

Livability Framework

Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
IL Route 15 and Bond Avenue in East St. Louis

»» Purpose

The Livability Framework is intended to support the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, IL Route 15 and Bond Avenue in East St. Louis, by guiding a collaborative, inclusive, and community-centered planning process that integrates transportation improvements with broader livability priorities, including safety, health, economic opportunity, environmental resilience, and neighborhood connectivity.

The framework builds upon more than a century of planning efforts in East St. Louis, including the 1920 City Plan, the 1960 Master Plan, the 1993 Winstanley Neighborhood Improvement Plan, the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, the Riverfront and Waterfront Master Plans, the Mid-America Medical District plans, and subsequent corridor and redevelopment studies. See Resource Materials, pages 25-26

The initial framework, including the Vision Statement and goals, was established using past planning documents and was then updated through visioning conducted by small resident groups and city leadership. This framework recognizes that transportation, land use, housing, public health, economic opportunity, environmental quality, and trust in government are deeply interconnected.

This livability-based planning framework helps inform transportation planning, infrastructure investment, neighborhood revitalization, economic development, environmental remediation, and community partnerships in support of a healthier, safer, more connected, and economically resilient East St. Louis.



Transportation investments should not simply move traffic, but help unlock the long-term potential of land, neighborhoods, institutions, economic assets, and community investment opportunities.



»» Vision Statement

East St. Louis will become a connected, healthy, economically vibrant, culturally proud, and environmentally resilient city where all residents have safe access to opportunity, quality housing, transportation choices, parks and open space, education, healthcare, and employment.

The City will leverage its historic riverfront, regional transportation assets, cultural identity, neighborhoods, institutions, and strategic location within the St. Louis metropolitan area to create equitable growth and long-term community stability.

»» Core Livability Principles

The framework is grounded in the following principles:

- Industrial redevelopment and economic resilience
- Equity-centered public investment
- Safe transportation systems for vulnerable road users
- Neighborhood stabilization without displacement
- Community-led decision-making
- Health-centered infrastructure and development
- Environmental justice and resilience
- Multi-modal transportation access
- Preservation of cultural identity and history
- Long-term institutional partnerships
- Transparent governance and measurable implementation



»»» Vision Zero & Safe System Framework

The City of East St. Louis recognizes that traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable and commits to eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes on non-interstate roadways by 2040 through a Vision Zero and Safe System Approach. Between 2015 and 2024, East St. Louis experienced 38 fatal crashes and 290 serious injury crashes, with fatal and serious injury crashes increasing significantly in recent years.

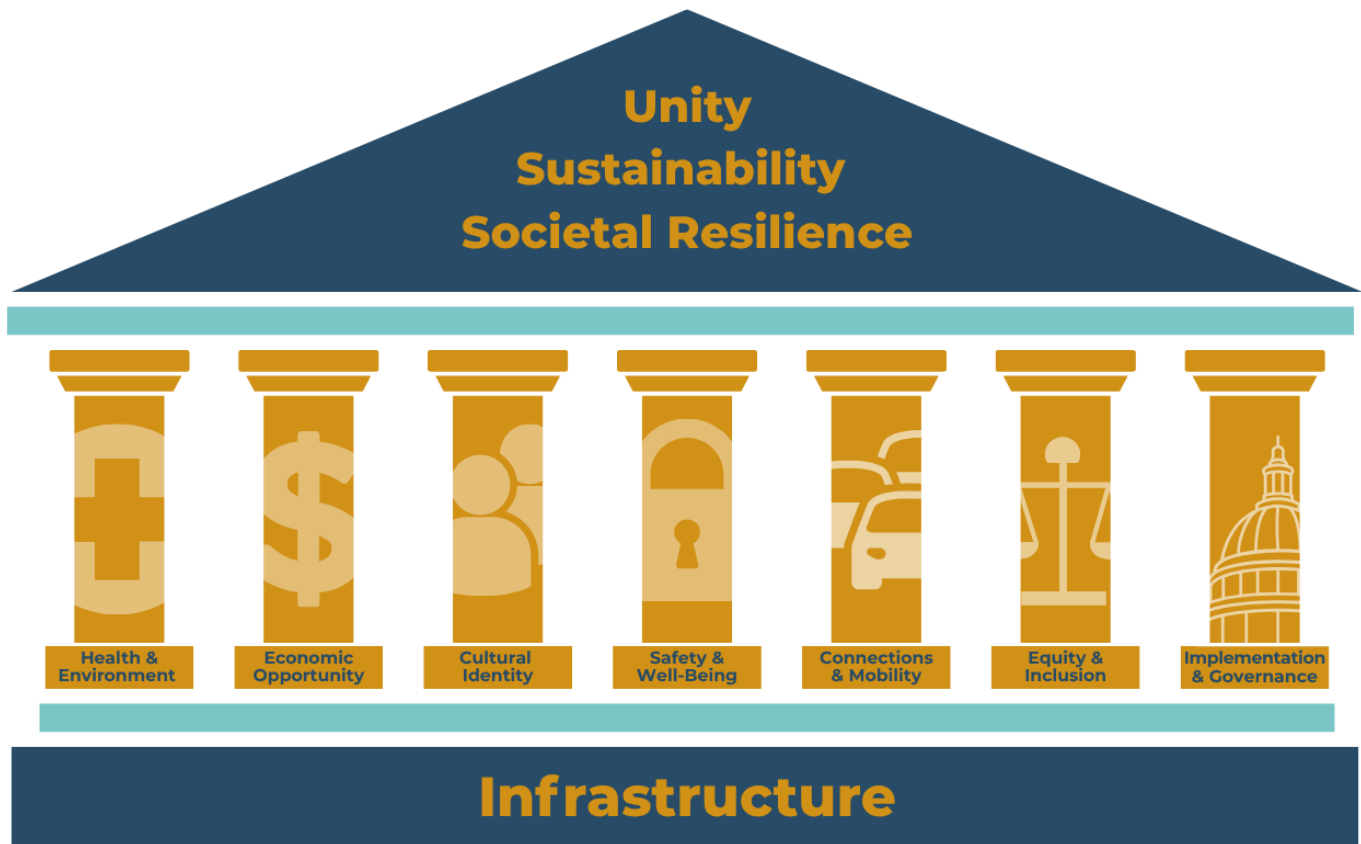
The Safe System Approach acknowledges that human error is inevitable and that transportation systems must therefore be designed to reduce the likelihood that mistakes result in severe injury or death. This approach prioritizes safer roadway design, speed management, safer crossings, visibility improvements, post-crash response coordination, and protections for vulnerable road users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, seniors, youth, and households without access to vehicles.

The City's Vision Zero Action Plan identified a High Injury Network (HIN) representing approximately 21% of the roadway network but accounting for the majority of fatal and serious injury crashes. Investments identified in this framework should prioritize these corridors and neighborhoods experiencing the greatest transportation disadvantages and safety risks.

The Vision Zero framework also recognizes transportation safety as both a public health issue and an equity issue. Safety investments should therefore align with broader goals related to environmental justice, neighborhood reinvestment, economic opportunity, mobility access, and public trust.



»» Pillars of Livability



Health & Environmental Resilience

Environmental Conditions

East St. Louis' environmental and public health challenges are deeply connected to decades of industrial activity, disinvestment, aging infrastructure, flooding, environmental contamination, and unequal access to healthcare and open space. Residents in many neighborhoods continue to face disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards, poor air quality, stormwater impacts, unsafe walking conditions, and limited access to healthy community infrastructure.

The long-term departure of heavy industry from the American Bottoms region has also contributed to significant changes in groundwater conditions and the regional water table. Reduced industrial groundwater pumping over several decades has resulted in rising groundwater levels that continue to affect portions of East St. Louis and surrounding areas. These conditions contribute to localized flooding, impacts on basements and foundations, roadway drainage challenges,



underground utility issues, and the need for ongoing infrastructure dewatering operations in certain transportation corridors.

Addressing groundwater conditions, stormwater management, infrastructure resilience, and long-term environmental adaptation will remain critical considerations in future redevelopment, transportation planning, and infrastructure investment decisions throughout East St. Louis.

The City recognizes that public health is significantly shaped by the design and condition of neighborhoods, streets, housing, parks, transportation systems, and environmental conditions. Transportation safety, environmental quality, and community wellness must therefore be addressed together as part of a comprehensive livability strategy. The Waterfront Development Master Plan and the Medical District plans both emphasized environmental restoration, wetland protection, open-space networks, and sustainable redevelopment strategies.

Healthcare Access

Access to healthcare services remains a significant challenge for many East St. Louis residents, particularly seniors, households without reliable transportation, transit-dependent populations, and working families seeking access to primary and specialty care. The area is designated as both a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) and a Medically Underserved Area (MUA), reflecting persistent shortages in primary care, dental care, and mental health providers. The closure and relocation of major healthcare facilities to surrounding suburban communities, combined with transportation barriers and limited provider participation in Medicaid programs, have created substantial obstacles to timely and affordable access to healthcare for many residents.

A central goal identified during community and stakeholder discussions was to expand access to convenient, high-quality healthcare services located within or near East St. Louis neighborhoods.

The framework recognizes that transportation access, healthcare access, and public health outcomes are closely interconnected. Improving connections to healthcare facilities, expanding safe and reliable mobility options, supporting neighborhood-based wellness services, and strengthening institutional partnerships will be important components of improving long-term health equity and quality of life in East St. Louis.

The Mid-America Medical District (MAMD) also represents a long-term opportunity to strengthen healthcare access, medical research, workforce development, and health-related economic investment within East St. Louis and the broader Metro East region. Established as a designated healthcare and economic development district, MAMD was envisioned as a regional center for healthcare services, life sciences, medical technology, education, and institutional investment. While portions of this vision remain in early stages of implementation, the district continues to provide opportunities for future healthcare expansion, institutional partnerships, workforce training, and health-centered redevelopment initiatives.

Health and Wellness

Community-based urban agriculture and neighborhood gardening initiatives play an important role in supporting public health, environmental stewardship, food access, and neighborhood cohesion throughout East St. Louis. Local nonprofit organizations and community partners have supported gardens, orchards, and urban agriculture initiatives that provide access to fresh



produce, educational programming, physical activity, and community gathering spaces. Projects such as Preston Community Garden and regional urban agriculture partnerships demonstrate how community-led greening efforts can support both neighborhood revitalization and long-term health outcomes.

Parks and Open Space

City parks, recreational spaces, and community green spaces are important components of neighborhood health and environmental resilience. Recent investments in parks and recreational amenities demonstrate ongoing efforts to improve quality of life, expand access to outdoor recreation, support youth and family activities, and strengthen neighborhood gathering spaces. Parks and open spaces contribute to physical and mental health, environmental quality, stormwater management, and community cohesion while providing important opportunities for safe and active living.

Community-Based Health Initiatives

Community-based organizations and nonprofit institutions play a critical role in advancing health, food access, youth development, and neighborhood wellness throughout East St. Louis. The Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation has become a major community anchor through its youth programming, after-school services, athletics, nutrition initiatives, urban agriculture partnerships, and food access programs. The Foundation's Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition (JJK FAN) Innovation Center combines STEAM education, agriculture, physical activity, nutrition, and workforce development while addressing food insecurity and community health disparities within East St. Louis.

The Foundation's broader campus vision, youth programs, athletic facilities, agricultural initiatives, and community partnerships demonstrate how neighborhood-centered investment can support long-term health outcomes, educational opportunity, economic empowerment, and community revitalization.



JJK FAN campus in East St. Louis, Illinois



The Health and Environmental Resilience pillar advances a health-centered, environmentally resilient future through investments in green infrastructure, brownfield remediation, safe and active transportation, flood mitigation, tree canopy expansion, environmental justice, neighborhood gardens, and neighborhood-scale wellness initiatives. The framework also recognizes traffic deaths and serious injuries as a preventable public health crisis and supports a Safe System approach that prioritizes human life, safety, and equitable access to healthy environments.

»» GOAL

Create a healthier, more environmentally resilient community by improving environmental conditions, expanding access to healthcare and wellness resources, strengthening neighborhood infrastructure, and supporting safe, active, and healthy living for all residents.



»» Objectives

- Reduce exposure to environmental hazards
- Improve air and water quality
- Improve access to healthcare and wellness services
- Improve neighborhood walkability and active living
- Strengthen stormwater and flood resilience
- Increase tree canopy and green infrastructure

»» Priority Strategies

Environmental Resilience & Green Infrastructure

- Brownfield assessment and remediation
- Green infrastructure corridors and stormwater management improvements
- Stormwater retention, bioswale, and flood mitigation projects
- Vacant land greening and adaptive reuse initiatives
- Integrate green infrastructure and urban agriculture into vacant land reuse strategies
- Environmental monitoring and sustainability partnerships

Health Access & Community Wellness

- Improve transportation and mobility access to healthcare facilities and wellness services
- Support neighborhood-based healthcare, wellness, and food access partnerships
- Strengthen healthcare workforce and institutional partnerships
- Coordinate transportation planning with healthcare accessibility needs
- Conduct health impact assessments for major transportation and infrastructure projects

Food Access & Urban Agriculture

- Support community gardens, urban agriculture, and neighborhood greening initiatives
- Expand partnerships focused on food access, nutrition, and wellness programming
- Support nonprofit-led health, nutrition, and youth development initiatives

Parks, Recreation, & Active Living

- Enhance parks, recreational facilities, and neighborhood open spaces
- Improve safe pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, schools, healthcare facilities, and recreation areas
- Integrate parks and green spaces into neighborhood revitalization efforts
- Support safe and active living opportunities for residents of all ages

Community Partnerships and Neighborhood Revitalization

- Coordinate neighborhood revitalization efforts with educational, healthcare, nonprofit, and community institutions
- Support community-centered initiatives that strengthen neighborhood identity, health, and quality of life

Key Opportunity Areas

- Riverfront redevelopment districts
- Mid-America Medical District
- Winstanley and surrounding neighborhoods
- Vacant industrial corridors
- MetroLink station areas
- Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center
- Community Gardens



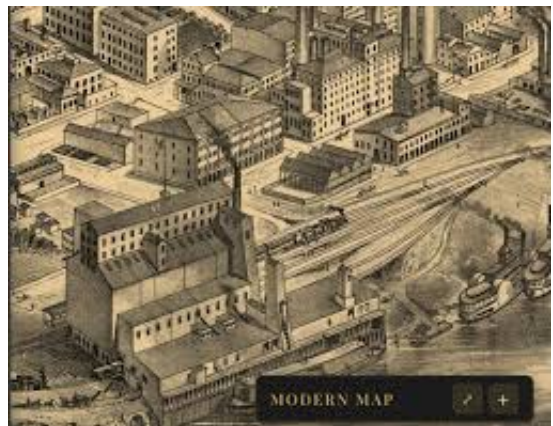


Economic Opportunity & Wealth Creation

East St. Louis possesses extraordinary economic assets, including regional transportation access, rail infrastructure, interstate connectivity, MetroLink access, institutional anchors, industrial land, and the Mississippi River waterfront. Yet decades of economic disinvestment, population decline, and systemic inequities have limited access to opportunity for many residents and neighborhoods.

Historic plans consistently identified East St. Louis' strategic regional location, transportation access, rail infrastructure, and riverfront as major economic assets. The 2004 Comprehensive Plan prioritized downtown revitalization, riverfront investment, redevelopment entities, and economic stimulation. The Mid-America Medical District initiative identified healthcare, education, research, government services, mixed-use redevelopment, and institutional anchors as long-term economic drivers.

East St. Louis' industrial history, transportation infrastructure, river access, rail connectivity, and strategic location within the American Bottoms region continue to provide significant long-term economic development potential. Historically, East St. Louis served as a major center for manufacturing, rail transportation, freight movement, meatpacking, and heavy industry. Although the city experienced substantial deindustrialization and manufacturing job losses during the mid-to-late twentieth century, many of the physical assets that supported industrial activity remain. East St. Louis is still one of the region's most significant multimodal freight and rail hubs.



Recent expansion of the Kaskaskia Regional Port District (KRPD) through Senate Bill 1889, signed into law in December 2025, creates new opportunities for industrial redevelopment, logistics investment, freight movement, river-oriented industry, and regional economic coordination. The integration of the Southwest Regional Port District into KRPD expands the district to include East St. Louis and surrounding townships, strengthening the region's long-term competitiveness for water-dependent and rail-served industrial development.

Industries requiring substantial water access, multimodal freight connectivity, rail infrastructure, and river transportation may be particularly well-suited for redevelopment opportunities within East St. Louis and the surrounding industrial corridor.

Future riverfront redevelopment strategies should balance environmental, recreational, industrial, freight, and economic development considerations while recognizing the importance of revenue-generating land uses that support long-term fiscal sustainability.

This framework recognizes that economic growth alone is insufficient unless it creates measurable benefits for existing residents, strengthens neighborhoods, expands access to



employment, and supports long-term community wealth-building. Public investment should create pathways for entrepreneurship, workforce participation, small-business growth, property reinvestment, and local ownership, while preventing displacement and exclusion.

Economic revitalization efforts should prioritize transit-accessible development, adaptive reuse, corridor redevelopment, workforce partnerships, neighborhood-serving businesses, green-industry opportunities, and community benefit agreements to ensure major projects generate equitable local outcomes. By aligning infrastructure investment, transportation access, institutional partnerships, and redevelopment strategies, East St. Louis can strengthen its regional competitiveness while building a more inclusive and resilient local economy.

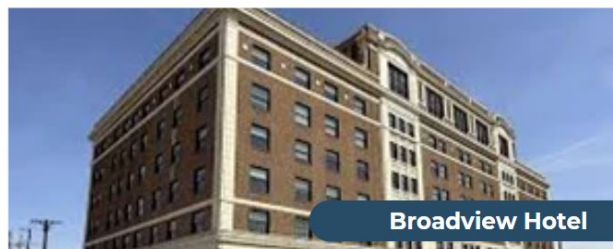
Several ongoing housing and neighborhood revitalization initiatives demonstrate continued investment and momentum in long-term reinvestment across East St. Louis neighborhoods and downtown districts.

Notable initiatives include:

- *Lansdowne Park.* A 20-home subdivision development in the Lansdowne neighborhood near North 25th Street and Gross Avenue led by Lansdowne Up. The project is intended to attract and retain middle-income households while supporting neighborhood stabilization and residential reinvestment.
- *Winstanley Park Revitalization.* A long-term neighborhood revitalization initiative supported by Mt. Sinai and the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA). The project has financed approximately 60 rentable single-family homes and includes a broader master plan for more than 220 new homes, rehabilitation of existing housing, and future commercial development opportunities.
- *The New Broadview.* Rehabilitation of the historic Broadview Hotel in downtown East St. Louis into a 110-unit mixed-use development providing affordable housing and supportive services for seniors and veterans.
- *East St. Louis Housing Authority (ESLHA).* Ongoing management and redevelopment of affordable and public housing properties throughout the city, including the Orr Weathers Family Development, South-End Scattered Sites, and Central City developments. The ESLHA is currently investing \$26M in the rehabilitation and modernization of several key public housing communities



Lansdowne Park



Broadview Hotel

Long-term community reinvestment, infrastructure modernization, neighborhood stabilization, and service delivery will ultimately depend upon rebuilding and diversifying the city's economic and tax base.

Major institutional investments, including the planned relocation of the Illinois State Police District 11 headquarters, further reinforce East St. Louis' strategic regional role and may bolster business confidence, infrastructure investment, and neighborhood stabilization efforts. These and other



ongoing housing, community development, and public safety initiatives highlight opportunities to better align future investments in transportation, infrastructure, mobility, and economic development with broader neighborhood reinvestment goals.

Urban agriculture, community gardens, and neighborhood greening initiatives may also provide productive interim uses for vacant and underutilized properties while supporting food access, environmental sustainability, community wellness, and neighborhood-scale revitalization.

»» GOAL

Promote long-term economic resilience by rebuilding the city's tax base, supporting industrial and commercial redevelopment, expanding workforce and employment opportunities, and leveraging East St. Louis' strategic regional assets to support equitable neighborhood reinvestment and community stability.

»» Objectives

- Industrial redevelopment and logistics recruitment
- Port-oriented economic development coordination
- Rail-served industrial site redevelopment
- Water-dependent industry attraction
- Adaptive reuse of industrial corridors
- Freight and multimodal infrastructure investment
- Expand access to quality jobs
- Support neighborhood-scale entrepreneurship
- Attract catalytic investment
- Strengthen workforce development pipelines
- Increase local ownership and business participation
- Reuse vacant and underutilized properties

»» Priority Strategies

- Transit-oriented development around MetroLink
- Small business incubators and storefront activation
- Medical district employment partnerships
- Workforce training linked to infrastructure projects
- Riverfront tourism and entertainment development
- Adaptive reuse of historic structures
- Industrial land repositioning for modern logistics and green industries
- Community benefit agreements for major projects
- STEAM and agricultural workforce development partnerships

»» Catalytic Economic Areas

- Downtown/Central Business District
- Riverfront districts
- Collinsville Avenue corridor
- Broadway corridor
- Mid-America Medical District
- MetroLink station districts
- Neighborhood Reinvestment Initiatives



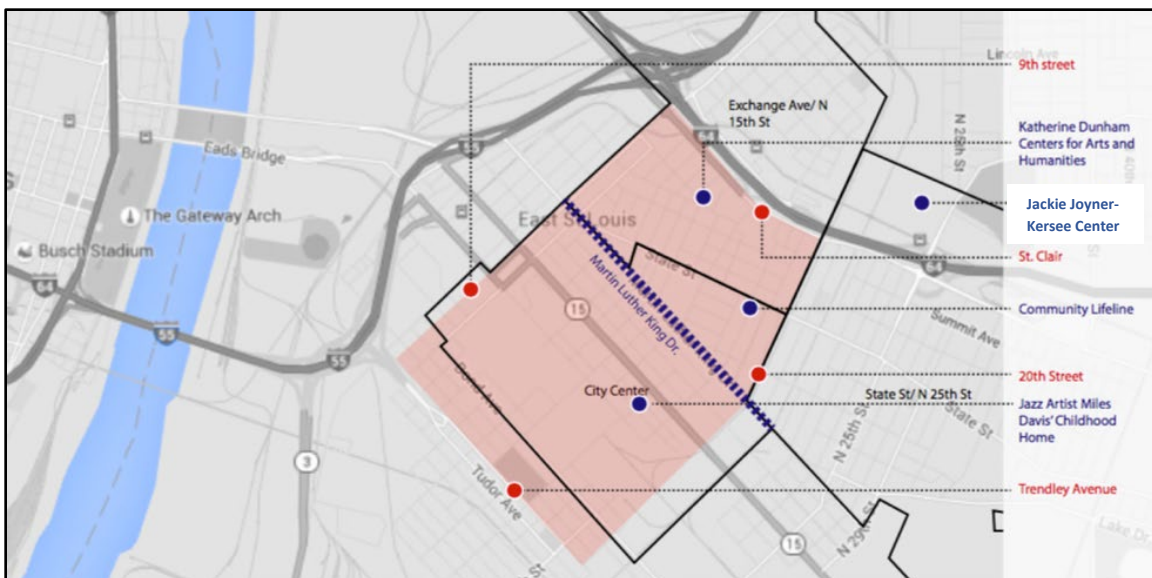


Sense of Place & Cultural Identity

East St. Louis has a nationally significant cultural, musical, industrial, and civil rights history that remains deeply embedded within its neighborhoods, institutions, churches, public spaces, and community identity. The Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation further reflects East St. Louis' nationally recognized athletic and community leadership legacy through ongoing investments in youth development, education, health, and neighborhood revitalization. The city's cultural legacy is one of resilience, creativity, movement, and regional influence despite decades of disinvestment and physical decline.

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan emphasized preserving cultural resources, strengthening neighborhood identity, and reconnecting downtown with the riverfront. Historic plans dating back to 1920 recognized East St. Louis as a major urban center and transportation hub with a strong civic and industrial identity. The Winstanley Neighborhood Improvement Plan reinforced the importance of community institutions, neighborhood pride, and public spaces.

East St. Louis also possesses nationally significant cultural assets that provide opportunities for heritage tourism, arts-based revitalization, education, and community identity-building. Ongoing initiatives such as the House of Miles project seek to transform the childhood home of jazz legend Miles Davis into a cultural destination and educational center while supporting broader neighborhood revitalization efforts. Regional arts and cultural partnerships have also identified opportunities to strengthen connections between the House of Miles, the Katherine Dunham Museum, the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation, and other cultural institutions as part of a larger vision for East St. Louis as a cultural and educational destination. These efforts reinforce the city's rich artistic, musical, and cultural legacy while creating opportunities for community pride, tourism, neighborhood reinvestment, and economic activity.



This framework recognizes that livability is not defined solely by infrastructure and development, but by whether residents feel connected to their neighborhoods, history, culture, and public spaces. Preserving and strengthening East St. Louis' identity is essential to building community pride, social cohesion, and long-term neighborhood stability.

Investments in historic preservation, public art, streetscape improvements, gateway enhancements, neighborhood public spaces, cultural programming, and riverfront activation should reinforce the unique identity of East St. Louis while improving the visual quality and experience of the built environment. Redevelopment efforts should honor the city's historic character and cultural significance while creating welcoming, inclusive spaces that reflect the voices and experiences of residents.

»» GOAL

Preserve, celebrate, and activate the historic, cultural, artistic, and neighborhood identity of East St. Louis through public investment, cultural partnerships, community spaces, and heritage-based revitalization.

»» Objectives

- Celebrate East St. Louis history and culture
- Reinforce neighborhood identity
- Improve public spaces and gateways
- Promote arts, music, and cultural programming
- Preserve historic assets
- Enhance visual character and streetscapes

»» Key Assets

- Historic downtown buildings
- Riverfront views and access
- Neighborhood churches and institutions
- East St. Louis musical legacy
- Cultural and civil rights history
- Existing neighborhood organizations
- House of Miles cultural district initiative
- Katherine Dunham Museum
- Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation
- East St. Louis Lincoln High School legacy

»» Priority Strategies

- Cultural tourism and heritage destination development
- Support for arts, music, and educational partnerships
- Neighborhood cultural corridor initiatives
- Preservation and activation of nationally significant cultural assets
- Historic preservation and adaptive reuse
- Cultural heritage trails
- Public art and murals
- Neighborhood gateway improvements
- Streetscape and facade enhancement programs
- Community event programming
- Music and arts district initiatives
- Riverfront public gathering spaces





Sense of Community Well-Being

Every resident of East St. Louis should be able to move safely and comfortably throughout the city, regardless of age, ability, income, or mode of transportation. Yet many neighborhoods continue to experience unsafe roadway conditions, disconnected sidewalks, inadequate lighting, speeding traffic, dangerous crossings, flooding, deteriorated pavement, infrastructure barriers, and high rates of fatal and serious injury crashes.

Between 2015 and 2024, East St. Louis experienced 38 fatal crashes and 290 serious injury crashes, with fatal and serious injury crashes increasing significantly in recent years. The City's Vision Zero Action Plan identified a High Injury Network that represents approximately 21 percent of the roadway network but accounts for 97 percent of fatal crashes and 87 percent of serious injury crashes.

Community engagement conducted through the SS4A planning process identified speeding, poor lighting, drainage and flooding issues, unsafe intersections, deteriorated sidewalks, ADA barriers, and roadway maintenance deficiencies as major resident concerns.

Multiple planning documents identified transportation barriers, disconnected infrastructure, poor pedestrian conditions, lighting deficiencies, and safety concerns throughout East St. Louis. The Tudor-Piggott feasibility study highlighted the importance of community safety, walkability, and neighborhood connectivity.

The City recognizes that traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable and has adopted a Vision Zero approach that prioritizes eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes by 2040 through data-driven, equitable, and systemic transportation safety investments. Safety investments should be guided by data, equity, public input, and the Safe System Approach, which acknowledges that human error is inevitable and that transportation systems must be designed to reduce the likelihood of severe harm.

This pillar prioritizes investments along East St. Louis' High Injury Network and in neighborhoods facing the greatest transportation disadvantages. Improvements will focus on safer roadway design, speed management, pedestrian and bicycle safety, ADA accessibility, lighting modernization, neighborhood visibility, and improved connectivity for vulnerable road users including children, seniors, transit users, bicyclists, and households without access to vehicles.

Infrastructure condition and routine maintenance are also critical components of community safety and quality of life. Residents participating in the Vision Zero and community engagement processes consistently identified deteriorated pavement, inadequate drainage, flooding, broken sidewalks, insufficient lighting, overgrown vegetation, and deferred infrastructure maintenance as barriers to safe mobility and neighborhood well-being. Addressing these everyday conditions through proactive maintenance, coordinated infrastructure management, and visible neighborhood improvements is essential to building public trust, improving safety outcomes, and supporting long-term livability.



Transportation barriers created by rail congestion and prolonged crossing blockages may also affect emergency response times, neighborhood access, and public safety conditions in several areas of the city. Community safety also extends beyond transportation infrastructure and includes the creation of safe public spaces, stronger neighborhood connections, improved emergency access, and investments that increase resident trust, comfort, and quality of life.

The proposed East St. Louis Public Safety and Wellness Center near the MetroLink corridor and federal campus area offers an opportunity to integrate public safety, mental health response, social services, family support resources, and community wellness programming into a coordinated, neighborhood-centered facility. The concept reflects a broader approach to community safety that integrates traditional public safety operations with trauma-informed interventions, crisis response, wellness services, and community support systems to improve long-term neighborhood stability and quality of life.

Community-centered crisis response and social-service partnership models, including trauma-informed intervention and nonviolent crisis response programs, may also support broader neighborhood wellness and public safety goals.”

»» GOAL

Improve transportation safety, public safety, emergency access, and neighborhood well-being by creating safer streets, safer public spaces, and more connected community environments for residents of all ages and abilities.

»» Objectives

- Reduce traffic injuries and fatalities
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Increase neighborhood lighting and visibility
- Reduce barriers created by highways and rail corridors
- Improve emergency access and response
- Promote safe public spaces

»» Priority Strategies

- Safe System roadway design
- Speed management strategies
- Safer crossings and intersection redesign
- Visibility and lighting improvements
- Post-crash response coordination
- Vulnerable road user protection
- Complete streets implementation

»» High-Injury Network/Priority Corridors

- Missouri Avenue (IL 15)
- State Street
- Kingshighway
- Mississippi Ave / S. 8th Street
- Summit / Maybelle
- Eads Bridge corridors





East St. Louis has historically served as one of the region's most important transportation hubs, connecting people, goods, rail systems, highways, transit networks, and river infrastructure throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area. It remains one of the region's most significant multimodal freight and rail hubs. However, many residents continue to face barriers to safe, affordable, and reliable mobility due to disconnected infrastructure, limited transportation options, unsafe walking conditions, and infrastructure that has historically divided neighborhoods.

Historic and modern plans repeatedly emphasized East St. Louis' importance as a transportation hub. The 2004 Comprehensive Plan and Waterfront Plan emphasized stronger linkages between downtown, the riverfront, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, East St. Louis Center, neighborhoods, and regional transit systems.

This framework supports a connected, multi-modal transportation system that prioritizes access, equity, safety, and opportunity. Mobility investments should improve connections between neighborhoods, schools, jobs, healthcare facilities, parks, transit stations, and regional destinations while reducing transportation costs for residents. Mobility investments should also reduce transportation cost burdens and improve access to jobs, healthcare, education, and daily needs for households that rely on walking, bicycling, transit, or shared transportation options.

As one of the region's largest freight and rail hubs, East St. Louis also faces significant mobility and connectivity challenges stemming from rail operations and infrastructure constraints. Train blockages, rail congestion, and long-term viaduct maintenance can disrupt local traffic circulation, isolate neighborhoods, delay emergency response access, and create barriers for residents, businesses, transit operations, and daily commuting. Addressing rail-related connectivity challenges and improving multimodal coordination will remain important considerations in future transportation planning, infrastructure investment, emergency access planning, and neighborhood mobility improvements associated with the Illinois 15 PEL Study and broader regional transportation initiatives.

Transportation systems should be designed for all users and all abilities, with particular emphasis on vulnerable road users and transit-dependent populations. Investments in sidewalks, trails, bicycle infrastructure, transit-oriented development, complete streets, greenways, and first-mile/last-mile connections will strengthen both local and regional mobility while supporting broader economic, environmental, and public health goals.

The framework also recognizes that transportation infrastructure must reconnect communities that were historically divided by highways, rail corridors, industrial uses, and disinvestment. Mobility improvements should therefore support both physical connectivity and long-term neighborhood reintegration.

Regional transportation initiatives may also create opportunities to improve connectivity, freight movement, industrial access, and long-term mobility coordination within East St. Louis and the surrounding Metro East region. The Illinois Route 3 Connector Project, currently being advanced by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration



(FHWA), includes planned improvements to regional arterial corridors, freight connectivity, bridge infrastructure, and transportation access between East St. Louis, Madison, and Fairmont City. The project's proposed roadway and corridor improvements may provide future opportunities to strengthen connections between Illinois Route 15, relocated Illinois Route 3 corridors, industrial redevelopment areas, regional freight infrastructure, and key economic opportunity districts throughout East St. Louis. Coordination between the Illinois 15 PEL Study and broader regional transportation initiatives may help support improved mobility, infrastructure reliability, economic competitiveness, and multimodal connectivity throughout the area.

As discussed above, East St. Louis' transportation network also plays a significant role in regional freight movement, rail operations, interstate commerce, and river transportation. Future mobility investments should balance neighborhood connectivity and safety improvements with the continued importance of industrial access, freight efficiency, multimodal logistics, and regional economic competitiveness.

»» GOAL

Create a connected, reliable, and multi-modal transportation system that improves neighborhood connectivity, strengthens regional mobility and freight coordination, reconnects divided communities, and links residents to jobs, healthcare, education, parks, transit, and economic opportunity.

»» Objectives

- Improve neighborhood connectivity
- Expand transportation choices
- Strengthen regional mobility access
- Improve first-mile/last-mile transit access
- Reduce transportation cost burdens
- Reconnect areas divided by infrastructure
- Reduce neighborhood barriers and connectivity disruptions associated with rail infrastructure
- Improve emergency access and transportation system reliability

»» Key Transportation Assets

- MetroLink stations
- Interstate access
- Rail infrastructure
- Mississippi River corridors
- Regional trail opportunities
- Existing street grid framework

»» Priority Strategies

- Multi-modal corridor planning
- Rail crossing and viaduct coordination improvements
- Emergency access and incident management planning
- Freight and community mobility coordination
- Improved multimodal connectivity across rail corridors
- Sidewalk and bike network expansion
- Transit-oriented development
- Greenway and trail connections
- Improved MetroLink access
- Complete streets retrofits
- Freight and passenger mobility coordination
- Riverfront access improvements
- Coordinate mobility and redevelopment planning with regional transportation corridor improvements





Equity & Inclusive Development

The history of East St. Louis is shaped by systemic racial inequities, economic isolation, environmental burdens, discriminatory housing practices, infrastructure disinvestment, and the displacement of historically Black neighborhoods.

These patterns have produced lasting disparities in:

- Health
- Transportation access
- Environmental conditions
- Economic opportunity
- Public investment

East St. Louis has experienced decades of racial inequity, disinvestment, economic isolation, environmental burdens, and infrastructure decline. Many prior plans recognized the disproportionate impacts borne by low-income communities and communities of color. Compared to surrounding jurisdictions, East St. Louis experiences the greatest concentration of transportation disadvantages, including high poverty, racial segregation, limited vehicle access, and age-related vulnerability. These demographic groups are indicative of populations more likely to experience transportation safety issues and traffic violence.

This framework recognizes equity as a foundational principle rather than a stand-alone initiative. Public investments should intentionally prioritize neighborhoods and populations that have historically experienced the greatest barriers to opportunity and the highest concentrations of transportation disadvantage, environmental risk, and infrastructure need.

Equity-centered planning requires:

- Transparent decision-making
- Meaningful community participation
- Accessible infrastructure
- Anti-displacement strategies
- Measurable accountability

Investments should improve access to jobs, transit, healthcare, education, housing, and public amenities while ensuring that revitalization benefits existing residents and businesses.

The framework supports the use of data-driven equity tools, demographic analysis, and community-informed prioritization strategies to guide investment decisions and ensure that infrastructure improvements, redevelopment initiatives, and transportation projects advance inclusive and measurable community outcomes.

The framework also supports the use of demographic and equity mapping tools, including transportation disadvantage indicators, to prioritize investments in neighborhoods facing the greatest cumulative burdens.



GOAL

Ensure public investment benefits historically underserved residents and neighborhoods while preventing displacement and exclusion.

Objectives

- Direct investment toward underserved areas
- Improve access to opportunity
- Prevent displacement
- Increase resident participation in decision-making
- Ensure equitable infrastructure investment
- Improve accessibility for all residents

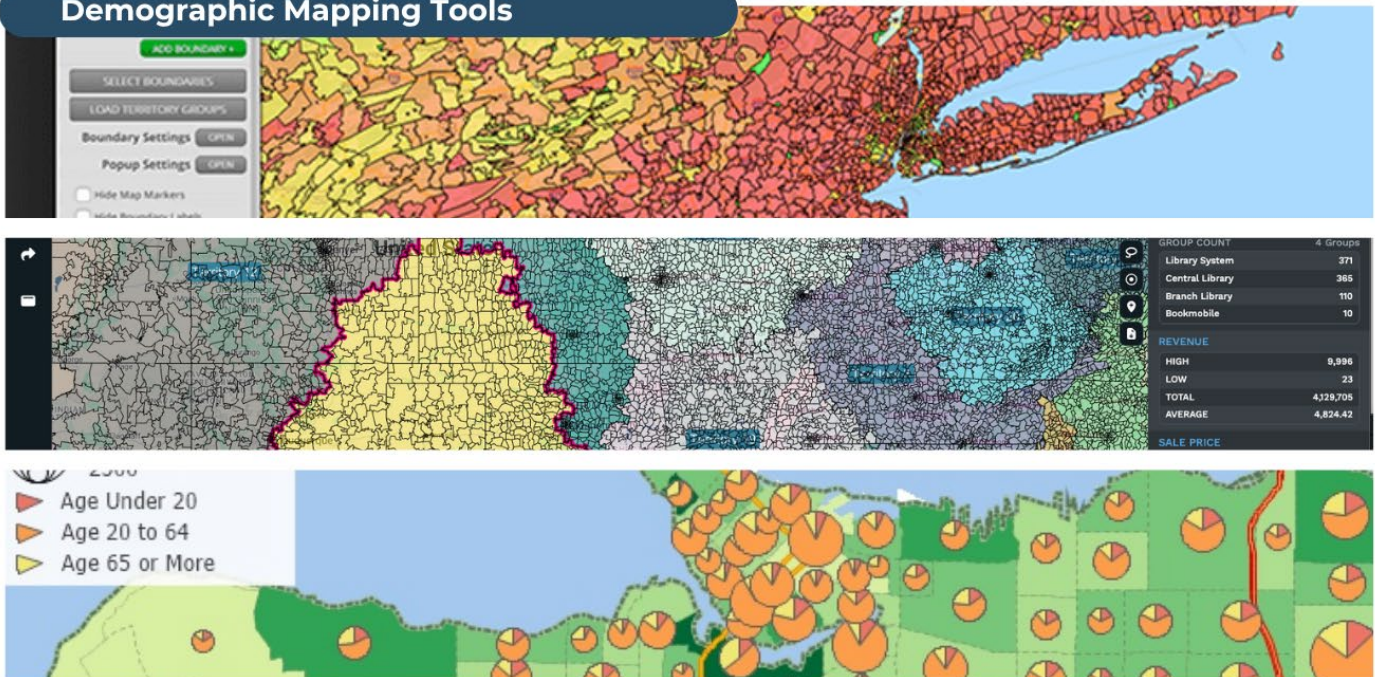
Equity Priority Areas

- Winstanley neighborhood
- Public housing transition areas
- Neighborhoods adjacent to industrial uses
- Transit-dependent communities
- Vacant property clusters

Priority Strategies

- Equity impact assessments
- Community benefits agreements
- Affordable housing preservation
- Minority and local contractor participation goals
- Participatory planning processes
- ADA accessibility improvements
- Targeted neighborhood reinvestment
- Youth engagement initiatives

Demographic Mapping Tools





Implementation & Partnership

East St. Louis has experienced repeated cycles of planning, study, and proposed investment without consistently achieving long-term implementation. While many plans have identified important community priorities, sustaining momentum often depends upon continued collaboration among local, regional, state, institutional, and community partners. This history underscores the importance of using planning frameworks that help align transportation decisions with broader community goals while supporting coordination among the many organizations involved in revitalization.

Developed as part of the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, IL Route 15 and Bond Avenue in East St. Louis, this Livability Framework provides a common set of principles that can be used to inform transportation planning, project development, and future investment decisions. Rather than establishing new governance structures or implementation requirements, the framework encourages transportation agencies, local governments, community organizations, institutional partners, and residents to consider how transportation investments can support safety, connectivity, economic opportunity, environmental resilience, neighborhood vitality, and equitable access throughout East St. Louis.

Although East St. Louis currently lacks an updated comprehensive plan, the Livability Framework provides an important planning resource that can help demonstrate community priorities, strengthen transportation planning efforts, and support future grant applications. The framework is intended to complement—not replace—future comprehensive planning initiatives by providing a transportation-focused foundation that reflects the community's long-term vision.

SAVE LIVES NOW!
A REGIONAL INITIATIVE TO REDUCE VIOLENT CRIME

The Three Proven Strategies

FOCUSED DETERRENCE	COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THEORY	STREET OUTREACH
Law enforcement and community leaders identify and directly engage individuals at the highest risk for committing or experiencing violent crime, offering both accountability and support.	Practitioners help participants develop new ways to process stress and trauma, replacing impulsive, violent reactions with positive decision-making skills.	Trusted messengers mediate conflicts, mentor at-risk individuals, and connect them to housing, counseling, education, and employment opportunities.

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EAST-WEST GATEWAY
Council of Governments

East St. Louis has already demonstrated the value of collaboration and community-centered public safety initiatives through recent anti-violence and crime reduction efforts. Under the leadership of Mayor Charlie Powell and Chief of Police Kendall Perry, East St. Louis has partnered with regional agencies and community organizations through the “Save Lives Now!” initiative to implement data-driven violence-prevention strategies, street outreach, trauma-informed interventions, and victim-support services to reduce shootings and homicides.

Save Lives Now! (SLN) is a collaborative initiative that coordinates proven anti-violence tactics, technical assistance, and crime data across law enforcement and governmental jurisdictions, neighborhoods, service providers, and local residents. Though regional in scope, SLN focuses resources in areas in the city of St. Louis, St. Louis County, and St. Clair County identified to have high incidents of violent crime.



These efforts illustrate how coordinated partnerships among public agencies, community organizations, healthcare providers, educational institutions, and regional stakeholders can address complex community challenges while strengthening public trust and neighborhood stability.

Additional public investment and regional partnership efforts further reinforce East St. Louis' role as a strategic center for public safety coordination and community reinvestment. The planned relocation of the Illinois State Police (ISP) District 11 headquarters from Collinsville to East St. Louis represents a major state investment intended to strengthen regional public safety operations, community partnerships, and long-term economic confidence within the city. The new facility, to be located near the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center and regional transportation corridors, will support patrol operations, criminal investigations, communications, and specialized response units serving the broader Metro East region. State and local leaders have emphasized that the investment is intended not only to support public safety operations, but also to strengthen neighborhood stability, encourage business and residential investment, expand community partnerships, and reinforce East St. Louis' strategic regional importance. The project also reflects broader collaboration among public agencies, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and community stakeholders to support long-term revitalization and neighborhood reinvestment.



As transportation improvements are considered throughout the IL Route 15/Bond Avenue corridor and elsewhere in East St. Louis, the Livability Framework provides a practical decision-making tool for evaluating how projects contribute to the community's long-term vision. By encouraging coordination with local plans, community priorities, and regional partners, the framework supports transportation investments that improve safety, strengthen connections, expand access to opportunity, and enhance quality of life while respecting the roles and responsibilities of the agencies responsible for implementation.



GOAL

Support transparent, collaborative, and context-sensitive transportation decision-making that builds public trust and advances the community's long-term livability vision.

Objectives

- Promote transparent transportation decision-making
- Encourage collaboration among transportation and community partners
- Support meaningful public participation throughout planning and project development
- Consider livability principles in transportation investment decisions
- Foster public confidence through clear communication and responsiveness
- Encourage coordination with adopted local and regional plans

Priority Strategies

- Apply the Livability Framework during transportation planning, corridor studies, and project development
- Consider safety, equity, accessibility, economic opportunity, and community context when evaluating transportation alternatives
- Coordinate transportation investments with adopted local and regional plans where appropriate
- Engage residents, stakeholders, and partner agencies throughout transportation planning and project development
- Encourage context-sensitive and multimodal transportation solutions that reflect community priorities
- Identify opportunities to leverage transportation investments to support neighborhood revitalization and economic development
- Seek funding opportunities that advance transportation and livability objectives
- Monitor project outcomes using transportation performance measures appropriate to implementing agency

Community Priorities Identified Through Engagement

- | | | | |
|------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| • Lighting | • Speeding | • ADA barriers | • Corridor safety |
| • Drainage | • Unsafe intersections | • Sidewalks | • Maintenance issues |

Key Partners

- | | |
|---|--|
| • City of East St. Louis | • Mid-America Medical District |
| • St. Clair County | • East-West Gateway Council of Governments |
| • IDOT | • Metro East Organizing Coalition |
| • Illinois State Police | • Regional violence prevention organizations |
| • East St. Louis School District 189 | • St. Louis regional public safety partners |
| • Public safety and trauma-informed service providers | • Community organizations |
| • MetroLink | • Faith-based institutions |
| • SIUE | • Schools and healthcare systems |



»» Application of the Livability Framework

The Livability Framework is intended to inform transportation planning, project development, programming, and investment decisions by encouraging consideration of safety, connectivity, equity, economic opportunity, environmental resilience, and community context alongside traditional transportation needs. The framework may be used by the City of East St. Louis, IDOT, regional transportation agencies, and partner organizations as one tool to help identify opportunities, evaluate transportation investments, and support coordination with other local planning initiatives.

The framework is not intended to establish new regulatory requirements or implementation responsibilities for partner agencies. Rather, it provides a common set of principles that can support coordination among the City of East St. Louis, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Metro, St. Clair County, and other public and private partners as transportation projects are planned, designed, funded, and implemented. Transportation projects should be evaluated within the context of the framework by considering how proposed investments contribute to one or more of the following community outcomes:

-  Improve safety for all roadway users, particularly pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, older adults, children, and persons with disabilities.
-  Strengthen connections between neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, healthcare facilities, parks, transit, and regional destinations.
-  Support equitable investment in historically underserved neighborhoods and improve access to opportunity.
-  Enhance environmental quality and community resilience through sustainable infrastructure and context-sensitive design.
-  Support economic vitality by improving access to businesses, workforce opportunities, redevelopment areas, and regional transportation assets.
-  Reinforce neighborhood identity, community character, and quality public spaces.
-  Encourage coordination with local plans, community priorities, and complementary public investments where appropriate.

The framework may also assist local governments and transportation agencies in identifying opportunities for grant funding, prioritizing capital improvements, coordinating investments across multiple agencies, and communicating how transportation projects support broader community objectives.



»» Transportation Evaluation Considerations

The following considerations may be used, as appropriate, to evaluate transportation projects for consistency with the Livability Framework:

Livability Pillar	Transportation Considerations
Health & Environmental Resilience	Improves air quality, stormwater management, active transportation opportunities, or environmental justice outcomes
Economic Opportunity	Improves access to jobs, commercial areas, redevelopment sites, or freight and logistics assets
Sense of Place & Cultural Identity	Enhances gateways, streetscapes, historic resources, public spaces, or neighborhood character
Safety & Community Well-Being	Reduces fatal and serious injury risk, improves ADA accessibility, manages speeds, or enhances pedestrian and bicycle safety
Connections & Mobility	Expands multimodal access, strengthens transit connections, closes network gaps, or reconnects neighborhoods
Equity & Inclusive Development	Benefits underserved populations, improves accessibility, or addresses documented transportation disadvantages
Implementation & Civic Trust	Demonstrates coordination with community priorities, supports transparent decision-making, or complements adopted local and regional plans

Performance measures should be selected by the responsible implementing agency and may vary depending on project type, funding source, and program objectives. Examples include:

- Reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes.
- Improved pedestrian, bicycle, and ADA accessibility.
- Enhanced connectivity to jobs, schools, healthcare, parks, and transit.
- Benefits to historically underserved neighborhoods.
- Environmental resilience and stormwater improvements.
- Support for economic development and neighborhood revitalization.
- Coordination with adopted local and regional plans.



»» Conclusion

East St. Louis possesses extraordinary regional assets, including a historic downtown, nationally significant transportation and freight infrastructure, the Mississippi River waterfront, strong neighborhoods, institutional anchors, and one of the region's most important multimodal freight and rail networks. Equally important is its resilient community, shaped by generations of cultural, industrial, and civic leadership, and its enduring commitment to creating a stronger future for residents.

Developed in support of the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, IL Route 15 and Bond Avenue in East St. Louis, this Livability Framework recognizes that transportation is more than the movement of people and goods. Transportation investments influence economic opportunity, public health, neighborhood connectivity, environmental quality, safety, and overall quality of life. By considering these relationships together, transportation planning can better support the community's long-term vision for revitalization and reinvestment.

The Livability Framework provides a common set of principles to help inform transportation planning, project development, and investment decisions while encouraging coordination with local plans, community priorities, and regional partners. As the Illinois Department of Transportation, St. Clair County, Metro, and East St. Louis pursue future transportation improvements, the framework offers a practical tool for evaluating opportunities, supporting context-sensitive solutions, and advancing projects that improve safety, strengthen connections, promote equitable access to opportunity, and enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.



RESOURCE MATERIALS

Planning and Implementation Timeline

1. 1920 – A Comprehensive City Plan for East St. Louis
Prepared by Harland Bartholomew for the War Civics Committee.
Established the city's early framework for land use, transportation, civic facilities, and regional connectivity.
2. 1960 – Master Plan: East St. Louis
Prepared by Candeub & Fleissig Planning Consultants.
Included land use planning, circulation systems, urban renewal, neighborhood analysis, CBD redevelopment, capital improvements, and infrastructure priorities.
3. 1960 – Land Use Plan Exhibit
Historic land use mapping and planning exhibit for East St. Louis.

Neighborhood and Community Revitalization Plans

4. 1993 – East St. Louis Winstanley/Industry Park Neighborhood Improvement Plan
Comprehensive neighborhood stabilization and revitalization strategy focused on housing, infrastructure, economic development, environmental hazards, urban design, and public health.
5. 1993 – Winstanley Neighborhood Boundary Map
Geographic definition of the Winstanley neighborhood planning area.

Citywide Comprehensive Planning

6. 2004 – City of East St. Louis Comprehensive Plan
Primary citywide planning document used extensively for the framework.
Key themes included:
 - Economic revitalization
 - Downtown and riverfront linkage
 - Historic preservation
 - Transportation and infrastructure
 - Neighborhood stabilization
 - Land use modernization
 - Public engagement and implementation strategies
7. 2004 – Comprehensive Plan Exhibits
Future land use maps and supporting graphics tied to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan.

Waterfront and Riverfront Redevelopment Plans

8. 2002/2004 – East St. Louis Riverfront Master Plan / Implementation Plan
Focused on redevelopment implementation strategies, governance structures, financing, riverfront activation, infrastructure investment, and economic development.
9. 2004 – East St. Louis Waterfront Development Master Plan
Major source document for:
 - Mixed-use riverfront redevelopment
 - Transportation linkages
 - Parks/open space systems
 - Environmental remediation
 - Economic development concepts
 - Public access and waterfront activation

Economic Development and Downtown Revitalization

10. 2009 – East St. Louis TIF Districts Map
Used to understand redevelopment districts and economic incentive geography.
11. 2011 – East St. Louis Central Business District Master Development Plan
Focused on catalytic redevelopment projects, zoning modernization, downtown revitalization, streetscape improvements, and private investment attraction.



Mid-America Medical District Planning

12. 2010 – Mid-America Medical District Comprehensive Master Plan

Important source for:

- Health-centered redevelopment
- Mixed-use institutional planning
- Urban design
- Connectivity
- Open space networks
- Sustainable development
- Healthcare and education integration

13. 2010 – Mid-America Medical District Economic Development & Recruitment Strategy

Used for economic development, organizational capacity, marketing, and long-term implementation concepts.

Transportation and Connectivity Studies

14. 2017 – Tudor-Piggott Connection Feasibility Study

Used for transportation safety, connectivity, community engagement, and corridor planning context.

15. 2017 – Alternatives Developed Map

Transportation and circulation alternative concepts.

Land Use, Environmental, and Ownership Data

16. 2017 – Properties Owned by St. Clair County Map

Used to identify public land ownership and redevelopment opportunity areas.

17. 2017 – Special and Hazardous Waste Sites Map

Used to support environmental justice, brownfield, and remediation considerations.

18. 2022 – City of East St. Louis Parcel-Based Zoning Map

Current zoning and land use context used to support redevelopment and land use recommendations.

Implementation, Accountability, and Equity-centered Action

19. 2026 – Safer Streets for All (SS4A) Vision Zero Action Plan

Comprehensive transportation safety and implementation framework focused on eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes on non-interstate roadways by 2040 through a Vision Zero and Safe System Approach.

Key components included:

- High Injury Network identification and prioritization
- Equity and demographic analysis
- Vulnerable road user safety
- Data-driven transportation investments
- Community engagement and neighborhood safety priorities
- Quick-build and long-term infrastructure improvements
- Performance measurement and accountability strategies
- Federal SS4A implementation readiness and funding alignment

The plan established a measurable, implementation-focused roadmap for improving transportation safety, neighborhood connectivity, infrastructure conditions, and equitable mobility access throughout East St. Louis.

