



QUALITY COMMUNITY SERVICES



Delivering Quality Community Services

The City of Maryland Heights provides residents with an array of community services, as do other public, private, and non-profit agencies in the region. These services are delivered to the public through a series of facilities spread throughout the City. Some facilities, such as parks, serve a neighborhood or limited area, while other facilities, such as the Government Center and the Community Center, serve the entire community.

Ensuring accessibility to quality municipal services for the population being served is critical. This includes residents, visitors, business owners, and other guests. This chapter is about how Maryland Heights seeks to develop and improve public services in the community. This can mean anything from getting a streetlight bulb replaced to starting a community-wide initiative that may involve several new programs. Either might be effective in solving a problem and improving the quality of life in a neighborhood. An improvement in services in a community may or may not be an intervention in itself, but it may be an important part of the foundation for community change.



Screen capture from City's Website.

"Click" Image for Hyperlink.



GOAL: CREATE VALUE AND CHARACTER FOR THE CITY, PROPERTY OWNERS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY THROUGH INNOVATIVE DESIGN OF THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

OBJECTIVES:

- *Encourage stormwater management practices that reduce peak flows while improving water quality.*
- *Encourage stormwater management systems that mimic natural processes.*
- *Utilize the stormwater management system as a visual, environmental, and functional amenity.*

ACTIONS

The following actions may be undertaken to implement the objectives of this goal:

- ⇒ Require stormwater management systems to provide functional green space for the subdivision and associated neighborhood.
- ⇒ Keep the impervious coverage of land to a minimum
- ⇒ Work with the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD) and levee districts (as applicable) to review and approve stormwater management areas.
- ⇒ Require the use of low-impact development practices to reduce and filter stormwater runoff.
- ⇒ Incentivize bio-retention facilities, such as rain gardens with native plant species, for passive treatment of stormwater.



GOAL: CREATE VALUE AND CHARACTER FOR THE CITY, PROPERTY OWNERS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY THROUGH INNOVATIVE DESIGN OF THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

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All stormwater management systems proposed to be constructed, altered or reconstructed by any person or corporation (public or private) within Maryland Heights require review and approval by the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD). This includes the altering of any storm drainage channel, site drainage, or floodplain. MSD seeks to balance water quality protection and Clean Water Act compliance with economic growth and help provide a sustainable path to stormwater management for the region. Within areas served by levee districts, such as the Riverport Levee District and the Howard Bend Levee District, the levee district reviews proposed stormwater management systems for water quantity and MSD reviews them for water quality.



While MSD and/or the applicable levee districts set minimum standards for stormwater management design, performance, and maintenance, the City of Maryland Heights seeks to ensure that stormwater management is developed as a functional amenity that adds character and value. Stormwater management facilities that enhance the site, the community, and the environment, should be encouraged. Gardens, plazas, rooftops, and even parking lots function as amenities and provide visual interest while performing stormwater quality functions and reinforcing design goals. The integration of water quality features and associated landforms, walls, landscape, and materials can reflect the standards and patterns of a neighborhood and help to create lively, safe, and pedestrian-oriented districts.



Objective: Encourage stormwater management practices that reduce peak flows while improving water quality.

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Objective: Encourage stormwater management systems that mimic natural processes.

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In an undeveloped watershed, vegetation-covered soil soaks up rainfall. The water filters through the soil before reaching the groundwater table or being released slowly into streams. In contrast, a developed watershed is characterized by impervious surfaces such as parking lots, roads, and rooftops. Rainfall cannot soak through these hard surfaces. Instead, it flows quickly across them, picking up pollutants along the way. The stormwater then enters gutters and storm drains, which often empty directly and without treatment into area waterways. Local streams then become overwhelmed by flash flooding and stream habitats are smothered by sediments carried by the excessive flows.

A response to make developed areas less impactful is an engineering approach known as low-impact development (LID). According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), LID includes a variety of practices that mimic or preserve natural drainage processes to manage stormwater. LID practices typically retain rain water and encourage it to soak into the ground rather than allowing it to run off into ditches and storm drains where it would otherwise contribute to flooding and pollution problems.

In parking lots and around buildings, construction of planters and infiltration basins can provide attractive green space while improving water quality and reducing runoff volume. Rain gardens, small ponds, and catchment areas hold and slowly release water to the environment. A design may also use several small-scale catch basins, instead of one large detention pond, reducing the need for earthmoving and enables preservation of a more natural landscape. Low impact development benefits and characteristics can include: improvement in water quality, reduced number of costly flooding events, restored aquatic habitat, improved groundwater recharge, and enhanced neighborhood beauty.



Green Roof Example.
Image Source:
EPA, 2020



Objective: Utilize the stormwater management system as a visual, environmental, and functional amenity.

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Image Source, :
EPA, 2020

Maryland Heights seeks to seamlessly incorporate LID practices into everyday landscapes, which add both beauty and functionality.

Minimalist stormwater retention options using only pipes and catch basins are not aesthetically pleasing and do not add value to a development. Well-integrated green infrastructure facilities, including landscaped rain gardens and conveyance swales, provide green space that enhances site aesthetic. For a business owner in the City, this means increased marketability, increased property values, and healthier environments for their tenants.



GOAL: SUPPORT COMPLETE STREETS THAT ARE CONVENIENT AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL USERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM INCLUDING MOTORISTS, TRANSIT USERS, PEDESTRIANS, AND CYCLISTS
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OBJECTIVES:

- *Assure that new development is responsive to pedestrian needs.*
- *Consider the mobility-impaired population of Maryland Heights in all planning and construction phases.*
- *Establish and expand the planning, implementation, and operation of a multi-modal transportation system, including transit, roadways, bikeways, and pedestrian facilities.*
- *Ensure the visual quality of transportation networks and their support facilities.*
- *Ensure the functional compatibility of the transportation system and adjacent land uses.*
- *Reduce the impact of parking facilities on public rights-of-way.*

ACTIONS

The following actions may be undertaken to implement the objectives of this goal:

- ⇒ Require new development incorporate an interconnected network of local streets with efficient and adequate connections to the regional system.
- ⇒ Provide amenities such as bike racks, street lighting, public art, street trees and landscaping, benches, and bus shelters in the public realm.
- ⇒ Continue to seek funding for implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Dorsett Road Great Streets study.
- ⇒ Leverage shared parking opportunities where possible.
- ⇒ Establish a workable set of guidelines for exemptions from parking regulations.
- ⇒ Use buffer zones, where appropriate, to ensure the compatibility of transportation and adjacent areas.
- ⇒ Require parking areas to be placed behind buildings where feasible. Where infeasible, require substantial screening.
- ⇒ Through proper location and design, ensure that the development of major transportation routes produces minimum negative impact on neighborhoods.



GOAL: SUPPORT COMPLETE STREETS THAT ARE CONVENIENT AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL USERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM INCLUDING MOTORISTS, TRANSIT USERS, PEDESTRIANS, AND CYCLISTS OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES.



Image Source:
Oregon Metro, 2019

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Complete Streets are defined as streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient. Complete Street policies are set at the state, regional, and local levels and are frequently supported by roadway design guidelines.

Complete Streets approaches vary based on community context. They may address a wide range of elements, such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus lanes, public transportation stops, crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, modified vehicle travel lanes, streetscape, and landscape treatments. Complete Streets reduce motor vehicle-related crashes and pedestrian risk, as well as bicyclist risk when well-designed bicycle-specific infrastructure is included. They can promote walking and bicycling by providing safer places to achieve physical activity through transportation. A 2003 study by K. Powell, L. Martin, and P. Chowdhury included in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that 43% of people reporting having “a place to walk” were significantly more likely to meet current recommendations for regular physical activity than were those reporting having no place to walk.

Complete streets can contribute to better health outcomes in Maryland Heights, improve safety, lower transportation costs, and reduce air pollution.



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Like most suburban communities, Maryland Heights is predominately characterized by a development pattern designed around the automobile. Moving forward, an emphasis must be placed upon ensuring that new developments and transportation infrastructure improvements support multiple modes of transportation. This is critical to ensure the health, safety, and general welfare of the community.



Images Source, :
MoDOT, 2020



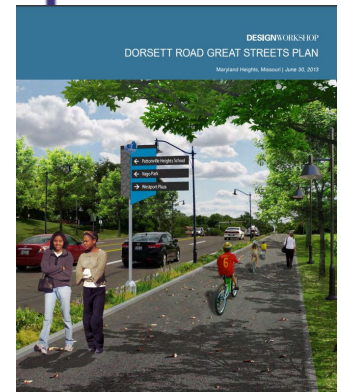
Objective: Ensure the visual quality of transportation networks and their support facilities.

Objective: Ensure the functional compatibility of the transportation system and adjacent land uses.

These objectives pertain to the relationship between the transportation system and adjacent land uses. This relationship is a key part of the Dorsett Road Great Streets Plan. As a matter of background, in August 2012, East-West Gateway Council of Governments selected Dorsett Road for funding in their Great Streets Initiative’s second round of regional demonstration projects. The intent of the effort is to support a fully functional multi-modal suburban environment that sets a framework for future development in the corridor. The plan, available on the City’s website, includes provisions for sidewalks, street trees, and wayfinding signage. It also seeks to encourage land uses along the corridor that are pedestrian oriented and encourage public gathering.

Objective: Reduce the impact of parking facilities on public rights-of-way.

Reducing the impact of parking facilities on public-rights-of way is difficult in suburban corridors such as Dorsett Road because the properties along the roadway are shallow in depth, offering limited area between the roadway and the development. In response, newer developments along Dorsett Road have employed a combination of masonry columns and landscaping such as shrubs or ornamental grasses to serve as a screen and provide visual interest. The continued use of this design element along the corridor, and elsewhere in the City, serves to improve the image of Maryland Heights and establish a sense of place.



“Click” Image for Link to plan.





GOAL: MANAGE ACCESS AND TRAFFIC TO PROMOTE SAFETY, MAXIMIZE EFFICIENCY, AND AVOID CONGESTION.

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OBJECTIVES:

- *Encourage the efficient use of roadways and other existing transportation elements.*
- *Create internal street systems that are coordinated and integrated, including multiple interconnections between individual developed area, avoiding freestanding development areas unrelated to each other.*
- *Encourage future road improvements that provide both a local and regional benefit.*

ACTIONS

The following actions may be undertaken to implement the objectives of this goal:

- ⇒ Monitor roadway levels of service (LOS) and strive for LOS of E or better on all roadway segments at peak times and prioritize improvements on those roads that are rated LOS F.
- ⇒ Work with the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and the St. Louis County Department of Highways and Traffic (as applicable) to review and approve access and roadway improvements.
- ⇒ Continue to require traffic studies for development projects.
- ⇒ Participate in regional approaches to land use and transportation issues.



GOAL: MANAGE ACCESS AND TRAFFIC TO PROMOTE SAFETY, MAXIMIZE EFFICIENCY, AND AVOID CONGESTION.

Maryland Heights strives to balance economic development with safety and efficiency in its overall transportation network. The Zoning Code requires traffic studies to be submitted for projects that could produce adverse traffic impacts or warrant roadway improvements. These studies are reviewed by the City Engineer and partners such as the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and St. Louis County Department of Transportation.

Objective: Ensure the visual quality of transportation networks and their support facilities.

Objective: Create internal street systems that are coordinated and integrated, including multiple interconnections between individual developed area, avoiding freestanding development areas unrelated to each other.

Frequently, the layout of streets makes distances much longer than they need to be. Long neighborhood block lengths and cul-de-sacs further contribute to this problem. When feasible, neighborhoods should be designed with short block lengths, numerous three and four-way intersections, and minimal dead-ends or cul-de-sacs. A network of streets, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and paths in which all parts are well-connected to each other reduces the distance individuals have to travel, allows for the use of more local streets rather than major roadways, and provides a greater choice of routes.

Objective: Encourage future road improvements that provide both a local and regional benefit.

Maryland Heights is a leader in constructing roadway improvements that provide both a local and regional benefit. The City originally constructed Maryland Heights Expressway between Interstate 70 and Missouri Route 364 (Page Avenue). As part of the regional infrastructure plan, federal funding was authorized to extend Missouri Route 141 from Interstate 64 to Missouri Route 364. In addition to the federal funding, the City of Maryland Heights contributed substantial funds toward the project. The new roadway, as well as the previous Maryland Heights/Earth City Expressway, was transferred to Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) control and redesignated as Missouri Route 141. The new section of Missouri Route 141 was completed in 2012.



Source:
Google Maps, 2019



GOAL: ENCOURAGE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS TO INCLUDE AESTHETIC ENHANCEMENTS THAT ADD CHARACTER AND FURTHER CITY IMAGE.

OBJECTIVES:

- *Require high level and quality design standards that create character along roadways.*
- *Ensure the character and image of the City of Maryland Heights is perpetuated in transportation improvements.*
- *Design roads, bridges, and overpasses to enhance the surrounding area and larger community.*

ACTIONS

The following actions may be undertaken to implement the objectives of this goal:

- ⇒ Use landscaping and tree planting to enhance roadways and encourage a pedestrian friendly environment.
- ⇒ Design and locate street lighting and other transportation support devices so transportation safety and nearby aesthetic features are mutually enhanced.
- ⇒ Incorporate unique design elements into the City’s infrastructure, where practical.



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Maryland Heights will continue to build on the aesthetics and character in transportation improvements. More recent projects include the diverging diamond interchange at Dorsett and I-270, the entrance markers located along Page Avenue and Missouri Route 141, street trees throughout the City, the aesthetic improvements envisioned the Dorsett Road Great Streets plan, and neighborhood improvements such as the stamped crosswalks at many intersections throughout the City.



Source:
Google Maps, 2019



GOAL: ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE PUBLIC UTILITIES WHILE BALANCING THE NEEDS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND GENERAL WELFARE.

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OBJECTIVES:

- *Support a strong infrastructure system that supports new, sustainable technologies.*
- *Support renewable energies that are easily scalable, environmentally sound, efficient, and adaptable to environmental change and community demand.*
- *Promote the conservation and re-use of water to the maximum extent practical.*
- *Ensure that provisions for the layout and delivery of utilities consider the potential impacts on the layout, value, and character of adjacent future development opportunities.*

ACTIONS

The following actions may be undertaken to implement the objectives of this goal:

- ⇒ Annually review and update the capital improvement program in order to maintain existing systems and integrate new infrastructure technologies.
- ⇒ Coordinate with Missouri American Water Company and the Howard Bend Levee District in the evaluation of providing potable water to proposed development in both an effective and efficient manner.
- ⇒ Coordinate with Spire to efficiently plan for natural gas infrastructure in the Maryland Park Lake District.
- ⇒ Coordinate with the school district(s) and fire district(s) in the zoning and development review process.
- ⇒ Work with local utility service providers to facilitate the appropriate siting and location of utility substations.



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Objective: Ensure that provisions for the layout and delivery of utilities consider the potential impacts on the layout, value, and character of adjacent future development opportunities.

The City of Maryland Heights' Department of Public Works is responsible for the repair, care and maintenance of all public streets, alleys and driveways, bridges, storm sewer collection systems owned or maintained by the City, street lighting and street signalization, plus the care of all property of the City that is not assigned to the care or custody of any other department. The department's mission is to "strive to provide superior municipal services that offer proactive infrastructure improvement and maintenance, while enhancing the quality of life for the community in a safe, economical, and environmentally sound manner." Further, the department's vision is to be a well-respected organization that is considered a model public works department. To achieve this, they will provide superior municipal services through teamwork, professionalism, and hard work while offering innovative solutions to resolve challenges.

To that end, the Public Works Department is an American Public Works Association (APWA) accredited agency. According to the [APWA website](#):

The purpose of the accreditation program is to provide a means of formally verifying and recognizing public works agencies for compliance with the recommended practices set forth in the Public Works Management Practices Manual. It is a voluntary, self-motivated approach to objectively evaluate, verify, and recognize compliance with the recommended management practices. The objectives of the accreditation program are to:

- *Create impetus for organization self-improvement and stimulate general raising of standards.*
- *Offer a voluntary evaluation and education program rather than government-regulated activity.*
- *Recognize good performance and provide motivation to maintain and improve performance.*
- *Improve public works performance and the provision of services.*
- *Increase professionalism.*
- *Instill pride among agency staff, elected officials and the local community*

