

#### **4.10.08**

#### **ST. LOUIS BRAINSTORM**

##### **What's holding St. Louis back?**

Inefficient, beaucroatic government

Short-sighted mentality - unwillingness to see the big picture

Poor, weak leadership

Perception/reality of crime

Ego wars

The City of St. Louis and the State of Missouri share great animosity for one another

##### **Who's doing it right?**

Independent developers/rehabbers

Loyal, steadfast residents

Small business owners/entrepreneurs

Community leaders/urban activists

Academic/cultural/medical institutions

##### **Public Policy - What can be done?**

Make it easier to do business in the city

Streamline city government

Stop demolitions/encourage historic rehabs

Encourage density

Promote city for gays, lesbians, empty nesters, childless couples, creative types

Promote citywide recycling

Promote urbanist ideals: transit, biking, pedestrian-friendliness, public art, street performers, etc.

Expunge obsolete ordinances/restrictions

##### **Who are the players?**

Aldermen

Property owners

City Hall

State officials

Police

School board

Business owners

Residents

##### **What-if statement**

If St. Louis were truly healthy, it would be a magnet for urbanists across the Midwest; instead of fleeing for more attractive locales, people would be drawn to STL's diversity, affordability, incredible housing stock and accessibility. Its vibrancy would resemble what it was in the mid-1900s, only with greater diversity and opportunity for all.

## REPLY FROM PITTSBURGH

Pittsburgh Responds to What is Holding St. Louis Back:

### STL vs the State

- Pittsburgh has a bit of the problem, but the state is assisting with financial oversight
- Pittsburgh is democratic, the surrounding areas are not, so we share those cultural issues

### Perception of Crime

- Pittsburgh also suffers from the perception of crime which is not representative of reality

### Leadership

- Pittsburgh leadership is lacking, false perception of leadership
- Few new faces in politics - "political elite"
- PGH and STL need visionary leadership but the political system makes that difficult
- Issue for both cities - How do you elect visionary leaders ? Old school democrats vs. new school?

### Inefficient/Bureaucratic Government

- PGH also deals with one party system
- How do we move away from patronage and get to a more efficient government

### Who's doing it right in Pittsburgh:

It seems like we have a lot of similar groups working in a positive direction for our city... here are some examples that we came up with.

Independent developers/rehabbers - Pittsburgh has been experiencing a surge in green building initiatives. There are plans in the works for larger and smaller projects, downtown and in residential areas, even a LEED certified supermarket. Some builders/developers are thinking more about community vs simply commercial needs in planning projects.

Loyal, steadfast residents - We've got them, too! Pittsburgh has a huge population of old residents who have lived here all their lives. Part of this includes strong ethnic communities which had their origins in the industrial in-migration.

Small business owners/entrepreneurs - Our relatively low cost of living allows entrepreneurs to try new ventures. We have a great arts community that is spreading throughout the city.

Community leaders/urban activists - Again with the low cost of living comes the fact that lot of people can afford to devote at least *\_some\_* time to community activism instead of just FT paid staffers.

Academic/cultural/medical institutions - University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) has partnered with the city on a scholarship fund called Pittsburgh Promise. Pittsburgh has growing major universities and smaller specialty schools doing well at fundraising and outreach, creating a breadth of academic options. The Cultural District for theatergoers is bringing nightlife to downtown, and the Carnegie Museum network is a major city attraction and resource.