

DRAFT



Table of Contents

Introduction

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Introduction..... | 4 |
| Method of Review..... | 6 |
| Organization of Guidelines..... | 8 |
| History of the District..... | 10 |

Public Right-Of-Way & Open Spaces

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Cafe and Merchandising Zones..... | 16 |
| Temporary Outdoor Markets..... | 18 |
| Special Events..... | 20 |

Landscaping & Open Spaces

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Neighborhood Parks..... | 24 |
| Pocket Parks..... | 26 |
| Landscaping..... | 28 |
| Street Furniture..... | 32 |
| Surface Parking Lots..... | 34 |

Architecture & Built Environment

| | |
|--|----|
| Existing Renovations..... | 40 |
| Renovation of Buildings..... | 42 |
| New Buildings..... | 44 |
| New Parking Structures..... | 46 |
| Storefront Design..... | 50 |
| Awnings and Canopies..... | 58 |
| Sidewalk Cafe and Outdoor Merchandising..... | 62 |
| Exterior Fire Escapes and Balconies..... | 70 |
| Loading Docks..... | 72 |
| Security..... | 75 |
| Exterior Lighting of Buildings..... | 76 |

Signage & Environmental Graphics

| | |
|---|----|
| Definition of Signage..... | 80 |
| Sign Types..... | 84 |
| Art..... | 92 |
| Board Up and Temporary Construction Partitions..... | 94 |
| Sign Maintenance..... | 98 |

Introduction

These guidelines are designed to foster development of the Loft District in an efficient and vibrant way. They provide creative ways in which change can occur, while maintaining respect for the history of the district. Using this resource, building owners can create positive growth, maintain a neighborhood-quality in the area, and develop a vital economic district that is a retail destination for regional residents and tourists. By following these guidelines, living streets are created, which respect history, and celebrate vitality and new technology. These guidelines are designed to be easy to use, specific in their design goals, and yet broad in their application.

The redevelopment of the Loft district is considered a critical step in the full revitalization of Downtown St. Louis.

History of redevelopment plans for the Loft District

Until the mid sixties, the Loft District was one of the busiest areas downtown. As the garment industry relocated to St. Louis county and abroad, the loft district became increasingly underutilized. In the past 20 years, several redevelopment plans have been enacted through Chapter 99 and Chapter 100 of the Missouri statutes. These redevelopment plans served to provide guidelines for design, and award city tax abatements as an incentive for redevelopment of buildings. These guidelines were consistent with the General Plan of the City of St. Louis, including the “Comprehensive City Plan” (1947), the “St. Louis Development Program” (1973), and the “Economic Development Strategy” (1978).

In 1986 and 1987, the area was listed with the National Register of Historic Places as two districts. One district encompassed the area east of Tucker, the other area was the district west of Tucker, and roughly falling between Delmar and Locust.

In 1991, the St. Louis Development Corporation in conjunction with the American Institute of Architects and the Landmarks Association wrote “The Street”. This book creates the first redevelopment plan for the Loft District. It also chronicles the Washington Avenue Loft District, with in depth discussion of the types of buildings in the area, and the history of each specific building.

Recently, the district has become an increasingly vibrant neighborhood. Anchored by the City Museum and enlivened by a host of nightclubs, the area is called home by an ever increasing number of technology companies and people residing in live/work loft environments.

In 1998, the Missouri Department of Economic Development enacted the Missouri Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program. This program offers substantial tax incentives for redevelopment of buildings, provided they meet the rehabilitation standards of the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, as determined by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Because of the increasing growth of the neighborhood, and the viability of economic development through tax credits, full revitalization of the district is possible.

Downtown Development Action Plan

In December 1999, the St. Louis City Planning Commission adopted the Downtown Development Action Plan. This plan calls for an organized method of revitalizing the whole of downtown St. Louis, with the Loft District as a focus area. The Washington Avenue Streetscape Project, funded by the Missouri Department of Transportation, provides seventeen million dollars in construction to revitalize the Washington Avenue streetscape and provide state of the art technology and infrastructure improvements to the area. Amenities include: a new water main; street trees and street furniture; paving to calm

vehicular traffic; new street and pedestrian lighting; power at street lights for special event lighting; and the nation's first example of dedicated event power at major cross streets, providing 400 amps for live performances. Private monies will provide funding for a duct bank for high speed telecommunications.

The Loft District is divided into several sections. These include: the Hip Core

The Loft District Guidelines work in conjunction with the Washington Avenue Streetscape Project, providing a seamless set of design goals that will lead to an exciting, vibrant, fun and safe neighborhood.



Figure 1.1

The open nature of a loft space allows for comfortable living.



Figure 1.2

Neighborhood parks provide space for relaxed recreation and fun.



Figure 1.3

Large display windows filled with unique merchandise are perfect for window shopping.



Figure 1.4

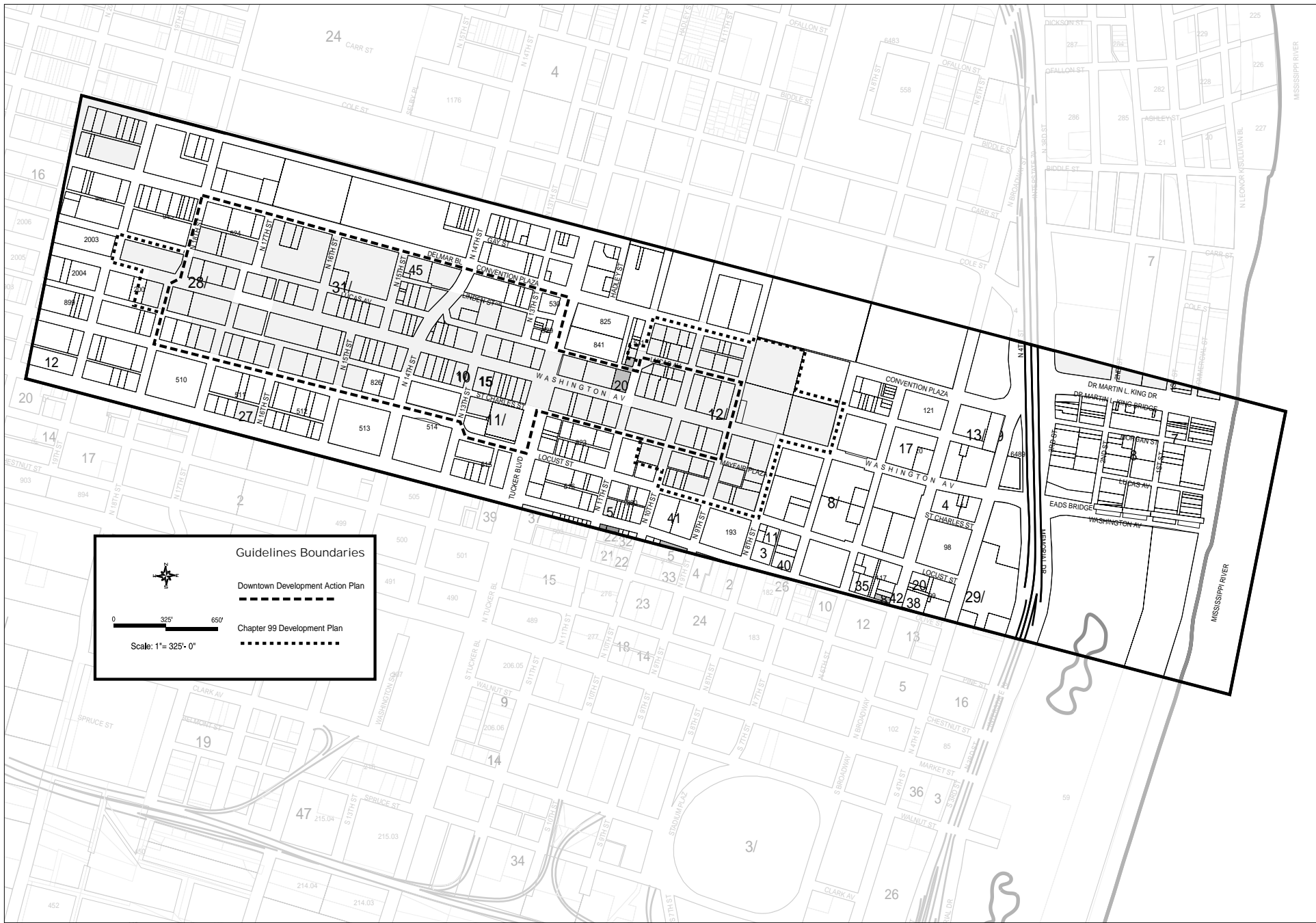
Live /work environments create convenience and efficiency.

Method of Review

These guidelines are designed to become an exhibit to existing and future Chapter 99, 100 and 353 redevelopment plans for the District. They will be presented to the LCRA and PIEA Boards of Commissioners and the Planning Commission for consideration. Once approved as revisions to existing Chapter 99 and 100 Redevelopment Plans for the District, all building permit applications referred to the LCRA and PIEA for review by the SLDC staff will be evaluated based on these guidelines.

Appeals of staff design decisions may be made to a designated existing or new board of commission. The best method of appeal process is under consideration.

Future consideration will also be given to adopting these guidelines as part of special zoning for the District and/or historic district regulations.



Organization of Guidelines

These guidelines are organized into four sections: public right of way and open spaces; streetscape and landscaping open spaces; architecture and built environments; and signage and environmental graphics. The public right of way and open space use section includes use changes on sidewalks, empty lots and along public right of way, including outdoor dining, outdoor retail, and events planning. The streetscape and landscaping open spaces section focuses upon changes to the streetscape as funded by the Missouri Department of Transportation, and future landscape design expected for parking lots, parks and in front of storefronts. The architecture and built environment section provides guidelines on all architectural aspects of the area including renovation of buildings, new infill buildings, storefront design, awning design and lighting. The signage and environmental graphics section delivers guidelines for appropriate design of all sign types. Sections are cross referenced where appropriate.



Figure 1.1

Outdoor dining and events in the district.



Figure 1.2

Landscaping and trees in the district.



Figure 1.3

Successful renovation of an existing storefront.



Figure 1.4

Unique signage that is simple and elegant in design.

| | Public Right-Of-Way | Private Use of Public Way | Private Sector |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Guideline | | | |
| Public Right-Of-Way & Open Spaces | | | |
| Cafe and Outdoor Merchandising Zones | | x | |
| Temporary Outdoor Markets | x | x | |
| Special Events | x | x | |
| Landscaping & Open Spaces | | | |
| Public Parks | x | | |
| Pocket Parks | | x | x |
| Landscaping | x | x | |
| Street Furniture | x | x | |
| Surface Parking Lots | x | x | x |
| Architecture & Built Environment | | | |
| Existing Renovations | | | x |
| Renovation of Buildings | | | x |
| New Buildings | | | x |
| New Parking Structures | x | x | |
| Storefront Design | | | x |
| Awnings and Canopies | | | x |
| Exterior Fire Escapes and Balconies | | | x |
| Loading docks | | | x |
| Security | | | x |
| Exterior Lighting of Buildings | | | x |
| Signage & Environmental Graphics | | | |
| Signage Definition, Types, Layouts, and Maintenance | | | x |
| Art | x | x | x |
| Board Up and Temporary Construction Partitions | | | x |

Figure 1.3

Public/Private Matrix for guidelines.

History of the District

Guideline: Use the history of the district to reinvigorate the neighborhood.

Location of Washington Avenue

In the 1790's, common fields surrounded St. Louis, with the St. Louis Prairie located in the area of what is now the loft district. In 1822, the common field system was dissolved, with the land divided into private land grants. Jeremiah Connor acquired a 380 foot tract from 4th Street to Jefferson, in which he planned an avenue down the center and 150 foot deep lots to either side. One of the finest residential neighborhoods developed west of 14th Street. When Washington Avenue was extended west, this neighborhood was razed.

Institutions and Commerce

One of the first commercial institutions located along Washington Avenue was Auguste Chouteau's furrier warehouse. Washington Avenue quickly became a center for business, with dry goods stores locating along both sides.

In 1842, the Medical School of St. Louis University located to Washington Avenue and 10th Street. In the middle of the century, Smith Academy, the first college of Washington University, was established at 17th and Washington Avenue.

In 1874, Eads bridge was completed, establishing commerce by rail and road with the east. The bridge connected directly to Washington Avenue, meaning that newcomers' first introduction to St. Louis was through this busy avenue. Washington Avenue became commonly known as "The Street".

Retail, Hotels and Entertainment

In the late 19th century, America changed the way it shopped. The department store was developed, providing a sense of luxury that catered to women. Shopping became a social activity that women could do without male escort. Department stores such as the May Company and Grand Leader located along Washington Avenue east of twelfth, creating a high class shopping district. During that time, the avenue became lined with carriages, causing congestion while awaiting their mistresses.

High class hotels along Washington Avenue, such as the Statler and the Mayfair catered not only to tourists, but were also residential hotels for both politicians and the elite. Ulysses Grant and Eisenhower are among the famous people who resided in these hotels. At the end of the century, the Missouri Athletic Club (the MAC) also located along Washington Avenue, at 4th Street.

The district was at its busiest during business hours. At night, it was more difficult to get people to remain downtown. When Loews theater opened in 1924, Loews himself mentioned that his peers believed that he would never be able to get people to stay downtown after work. Happily the theater was wildly successful for many decades.

The Fashion Industry

During the 19th century, wholesale storage facilities developed along Washington Avenue, where clothing was stored, and resold in the St. Louis area, or distributed to the West. In the latter half of the century, manufacturing facilities developed for hats, shoes, and clothing.

Millinery shops were clustered along Washington Avenue. The Bee Hat Company building, which still exists today,

was constructed in 1899 and is an example of one of the millinery manufacturers in the district.

Brown and Hamilton shoe opened its headquarters in the Brown and Hamilton Building (AD Brown Building), constructed in 1878, at 14th Street. By 1911, Brown and Hamilton shoe company was the world's largest shoe company, only to be outsized by International Shoe in 1912, with the conglomeration of Peters Shoe and Roberts, Johnson and Rand Shoe Company. Other shoe companies, such as Wohl Shoe and Edison Brothers were also located along Washington Avenue. In the 50's, shoe designs from these firms were regularly featured in magazines such as Vogue. As the suburbs developed, and manufacturing facilities downtown became obsolete, the shoe companies either relocated west or closed.

At the turn of the century, Washington Avenue stock houses warehoused and then distributed clothing to retail stores throughout the western United States. Often this clothing was delivered to St. Louis, still needing finishing touches, that were added by local seamstresses. As St. Louis became a center for stock houses, smaller fashion design companies also developed. In 1929, the first dress design degree in the United States was offered by Washington University. In 1934 the Junior Dress was invented for Kline's Department Store, establishing St. Louis as the center of the fashion industry. The Junior Dress created a new concept in clothing for young women, differing from what mothers and younger siblings wore. Demure, yet tightly fitted blouses, with full skirts created a youthful image that was wildly popular. Vogue and Glamour regularly featured dress lines such as Dorsa, Frances Dexter, and Carole King. In 1956, Glamour's feature article was "St. Louis - Home of Young Fashion". However the St. Louis fashion craze was brief. With the end of World War II, companies favored sending manufacturing abroad where it was significantly cheaper to make them. In the 1960's when fashion

moved away from the ladylike dresses upon which St. Louis prided itself, to miniskirts and bell bottoms, retail stores favored New York and began ordering directly, rather than using stock houses.

Events and Traffic

Parades for both military occasions and the Fall Festival were located along Washington Avenue. The buildings were adorned with large banners and flags. Between 1882 and 1892, the major streets in St. Louis, including Washington Avenue, were lined with 21,000 colored gas light globes suspended on metal arches along streets and over cross streets. Initially used as temporary decorations for the Fall Festival, the globes became a permanent installation. St. Louis was renowned for its carnival-like appearance - drawing visitors from throughout Europe. The perfection of uses for natural gas such as cooking and heating in conjunction with the introduction of electricity as a cheap source for light made the decorations obsolete. The gas lights were removed in 1892.

Because of its popularity, congestion along Washington Avenue was typical. In 1931, the street was paved with asphalt for the first time. It was typical for traffic to be backed up for four to five blocks trying to get on and off the avenue. In 1943, traffic was so heavy five bus lines and a street car were relocated onto other streets. Bus lanes were located at the center of the street, with passenger loading zones adjacent to the lanes, effectively putting pedestrians in the middle of the street. In 1963, the first electric traffic signals were installed. By the 70's, with the growth of suburbs and car ownership, many businesses had moved out, and Washington Avenue became increasingly underutilized.



Figure 1.1

View down Washington Avenue, showing the trolley tracks.



Figure 1.2

Washington Avenue during celebrations after the Spanish American War. Note the banners in front of Grand Leader's windows.

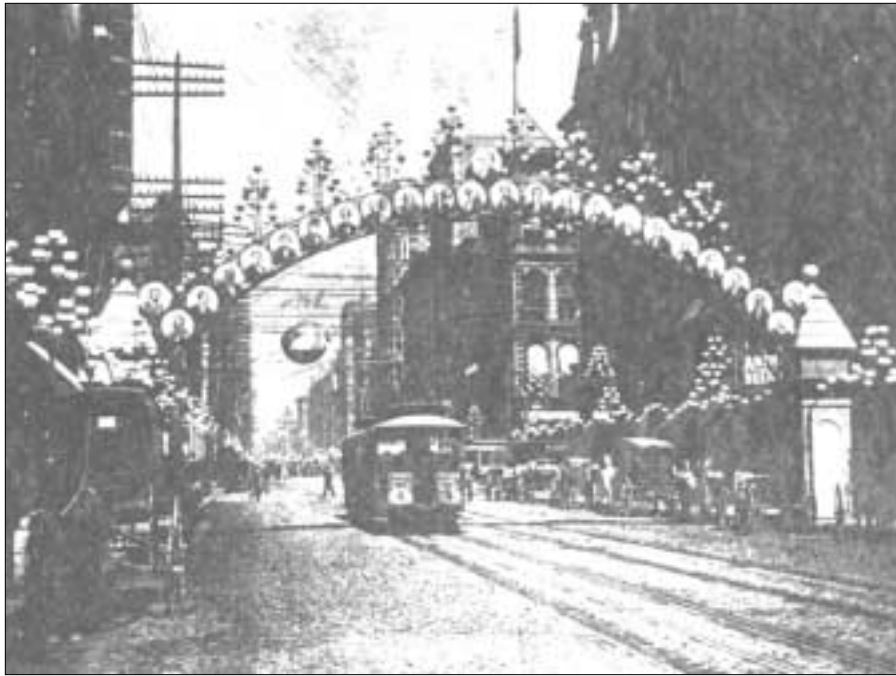


Figure 1.3

Gas light globes lined Washington Avenue during the 1890's.



Figure 1.4

Sketches of junior dresses similar to those produced on Washington Avenue.



Figure 1.5

Sample of shoe design from the 1950's.



Figure 1.6

Traffic on Washington Avenue.