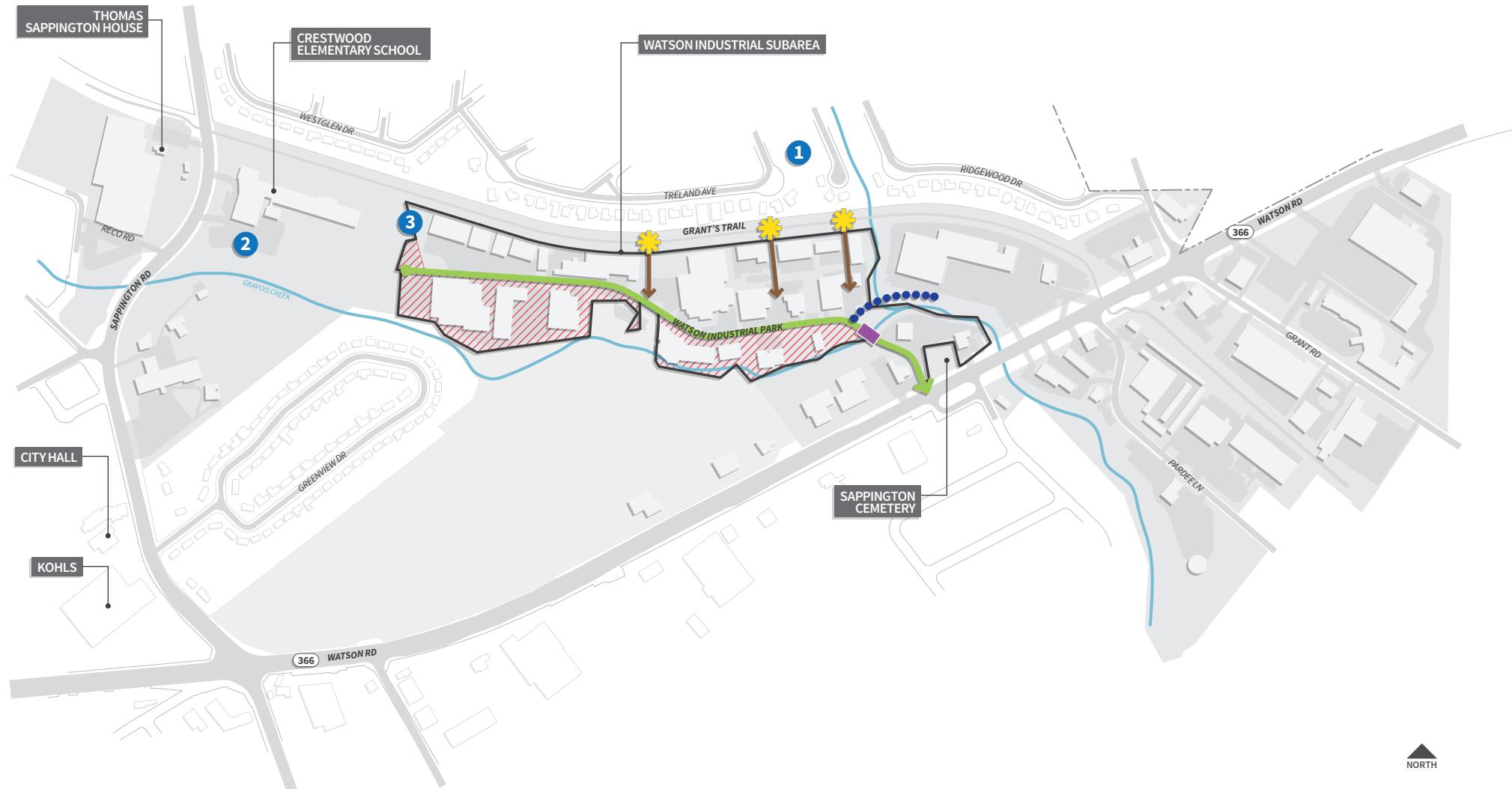
### Bici Flats, Des Moines, Iowa

Bici Flats is a 154-unit, market-rate, multi-family housing development in Des Moines' Two Rivers District. The six-acre site is located at the intersection of the Des Moines River, Meredith, and Pat Dorian Trails, which provide access to downtown Des Moines and the larger Des Moines region. The bicycle-oriented development features a bicycle storage room, in-unit bicycle storage, wide hallways, a bike workroom, and a bike washing station.

Anticipating a 2017 opening, Bici Flats is being marketed to recreational cyclists and trail users. The trail-oriented location is intended to provide alternative transportation options to a variety of destinations in Des Moines and access to recreational opportunities, which may result in increased mode-share (shifting trips from vehicles to bikes, walking, and transit). Bici Flats also comes following \$500,000 of bicycle infrastructure projects slated for downtown Des Moines, enhancing the development's connections and access to urban amenities.



## WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA NEAR-TERM SCENARIO



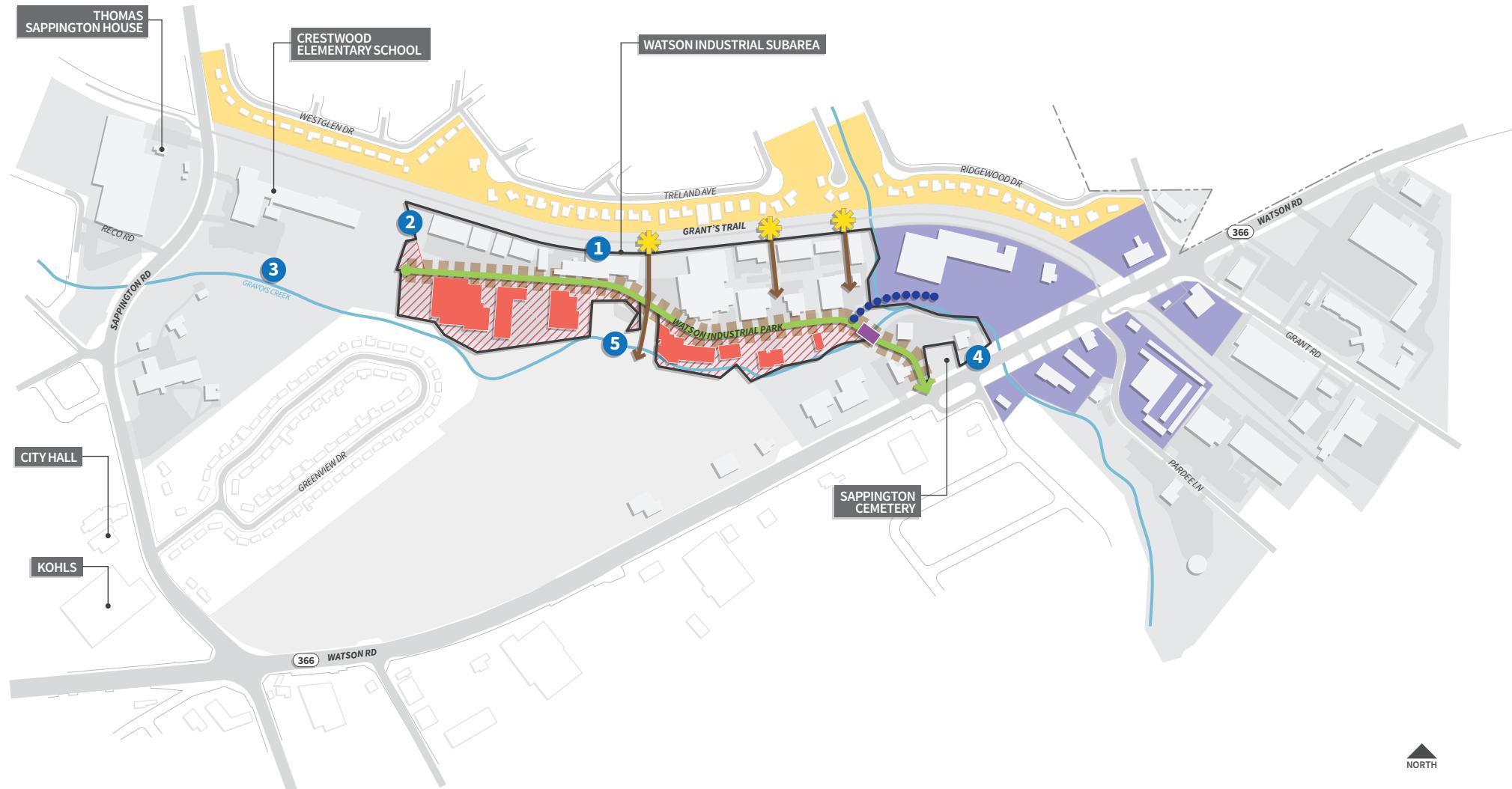
## NEAR-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

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-  Bridge Widening to Two Lanes
-  Paved Access to Grant Trail
-  Evaluate Possibility of 2nd Bridge Connection
-  Roadway Access Improvement. The city should acquire right-of-way and repave/improve the condition of the roadway
-  Floodplain Overlay Area should require the integration of flood-resistant design and low-impact development for new development or redevelopment

- 1** Begin discussion with adjacent neighborhood property owners to evaluate the potential for neighborhood access to Grant's Trail.
- 2** Begin discussion with Crestwood Elementary School and St. Elizabeth of Hungary to evaluate the potential for extending the Watson Industrial Park to Sappington Road.
- 3** Change the zoning designation to allow commercial and residential land uses within the Watson Industrial subarea.

# WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA MEDIUM-TERM SCENARIO



# MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

-  Initiate streetscaping on Watson Industrial Park Drive and the widened bridge
-  As business relocate, the city should actively acquire parcels for demolition and return them to open space or well-designed surface parking lots.
-  Rezone adjacent node area for redevelopment as trail-oriented development, including mixed-use.
-  Work with adjacent neighborhood property owners to identify potential locations and funding for neighborhood access to Grant's Trail.

- 1 Add minimal but permanent trailhead amenities, such as water fountain, bike repair tool totem, and wayfinding.
- 2 The City should actively assemble parcels and provide development incentives. The City should also evaluate the possibility of adopting form-based code for the Watson Industrial Subarea.
- 3 Should the adjacent public / semi-public property owners agree to the possibility of a road extension, the City should initiate engineering and environmental study to determine the road extension's feasibility.
- 4 Discuss with the property owners about the possibility of closing the Watson Road's curb cut and allowing cars to enter from Watson Industrial Park Drive.
- 5 Connect the Mall development to Grant's Trail with a paved access trail (At the time of drafting a trail connection was proposed; however, construction details were not set).

## Short-Term Recommendations In Place

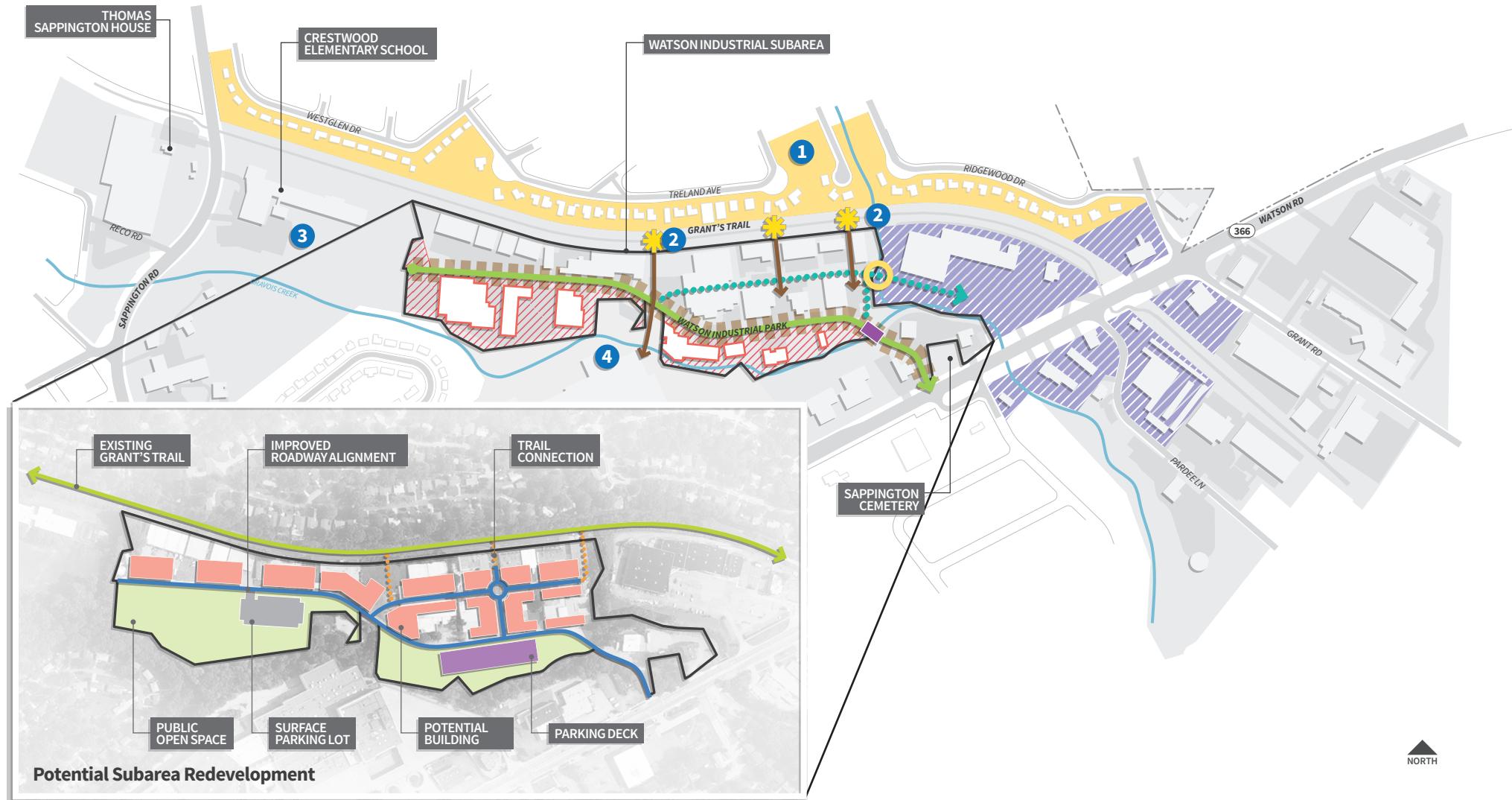
-  Bridge Widening to Two Lanes
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Begin discussion with adjacent neighborhood property owners to evaluate the potential for neighborhood access to Grant's Trail.

Begin discussion with Crestwood Elementary School and St. Elizabeth of Hungary to evaluate the potential for extending the Watson Industrial Park to Sappington Road.

Change the zoning designation to allow commercial and residential land uses within the Watson Industrial subarea.

# WATSON INDUSTRIAL SUBAREA LONG-TERM / MOONSHOT SCENARIO



Potential Subarea Redevelopment

# LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

-  Buildings at this point are either developed with flood-resistant design and/or is vacant, open space, or surface parking
-  Incentivize redevelopment of those areas for trail-oriented development
-  Evaluate the potential for a second bridge to connect adjacent development
-  Evaluate the potential for through road alignment for main street grid-like development

- 1 Work with adjacent neighborhood to identify numerous access points to the Grant's Trail.
- 2 Provide a fully developed trailhead for Grant's Trail. The trailhead's amenities include: bathrooms, bike repair and rental, and parking. An alternate site to consider is the Sappington House and Barn property.
- 3 Evaluate the potential for redevelopment of Sappington Road parcels and a roadway extension (should the Crestwood Elementary School and St. Elizabeth of Hungary decide to relocate).
- 4 Connect the Mall development to Grant's Trail with a paved access trail (At the time of drafting a trail connection was proposed; however, construction details were not set).

## Short-Term Recommendations In Place

-  Bridge Widening to Two Lanes
-  Paved Access to Grant Trail
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Begin discussion with adjacent neighborhood property owners to evaluate the potential for neighborhood access to Grant's Trail.

Begin discussion with Crestwood Elementary School and St. Elizabeth of Hungary to evaluate the potential for extending the Watson Industrial Park to Sappington Road.

Change the zoning designation to allow commercial and residential land uses within the Watson Industrial subarea.

## Medium-Term Recommendations In Place

-  Initiate streetscaping on Watson Industrial Park Drive and the widened bridge
-  As business relocate, the city should actively acquire parcels for demolition and return them to open space or well-designed surface parking lots.
-  Rezone adjacent node area for redevelopment as trail-oriented development, including mixed-use.
-  Work with adjacent neighborhood property owners to identify potential locations and funding for neighborhood access to Grant's Trail.

Add minimal but permanent trailhead amenities, such as water fountain, bike repair tool totem, and wayfinding.

The City should actively assemble parcels and provide development incentives. The City should also evaluate the possibility of adopting form-based code for the Watson Industrial Subarea.

Should the adjacent public / semi-public property owners agree to the possibility of a road extension, the City should initiate engineering and environmental study to determine the road extension's feasibility.

Discuss with the property owners about the possibility of closing the Watson Road's curb cut and allowing cars to enter from Watson Industrial Park Drive.



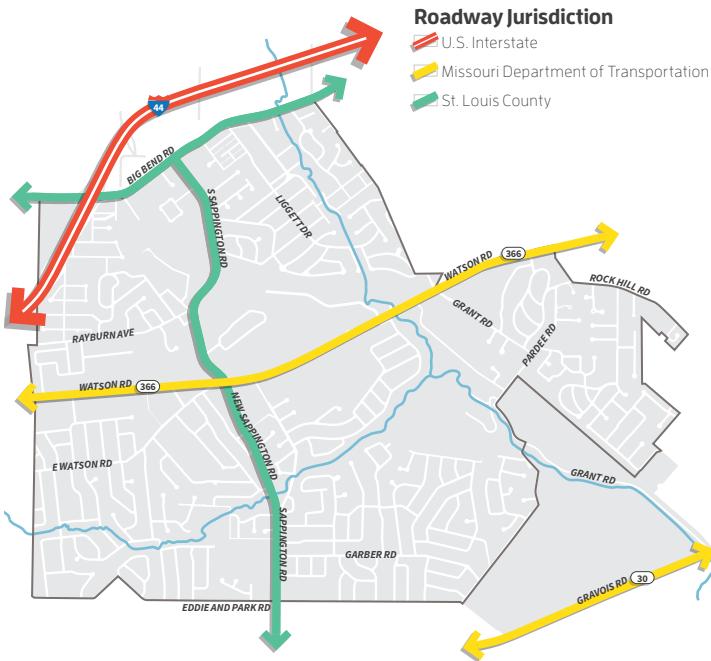
# 5

# TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

The plan is based on an assessment of the existing transportation conditions in the City and considers input received during the community outreach process. Today, Crestwood is primarily auto-oriented, although it does feature one of the region's best multi-use trails as well as bus transit service. The plan incorporates regional improvements planned by the Missouri Department of Transportation, St. Louis County, Great Rivers Greenway, and the Bi-State Development Authority, as well as the local plans of the City.

Despite being primarily auto-oriented and suburban in urban design character, Crestwood also features roadway connectivity in its residential areas and a series of collectors that function adequately within the larger network of MoDOT and St. Louis County managed arterials. The challenge for Crestwood moving forward is to integrate and retrofit pedestrian, cycling, and transit design features and infrastructure to better accommodate multi-modal travel.

- 90 Existing Roadway Network
- 92 Improvements for Consideration
- 94 Transit & Rail



# EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK

Crestwood's roadway network is the primary infrastructure carrying travelers into and throughout the community; the network is defined by a few arterials corridors, which are essential to the daily function of the City. Watson Road is the City's key east-west arterial roadway, while Sappington is the City's key north-south arterial; their intersection is a prominent feature of the community. Additionally, the City has access to I-44, which provides the community direct access to the City of St. Louis and the I-270 employment corridor.

## ROADWAY JURISDICTION

Roadway management within the City of Crestwood is divided across a number of jurisdictions. Certain roadways within Crestwood fall under the purview of either City, St. Louis County, or the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), and infrastructure projects involving these roads require close coordination among agencies.

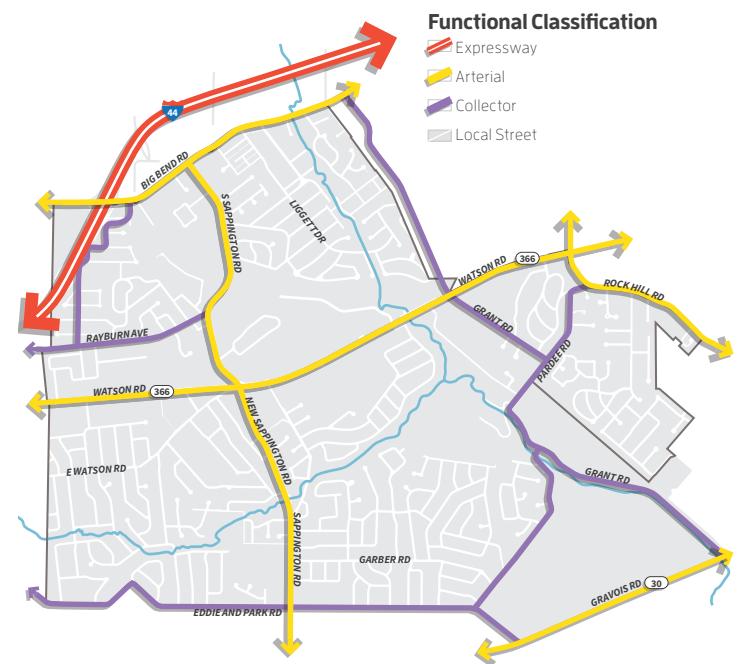
The City's design and management influence on state and county highways and interstates are limited by the policies, requirements, regulations, and recommendations established by MoDOT. Watson Road was recently resurfaced and MoDOT has no other planned improvements at this time. Certain project ideas, such as streetscaping or boulevarding Watson Road, may require local funding from the City, including long-term maintenance agreements. It will be critical for the City to continue coordinating with these transportation agencies and identifying constructive partnership opportunities.

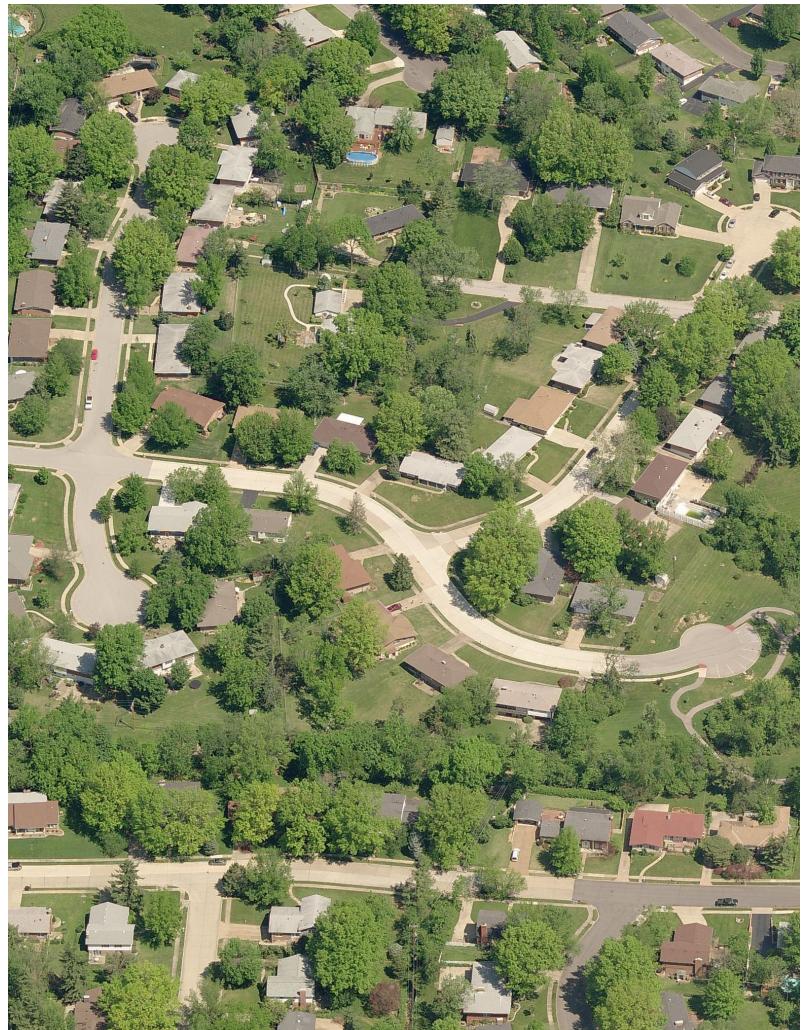
## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

All streets within the City of Crestwood are classified according to a hierarchical system that is based on elements such as the number of travel lanes, traffic volumes, level of access, and mobility. The City has roadways broken into the following functional classifications:

- Expressway (I-44);
- Arterials (Watson Road, Big Bend Road, Sappington Road, and Rock Hill Road);
- Collectors (Grant Road, Pardee Road, Rayburn Avenue, Spellman Avenue, and Eddie and Park Road); or
- Local Streets (all other roads).

These classifications relate to the function of the streets. Lower order streets function primarily as access to individual lots, while higher order streets function primarily for the purpose of mobility (quick movement of people and goods).





# IMPROVEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION

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## RESIDENTIAL STREET CALMING

During the planmaking process some residents reported cut-through traffic and speeding on residential streets. The City should first study these concerns and then address as appropriate through traffic calming measures such as lane narrowing or neighborhood traffic circles. Many older residential neighborhoods built during the 1960s and 70s lack sidewalks but feature wide, curvilinear streets. As a result, pedestrians are sometimes forced to navigate both parked cars as well as motorists; in some cases, the wide pavement design can encourage traveling at rates of speed that exceed the posted limit.

Cities are beginning to evaluate retrofitting traffic calming features in these neighborhoods to better accommodate pedestrians, slow traffic, and create a more appealing right-of-way that fits the character of a residential area. While the City of Crestwood should prioritize this analysis as part of a residential reinvestment strategy and conduct a study to identify candidate roadway segments and/or intersections that could benefit from traffic calming measures, possible candidates to consider are Liggett Avenue, Rayburn Avenue, and East Watson Road.

## WATSON ROAD DIET & BOULEVARDING

As discussed in the Commercial Areas Framework Plan in Chapter 4- Land Use, Development & Growth Management, Watson Road could be a candidate for a road diet to reduce and reuse the existing travel lanes to accommodate additional modes of transportation and other uses. Today the roadway functions as a major state highway, but it could be redesigned to accommodate true multi-modal travel while better connecting to the surrounding neighborhoods. The City should weigh all the various road section possibilities, including multi-modal transportation capacity, a complete street section, discussed below, and/or the integration of a boulevard that would feature landscaped medians.

## RECO ROAD & CAMERA AVENUE

Reco Road currently spurs north from Sappington Road toward Big Bend Road, while Camera Avenue currently spurs south from Big Bend toward Sappington Road. Both roads travel through existing industrial development, but operate as cul de sacs. These right-of-ways could be connected through the removal of a fence and the construction of a new paved surface; this work would require the cooperation of private property owners. The City should work with these property owners to evaluate the possibility of connecting and aligning Reco Road and Camera Avenue. This project would improve the connectivity and viability of these two industrial areas and provide businesses on Reco Road direct access to the I-44.

## COMPLETE STREETS

A “complete street” is a roadway that is designed to be safe for all users of the transportation network, including motorists, transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Designing streets that encourage walking, biking, and public transit use is an effective strategy for increasing traffic safety, mitigating congestion and air pollution, and promoting a healthy, active lifestyle. In addition, these street design projects have been shown to improve property values, boost local business, and allow families and individuals to save on transportation costs.

The City of Crestwood could consider incorporating more complete streets design in the community, most notably along Watson Road because it is a possible road diet candidate. Complete streets implementation may be one of the best transportation investments a community can make, offering an often low-cost solution to transportation goals while supporting broader community initiatives. Most importantly, they can reduce injurious crashes for all users. By making the most of small investments, supporting economic development, and encouraging multi-modal travel, communities across the country have seen decent returns for their investments in complete streets.

It is also important to note, that while not all roads will have the conditions possible to create a complete street in Crestwood, elements of a complete street policy can still be implemented, such as green allys and yield streets. Additionally, there are ways to implement some interim design strategies as a pilot project to ensure that the strategy will be successful and the funding is warrented; examples include moving the curb, parklets, and interim public plazas.

Adopting a complete streets policy may require the City to revise its existing roadway cross sections. As such, the City should consider consulting the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide and NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide for best practices in street design that safely and effectively accommodates bicycle, transit, and pedestrian facilities.

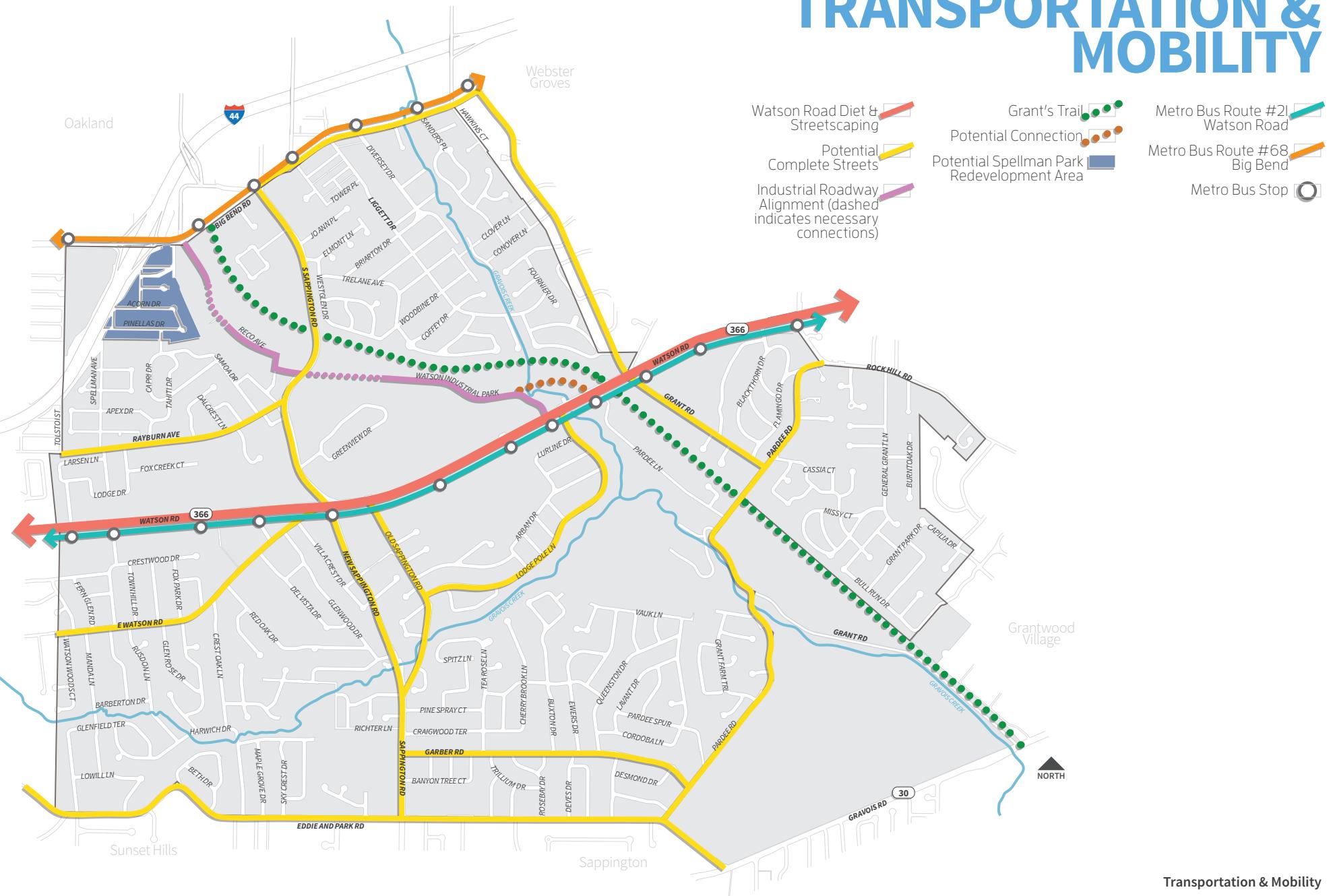
## TRANSIT & RAIL

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The City of Crestwood's public transit is served by Metro, officially incorporated as the Bi-State Development Authority. There is one bus route within Crestwood's boundaries, that is the 21 MetroBus route that stops intermittently along Watson Road and goes to Kirkwood to the west, and northeast to the Shrewsbury Lansdowne I-44 Metrolink Station that intersects with seven other MetroBus routes. From the Metrolink station, Crestwood is connected into the St. Louis region's light rail network, linking the community to a number of employment hubs and other destinations.

Transit is not a major feature of Crestwood at this time, however, there are opportunities for improvements. Many of the bus stops along Watson feature only a metal sign. In some instances the bus stops are located next to paved sidewalks, but there are no paved connections to the stop itself. In other locations the stops are more accessible and feature benches, trash cans, and shelters. The City should work with Metro, MoDOT, and other partners to identify bus stops that could be improved and ensure ADA accessibility.

# TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY



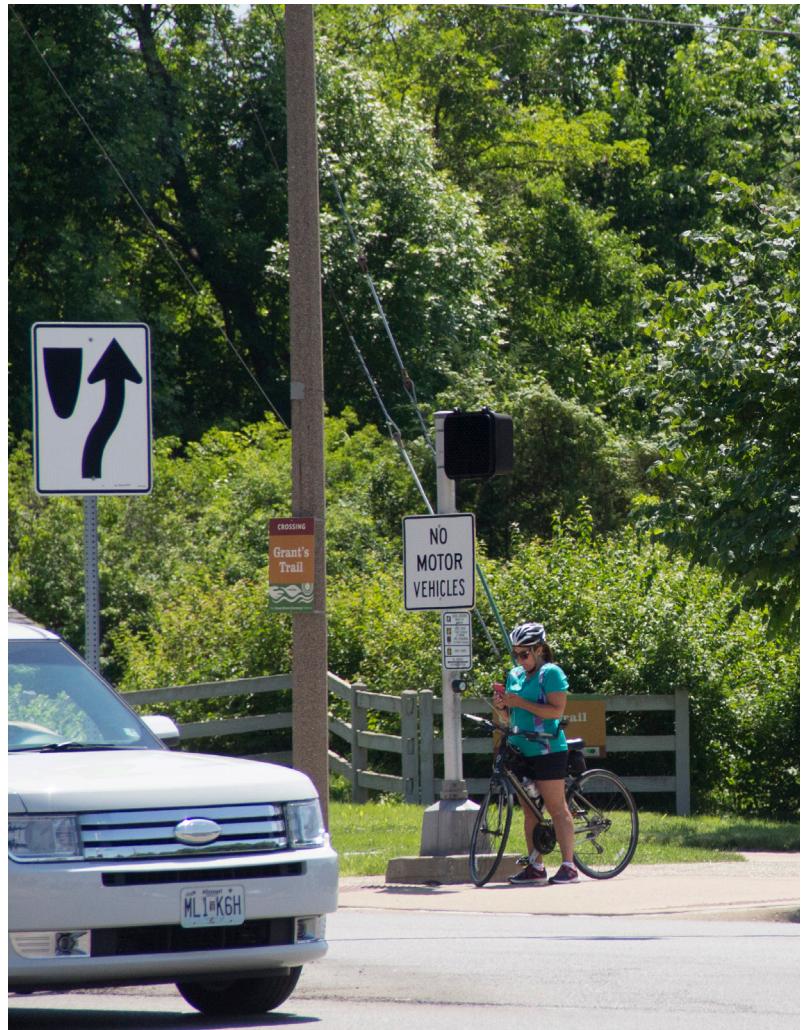


# 6 BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

Communities strive to develop a comprehensive bicycle and trail system to reduce dependency on the automobile and to foster and encourage an active, healthy lifestyle. Although Crestwood's roadway network is vital, the City is also placing a greater emphasis on balancing out the design of its transportation system to promote active transportation.

98      Bicycle & Pedestrian Network

100      Bicycle & Pedestrian Mobility



## BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

The bicycle and pedestrian system should be thorough and contiguous across the community, providing important connections to the major community facilities (City Hall, schools, parks, religious institutions, etc.), commercial centers, and residential subdivisions. The system should also connect to the regional trail system and the bicycle network of its adjoining communities so that the residents can take advantage of the resources that are available within the larger metropolitan area.

Throughout the planning process the community has emphasized a desire and importance to better integrate multi-modal transportation features. It is recommended that the City create a more detailed and strategic Active Transportation or Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to more thoroughly examine the network and provide specific recommendations and prioritized improvements. Such a plan should be aligned with the City's Parks Master Plan as well as its Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Further, this Plan could serve as an important component of an updated Transportation Master Plan which draws from MoDOT, St. Louis County, and other regional planning efforts, including the Gateway Bike Plan and Regional Greenway Plan. This type of holistic planning effort would best ensure new investments in Crestwood's bicycle and pedestrian network are community-supportive and effectively designed within the community and coordinated with the larger region.

## REGIONAL TRAIL ACCESS

Crestwood has access to one of the busiest trails in the St. Louis region, Grant's Trail (also known as Gravois Greenway). Currently, the trail runs northwest and southeast, providing access to the City of Kirkwood, Grant's Farm, and the City of Bella Villa. In the near future, the trail will be extended to connect into the River Des Peres Greenway. This trail connection will allow members of the Crestwood community to access the Bike St. Louis trail network in the City of St. Louis.

While the City of Crestwood is lucky enough to have access and proximity to the Regional Trail System, the community's residential neighborhoods have little direct access to the amenity. Existing access is only provided at major arterial and collector roads, forcing those who want to access the amenity to drive or travel along busy roads to access it. The City should work with residents to identify strategic points of access to Grant's Trail, particularly for adjacent residential areas and subdivisions as well as community facilities. As appropriate, access points should include improvements and amenities that clearly mark the pathway and invite residents to take advantage of Grant's Trail for recreation, such as wayfinding signage, benches, or water fountains. The City should work with Crestwood Elementary School to establish dedicated trail access to the school and identify areas of the community where improved access could help establish safe routes for students.

In addition, the City should aim to establish a dedicated trailhead in the community, which both residents and visitors can utilize as a key access point for Grant's Trail. This should include gateway signage, informational kiosks, maps of the trail system, and other improvements that help establish a destination along the trail where cyclists and pedestrians may stop to rest and spend time. Improvements near the Sappington House could better elevate this area as a community trailhead.

Given the proximity of Grant's Trail to Whitecliff Park, the City should explore the feasibility of developing a trail branch which connects the two. As a significant destination, Whitecliff Park could greatly increase non-motorized traffic moving along Grant's Trail and promote Crestwood within the region. Development of a trail connection would likely require a realignment of Pardee Road, cooperation with Grant's Farm, or cooperation with property owners along Pardee Lane.



## BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

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The current bicycle system in the City consists of an off-street trail and shared paths, which are owned and maintained by various entities, including MoDOT and Great Rivers Greenway. Throughout the outreach process, the community identified a desire to see non-motorized mobility become a higher priority throughout Crestwood. As suggested earlier in this chapter, the City should create a more detailed and strategic Active Transportation or Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to ensure the trail and shared-path system grows, providing a cohesive non-motorized transportation network that reaches all community assets, as well as the regional bike trail system.

The recommended Master Plan should identify specific improvement projects to expand the bicycle and pedestrian system, including shared-use pathways, on-street bike lanes, and amenities that support non-motorized transportation, such as bicycle parking. Further, the future plan should outline City policies that could benefit bicycle and pedestrian mobility over time. For example, necessary amenities for cyclists and pedestrians should be considered and included, as appropriate, in future streetscaping and repaving projects. Improving non-motorized connectivity within Crestwood will require not just specific projects, but a dedicated mindset to consider improvements in the long-term.

## BICYCLE FACILITY PLANS

St. Louis County has a long-range bicycle facility plan, the Gateway Bike Plan, which identifies four recommended on-street facility improvements in Crestwood. The City of Crestwood should work with St. Louis County to implement these improvements:

- Accommodating a bike lane along Watson Road;
- Including a wide outside lane along New Sappington Road; and,
- Adding shared lane markings along Eddie & Park Road east of New Sappington Road, and along Pardee Road.



## PEDESTRIAN SYSTEMS

The sidewalk system in the City is fairly extensive, with sidewalks located throughout most neighborhoods on at least one side of the street, however there are still gaps in sidewalk connectivity in some of the City's residential areas. Ideally, the pedestrian system should extend across the entire Crestwood community with contiguous connections to all neighborhoods, community facilities, parks and recreational areas, and commercial and employment centers.

The City should actively seek the extension of sidewalks throughout the community and work to fill any sidewalk gaps. Priority should be given to areas that currently lack any sidewalk or pedestrian amenities. In residential areas, the City should aim to fill any gaps and provide dedicated sidewalks on both sides of all streets. However, emphasis should be given to sidewalk projects that will establish continuous routes through neighborhoods and better connect residents with adjacent commercial areas and community facilities.

Understanding the full scale of this objective, the City should utilize both short- and long-term policies for sidewalk infill. In the short-term, the City should identify priority projects to complete which will most benefit pedestrian mobility, coordinating these projects with the annual Capital Improvement Program.

Infill and sidewalk repairs can be prioritized using the following hierarchy, which is displayed on the corresponding map:

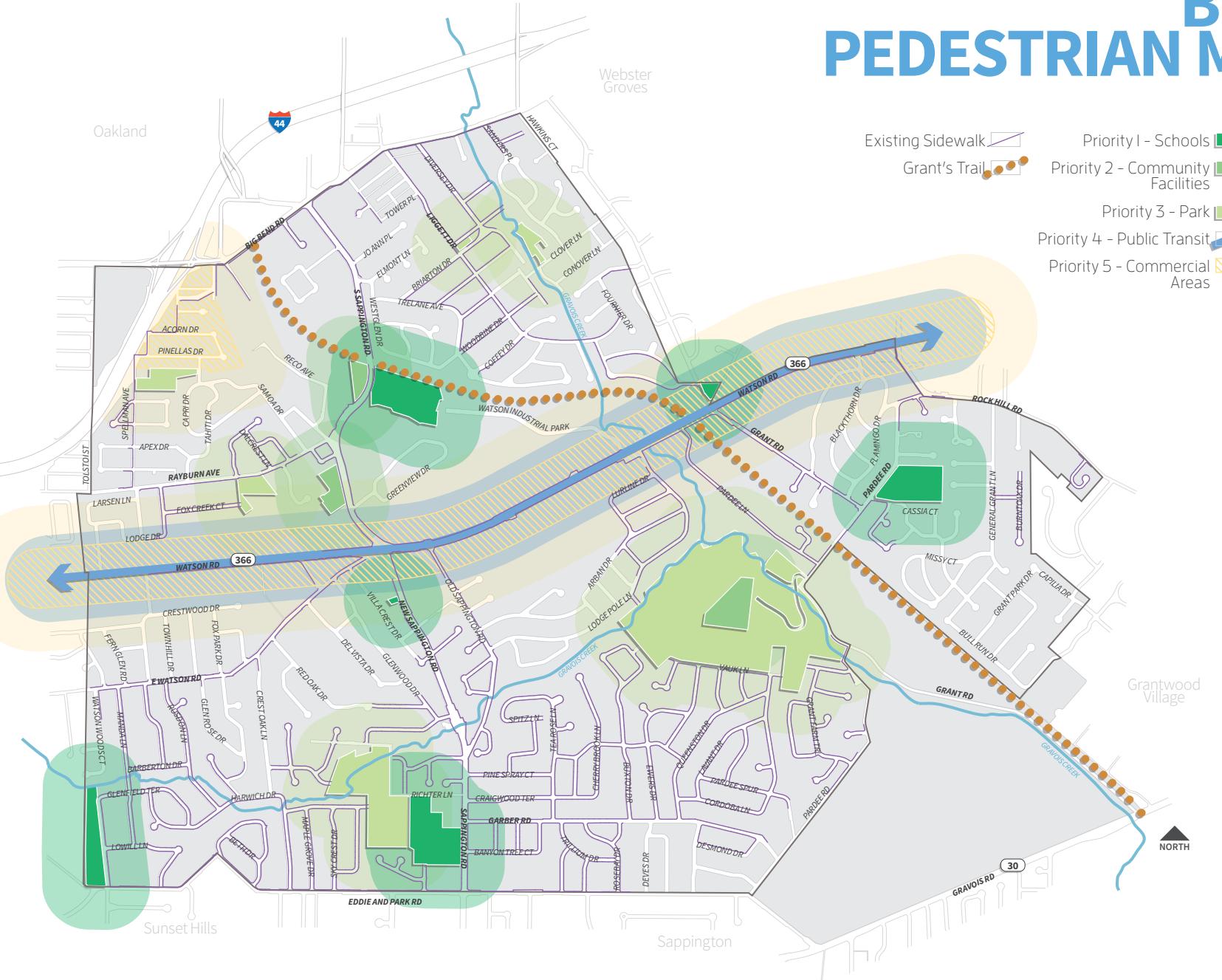
- Schools
- Commercial areas
- Parks
- Other neighborhood streets
- Public Transit

To support sidewalk infill in the long term, the City should adopt policies that require sidewalk development be included with other projects, such as roadway repaving or other improvements. Coordination with MoDOT will be required for road facilities under their jurisdiction. The need for these sidewalks is also addressed in the Residential Neighborhoods Plan of **Chapter 4- Land Use, Development & Growth Management**.

## Crossings

The signalized intersections along the City's arterials and collector roadways are the safest places for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross the road. The City should review each of its signalized intersections to identify locations in need of safety upgrades. All intersections should feature high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian signals with countdown features, ADA compliant curb ramps, proper lighting, and adequate "walk" times for people of all ages and abilities to cross the street. Deficiencies on the arterials under MoDOT control should be addressed in coordination with that agency, with priorities along Watson at Sappington Road, Grant Road, and Brookview Drive. Crosswalk design standards should also be developed as a component of the Active Transportation Plan.

# BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY



## 1/8 mile Priority Walking Distance

- Priority 1 - Schools
- Priority 2 - Community Facilities
- Priority 3 - Park
- Priority 4 - Public Transit
- Priority 5 - Commercial Areas



# 7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

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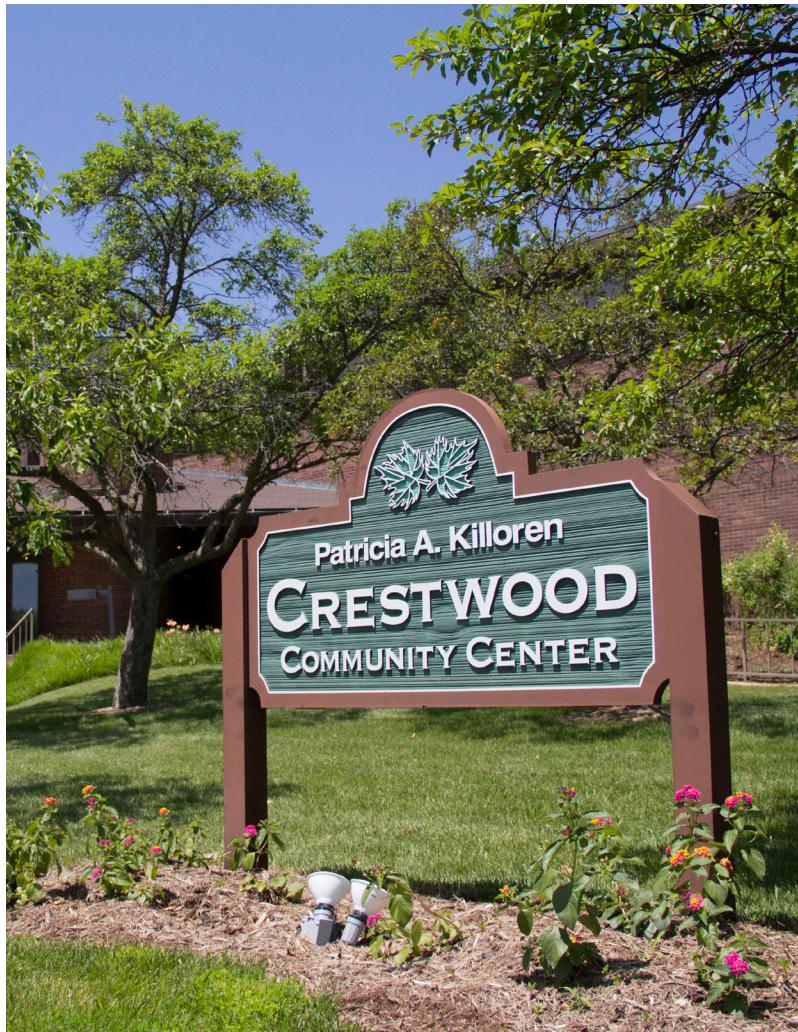
Community facilities and infrastructure provide for the general welfare and quality of life of Crestwood residents and businesses. They include the structures and services that support and deliver public safety, education, and healthcare, among others. The Community Facilities & Infrastructure Plan provides an assessment of the existing facilities and long-term recommendations for growth and improvements. Crestwood provides a number of community facilities and services that reportedly adequately meet the City's current needs. However, the challenge for the Crestwood community will be maintaining that level of service and facility quality over the life of this plan. As an established suburban community there is limited demand to substantially expand or build additional facilities.

The policy emphasis needs to be on the long-term maintenance and improvement of public facilities, schools, and utilities. These reinvestments are fundamental to maintaining a desirable quality-of-life in Crestwood and should be integrated into all long-range budgeting and planning activities, across all community stakeholders and jurisdictions. As many of the organizations responsible for providing community services are not under the direct purview of the City of Crestwood, the Community Facilities & Infrastructure Plan stresses active inter-agency communication and cooperation. The intent is to utilize a collaborative approach to provide for the everyday needs of the community.

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I06      The City of Crestwood  
I08      Public Safety

I09      Public Works  
I10      Education



## THE CITY OF CRESTWOOD

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The City of Crestwood is governed by a Mayor-Board of Alderman structure, with a Mayor elected at-large and 8 Alderman, elected two each from 4 wards. The government of Crestwood are responsible for maintaining the quality of life in the City and providing the services and facilities residents require day-to-day. Further, The Mayor, Board of Alderman, and City staff make and execute the decisions which will guide the community on a regular basis and in the future. City staff includes the following departments:

- Administration
- City Clerk
- Finance
- Fire Services
- Municipal Court
- Parks & Recreation
- Police
- Public Works
- Human Resources

## CITY FACILITIES

The City of Crestwood operates five facilities across the community. These include:

- Crestwood Government Center (includes Police Department, Department of Fire Services, and Public Works Department)
- The Public Works Building & Garage
- Community Center & Parks Department Building
- Whitecliff Community and Aquatic Center
- Thomas Sappington Historic Campus

## Planned Improvements

City staff identified the following planned improvements which are expected to be completed in the next 5 to 10 years:

- Based on findings of the BRiC Partnership Report, updates to the HVAC and electric work at the Whitecliff Community Center and Thomas Sappington Campus.
- An evaluation or study of Crestwood Government Center and the Public Works Building & Garage to prepare for renovations.
- Based on Environ Tech roofing inspections, roof replacements at Whitecliff Community Center and the Parks Department Building, as well as Crestwood Government Center and Public Works Building & Garage.
- Over the next two years, construction of the Whitecliff Park Amphitheater.
- Over the next two years, structural stabilization improvements on the Crestwood Government Center and replacement of switch gears and breakers.
- Over the next 3-10 years, replacement of Whitecliff bridge and replacement of switch gears and breakers at Whitecliff Community Center.

# PUBLIC SAFETY

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Public safety in the City of Crestwood is provided by the Police Department and the Department of Fire Services. Both of these departments operate a limited number of facilities but do provide a high quality of services to residents and businesses. Close cooperation and communication with these departments will be essential to identifying necessary improvements and ensuring a high degree of safety within Crestwood.

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Crestwood Police Department employs 26 full-time police officers and 7 staff members. The department operates out of two facilities: The Crestwood Government Center and the Crestwood Community Center. The department reports that there are currently no issues affecting their ability to respond to calls in a timely manner. Planned improvements for the next two years include enclosing the rear of the station for a sally port, and a renovation of the radio room when a new 9-1-1 system is installed.

Operating only two facilities, the Crestwood Police Department provides a high-level of service with a lean building and facility footprint. This places a greater emphasis on the need for consistent maintenance and modernization. Should either facility become outdated or inefficient, this could significantly impact police services within the community. The City should work with the department to regularly review existing facilities and systems and identify necessary improvements to maintain a high quality of service. This should include steps to prioritize projects and ensure that scheduling and funding best meets projected needs as part of the capital improvements program.

## DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES

The Department of Fire Services delivers fire suppression and emergency medical response services, as well as annual fire inspections and other processes to prevent fire emergencies. This includes a Smoke Detector Program which provides detectors to residents and aids with battery replacement. The department operates out of a single Engine House located at the Crestwood Government Center and has an ISO rating of 4. An ISO classification is a rating that scores the level of fire safety response on a scale of I-10, with I being the best rating.

Operating out of only a single facility places greater emphasis on the need for regular maintenance and upgrades to the Engine House. The Engine House is reported as sufficient, but will need to be prioritized for reinvestment as part of capital planning. The City should work with the department to conduct regular reviews of the existing facility and systems, identifying improvements which will be necessary to maintain a high quality of service.

# PUBLIC WORKS

The Public Works Department is critical to the City's operation and will play a central role in implementation of plan recommendations, including right-of-way improvements. The Department provides professional, technical, and maintenance services with regards to infrastructure within Crestwood. This includes the design and oversight of construction for public projects and improvements. The department also oversees both the Public Works Building & Garage and the Parks Department Building.

Planned improvements within the Public Works department include:

## Over the next two years

- Replacement of the roof and exterior upgrades to the Park Operations Facility
- Construct a new pavilion in Whitecliff Park
- Make improvements to the walking bridges at Sanders Park and Crestwood Park
- Complete street maintenance projects

## Over the next 3 to 10 years

- Construct new lighting at the baseball fields in Whitecliff Park
- Construct a new playground at Rayburn Park
- Construct a new amphitheater in Whitecliff Park
- Construct a new bridge or roadway leading to Whitecliff Park
- Possibly make upgrades at the Whitecliff Quarry
- Possibly make Reco Avenue a thru-street

The Public Works department reported existing issues with flooding in Crestwood, particularly along the City's three creeks and at the Public Works Building & Garage. The creeks are prone to flash flooding which causes occasional issues and has resulted in street closures in the past. The City should review floodwater management systems and identify the need for mitigation of floodwater within the 100-year floodplain. In particular, any areas that experience regular flooding, such as roadways and the Public Works Building & Garage, should be studied and improved to reduce the potential for future flooding events.

The department also indicated difficulties with high traffic volumes along major arterial streets and concern for the maintenance of roadways, sidewalks, paths. The City should work with the department to review existing infrastructure, particularly for transportation, and determine both current needs to maintain a high level of service, as well as future needs such as road repaving. This assessment process should be used to develop a long-range transportation investment plan that is tied to a multi-year capital improvement program (CIP).

# EDUCATION

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Public education in Crestwood is provided by the Lindbergh School District, which includes grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12th. Multiple communities and unincorporated areas are included within the district, most prominently including neighboring Sunset Hills. Three district schools are located within Crestwood itself: Crestwood Elementary School, Long Elementary School, and Truman Middle School.

The District's High School, Lindbergh High School, is located south of the community in Sappington. The Lindbergh School District is nationally recognized for academics and was listed as the number one district in the state for academic achievement K-12 from 2010 to 2014. Residents consistently discussed the strength of local education and its role in significantly increasing Crestwood's appeal.

The school district indicated that they are generally over-capacity, with Crestwood and Long elementary schools exceeding their capacity yet both have growing enrollment numbers. In particular, Kindergarten through 3rd grade have seen a marked increase in enrollment, placing greater demand facilities and programming. The district would like to add gymnasiums at both elementary schools in Crestwood; however, this would require approval of a bond issue, therefore no specific plans are being pursued.

The City should work cooperatively with the Lindbergh School District and other communities within the district boundaries to address challenges related to capacity and facility needs. The City should consider establishing "2+2" type programs with representatives from Sunset Hills and the City of Crestwood to directly partner with the Lindbergh School District. Such programs provide an informal and collaborative opportunity to jointly plan for community development initiatives as well as physical improvements.

"2+2" is an informal term for the types of joint City/School District ad hoc committees that have been formed in a number of communities in the country. 2+2 Programs include two elected board members from both the municipality and their school district, along with the City Administrator and Superintendent(s), who meet as a group to discuss community issues that impact both organizations; the outcome is to identify opportunities for a jointly-designed response.

Public education is a significant factor in a community's appeal to new residents, thus the City should be willing to support the school district in maintaining its high quality. Working cooperatively, the City and District should explore potential solutions to reduce strains on capacity for existing facilities. In addition, the district should conduct a review of all facilities and identify long- and short-term improvement projects to keep schools updated and modern.

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

In addition to the Lindbergh School District, education is also provided by three private schools located within Crestwood. These include:

- Christ Community Lutheran School
- Queen of the Hold Rosary Academy
- Our Lade of Providence

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## City Facilities

Thomas Sappington  
Historic Campus

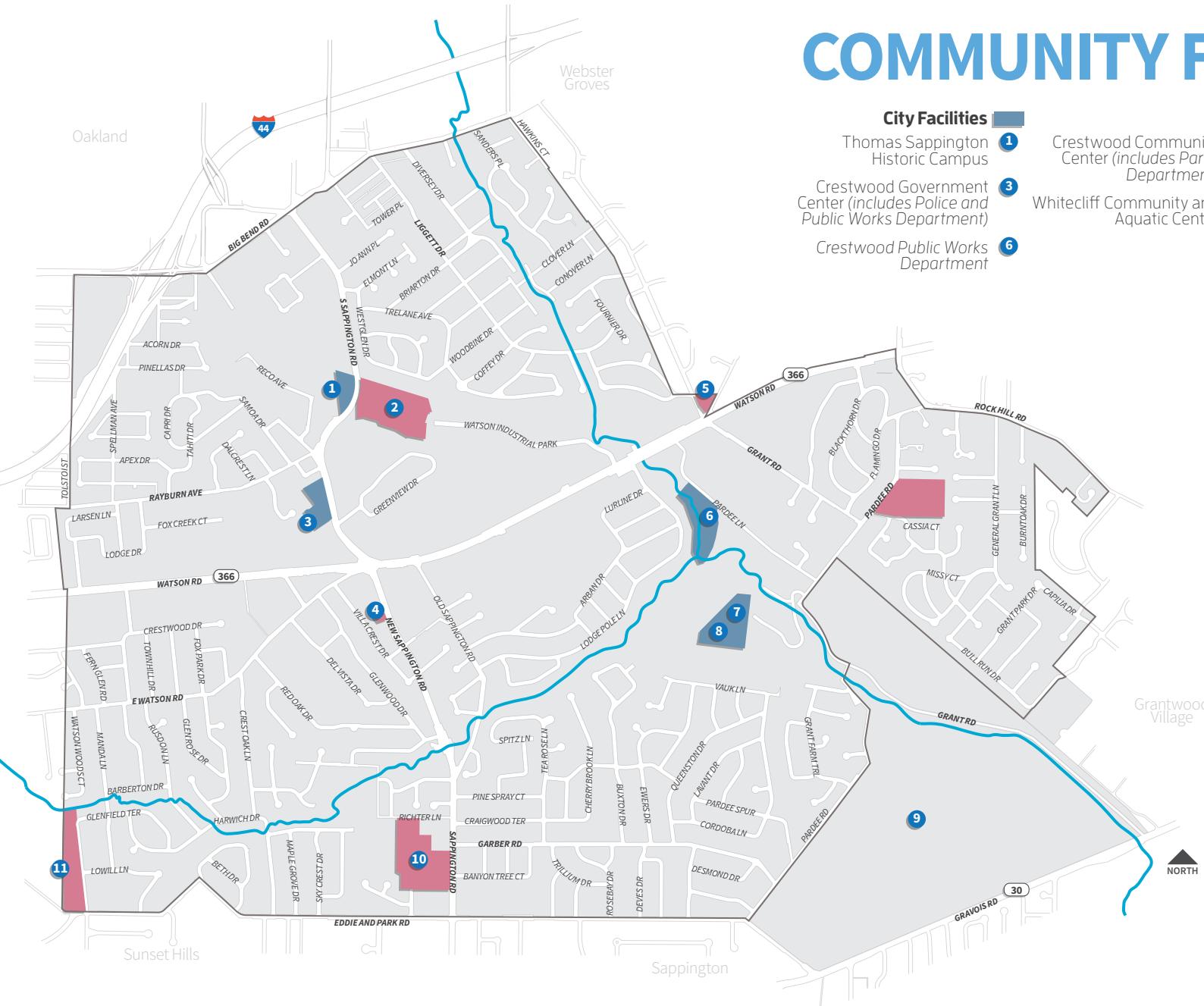
Crestwood Government  
Center (includes Police and  
Public Works Department)

Crestwood Public Works  
Department

## Education

- Crestwood Elementary School **2**
- Christ Community Lutheran School\* **4**
- Queen of the Holy Rosary Academy\* **5**
- Our Lady of Providence\* **9**
- Long Elementary School **10**
- Truman Middle School **11**

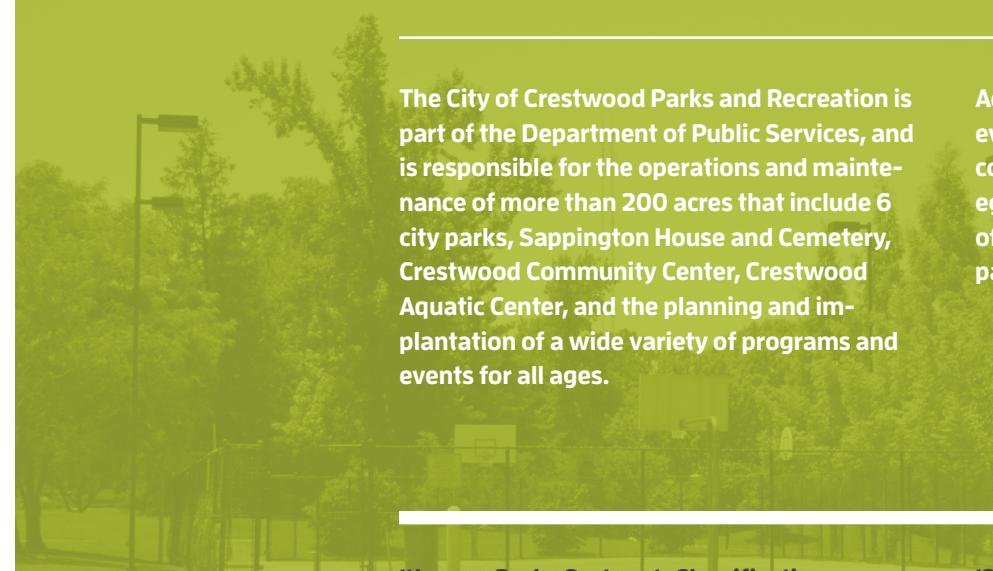
\* indicates the educational facility is privately-owned





# 8 PARKS, OPEN SPACE & ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

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The City of Crestwood Parks and Recreation is part of the Department of Public Services, and is responsible for the operations and maintenance of more than 200 acres that include 6 city parks, Sappington House and Cemetery, Crestwood Community Center, Crestwood Aquatic Center, and the planning and implantation of a wide variety of programs and events for all ages.



Additionally, the department hosts special events for the community, including free concerts, arts and crafts, pizza with Santa, an egg hunt, and a kid's triathlon. The department office is located in Whitecliff Park, the largest park in the City.

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II4	Parks System & Classifications
II6	Parkland Needs
II6	Parkland Access
II8	Parks Master Planning & Capital Projects
II9	Open Space

I20	Environmental Features
I21	Topography
I22	Gravois Creek
I22	Whitecliff Park Quarry Site
I23	Tree Preservation & Urban Forestry
I24	Floodplain Management

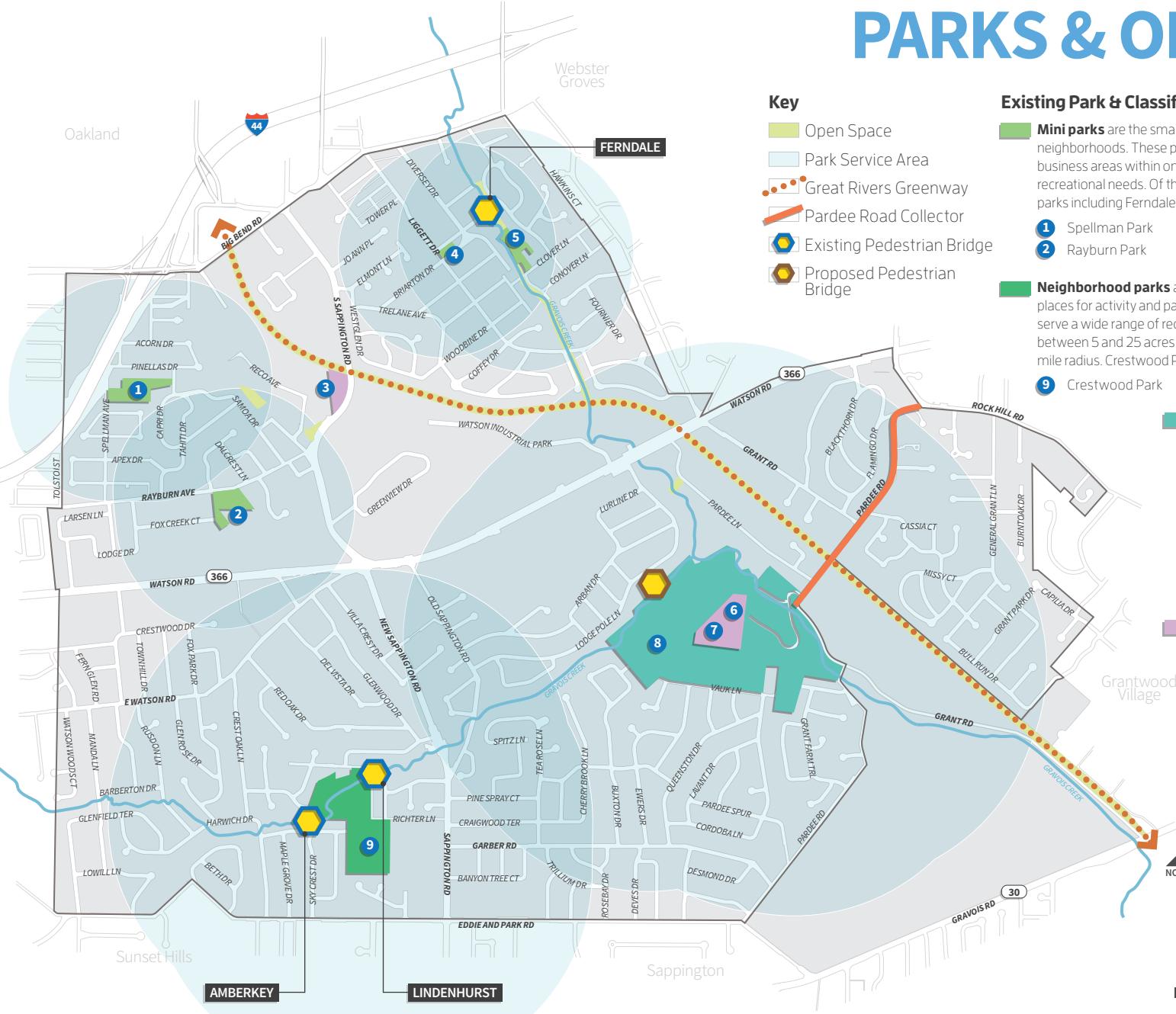
# PARKS SYSTEM & CLASSIFICATIONS

Parks and facilities of the City of Crestwood can be classified into four groups: Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, and Special Use Areas. Each category serves different needs of the community, creating an overall parks system. A complete parks system should include a range of park sizes and purposes to provide residents with a variety of recreational opportunities, both within close proximity and as local destinations.



Park Name	Crestwood Park	Ferndale Park	Rayburn Park	Sanders	Spellman Park	Whitecliff Park
Acres	2	1	3.3	4.2	3	85
Park Type	Neighborhood Park	Mini Park	Mini Park	Mini Park	Mini Park	Community Park
Service Area	½ mile	¼ mile	¼ mile	¼ mile	¼ mile	½ mile
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Trail</li> <li>Sports field</li> <li>Restroom</li> <li>Picnic pavilion</li> <li>Tennis court</li> <li>Sledding hill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Picnic Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Tennis court</li> <li>Picnic area</li> <li>Multi-use court</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Pond</li> <li>Picnic area</li> <li>Sports field</li> <li>Tennis court</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground</li> <li>Trail</li> <li>Pond</li> <li>Picnic area</li> <li>Picnic pavilion</li> <li>Restroom</li> <li>Multi-use court</li> <li>Sand volleyball court</li> <li>Sports field</li> <li>Tennis Court</li> <li>Community Center</li> <li>Outdoor Aquatic Complex</li> </ul>

# PARKS & OPEN SPACE



## Key

- Open Space
- Park Service Area
- Great Rivers Greenway
- Pardee Road Collector
- Existing Pedestrian Bridge
- Proposed Pedestrian Bridge

## Existing Park & Classification

**Mini parks** are the smallest parks, usually contained within residential neighborhoods. These parks are less than 5 acres, and serve residential or business areas within one-quarter mile radius; providing limited or small scale recreational needs. Of the six parks in the City of Crestwood, four are mini parks including Ferndale Park, Rayburn Park, Sanders Park, and Spellman Park.

- 1 Spellman Park
- 2 Rayburn Park
- 4 Ferndale Park
- 5 Sanders Park

**Neighborhood parks** are the basic component of a park system, offering places for activity and passive recreation within a neighborhood. These parks serve a wide range of recreational needs within the community and are between 5 and 25 acres. The service area for a neighborhood park is one-half mile radius. Crestwood Park is the City of Crestwood's only neighborhood park.

- 9 Crestwood Park

**Community parks** are designated to meet the needs of several neighborhoods and the greater community at large. Encompassing a larger area of 25 to 150 acres, community parks offer places for active and passive recreation as well as space for social and community gathering. The service area for community parks is a two-mile radius, and the City of Crestwood's only community park is Whitecliff Park.

- 8 Whitecliff Park

**Special use areas** are parks and recreational areas that have a specialized purpose, such as a recreation center, sports complex, or unique open space. The City of Crestwood Parks and Recreation Department operates three special use areas within the City:

- 3 Sappington House Historical Site
- 6 Crestwood Community Center
- 7 Crestwood Aquatic Center

## PARKLAND NEEDS

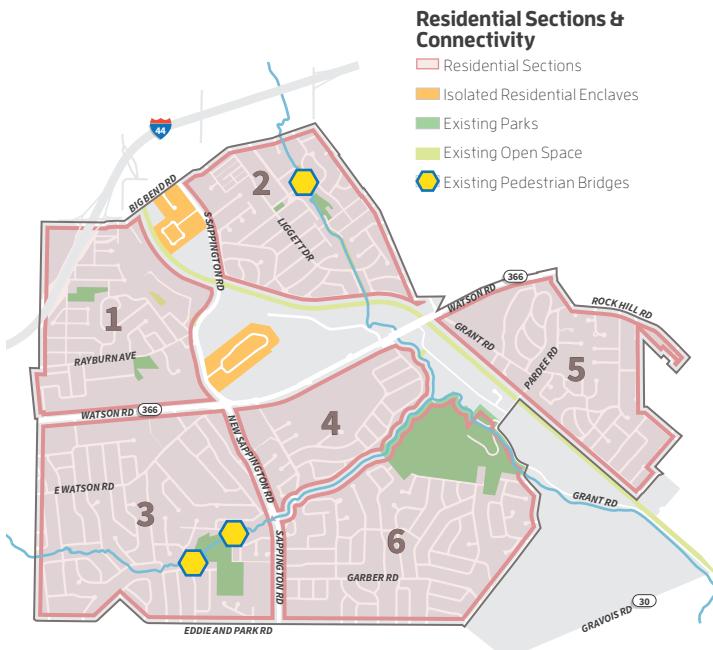
The Crestwood Parks and Recreation Department includes 117.5 acres of developed parkland with an overall level of service of 10 acres of total park space per 1,000 residents. While the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) no longer publishes "National Standards," the 2016 Field Report has found that the typical park and recreation agency has 9.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, and has 1 park per 2,277 residents. According to these findings, the City of Crestwood surpasses the typical community by 0.5 acres per 1,000 residents, and provides 1 park per 1,988 residents.

The City's population is not expected to grow considerably over the next decade, and there are limited areas for potential annexation, therefore a large increase in demand for more parks and recreation facilities and programs are not anticipated. However, Crestwood must ensure that it prioritizes capital funds for two priorities: (1) to maintain the level of quality of existing facilities and not to defer maintenance, and (2) modernize and enhance existing facilities to meet the tastes and needs of future residents. Integrating the parks master planning process into the City's multi-year capital improvement program is critical in achieving these aims.

## PARKLAND ACCESS

In general, the City of Crestwood's neighborhoods are well-served by existing parks. The community features a purposeful hierarchy of parks and virtually all residents are within a short drive of a variety of park types within the community. Whitecliff and Crestwood parks are both signature destination parks and serve the entire community. But like many established suburban areas, Crestwood features connectivity challenges between residential neighborhoods and parks due to an auto-dominated environment. The City would benefit from new investments in improving accessibility and mobility between Crestwood's parks and the housing they serve.

Certain residential areas could benefit from bicycle and pedestrian access to nearby parks. The City is generally divided into six sections in these regards. Sections 1, 2, 3, and 6 all have convenient pedestrian and cyclist access to existing parks; some of this accessibility and mobility is facilitated by the presence pedestrian "foot bridges" over the creek, such as the ones at Amberley Drive, Lindenhurst Drive, and Ferndale Drive. These sections could still be better served if sidewalks were upgraded, widened, or added to both sides of the street; further, crosswalks could be improved at key intersections, particularly where local residential streets cross collectors and arterials. Bike lanes could also be added to these streets and intersections to facilitate neighborhood cycling mobility to the parks.



Despite these areas of town, Sections 4 and 5 present accessibility and mobility challenges. Section 4, is generally aligned along Arban Drive, and is bound by Watson Road, Sappington Road, and creeks to the east and south. These corridors are all challenging to pedestrians and cyclists trying to access City parks. Although Whitecliff Park is immediately adjacent to Section 4, there is no existing pedestrian "foot bridge" and the most likely route is to drive to the park.

Section 5 lacks sidewalks and local residential streets all flow into Pardee Road. Pardee is a collector which crosses Grant's Trail at a single access point for the neighborhood. Pardee Road is the route into Whitecliff Park, which is the nearest open space and parkland for the residents of Section 5.

Both of these sections and residential areas of town would benefit from improved connectivity to existing parks. The City should further study accessibility from a pedestrian and cyclist policy standpoint; this could be addressed through a Bike-Ped Master Plan for the City. Solutions could include the addition of bike lanes and paths, enhanced or new sidewalks, foot bridges over creeks, and improved crosswalks that accommodate pedestrians and cyclists through new amenities.

# PARKS MASTER PLANNING & PLANNED CAPITAL PROJECTS

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The City of Crestwood does not currently have a Parks Master Plan; but there is an existing Whitecliff Master Plan completed in 1999, which has some elements of a Parks Master Plan. These elements include an overall parkland needs assessment, a demographic observation report, and an overview of community input. The recommendations, however, only identify recommended improvements for Whitecliff Park. Further, this analysis is nearly two decades old now.

While some of these recommendations are still in the process of being implemented, the City of Crestwood should create a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to solidify the improvement and project priorities of the community. The master plan should analyze, in more detail, the existing parks and recreation facilities and identify opportunities to provide better service and access to underserved areas of the community.

Should new parkland dedication prove too difficult due to the already built-out nature of the community, it would be beneficial to consider partnerships with schools who have facilities that have the capacity to be used after school hours by members of the public, either programmed or not.

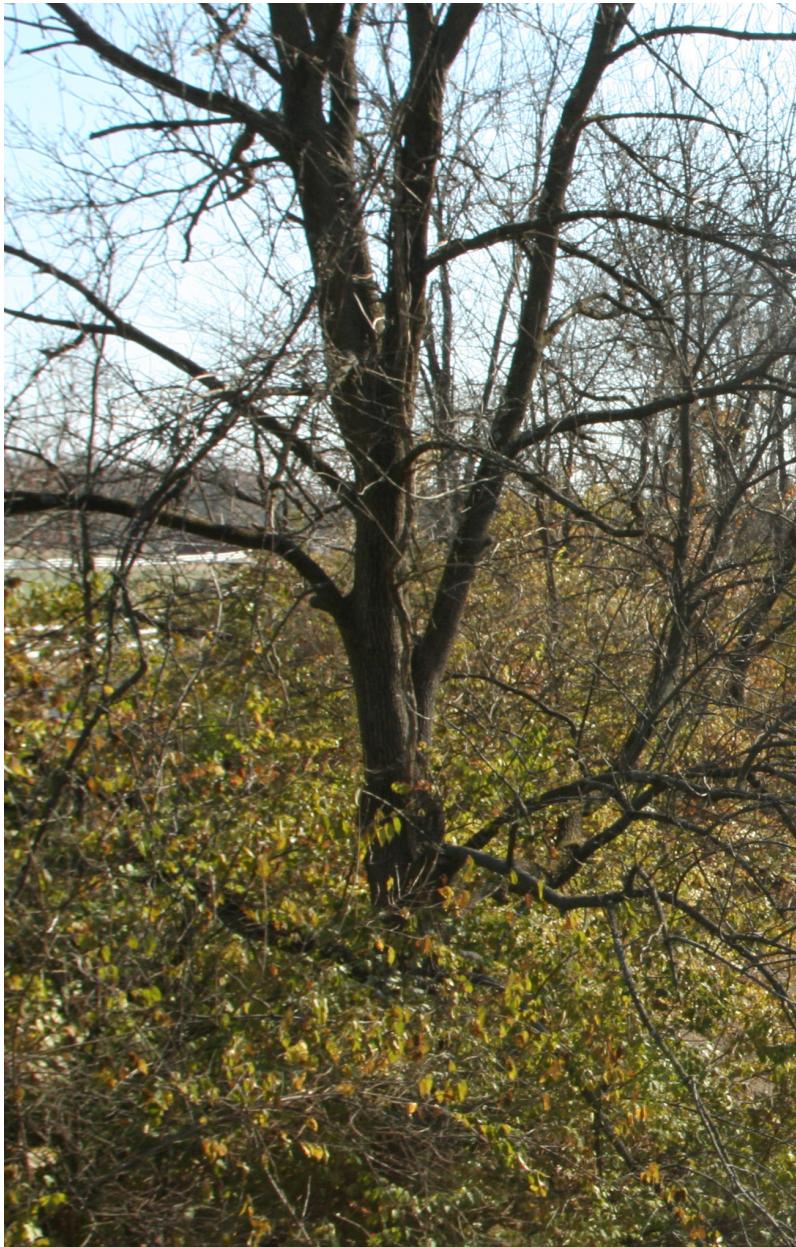
Currently planned improvements include, the City of Crestwood Parks and Recreation Department has plans to make building improvements to the Community Center, add an amphitheater and replace a pavilion in Whitecliff Park, and make playground improvements in Rayburn Park. Additionally, there are long term plans to add a boardwalk/trail around the quarry pond in Whitecliff Park. These proposed improvements are also included in the Community Facilities & Infrastructure chapter among other projects.

# OPEN SPACE

Natural areas within and around the City of Crestwood generally consist of small-scale wooded areas. These features play an important role in the local environmental system, providing natural flood control measures. Large tree-stands and wooded areas are generally located near Gravois Creek, and in Whitecliff and Sanders Parks. These undeveloped areas are valued by the community as they provide a relief from urbanized areas and lend to the natural identity of Crestwood.

Maintaining open space area for environmental and recreational use should continue to be a key priority for the City of Crestwood and the Crestwood community. The City of Crestwood should consider establishing a conservation easement program to preserve significant natural, historical, and cultural resources. Conservation easements are legal agreements between the conservation easement holder (the City of Crestwood) and private property owners, which places permanent restrictions on the development or use of land for the purposes of conservation. The City of Crestwood should prioritize key sites for conservation, the focus of which should be environmentally sensitive areas such as the Gravois Creek, and unique environmental amenities such as Grant's Trail and the quarry area in Whitecliff Park.





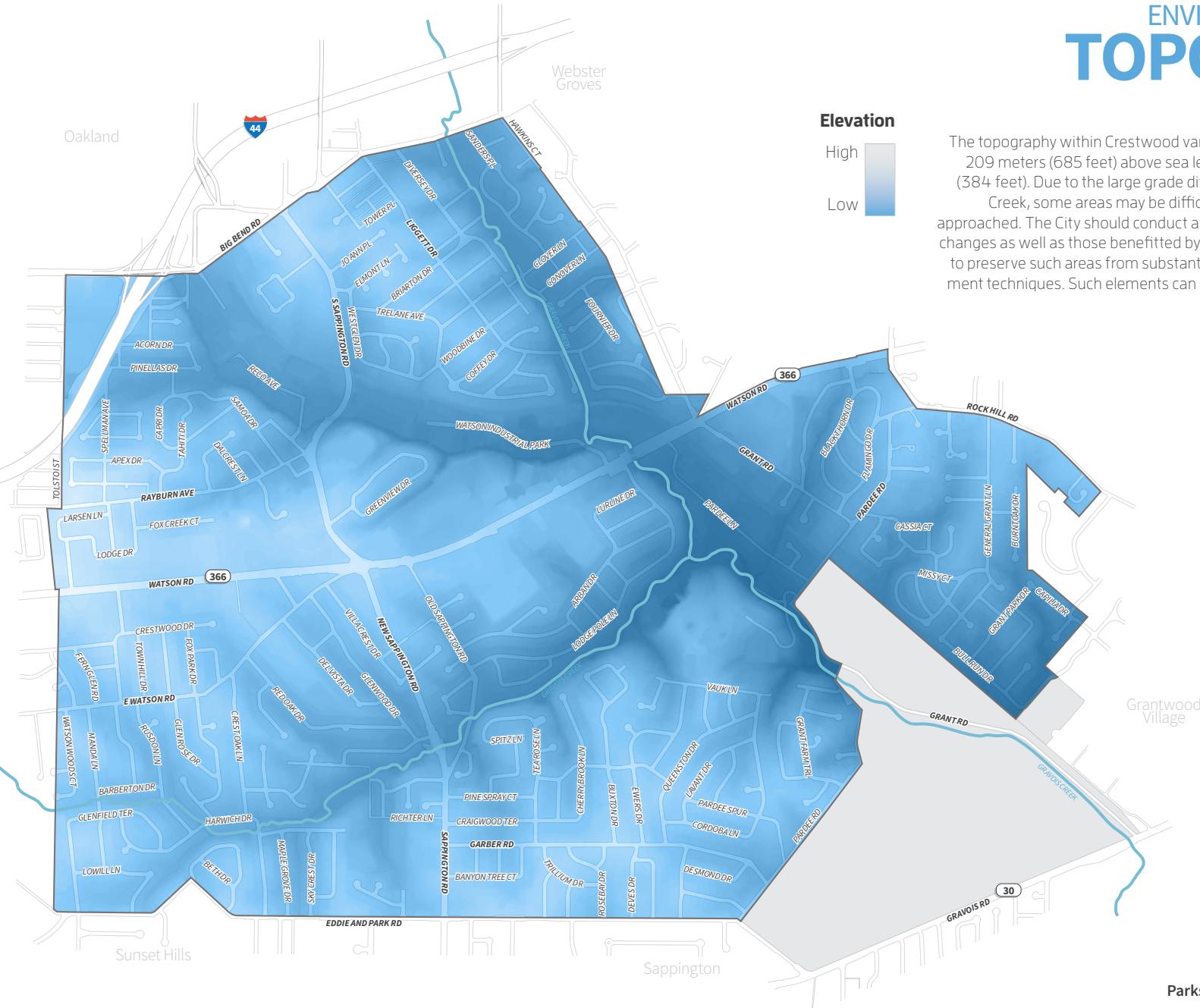
## ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

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Although Crestwood is a built-out suburban area its environmental and natural features are still an important community characteristic. The City includes mature street trees and other wooded areas, creeks and waterways, and a rolling topography. Many of these areas combine together to create appealing greenways and natural buffering between different areas of town. These are important community assets and the City should work to ensure they are maintained, preserved, and even improved.

Outside resources such as the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and examples of best practices from other communities should also be consulted when considering development that could impact Crestwood's environmental features.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES TOPOGRAPHY



The topography within Crestwood varies widely, from a high elevation of about 209 meters (685 feet) above sea level, to a low elevation of about 117 meters (384 feet). Due to the large grade differences generally at and around Gravois Creek, some areas may be difficult to redevelop and should be sensitively approached.

The City should conduct a study of parcels impacted by steep grade changes as well as those benefitted by appealing topography and identify a plan to preserve such areas from substantial tree removal and cut-and-fill development techniques. Such elements can be incorporated into the City's zoning and development regulations.

## GRAVOIS CREEK

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The Gravois Creek is a tributary of the River des Peres in South St. Louis County. Gravois Creek also has small tributaries that run throughout the community and generally confluence in the southeastern quadrant of the municipality. One tributary runs from Big Bend Road and I-44, southeast through the community to Whitecliff Park. The creek also has a tributary that runs from Big Bend and Sanders Drive, along Sanders Park, and joining at Watson Industrial Park Drive.

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources scheduled a portion of the Gravois Creek (just south of Crestwood city limits) for Total Maximum Daily Load development in 2013, for bacteria in 2015, and chloride in 2017. These are important efforts to improve the health and water quality of this environmental feature. The City should establish a long-term objective to mitigate the water quality of Gravois Creek and its tributaries to be developed as greenways and waterways that are safe for recreation use by the public.

The City of Crestwood should work with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), and adjacent communities to ensure that the creek is brought up to healthy environmental standards and meets the whole body contact criterion. Further, the City should partner with groups such as the Missouri Stream Team and the River des Peres Watershed Coalition to monitor and manage the creek's health, as well as organize events such as the River des Peres Trash Bash with Crestwood as an active partner.

## WHITECLIFF PARK QUARRY SITE

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The quarry site in Whitecliff Park represents an important opportunity in the community. The City could work to transform a former aggregate mine into a destination community park and iconic outdoor recreation feature.

The City should maximize the future use of this site as a parks and recreation amenity. The 1999 Whitecliff Park Master Plan made recommendations to include a boardwalk with fishing pier, two overlook decks, an education pavilion, new primary and secondary trials, and a defined historic feature from the existing concrete pillars that once held a rail line leading to the quarry. These improvement recommendations should be revisited and implemented to ensure that Whitecliff Park is being used to its greatest potential by both residents and visitors of Crestwood. An updated master plan for this site could be included as part of a parks master plan created by the City of Crestwood.

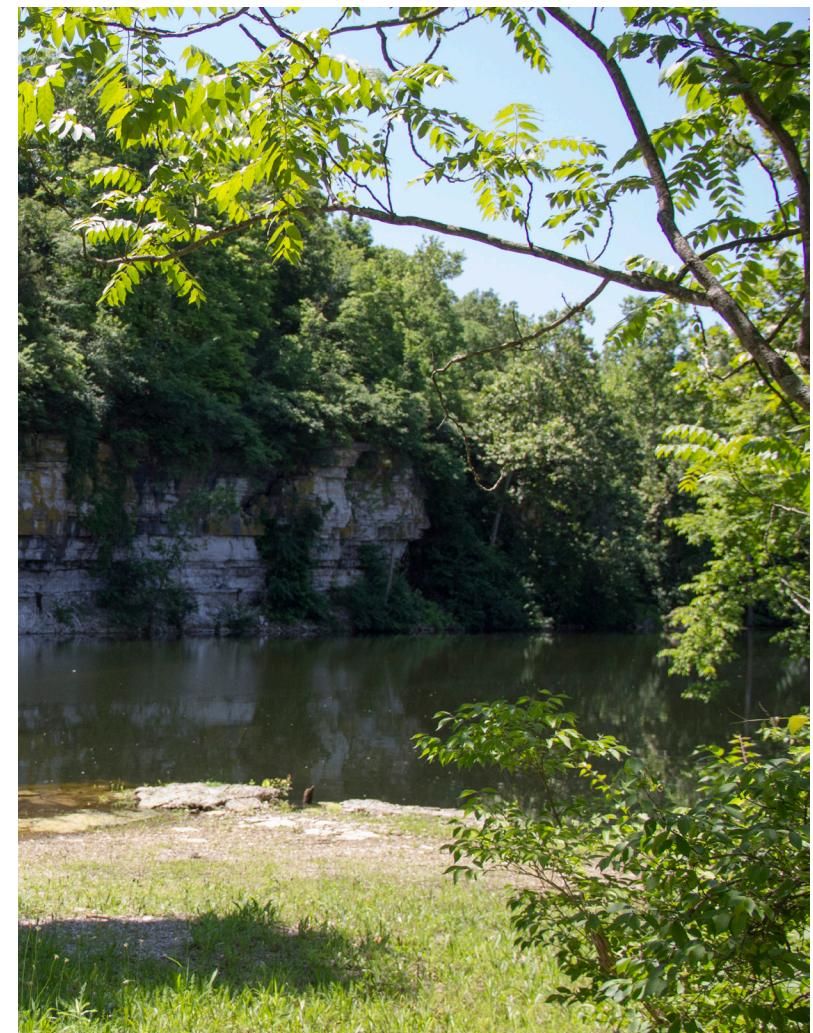
# TREE PRESERVATION & URBAN FORESTRY

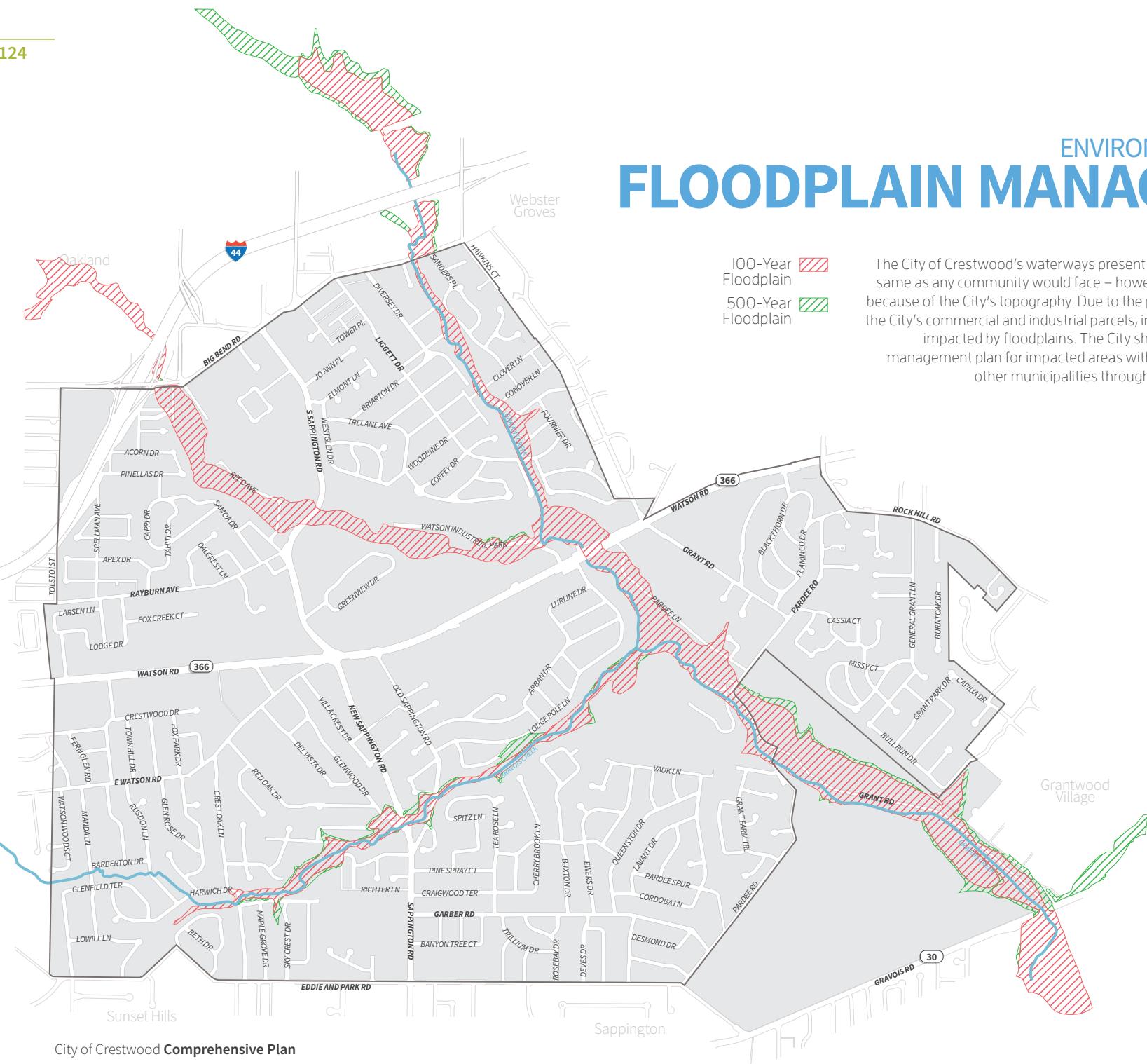
More and more communities are beginning to recognize the very tangible benefits that trees provide in the urban environment. Healthy trees reduce air and noise pollution, provide energy-saving shade and cooling, furnish habitat for wildlife, enhance aesthetics and property values, and are an important contributor to community image, pride, and quality of life. Furthermore, many communities have realized that in order to protect and enhance their valuable tree resources, it is useful to view and manage their trees as a cohesive unit, the community or urban forest.

There are four main types of tree protection ordinances:

- **Street tree ordinances.** These contain provisions regarding the planting, maintenance and removal of trees within public rights of way which may pose a public hazard or impact public interest.
- **Tree protection ordinances.** These protect native trees, tree canopy or trees with unique attributes based on species, historical significance, aesthetic, size or age. They usually institute a permit requirement for a protected tree to be removed, pruned or encroached upon.
- **Buffer or view ordinances.** These ordinances protect the views of adjacent property owners in commercial and residential developments and establish specifications for noise, visual and riparian buffers.
- **Landscape Ordinance.** These required landscaping provisions, such as the placement and number of trees planted, types of suitable plants or trees and more.

The City of Crestwood has been recognized as a Tree City USA in the past and it does address tree planting to a degree in its development regulations. The City should consider adopting additional requirements for new development to further its tree population, as well as strengthen its tree preservation policies. Opportunities also exist to require tree plantings in dedicated greenway buffers along waterways in the City, including requirements placed on private property.





## ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

# FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

The City of Crestwood's waterways present floodplain management issues the same as any community would face – however, they are magnified to a degree because of the City's topography. Due to the proximity to Gravois Creek, many of the City's commercial and industrial parcels, including areas on Watson Road, are impacted by floodplains. The City should adopt a long-range floodplain management plan for impacted areas within Crestwood, and coordinate with other municipalities throughout the River des Peres watershed.

This past winter, the St. Louis area experienced record-setting flooding with some rivers cresting higher than that of the Flood of 1993. By implementing floodplain management and development standards a community can reduce the risks associated with traditional development in floodplains, including flood damage and floodplain expansion. There are many ways to manage floodplains responsibly:

- **Dedicated open space.** Returning floodplain areas to open space is the best environmental practice and has the least amount of impact on the environment; however, this method does consume some of the community's developable land for open space. In Crestwood this would require retrofitting greenways and vegetated buffers along waterways, which would impact private property.
- **Flood-resistant design.** One way to develop in the floodplain while still minimizing the effects, is to develop with flood-resistant design and/or architecture. This development style can be applied to any type of development through the use of flood damage-resistant building materials, anchoring, elevated building design, and backflow and automatic shut-off valves in sanitary sewer lines. In Crestwood, this approach would need to be incorporated into updated zoning and building codes.
- **Dredging and widening.** While both of the examples above are methods of handling development differently in floodplains, there are methods of intervening with environmental features to ensure that development is not impacted by floodplains. One of those methods is dredging and widening; or excavating waterways lower and wider to allow more room for water to pass more quickly and minimize floodplains. This tactic has not been used in the Crestwood area in recent years and would require close coordination and approvals from a variety of federal, state, and regional agencies.
- **Creek relocation.** Another method of environmental intervention is to redirect waterways all together, through another area of the community where the impact would be more appropriate and less impactful on development. This tactic has not been used in the Crestwood area in recent years and would require close coordination and approvals from a variety of federal, state, and regional agencies.
- **Low Impact Development.** Finally, a community can choose to integrate low impact site development methods in combination with any of the aforementioned approaches. This might include bio-retention cells or gardens, amended soils, porous pavements, and native vegetation, among other site development strategies. In Crestwood, this approach would need to be incorporated into updated zoning and building codes.



## 9

# COMMUNITY IMAGE, IDENTITY & URBAN DESIGN

Throughout community outreach efforts, it has been clear that Crestwood desires an updated community image and reputation in the St. Louis region. Many of the residents, business owners, and community stakeholders have made it clear that they see the next 5 years as a period of rapid redevelopment and even rebirth in Crestwood. The mall is finally being redeveloped, young families are moving into the community, renovating, and modernizing the housing stock, and the potential for greater economic development is clear in a number of proposed projects. Simply, that's the story Crestwood citizens want to tell the region. And it is clear there is some frustration that message is not getting out to everyone in the St. Louis area.

For decades Crestwood was known for the Crestwood Plaza, first as a major regional destination, and then later as a symbol for economic decline and shifts in the metropolitan area further into West County. The community seems to recognize that for many residents of the St. Louis region that is still the image they see when they think of Crestwood in 2016. As part of this planning process, Crestwood wants to change that mindset. Updating the City's brand is timely. Crestwood is one of the most desirable established suburban communities, featuring high-quality neighborhoods, schools, parks, and other amenities. The story about Crestwood as a community needs to be more complete and well-rounded, as well as updated for the next generation of St. Louisans. This chapter aims to provide the City of Crestwood with the fundamental tools to initiate a strategy to identify, brand, and market the new image of Crestwood.

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I28  
I32

Community Branding  
Marketing & Promotion



## COMMUNITY BRANDING

Branding is a tool that Crestwood can utilize to define the community and develop a long-term vision for a place that is compelling to residents and visitors alike. Ultimately, it can be used to influence and shape positive perceptions of a location, creating a foundation that helps make Crestwood a place that is desirable for residents to call home, visitors to spend time, and business and investors to develop.

As a key implementation component of the City of Crestwood Comprehensive Plan, initiating a successful community branding strategy requires honest and thoughtful responses to the following questions:

- What does the City of Crestwood stand for today—what are the strengths and weaknesses?
- What can and should Crestwood stand for in the future, and how can the City represent that?
- What will make the City of Crestwood unique, valued, and attractive to target businesses and consumer audiences?
- How will the City make this new positioning become a reality?
- What role do key stakeholders and community groups have in bringing the brand to life?
- How will the City measure success of their strategy?

Although the Crestwood Comprehensive Plan and process has provided answers and insight into some of these questions, there remains work to be done. A Comprehensive Plan cannot replace the need for a well-defined community marketing and branding strategy. However, the conclusion of the Comprehensive Plan is an appropriate time to begin such efforts. While the process varies by community, the following steps are commonly considered:

- Define objectives
- Understand the target audience
- Identify the current brand image
- Set the aspirational brand identity
- Develop the positioning
- Create value propositions
- Execute the brand strategy

## STEP 1 DEFINE OBJECTIVES

Before beginning the process, the City of Crestwood should identify what the community branding strategy is trying to achieve. What results is the City seeking from the development of the strategy? Is the primary objective to attract and retain residents? Drive commerce? Attract visitors? Change current perceptions? While participants of the comprehensive planning process identified a desire to see a change in the current perceptions of the community, it would be beneficial for the City to initiate outreach specific to this cause to gain a more detailed understanding because the answer to these questions and the priorities among them will help to define the scope of the project and the activities that form the approach.

While the Crestwood Comprehensive Plan focuses on improvements and projects to be undertaken within the community, it also provides an initial understanding of objectives the City and community share for Crestwood's future. Through community outreach, the City of Crestwood was envisioned as a bike-town, a commercial destination, and a historical gem. Reviewing community outreach and the Plan's vision for the community will help to provide a foundation for branding objectives that best respond to community needs and desires.

## STEP 2 UNDERSTAND THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Understanding all the community users can be a difficult step in place branding; as it is tempting to put everyone into that group. This step will require the Crestwood community to decide what types of people the City of Crestwood wants to attract. These groups should be minimized in number, however, and prioritized based on importance to the objectives of the branding strategy. Focusing on a few specific audiences can uncover more detailed and specific insights rather than gathering a variety of general insights.

While others should be considered, a few target audiences were specifically highlighted throughout the planning process. This includes all residents of Crestwood, young professionals, new families, and senior citizens.

## STEP 3 IDENTIFY THE CURRENT BRAND IMAGE

What does the City of Crestwood give people today? Is it Whitecliff Park and the Aquatic Center? Is it Watson Road service businesses? Is the Sappington House and the Barn? Has the image of Crestwood changed over time? Was it the Crestwood Plaza? This step in the process is designed to gain insight on the benefits and associations that residents, business owners and investors, and visitors have with the community; to assess the gap between the current state and the desired state.

Community outreach conducted through the comprehensive planning process establishes an understanding of the current identity of Crestwood. For example, members of the community were asked through an online survey, to describe the current state of Crestwood.

While some noted the area as safe, quiet, and having great potential, there are general concerns about the state of the community's major commercial corridor (Watson Road), especially with the vacated Crestwood Plaza Mall Site, and the lack of a downtown of business node that many other surrounding communities enjoy. Understanding Crestwood's current identity, or as many noted, lack of identity, helps to determine the steps necessary to mend that image.

## STEP 4 SET THE ASPIRATIONAL BRAND IDENTITY

What image does the City of Crestwood want to give to its users? How does the City want the public to describe the community? An aspirational brand identity should be within reach and credible for the brand; crafting the associations you want residents, visitors, stakeholders, business owners, and investors to make when they think of Crestwood.

Sometimes area branding isn't about inventing something, it can be about discovering what's already there. The City of Crestwood could examine the perceived strengths of the community, and build on these to create the aspirational brand identity. Whatever the result, the aspirational brand identity should influence future business and community decisions, and should be an identity the Crestwood community can sustain for a long period of time.

One example would be the lack of recognition for historical assets within the community of Crestwood, including the Sappington House, the Sappington and Father Dickson Cemetery, and the historic Route 66. Additionally, Crestwood is in close proximity to Grant's Farm, which is a unique historic amenity that attracts people to the area from beyond the region.

## STEP 5 DEVELOP THE POSITIONING

What are the benefits that the City of Crestwood wants to own or offer in the minds of the public? Brand positioning is the means for transitioning the community's current image to its aspirational brand identity. It is a promise or benefit that Crestwood wants to own in the minds of the user. For instance, affordability, a high quality of life, abundant natural resources and amenities, active lifestyle conveniences, friendly people, or a fun place to go.

The aspirational brand identity and its associated positioning typically has a long-range horizon. Perceptions of Crestwood will not change overnight, and could require significant changes over time to see the aspirational identity become a reality.

## STEP 6 CREATE VALUE PROPOSITIONS

What does the positioning mean for each user, and what are the messages that should be communicated to influence their perceptions? Once defined, it's important to make the propositions actionable. The key is to take a critical look at the City of Crestwood's characteristics and policies, to ensure that they are aligned to the aspirational brand identity. For example, if the City of Crestwood hopes to identify itself as a place that is inviting to Millennials or young professionals, they might want to encourage later business hours and encourage mixed use development for more integrated walk- and bike-ability, which is appealing to young professionals today, and ensure that no existing policies make it difficult to introduce nightlife businesses.

## STEP 7 EXECUTE THE BRAND STRATEGY

In developing the Crestwood community branding and promotional plan, it is critical to identify every point at which a potential user may come in contact with the brand. Every interaction with the public is an opportunity to enhance or diminish the Crestwood brand. These points of contact may vary widely in form and could include the physical environment, street signage, advertising, brochures, websites, events, and interaction with residents. Much of the execution relies on improving these points of contact to lend credibility to the new brand.

# MARKETING & PROMOTION

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Once Crestwood has identified their brand identity, it will be helpful to market and promote that brand, which supports and reinforces the Crestwood character and how it is represented in the region. There are a number of programs and activities that can be initiated immediately to build interest and awareness of Crestwood and all that it has to offer.

The purpose of these efforts is to bring about a positive view of the City of Crestwood. The ultimate objective is to make the City of Crestwood a familiar and recognized place in the St. Louis region, and for every citizen to recognize the positive value of the community. While these efforts do not need to be directly linked to the branding strategy, it would be beneficial for the branding and marketing and promotional efforts to link together and maintain a cohesive image and support and reinforce their successes.

## Potential Short-Term Actions

Re-establish a regular and public communication vehicle to the community, outside of the Crestwood email list, such as a column in a City Newsletter or social media outlets. While methods of distributing these messages can vary depending on the target audience established in the branding strategy, the communications could include:

- Details of the community planning processes—what is it, why is it being done, its timetable, ongoing progress reports, and opportunities to give input;
- Profiles of new businesses and histories of established businesses;
- Information for upcoming community events;
- Consider updating the City's existing website and adding more contemporary features; and,
- Evaluate budgeting for a printed community newsletter mailed to each business and household in the community.

All of the preceding should be considered in the context of what currently exists in the City of Crestwood. The City of Crestwood and other community partners will be essential to the success of these strategies. However, it is important for as many businesses, stakeholders, residents, and elected and appointed officials to know about, participate in, and support the promotional activities.

## Potential Long-Term Actions

Other the upcoming years, as the City of Crestwood is being re-branded, a comprehensive promotional plan could be created and approved annually to reflect changing activity, perceptions, and needs of the community. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Promotional events, expanded to take place periodically throughout the year, with other organizations.
- Promote a "buy local" campaign that invites customers to consider the benefits of keeping shopping dollars local. This program should either replace or revive The City's existing Discover Crestwood program.
- Directional signage to key areas of the community at entry points; ensuring that all signage is consistent with the City of Crestwood branding strategy.
- Ongoing public relations and community involvement outreach.

## Community Events

Many community outreach participants expressed through the comprehensive planning process, that they would like to see more community events created that bring Crestwood together throughout the year. These events would be a great opportunity to showcase the community's assets and brand identity. Frequent public events and a variety of distinctive activities help establish communities with a sense of vibrancy and energy within the St. Louis region. The City of Crestwood should lead a community-wide planning exercise to evaluate existing events, assess the potential to expand the free concerts and picnics, and launch new potential community events and festivals.

The City recently experienced success with a new initiative and built some positive momentum with the Food Truck Party at the Plaza event; the City could evaluate modifying the event and making it an annual summer kick-off tradition. Other potential events could include developing a series of neighborhood block parties that emphasize the residential and family character of Crestwood, a history or heritage days event that celebrates Crestwood's past, or events that tie into Grant's Farm and that property's proximity to Whitecliff Park.

## Watson Road

For most St. Louis area citizens, they know Crestwood from their experience traveling Watson Road. Local residents are familiar with the City's housing, residential character, schools, parks, events, and other facets of daily life in Crestwood, but when developing a brand identity for visitors, consumers, and potential businesses, Watson Road remains the prominent feature of the City.

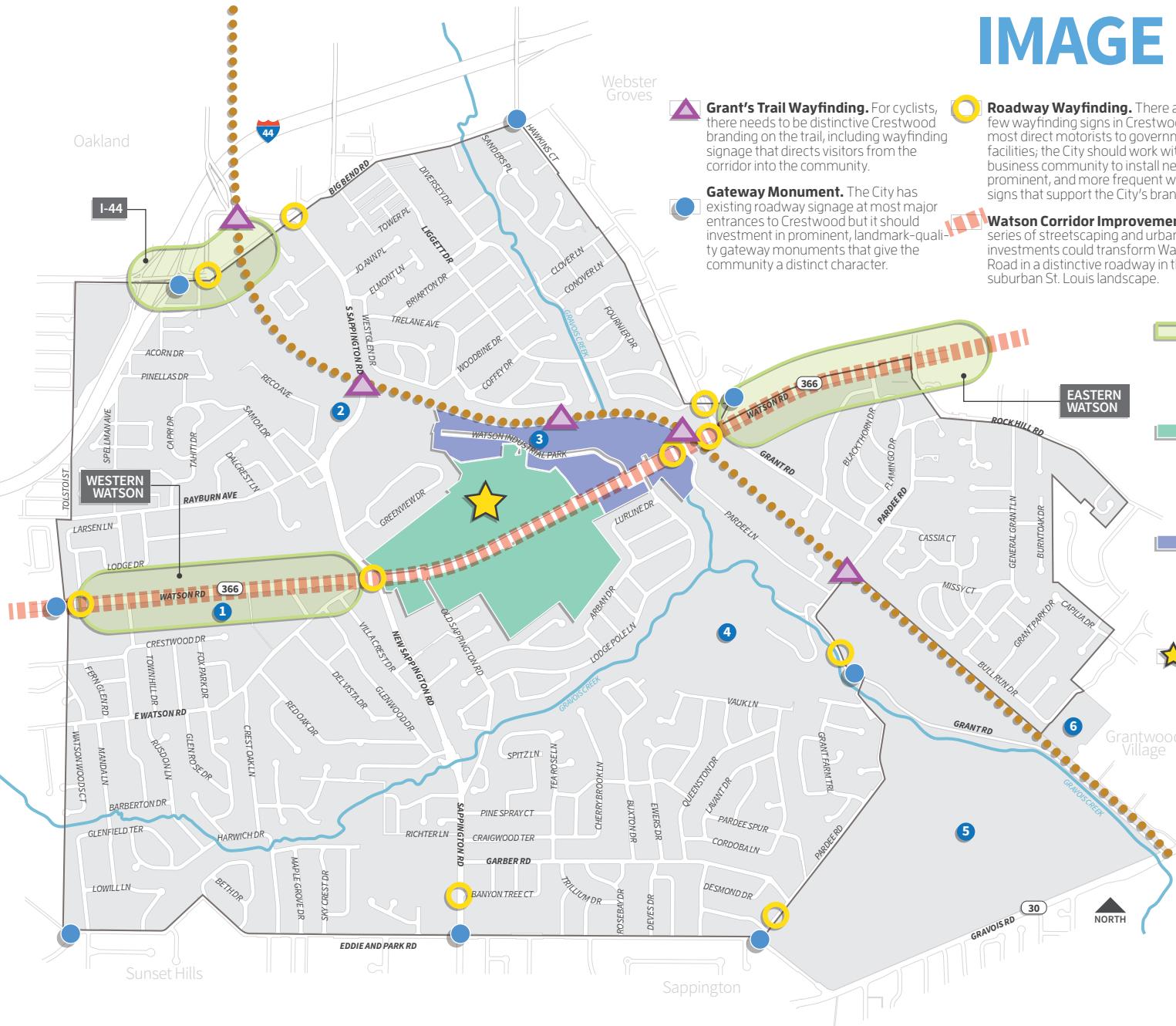
Many residents and stakeholders expressed through the outreach process they would like to create a distinct character for Watson Road so visitors know they are in Crestwood. This is a common challenge in many established suburban communities in large metropolitan areas, where motorists traveling along major state highways have few landmarks, and everywhere starts to blur together.

Some methods that could elevate a clear, distinct Crestwood identity along Watson Road are:

- **Installing unique to Crestwood infrastructure** such as bicycle racks, street and wayfinding signs, landscaped medians, banners, entryway signs, and/or benches as part of an urban design treatment to the roadway and right-of-way.
- **Coordinating a corridor-wide sales event** that invites people of and outside the community to explore and become more familiar with the businesses along this stretch of Watson Road. The City could partner with the Crestwood-Sunset Hills Area Chamber of Commerce in these efforts.
- **Encouraging the development of a dedicated Watson Road Business Association** that promotes a stronger business community and jointly brands and markets the district. This approach could also include joint advertisement purchasing and coordinated marketing. They could also coordinate business hours and services and discuss ways that the City can improve their process and become more business friendly.

Streetscaping, urban design, and other Watson Road elements related to transportation and community facilities are included in both Chapters 5 and 6.

# IMAGE & IDENTITY



**Grant's Trail Wayfinding.** For cyclists, there needs to be distinctive Crestwood branding on the trail, including wayfinding signage that directs visitors from the corridor into the community.

**Gateway Monument.** The City has existing roadway signage at most major entrances to Crestwood but it should invest in prominent, landmark-quality gateway monuments that give the community a distinct character.

**Roadway Wayfinding.** There are very few wayfinding signs in Crestwood and most direct motorists to government facilities; the City should work with the business community to install new, more prominent, and more frequent wayfinding signs that support the City's brand.

**Watson Corridor Improvements.** A series of streetscaping and urban design investments could transform Watson Road in a distinctive roadway in the suburban St. Louis landscape.

**Grant's Trail.** This regional bicycle amenity is well-known throughout St. Louis and is an important destination for visitors to Crestwood; its value to the City should be fully leveraged in branding efforts.

**Creeks & Waterways.** The City's creeks and waterways feature some segments of greenways and wooded areas, but in other segments they could be improved; the City should champion its natural water features as a key part of the community's identity as a destination for outdoor recreation.

**Business District Branding.** The City features a number of business districts, including I-44, and two distinct segments of Watson Road (discussed in the Land Use & Development chapter); these business districts could be branded through signage, banners, and other physical improvements.

**Town Center District Branding.** The mid-block section of Watson Road anchored by the Plaza mall site acts as Crestwood's "town center" – as the area redevelops and hosts community events and activities the business district should be differentiated from other commercial areas in Crestwood and clearly defined and branded.

**Subarea Redevelopment District.** As outlined in the Subarea Plan, the City's vision to transform this light industrial district into a new type of neighborhood for the St. Louis region would be a major component of the City's future identity; it should be signed and branded as a distinct business district and neighborhood.

**Community Focal Point.** The Crestwood Plaza redevelopment will stand as a focal point and defining element of the community in the future. The City should cooperate with the developer and future tenants to ensure the area provides an attractive and inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors from surrounding communities.

**Key Identity Asset / Landmark.** Crestwood features a number of defining locations that give the City its character, spanning from historic sites, destination parks, to iconic Route 66 signage.

- 1 Crestwood Bowl
- 2 Sappington House & Barn
- 3 Watson Industrial Subarea
- 4 Whitecliff Park
- 5 Grant's Farm
- 6 U.S. Grant National Historic Site



# 10 IMPLEMENTATION

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Implementation of the Crestwood Comprehensive Plan is essential to achieving the community's vision for its future. With the planning process complete, the City enters into a longer process of facilitating change and growth over the next 15 to 20 years. This will require a cooperative and dedicated effort from all of Crestwood's stakeholder, including elected and appointed officials, City staff, public agencies, the local business community, property owners, developers, and residents.

This chapter details implementation strategies the City should utilize to implement the central recommendations and policies of the plan. This establishes the "next step" by which the City can continue the process of community planning.

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I38      **Guiding Principles**  
I42      **Potential Funding Sources**

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## ACTIVE USE

The Crestwood Comprehensive Plan is the official policy guide for land use, development, and reinvestment as the City undergoes future development and improvement. The Plan should be regularly consulted by City staff, the Board of Aldermen, and the Planning & Zoning Commission, as well as other elected and appointed officials. The Plan should also guide community facilities and service providers as new facilities, infrastructure, and programming are developed.

The City should ensure that City staff, key stakeholders, department heads, and newly elected or appointed officials understand the purpose and benefits of the Comprehensive Plan through a 'plan orientation' to familiarize individuals with the document. Further, City staff should assist the Board of Aldermen and other boards and commissions in the administration, interpretation, and application of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the community at large will have a direct impact on implementation of the plan, thus it is essential they understand the central themes of the document. Copies of the plan should be made available for free on the City's website and in hard copy for sale at City Hall.

## JURISDICTIONAL COOPERATION & PARTICIPATION

For the Comprehensive Plan to be successful, the City of Crestwood should assume a leadership role in facilitating the cooperation and participation of its local and regional agencies, organizations, and various jurisdictions. Establishing partnerships and maintaining open, clear communication will contribute to a more efficient implementation process. Partners in this endeavor should include:

- Lindbergh School District
- St. Louis County
- Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District
- Great Rivers Greenway
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- Missouri Department of Transportation
- Metro Transit, St. Louis
- Business Community
- Private Property Owners and Developers

In addition to cooperation and participation among local and regional agencies, the City should coordinate with neighboring municipalities and communities. The City should regularly communicate and cooperate with the following adjacent municipalities:

- The City of Kirkwood
- The City of Oakland
- The Town of Grantwood Village
- The City of Webster Groves
- The City of Sunset Hills
- St. Louis County in coordinating within the unincorporated Affton and Sappington communities

## AMENDING DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The City of Crestwood's development regulations are the primary tool for implementing the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations. Upon adoption of the Plan, the City should initiate a process to update the current zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure that regulations reflect current City policy and the future goals of the Crestwood community. Such amendments and updates should include, but are not limited to:

- Reviewing and updating specific zoning designations, including update of the zoning map to reflect the Land Use Plan
- Reviewing and updating subdivision regulations
- Reviewing and updating permitted uses to reflect Land Use designations, particularly the allowance of mixed-use development within commercial zones.
- Adopting design guidelines for commercial corridors within the community

In addition, the City should consider a reformatting or overall update to the City's zoning code to better organize regulations and reflect modern document standards. Sections of the ordinance can be difficult to navigate, redundant, and complex. An update of the entire document should help produce a user-friendly document which is easy to understand and user-friendly for the development community, property owners, and City staff.

## PERIODIC UPDATES

The Crestwood Comprehensive Plan is not a static document, but rather a document that evolves over time. Updates should be made to the Comprehensive Plan to meet changing conditions. The City should maintain a list of possible amendments or issues which may be subject to change, addition, or deletion from the Plan. Although a proposal to amend the Plan can be brought forth by petition at any time, the City should initiate review of the Plan at least every three to five years to ensure that the Plan is in line with potential demographic shifts, new issues, or community interests. This review should coincide with the preparation of the City's budget and future Capital Improvement Plans as well as the preparation of an annual action agenda. This allows recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs to be considered as part of the City's commitments for the upcoming fiscal year.

The City should also review the plan following the completion of major projects or after significant events that may directly affect the community. The Crestwood Plaza redevelopment project is one example of a development which could drastically impact a variety of factors within the community. As such, a review and update of the Plan may be necessary following completion of the project to ensure the Comprehensive Plan is reflective of the community it serves and addresses changes which may affect the City's vision for its future.

## MAINTAIN PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

The Crestwood Comprehensive Plan was supported by public outreach and engagement designed to not only gather input but also keep residents informed of the plan's development. This included outreach events, the project website, interactive outreach tools, newsletters, and other media sources. Outreach is essential to educating a community about the relevance of planning and the City's role in defining its future. Capitalizing on efforts completed through the planning process, the City should work to convey the Plan's major recommendations and overall vision to the entire community. This can be completed through regular updates, coverage of major milestones and projects, and by providing further opportunities for residents to voice their opinion.

The City should develop additional methods by which community members can communicate with the City and obtain information about local planning and development. For example, the City should develop a system for residents to submit questions and concerns which can then be addressed by staff in a timely manner. The City should also provide accessible materials, both online and in print, that simplify and explain regular civic functions, as well as materials that provide guidance on applying for zoning, building, subdivision, or other development related permits and approvals.

## Mall Redevelopment

The Crestwood Plaza redevelopment project offers an opportunity to maintain communication with residents and community stakeholders. Given the prominence of this development, the City should provide regular updates to the public through the City's website and local media sources. A project website for the redevelopment project could allow residents to ask questions and stay more directly informed of the process. In addition, the project should be capped with a grand opening or some form of City sponsored event to generate excitement and community pride.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will also be reliant on careful budgeting to support the variety of capital projects identified through the planning process. The City should develop and adopt a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) which will ensure these projects can be funded and completed in an efficient manner. A CIP is usually comprised of construction, maintenance, and improvement projects along with infrastructure replacement and upgrades. In many cases, projects identified within the plan will require budgeting across multiple years as different phases, such as environmental analysis, design, right-of-way or property acquisition, and construction usually do not occur within the same year. A CIP can provide the necessary planning to fund these improvements on a multi-year basis and spread out costs, decreasing the economic burden on Crestwood. The CIP should be reviewed and updated each year as part of the City's budgetary process, using the Comprehensive Plan as a reference to manage completed and upcoming projects.

The following projects should be included within the CIP to ensure they are properly funded and completed over the life of the plan:

- The completion of a functional roadway; Starting at Camera Avenue continuing to Watson Industrial Park via Reco Avenue. This also includes the acquisition of right of way for Camera Avenue and Watson Industrial Park. The roadway should be inclusive of pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile modes of transportation.
- Construct a Secondary access point to Whitecliff Park via Vaulk Lane. This access point should be accommodate pedestrian, bicycle, and auto oriented.
- The construction of a complete system of sidewalks for pedestrian safety. Construction should be prioritized around schools, community facilities, public parks, public transit stops, and commercial areas (Chapter 6).

# POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

## GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Community Improvement District (CID)

Community Improvement Districts allow a City to collect sales taxes, real property taxes, special assessments, and issues bonds to fund a range of improvements and projects within an area. CIDs must be created at the petition of property owners within the district. CID funding can be used for a variety of projects such as utility and transportation infrastructure improvements, maintenance and expansion of landscaping and public spaces, creation and support of community facilities and amenities, and providing public services such as promotion, maintenance, and economic development for the district.

### Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax

Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax is a tool by which a City may levy a tax of up to 0.5% to support planning, projects, and improvements related to economic development. To administer the tax, the City must receive voter approval, allowing the creation of an Economic Development Tax Board. The board operates in an advisory role, creating plans and identifying projects for economic development which are then recommended to the City for funding. The program requires that 20% of the revenue be used for long-term economic development preparation and no more than 25% be used annually for administrative purposes.

### Neighborhood Improvement District (NID)

Neighborhood Improvement Districts allow a City to make improvements within a district by issuing bonds to pay for improvement projects. Unlike other funding methods which create districts or corporations which are separate entities, NIDs are not separate from the City. NIDs are not limited to blighted areas of a City. Using NIDs, the City will issue bonds to pay for public improvements and pay these bonds by levying assessments on property within the district. As these districts are not separate from the City, bonds are backed by general revenue of the City and thus more secure than other market investments. NID funding is limited to projects for public facilities and services, such as public infrastructure, utilities, transportation systems, parks and open spaces, and public amenities.

### Special Assessments

Special assessments are taxes levied on properties to provide funding for improvement projects that will directly benefit that property. Unlike districts, special assessments are applied only to those properties which will benefit from a project, rather than an established area. Assessments can be initiated by property owners, legislative bodies, or local administrations, at which point the cost of the project and the potential benefit to adjacent properties is assessed. Total costs of the project are apportioned to all properties within the assessment and paid through special tax bills.

### Special Business Districts (SBD)

Special Business Districts allow a City to collect real property taxes, business license taxes, and special assessments, and issue bonds to fund projects within an area, with a focus on improvements that will benefit businesses within the established district. SBDs must be created by the petition of property owners within the district. SBD funding can be used for a variety of projects similar to those permitted for CIDs; however, a greater focus is placed on infrastructure improvements and public services which will benefit business activity and economic development.

### Tax Increment Finance (TIF)

TIF funding is used to assist funding the redevelopment of areas within a community which qualify as blighted, in need of conservation, or an area of economic development. TIF dollars can typically be used for infrastructure, streetscaping, public improvements, land assemblage, and offsetting the cost of development.

TIF utilizes future property tax revenues generated within a designated area or district, to pay for improvements and further incentivize continued reinvestment. As the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) of properties within a TIF district increases, the incremental growth in property tax over the base year that the TIF was established is reinvested in that area. Local officials may then issue bonds to undertake other financial obligations based on the growth in new revenue.

Over the life of a TIF district, existing taxing bodies receive the same level of tax revenue as in the base year. Provisions exist for schools to receive additional revenue. The maximum life of a TIF district in the State of Missouri is 23 years.

## Incentives

Utilizing other funding mechanisms, such as TIF districts, CIDs, or SBDs, the City can provide a variety of incentive programs to help with implementation of the Plan. These incentives can be used to attract new development, improve existing development, and encourage business owners to remain in the community. This list identifies potential incentive programs that establish a starting point for the City in creation of a comprehensive range of incentive programs that help the City complete its objectives.

### Façade & Site Improvements Programs

Façade and site improvement programs can be used to beautify and improve the appearance of existing businesses. These programs provide low interest loans or grants to business owners to improve the exterior appearance of designated structures or properties. These programs are most commonly supported by funding made available through TIFs.

### Property Tax Abatement under Chapter 353

Property Tax Abatement under Chapter 353 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri allows a community to address blighted areas by offering property tax abatements. A municipality may provide abatements upon establishment of an Urban Redevelopment Corporation and approval of a development plan. Tax abatements can be offered for up to 25 years with the goal of encouraging redevelopment within the area. During the first 10 years, real property taxes on land and all improvements are abated and the owner pays the cost of real property taxes from the year before establishment of the abatement. For the following 15 years, the City can offer a 50% to 100% abatement on the incremental change in real property taxes that would naturally occur.

### Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) is a tool similar to tax abatement and may be used in coordination with abatements. The City can use PILOT to reduce the property tax burden of a desired business for a predetermined period. In this instance, the City and property owners will agree to the annual payment of a set fee in place of property taxes. Payments are generally made in the form of a fixed sum, but they may also be paid as a percentage of the income generated by a property.

In addition, PILOT can be a means of reducing the fiscal impact on the City of a nonprofit, institutional use, or other non-taxpaying entity. While such uses can be desirable as activity generators, they can also negatively impact municipal services because they do not pay taxes. Provisions can be made to offset that negative impact by allowing the City to be compensated for at least a portion of the revenue that would otherwise be collected in the form of property tax.

### Revolving Loan Fund

A revolving loan fund is administered to provide financial support and assistance to new or expanding businesses, funded through the Missouri State Revolving Loan Fund, called the SRF Leveraged Loan Program. The program is managed by the Department of Natural Resources Water Protection Program. The borrower may use the low-interest loan for construction, property rehabilitation/improvements, and land acquisition, among other things.

### Sales Tax Rebate

A sales tax rebate is a tool typically used by municipalities to incentivize business to locate to a site or area while making cost effective physical improvements. For developments that require public infrastructure extensions, the City can enter into a sales tax rebate agreement, by which the developer agrees to pay for the cost of improvements. The City will then reimburse the developer over a specified period of time utilizing the incremental sales taxes which are generated by the improvement. Sales tax rebates have proven effective in attracting new businesses and encouraging redevelopment and renovation.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

### Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ)

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program was established through federal funding to provide assistance in meeting federal air quality guidelines. As part of the St. Louis metropolitan area, Crestwood is eligible for funding through the CMAQ program. Funds are available for a variety of transportation projects with the requirement that the project have a demonstrated effect on reducing emissions.

### Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act

In December 2015 FAST Act, a five-year transportation reauthorization bill, was established. The FAST Act replaces the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act, which expired in October 2015 and was extended three times. The FAST Act aims to improve infrastructure, provide long-term certainty and increased flexibility for states and local governments, streamline project approval processes, and encourage innovation to make the surface transportation system safer and more efficient. The City should monitor the FAST Act as application occurs to determine the full extent of funding changes and implementation. The City should remain an active participant in regional transportation funding discussions through East-West Gateway as the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is developed.

### Great Streets Initiative

The East-West Gateway's Great Streets Initiative was launched in 2006 to identify and make improvements to key roadways within the St. Louis Region. The concept was to alter the way in which communities understand roadways, creating streets which not only serve a variety of transportation methods but also act as diverse spaces for activity and interaction. The initiative started with four demonstration projects funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) act in 2009, and was expanded to include additional projects in 2012. Recently, the East-West Gateway has shown interest in making the Great Streets Initiative a more consistent program with regular projects.

Within Crestwood, Watson Road has the potential to be the focus of a Green Streets Initiatives project. The City should partner with adjacent communities, such as Sunset Hills, to submit for a Green Streets Initiatives project when the next opportunity exists through East-West Gateway. This would increase the likelihood of selection by providing a sizeable project that has a significant impact on the region.

### Missouri Byways Program

The Missouri Byways Program was established to encourage the creation of routes that demonstrate examples of the state's culture, history, archeology, natural beauty, scenic views, and recreational amenities. The program provides funding for the designation, protection, promotion, and necessary infrastructure development to benefit important routes. Cooperation with neighboring communities may be necessary to coordinate efforts and obtain funding.

### Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)

The Safe Route to Schools program was established to provide funding for the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure related projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bike to school. This has included funding for a variety of projects, include:

- Sidewalk improvements
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
- Pedestrian and bicycle-crossing improvements
- On-street bicycle facilities
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Secure bicycle parking system
- Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools

### Surface Transportation Program (STP)

The Surface Transportation Program provides federal funding through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for transportation projects and improvements. Sunset Hills is eligible for STP funds through the Large Urban program, which provides funding for the metropolitan areas of Kansas City, Springfield, and St. Louis. STP funds can be used for multi-modal and roadway projects related to highways, alternative transportation, transportation safety and control, natural habitat and wetlands mitigation, infrastructure improvements, and environmental restoration and pollution prevention.

## Transportation Enhancements (TE)

Transportation Enhancements are funded as part of the STP program with the aim of expanding travel choices and improving the transportation experience. This can include projects related to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, historic preservation, landscaping and scenic beautification, and control of outdoor advertising, amongst others.

## Transportation Development District (TDD)

Transportation Development Districts allow a municipality to collect sales taxes, special assessments, property taxes, tolls, and issues bonds within a specific area to be used for transportation improvements. The establishment of a TDD must be approved by a majority of voters within the new district boundaries. TDD funds can be used for improvements and expansions of transportation infrastructure, including roadways, highways, signage, intersections, parking lots, and transit stops and stations.

## PARKS, TRAILS & OPEN SPACES

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources offers two grant programs for outdoor recreation through the Division of State Parks. This includes the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), which are federally-funded through the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Land and Water Conservation Fund grants are available to municipalities, counties, and school districts to be used for outdoor recreation projects. Grants require a 55% match and funding varies by year, most recently having a \$75,000 maximum amount per project. All funded projects are taken under perpetuity by the National Park Service and must be used only for outdoor recreational purposes. Examples of common projects funded by LWCF grants include:

- Playgrounds
- Ball fields
- Pools and water parks
- Archery and shooting ranges
- Camping facilities
- Picnic areas
- Golf courses
- Boating and fishing facilities

## Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Recreational Trails Program is federally-funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), with the aim of promoting motorized and non-motorized recreational trails. Grants are available to local and state governments, school districts, for-profit and non-profit organizations, and businesses. Projects require a minimum match of 20% of the total cost and have a grant maximum of \$150,000 per project. Eligible projects must be open to the public and can include:

- Constructing new recreational trails
- Maintaining or renovating existing trails
- Developing or renovating trailheads or trail amenities
- Acquiring land of recreational trails
- Purchasing or leasing trail maintenance equipment