



# *Soulard Community Improvement District*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is the Soulard CID (Community Improvement District)?**

A Community Improvement District (CID) is a legal entity recognized by the State of Missouri, with the singular purpose of improving and promoting a specific neighborhood or community, in this case, Soulard.

Revenue from the Soulard CID is collected from a simple sales tax on sales of food, beverages and items sold at retail within the District. All revenues collected from the sales tax will be spent on improvements and services within the designated boundaries of the Soulard CID.

### **What is needed to create the Soulard CID?**

For a CID to be created, District Organizers must first get approval signatures from a majority of property owners within the District. Once this step is completed, a mail-in election will be held, requiring approval of the CID by the majority of registered voters within the District.

### **What are the District's Boundaries and how were they determined?**

*(See map for boundary specifics.)*

The first thing you'll notice is that the Soulard CID doesn't cover the entire neighborhood right now. Long-term, the CID is planned to cover all of Soulard; however, including the entire neighborhood from the CID's inception would probably mean the CID would never happen. Here's why:

The Soulard CID relies on businesses to generate income through a sales tax. So for the program to be successful, it's critical to include the most number of businesses in the district with the fewest number of signatures and approvals necessary.

The boundaries of the proposed CID were determined based on a requirement that the district boundary must be contiguous. Once that requirement is met, program launch requires a plan that provides a balanced revenue stream, combined with a manageable District size, which can be approved without excessive effort and expense.

The Soulard CID would be the largest CID in St. Louis (outside of the 180-block Downtown CID). Further, the Soulard CID would cover more residential properties than any other CID in the City. Adding any more territory to the CID without a significant number of businesses in the area would require substantial time, work and finances in order to get the District approved.

Simply put, the current plan represents the smartest, most efficient way to launch the Soulard CID. Adding any more properties at the beginning of this effort would probably result in failure. We need to take baby steps first.

In response to a request from the Soulard Restoration Group, the Soulard CID Steering Committee agreed that the Soulard CID's boundaries would be reviewed in the future, once revenue streams have been established, benefits of the CID are clearly visible within the neighborhood, and expansion of the District could be accomplished in an effective and efficient manner.

Note: Soulard Market is not included in the Soulard CID because it is a City-owned property, which is eligible for its own, individual CID. Allowing Soulard Market to eventually pursue a CID which would benefit improvements, repairs and revitalization of the market would allow the Market to focus on its particular needs apart from the needs of residents within the Soulard CID.

### **What is the cost of establishing the Soulard CID and who's paying for it?**

Estimated cost to establish the District is \$30,000 - \$50,000, which includes legal fees, printing costs and certified mailings required for the mail-in election (as required by the State).

There is no current revenue to cover startup costs for the CID. All expenses associated with the Soulard CID's launch are being shouldered by a grassroots effort consisting the generosity of many Soulard residents and business owners, pro bono donations and a bank loan to cover any additional funding gaps.

### **Will the Soulard CID increase my property taxes?**

No. Never. Absolutely not.

The Soulard CID is a simple 1% sales tax. Revenue from the 1% sales tax on all retail, food and beverage sales, based on current sales data, is estimated to be \$500,000 annually. That's an added \$2.5 million over the next 5 years alone. Additionally, revenues from the Soulard CID can be leveraged with grants and City, State and Federal funds to provide even more monies for projects included in the CID plans.

What does an additional 1% sales tax mean to you? If you spend \$100 a month within the district, your added cost would be \$1 per month or \$12 per year.

Please note: Neighbors using EBT are not subject to the additional tax.

Areas with a CID or other tax districts have increased sales taxes include:

Ballpark Village – 9.679%;

South Grand – 9.179%;

Georgian Square (Fields Foods, Walgreens, Tim Horton's) – 9.679%;

Loughborough Commons (Schnucks, Lowes, St. Louis Bread Company, Starbucks, etc.) – 9.679%.

*Beginning in October 2017, the aforementioned sales tax rates will all increase by 1/2%, as a result of a voter referendum passed earlier this year.*

### **How will the Soulard CID get started and operate?**

A state statute defines the process and requirements for a Community Improvement District.

First, Soulard CID organizers must submit individually signed approval forms to the City of St. Louis defining the district boundaries, purpose, expected revenues, governing body, and proposed projects and services.

The State of Missouri requires signatures on these individual approval forms from both:

1. The majority of property owners in the district.
2. Property owners holding properties representing over half of the overall assessed property value within the district boundaries. Each individual signature form is required to be notarized to guarantee validity and authenticity of the signature.

The documents are reviewed by the City which will hold a public hearing on the validity and necessity of the CID. Following the hearing, a bill will be presented to the Board of Aldermen for approval to create the CID by ordinance.

Once the District is established, a mail-in vote to approve the 1% sales tax will be held. The Hancock Amendment to the Missouri State Constitution requires all new taxes be approved by a vote. Ballots will be sent via certified mail to all registered voters within the District, who will then be asked to vote for or against the Soulard CID. Completed ballots must be returned by mail.

Once the tax is approved, it will be added to the existing sale tax in the District, collected by the State of Missouri Department of Revenue and distributed to the CID for use for projects and services.

As an established, legally recognized taxing district, the Soulard CID must adhere to the strict legal requirements of a public entity by hosting public meetings, providing full public disclosure of the CID's operations, work, projects and finances to the public in adherence with the Sunshine Laws of the State of Missouri.

### **What benefit will I get from the Soulard CID?**

In every neighborhood or district in St. Louis where a CID has been enacted, property values and business revenues have risen . . . and in some cases, risen dramatically.

Funding from the Soulard CID will be used for improvements not currently available or budgeted by the City or neighborhood entities. Services and projects could include:

- Infrastructure (public improvements, sidewalks, street lighting, etc.)
- Clean up and Maintenance (trash cans, trash clean up, etc.)
- Marketing and Branding (brochures, signage, and marketing for residential, commercial and business opportunities)
- Community Development (long-range planning to keep Soulard vibrant)
- Transportation and Parking Solutions, plus Administration for implementation of all projects and services.

### **What's in it for me, if I don't live within the proposed Soulard CID boundaries?**

When one part of Soulard benefits, we all benefit.

Even if you don't live in the CID, expect your property values to rise. Expect a carry-over effect to your block or your street, in terms of quality of life.

With branded marketing programs in place, Soulard's image will be enhanced throughout the region as St. Louis's premiere neighborhood for entertainment and true urban living.

This is our neighborhood's chance to promote what's best about Soulard. We're much more than Mardi Gras, pub crawls and the place to go party.

Soulard is rich in architecture, provides a local feel with city amenities, is home to some of the metro's most popular restaurants and stands tall as a safe, friendly and fun place to live, work and play. But if we don't convey those messages and keep improving our neighborhood, we'll be surpassed by other neighborhoods competing for the same residents and revenues.

### **Is any of the funding from the Soulard CID allocated for safety?**

In research and discussions, the Steering Committee found (3) broad categories for safety coverage: patrols, cameras and infrastructure. The first two of these categories are covered by the Soulard Special Business District (SSBD). The SSBD collects a special assessment on every Soulard property to pay for safety/security projects and services. Safety and security is the singular reason for the SSBD's existence.

The CID Steering Committee, on the other hand, feels the purpose of the CID is to fill gaps for projects, services and efforts which are currently under-funded or not funded by the City or neighborhood organizations. The CID's funding of infrastructure, such as improved lighting, would contribute added safety, while addressing areas of concern that are

not being addressed at present. The CID will fill gaps, rather than duplicate or overlap efforts already in place; consequently, the possibility of "double taxation," particularly in the case of SSBD safety and security programs, will be eliminated.

The CID will address needs which are currently being neglected, due to insufficient resources rather than focus all efforts on one single issue. This strategy will allow the newly created tax district to provide more services and benefits to the neighborhood, while addressing a broad spectrum of needs.

Once the CID has been established and has fulfilled the goals outlined in its organizational petition, the tax district's Board of Directors could consider expanding the CID's mission to include safety, if they believe the change is warranted and necessary for neighborhood improvement and stabilization.

## **Who will manage the CID?**

A Board of Directors, appointed by the Mayor, will manage and oversee all functions of the Soulard CID. The Board will consist of seven (7) members, who meet legal requirements as defined by Missouri statute.

Board members must be at least 21 years of age, residents of the state of Missouri, and own either residential property or own a business.

The Board will be comprised of both residential and commercial representatives as follows:

- Three (3) residential property owner/occupants
- Two (2) commercial property or business owners,
- One (1) nominee from the Soulard Restoration Group (SRG)
- One (1) nominee from the Soulard Business Association (SBA).

Directors will serve four (4) year terms with a portion of the board changing every two (2) years. Four (4) of the initial board members will serve an inaugural term of two (2) years to ensure a complete Board turnover does not occur following the first appointment cycle during the CID's inception.

## **How long will the CID remain in place?**

As defined in the articles of organization for the ordinance creating the CID, the proposed length of the existence for the Soulard CID is 25 years.

The term for the sales tax funding the CID is 10 years and subject for review at that time.

## **Where can I find more information on the Soulard CID?**

[www.soulardcid.org](http://www.soulardcid.org)  
email: [info@soulardcid.org](mailto:info@soulardcid.org)

## **How can I help or apply for apply for a Soulard CID Board of Directors position?**

We're always looking for enthusiastic supporters to help make the Soulard CID a reality. Whether you'd like to volunteer or apply for a Board position once the Soulard CID is enacted, please e-mail us at: [info@soulardcid.org](mailto:info@soulardcid.org).

## **Who are the people responsible for organizing the Soulard CID?**

- Steering Committee members: Luke Reynolds, Bill Clendenin, John Durnell, Richard Eaton, Terry Hoffman, Chris Schroeder, Bill Tomber, and Phyllis Young.
- Ex-officio and advisors: Jack Coatar (7th Ward Alderman), Bryan Robinson and Lisa Otke (St. Louis Development Corporation).
- Special consultants to the Steering Committee: Terri Lacey, Bill Shelton.