

Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023-2028



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Message from the Mayor and Board of Aldermen	3
Government	4
Demographics Snapshot	5
Guiding Principles	7
Approaches and Initiatives	8
Focus Areas	9
Historic Downtown	10
Wentzville Parkway	12
Wentzville Parkway South	14
David Hoekel Parkway (DHP)	16
Highway A Industrial	18
Appendix	20

Introduction

The Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) was written to guide a targeted approach to economic development efforts in the City of Wentzville. This focused approach is designed to attract and retain specific businesses and industries and promote strategies to optimize economic development opportunities that will benefit the citizens of the community. The City is strategically located for companies needing excellent access for rail, ground and air transportation.

This updated EDSP will serve as a stand-alone document in addition to the Economic Development Chapter (Chapter 8) of the City of Wentzville Comprehensive Plan, which provides general information related to Wentzville's economic development.

This ESDP pulls from experience and history, using the available knowledge and resources of the City, coupled with the applicable history of the City's economic growth and development, its trends and opportunities, and lessons learned through the continuous growth in the surrounding community and the region.

The EDSP examines Wentzville's unique opportunities for growth, particularly in several key development areas including the David Hoekel Parkway interchange, Wentzville Parkway, Wentzville Parkway South, the Highway A industrial corridor and Wentzville's Historic Downtown. In general, the EDSP is guided by the Vision and Critical Success Factors as defined by Wentzville's Board of Aldermen.

The EDSP will present the City's economic development strategies through the framework of business attraction, retention and expansion efforts.



Message from the Mayor and Board of Aldermen

Since 2000, the City of Wentzville's population has grown over 495%, making it one of the fastest growing cities in Missouri. With rapid growth, the City has focused on providing a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) that will guide the City through the next five years. The EDSP focuses on smart growth, while highlighting the City's Vision: "Located at the crossroads of the nation, we are a welcoming community, uniquely positioned as an innovative regional leader. Wentzville delivers exceptional services and a vibrant quality of life for residents and businesses to thrive."

Along with this Vision, the City has developed five critical success factors that will guide its economic development efforts moving forward:

- Regional Destination
- Economic Vitality
- Exceptional City Services
- Infrastructure Connectivity
- Safe and Welcoming Community

With these key factors in mind, the Economic Development Office has developed an expansive plan that details Business Retention and Expansion, Business Attraction and Expansion, Historic Downtown Revitalization, and Small Business Development. With its focus on economic development, the City has accomplished countless projects, some of which are listed below.



- **West Meyer Road**
 - Roadway widening and replacement
 - New sidewalks
- **Wentzville Parkway South Phase 1**
 - New roundabout
 - Improved ramps between I-70 and Wentzville Parkway
- **Concrete Pavement Resurfacing**
 - Removal and replacement of failed concrete slabs
- **City Hall Renovations**
 - New reception area
 - Improved Board Chamber and meeting rooms
- **West Pearce at Meyer Signal**
 - New traffic signal
 - Improved utilities
 - Improved traffic flow
- **Asphalt Pavement Resurfacing**
 - East Pearce, West Pearce resurfacing
 - Resurfacing Main Street and other downtown roads

The City will continue to thrive and prosper in the economic development field through the implementation of this EDSP. This plan will serve as the guide to all economic development within the City of Wentzville.



Government

Located at the “Crossroads of the Nation” — at the intersection of Interstate 70 and U.S. Highway 40-61 — the City was incorporated in March 1872. In 2022, Wentzville reached its historical 150th year and celebrated its milestone birthday. Wentzville is a fourth-class City, and has earned a reputation as one of the best places to build and grow a business.

The City of Wentzville has a Council-Administrator form of government. The Wentzville mayor is elected at-large for a four-year term. The mayor, who serves as the City’s Chief Executive Officer, attends and presides over the Board of Aldermen meetings; however, the mayor only has veto powers over legislation. There are six aldermen who are elected to serve a two-year term.

The City is made up of three Wards with two Aldermen representing each Ward. The City Administrator serves as the Chief Administrative Officer of the City and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the City. The Mayor, with the approval of the Board of Aldermen, appoints the City Administrator.

The City is divided into various departments and divisions. The Economic Development Office, which is responsible for the implementation of this Economic Development Strategic Plan, reports directly to the Assistant City Administrator.

Demographics Snapshot

46,495 Residents **17,220 Housing Units** **98.1% Employment Rate**

 **33.4**
Median Age

 **51.1%**
Female Residents

 **48.9%**
Male Residents

 **\$298,294**
Median Home Value

 **\$98,207**
Median Household Income

Major Employers and Top Industries

The major employers in the City of Wentzville include General Motors, Wentzville School District, TVS Supply and Etrailer Corporation.

The top industries include education, social services and healthcare, manufacturing and retail trade.

Awards and Accolades

- 2022-** One of the Best Places to Start a Small Business
- 2019-** Outstanding Local Government Achievement Award
- 2019-2022-** Green Cities Challenge Award
- 2019-** Third Safest City in Missouri





Demographics Snapshot

Government

Ensuring a safe and adaptable community for families and businesses is a top priority for City leaders. The structure consists of Wentzville Residents, then the Wentzville Mayor, Board of Aldermen and City Administrator.

Education

Wentzville is primarily served by the Wentzville R-IV school district.



17,423

Enrolled Students



20

Schools in Wentzville

Special Events

Holiday Night Lights

Wentzville Days Festival

St. Charles County Fair

Sweetheart Dance

July 4th Celebration

Fall Festival

Easter EGGstravaganza

Citywide Yard Sales

Guiding Principles

The EDSP is guided by the recently adopted Vision Statement and Critical Success Factors of the City.

Vision

Located at the crossroads of the nation, we are a welcoming community, uniquely positioned as an innovative leader. Wentzville delivers exceptional services and a vibrant quality of life for residents and businesses.

Critical Success Factors



Regional Destination: Providing long-term community value through trusted stewardship and responsible financial management.



Economic Vitality: Wentzville is committed to economic prosperity through partnerships, development opportunities, a versatile and skilled workforce and favorable property taxes to ensure that new and established businesses will thrive.



Exceptional City Services: Wentzville provides industry-leading services that enhance the quality of life for residents and businesses by creating unsurpassed customer experiences and ensuring responsible stewardship of resources.



Infrastructure Connectivity: Wentzville connects our community through optimized traffic systems, pedestrian-friendly amenities, dependable utilities and cutting-edge technology to enhance the quality of life.



Safe and Welcoming Community: Wentzville is a safe, inclusive and engaged community, with a built environment and diverse mix of services and outreach that create a unique sense of place.



Approaches and Initiatives

The City of Wentzville's Economic Development Office fulfills the Vision and Critical Success Factors primarily through efforts concentrated on business retention and expansion, business attraction and revitalization, placemaking, and small business development and redevelopment practices.

Business Attraction

Business attraction generally refers to efforts to recruit new businesses to the City of Wentzville. While business attraction necessarily includes marketing efforts with the Communications Office, the Economic Development Office has the unique responsibility to respond to and develop project leads. The Economic Development Office primarily accomplishes this by responding to Requests for Information (RFIs) and lead generation.

Actions: *Announce new and expanding business development through appropriate channels; Continue to maintain contact with Wentzville businesses, utilizing multiple strategies such as in-person business visits, social media and website initiatives; Utilize and promote a property database listing available buildings and parcels in the City; Maintain an up-to-date list of businesses and contacts through the business license program; Undertake an annual survey of business growth, expansion, retention and vacancies; Maintain a database of business attraction efforts and RFI responses.*

Partners: *Missouri Partnership, AllianceSTL, St. Charles County, Economic Development Council of St. Charles County, Brokers, Developers, Realtors, Property/Parcel Owners, Utility Partners, Site Selectors*

Business Retention and Expansion

Staff efforts to help businesses already located in Wentzville to stay in Wentzville, is generally referred to as Business Retention and Expansion (or BRE). This includes helping businesses grow and develop their operations within the City. One of the primary goals of the Economic Development office is to maintain a BRE program that focuses on a multi-touch, multi-layer strategy. Multi-touch as businesses will be contacted through multiple avenues and channels. Multi-layer because the BRE framework includes various interactions with businesses: one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many.

The City of Wentzville recognizes the value of having a strong business base in the community. A strong business climate provides jobs, tax revenues and an enhanced quality of life. Overall, the City of Wentzville wants to support and promote a diversified business economy. The City recognizes business retention and expansion as a fundamental strategy for economic sustainability and growth. The following actions have been developed by the City of Wentzville to enhance and support the existing business community and encourage its growth and expansion.

Actions: *Continue to utilize the "Business Spotlights" and business-to-business videos as a meaningful way to promote exposure and marketability of local business interests; Continue to send an eNewsletter to businesses licensed in the City of Wentzville; Work closely with the Western St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Council (EDC) of St. Charles County to enhance the existing business community.*

Partners: *Western St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council of St. Charles County, Downtown Business Associations, Main Street Associations, Small Business Owners, Community Stakeholders*



Focus Areas

The City of Wentzville has approximately 90 parcels of potential commercial and industrial ground within the City’s growth area that are actively being marketed. These parcels vary in size and are located throughout the City in all quadrants of the community. There are also a number of buildings and tenant spaces available for new growth opportunities. These buildings are identified on the City’s website at www.wentzvillemo.gov/ED. There are five primary focus areas for targeted economic development activity:

- Historic Downtown
- Wentzville Parkway
- Wentzville Parkway South
- David Hoekel Parkway (DHP)
- Highway A Corridor



Historic Downtown

Small businesses are a crucial element in Wentzville's economy, particularly businesses located in the Historic Downtown districts (HD-1, HD-2 and HD-3). They bring a plethora of goods and services to the community as well as diversify the business climate. Each small business provides an opportunity for relationship building and partnership with the City. In combination with the City's efforts in placemaking and revitalization, small businesses enhance the community's quality of life and create a sense of place unique to Wentzville.

From 2016 through 2022, the City of Wentzville has budgeted more than \$320,000 for its Facade Improvement Grant program. In that same time frame, 25 applications have been received, and 16 projects have been completed or are pending.

More than \$98,600 has been paid out from the Facade Improvement Grant program to help businesses thrive in Historic Downtown Wentzville while retaining the historic character of downtown buildings.

From 2013 to 2021, roughly \$6 million was spent on Historic Downtown Wentzville infrastructure improvements. In 2022, another \$1.5 million was budgeted for additional updates. These improvements include road and stormwater enhancements, traffic signals, slab replacement, and various asphalt overlays.

The City also offers a Business Development Grant to help new or significantly expanding businesses. To learn more, see the Appendix.

Actions

- Maintain designation as a Certified Local Government.
- Continue to attract targeted businesses to downtown as a regional destination and economically vital part of Wentzville.
- Encourage and implement growth strategies for Historic Downtown Wentzville, through optimized traffic systems and pedestrian-friendly amenities.
- Utilize the adopted Downtown Revitalization Study as a guide for downtown improvement.
- Promote funding and grant opportunities for new, expanding and current downtown businesses.
- Continue to facilitate the way-finding signage program to draw visitors to downtown.

Partners

- Western St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce
- Small Business Administration
- Wentzville Downtown Committee
- Wentzville Community Historical Society
- Main Street Association
- Commercial Brokers
- Crossroads Arts Council
- Wentzville Community Club
- Downtown Business Association



Wentzville Parkway

Wentzville Parkway is essentially an outer-belt roadway that connects the east-west Interstate 70 with the north-south Highway 40-61. Wentzville Parkway originated as an outgrowth of the General Motors Assembly Center in the early/mid 1980s. The construction of this now five-lane roadway began in 1988. Today, the Wentzville Parkway is a retail success story with numerous businesses and restaurants. A number of subdivisions have developed near the Parkway helping to increase the demand for retail in this area. Along Wentzville Parkway, a number of businesses have been supported through the creation of special funding approaches such as Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NIDs) and Transportation Development Districts (TDDs).

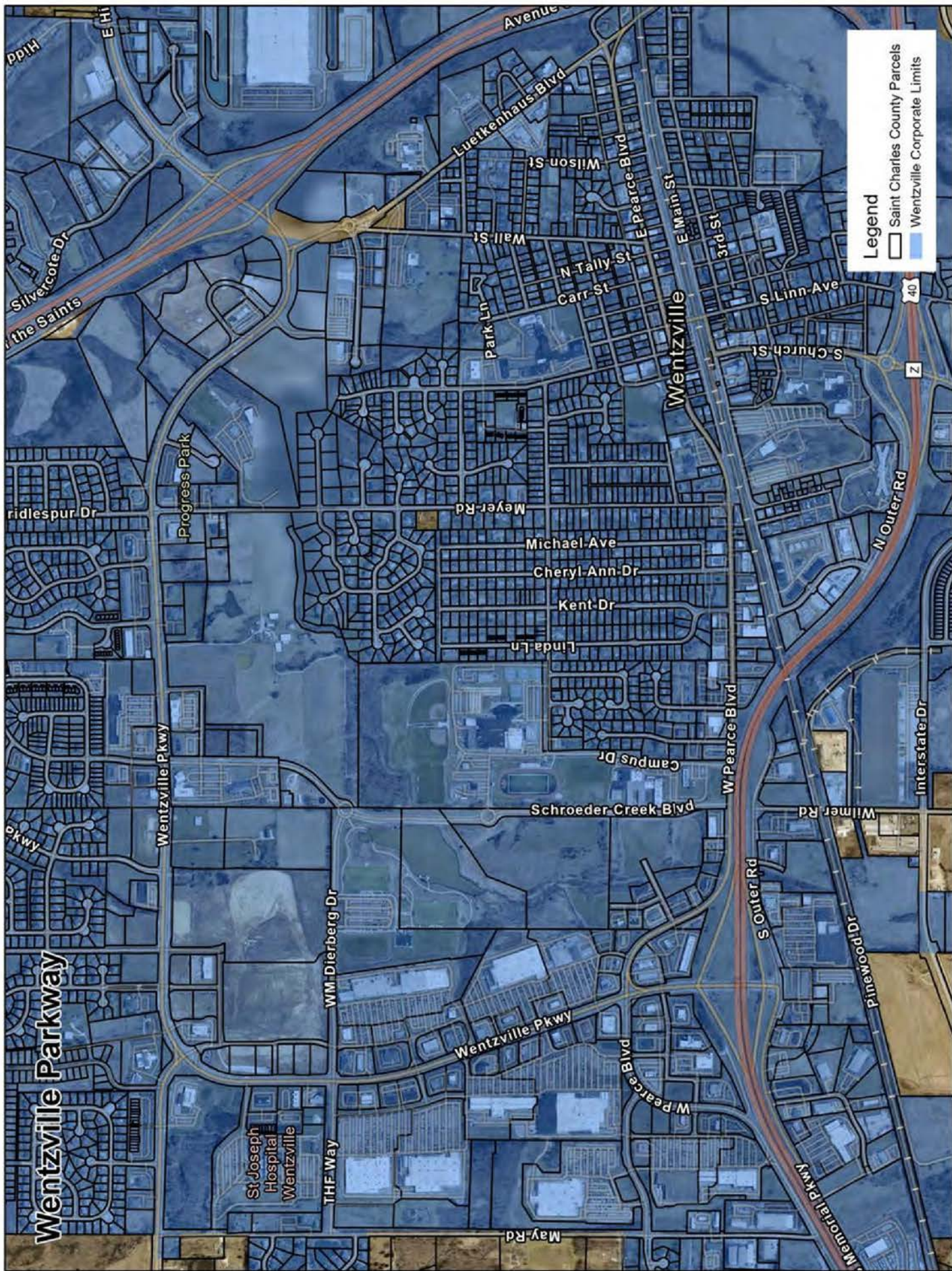
In 2019, the 61-acre Wentzville Bend development was approved. This impressive commercial project provides approximately 25 combined acres of commercial lots, over 10 acres of open space and approximately 14 acres for a new 93,000 square-foot, two-story multigenerational recreational facility known as the Wentzville Rec Center (WREC), located in the heart of Wentzville's primary commercial corridor. This facility provides residents with a wide range of fitness and recreational opportunities, meeting rooms, senior amenities and classrooms. As several commercial projects have already been proposed and completed within The Bend through 2020 and 2021, construction of the recreational facility was completed in late 2022.

Actions

- Proactively pursue additional growth opportunities along Wentzville Parkway.
- Develop properties along the Wentzville Parkway consistent with the City's Future Land Use Plan and the Board's adopted Critical Success Factors.
- Promote retail diversification along Wentzville Parkway.
- Work with business community stakeholders to address concerns and facilitate growth and expansion of existing businesses in the City of Wentzville.

Partners

- City Departments
- Wentzville Parkway developers
- Real estate brokers and retail-oriented organizations such as the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC)
- Individual business owners



Wentzville Parkway South

The City of Wentzville has been planning and designing a new roadway to serve the future transportation needs of the community and the western St. Charles County region. The proposed roadway, designated as the Wentzville Parkway South Extension, will provide a new connection between Interstate 70 and Highway N. This project is divided into two phases. The first phase includes improvements on Veterans Memorial Parkway, which will improve traffic flow through the construction of a roundabout to the west of Wentzville Parkway as well as increase the length of the eastbound acceleration lane onto I-70.

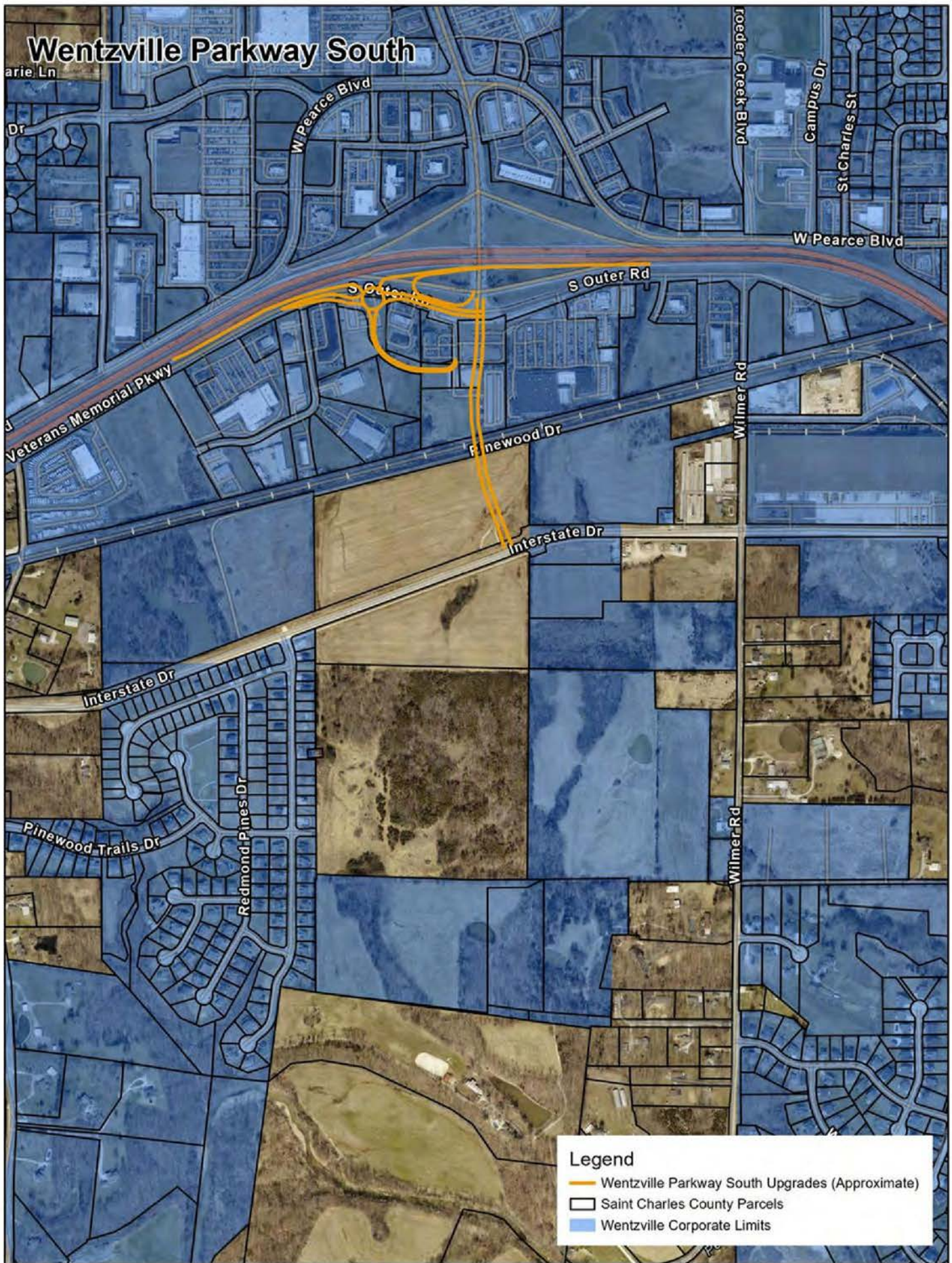
Phase 2 will include the extension of Wentzville Parkway South over the Norfolk Southern Railroad via a grade-separated bridge. Construction on this project started in 2023. This will continue to be a City priority for future commercial, residential and/or mixed-use development. More timeline and construction information can be found on our City website at www.wentzvillemo.gov/ProjectUpdates.

Actions

- Upgrade and enhance infrastructure to create growth opportunities for the City.
- Continue to pursue development surrounding the area of Wentzville Parkway South.
- Continue to make a strong commitment to public investment in infrastructure.
- Encourage the application of mixed-use development projects in appropriate locations.

Partners

- City Departments
- Real estate brokers
- Developers and retail-oriented organizations
- Individual business owners
- ICSC



David Hoekel Parkway (DHP)

In November 2021, the David Hoekel Parkway/I-70 Interchange officially opened to the public. Prior to its grand opening, this was the primary, long-term roadway improvement project in Wentzville. This project consisted of grading/paving ramps and construction of bridges over I-70 and the Norfolk Southern Railroad. This project is a significant investment into the long-term transportation health of the community and, along with traffic alleviation benefits, is expected to create further development opportunities along both sides of I-70.

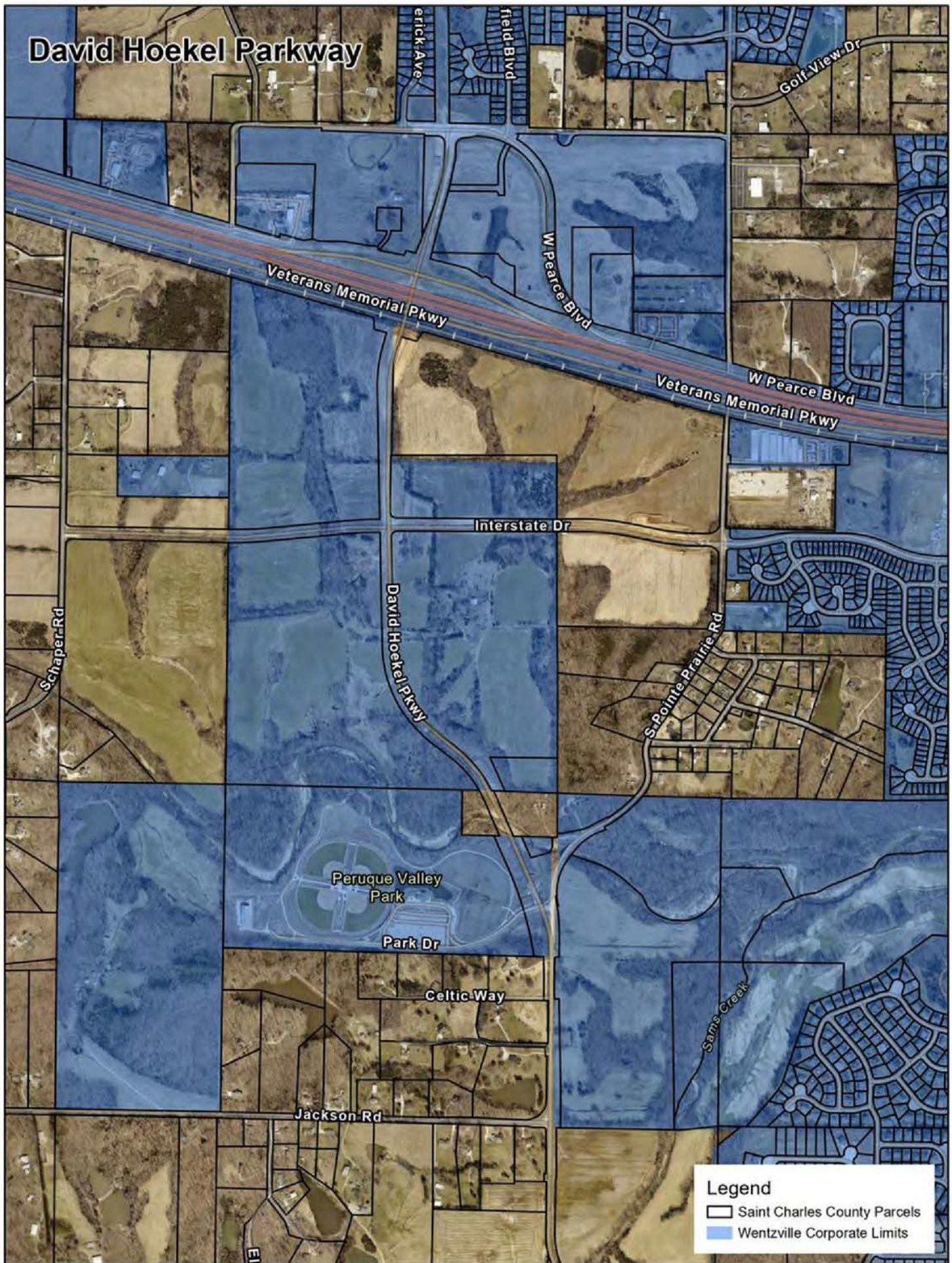
Further improvements included concrete sidewalks, concrete curb ramps, paved approaches, pavement markings and lighting. The City's Future Land Use map has zoned this area for potential commercial, institutional or mixed-use developments. This roadway improvement provides up to 350 to 400 acres of new development opportunity.

Actions

- Support businesses/developments within the community.
- Encourage the application of mixed-use development projects in appropriate locations.
- Continue to support “brick and mortar” retail construction in the City of Wentzville.
- Complete a market gap analysis survey for DHP 2D.

Partners

- Real estate brokers
- Listing agents and retail-oriented organizations
- Developers and property owners



Highway A Industrial

The Missouri Route A (Highway A) corridor extends from Interstate 70 to Highway 40-61. This corridor is the primary industrial sector in Wentzville. The corridor includes the General Motors (GM) Wentzville Assembly Center and many other industrial-related businesses and activities. While there are a number of GM-dependent businesses located along this corridor, there are a number of other manufacturing, wholesale and warehousing facilities which are not dependent upon GM. The general direction of economic development efforts as it relates to this corridor is to create a diversified industrial base. The City of Wentzville should continue to support efforts to build on the strength of General Motors. However, to the extent possible, the Economic Development Office should market to other independent industrial uses. Industrial users typically place higher demands on the utility infrastructure than other land use activities. The City's adopted Comprehensive Plan contains detailed utility information.

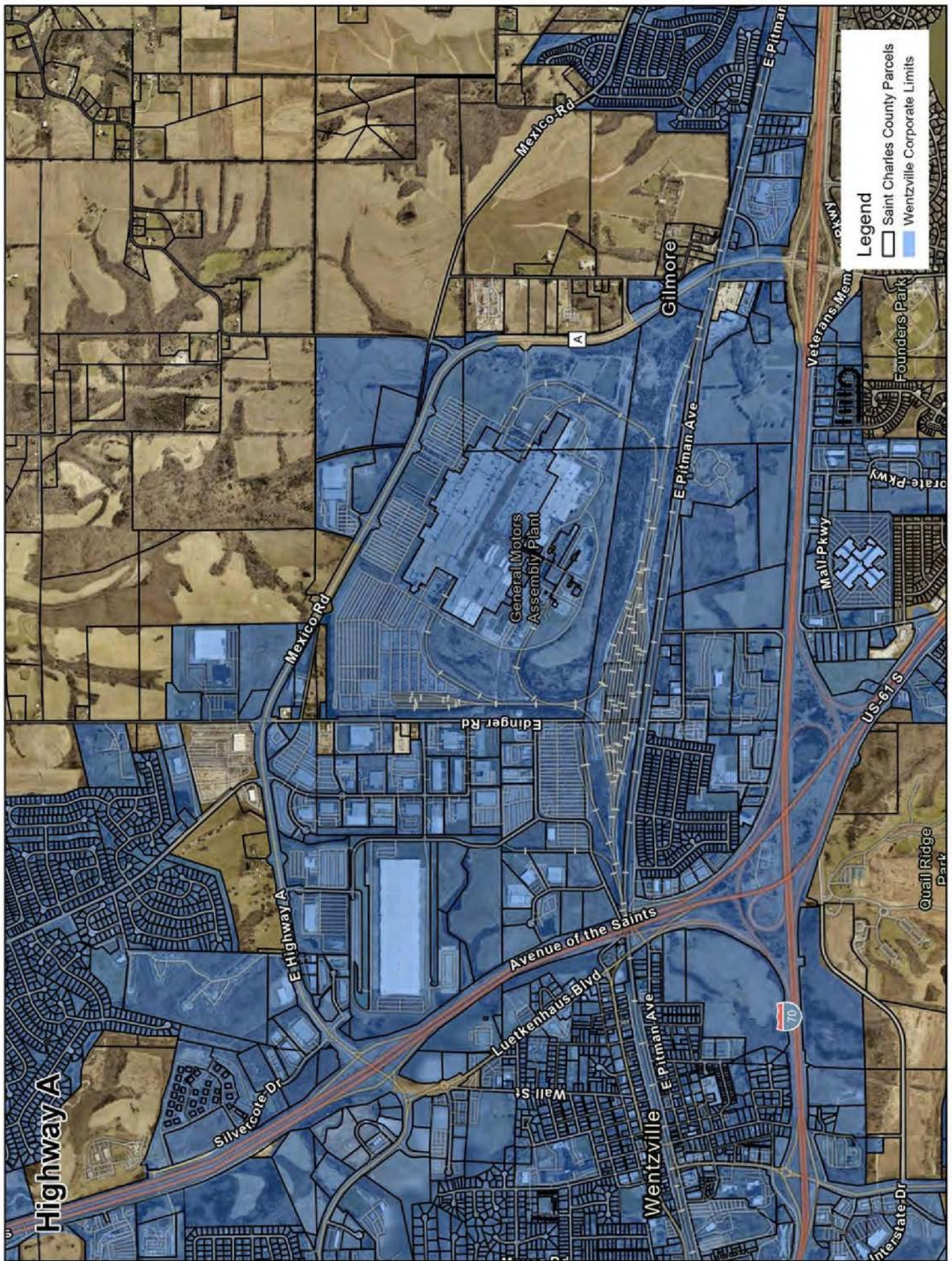
The Wentzville Logistics Center completed construction in 2018 and General Motors announced a \$1.5 billion expansion investment in 2019. Project Big Deal in early 2020 created interest in pursuing data centers and the creation of "mega sites." These "mega-sites" are multiple parcels of land spanning over 500 acres. Conversation with the surrounding unincorporated property owners continues to be a priority among staff for future industrial development. A rail-spur feasibility survey, which was completed in 2021, has prompted several in-person site selector visits to multiple Highway A industrial site locations. The City continues to seek to support GM and its suppliers, while simultaneously exploring opportunities for industrial market diversification in future developments.

Actions

- Concentrate on efforts to enhance the local workforce.
- Continue to support the STEM program in cooperation with the Economic Development Council of St. Charles County (EDC) and the Wentzville School District.
- Work with local educational institutions such as Lindenwood University, Midwest University, Ranken Technical College, St. Charles Community College and Urshan College to train and educate prospective employees.
- Utilize tax incentives in a manner that maximizes the rate-of-return for the community.
- Maintain close coordination with the EDC, Missouri Department of Economic Development (MoDED) and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to ascertain programs available to assist business expansion/development.
- Continue to respond to RFI/Lead generation.

Partners

- City Departments
- Real estate brokers
- Alliance STL
- Economic Development Council of St. Charles County (EDC)
- Industrial land developers
- Norfolk Southern
- Utility partners such as Ameren and Spire
- Missouri Partnership
- Greater St. Louis Inc.



Appendix

The City of Wentzville offers two different grants, including the Facade Grant and the Business Development Grant.



Facade Improvement Grant

This program is open to businesses and mixed-use buildings more than 30 years old that are located in Wentzville's Historic Downtown zoning districts (HD-1, HD-2 or HD-3). Residential structures are not eligible. Facade Improvement Grants are a 50-50 match for an amount not to exceed \$10,000, per project.

Business Development Grant

This program is open to new* or significantly expanding businesses in Wentzville's Historic Downtown zoning districts (HD-1, HD-2 or HD-3). The Business Development Grant is designed to ease start-up and/or business development costs. The grant can be used for various interior building improvements such as paint, finish carpentry, flooring or countertops. *New businesses must have been open for less than 12 months.

**Open Application Periods:
April 1-30, June 1-30 and Aug. 1-31**

GRANTS



Economic Development Office

1001 Schroeder Creek Blvd. Wentzville, MO 63385

(636) 327-5101 • www.wentzvillemo.gov

