



WHERE COMMUNITY AND SPIRIT MEET®

## **WORK SESSION MINUTES**

A work session of the Kirkwood City Council was held on November 21, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at Kirkwood City Hall, 139 S. Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood, Missouri. Present Mayor Gibbons, Council Members Jaksetic, Luetzow, McLean, Rheinnecker, Schaefer, and Zimmer. Also in attendance were Chief Administrative Officer Russ Hawes, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer David Weidler, City Clerk Laurie Asche, Planning & Development Director Jonathan Raiche, Public Services Director Chris Krueger, City Attorney John Hessel, and Communications Manager Jessica Winter.

## **ATTAINABLE HOUSING STUDY**

Planning & Development Services Director Jonathan Raiche provided the Attainable housing study. The Housing study was completed in June 2023. The study is part of the strategic plan to encourage middle housing to provide a range of opportunities, diversity, and appropriate density. In the EnVision Kirkwood 2035, the study aims to promote the development of various housing types to accommodate residents based on population age, abilities, and socio-economic needs. The County's Strategic Plan for Investing in Affordable Housing & Homeless Services and the STL Affordable Housing Report Card were reviewed as part of the regional context. Based on the cost burden, more than 30% of household income goes toward housing costs.

Regional Comparison: there are 12,077 households in Kirkwood, which is 2.9% of all households in St. Louis County. Kirkwood has 2,545 households, or 21%, that are cost-burdened. Kirkwood is home to 2.4% of the county's cost-burdened homeowners. Kirkwood is home to 2.1% of the county's cost-burdened renters. Kirkwood has a slightly greater share of cost-burdened households (3.7%) for households making more than \$75,000. Housing is becoming less affordable nationwide and in Kirkwood. The current cost of housing requires a household income of \$67,000. That's equivalent to a monthly payment on a \$207,000 mortgage but does not build equity. The average sale price for an available home in November 2022 was \$750,000. That required a household income of \$240,000 or significant assets. In Kirkwood, residents are more likely to be cost-burdened if they live alone, have lower income (significantly less than \$35K), are over 65, or are apartment renters.

### **Staff Recommendations:**

1. Modify existing housing regulations to encourage additions, renovations, and ADU access to facilitate long-term residency in the City.
  - Waive FAR regulations for existing property owners who fulfill lot coverage requirements. (Legislation)
  - Create a page on the City's website that explains the steps toward adding an addition or ADU to an existing property, encouraging home renovations and additions as opposed to relocating. (no Legislation)
  - Allow ADUs on lots of 10,000 square feet or more. (Legislation)
  - Remove the additional parking spot requirement for ADUs if the property already has at least two off-street parking spots. (Legislation)
  - Reduce setback requirements for ADUs. (Legislation)



2. Support renters in the city by adopting legislation and partnering with organizations geared toward stable, long-term tenants.
  - Evaluate and revise policies that would encourage more landlords to accept Housing Vouchers in the City. (potential Legislation)
  - Offer HomeScreen or another similar tenant screening program via the City website to encourage high-quality rentals and long-term tenants in the City. (no Legislation)
3. Work with Nonprofit developers and other community organizations to continue making progress on housing attainability in Kirkwood.
  - Support the establishment of a Community Land Trusts Commission with representation from the City of Kirkwood, potential partnering organizations, and interested area residents to contribute their real estate to the Community Land Trust. (optional Legislation)
4. Support developments in key areas to encourage a mix of units and prices, allowing new demographics to access the community.
  - Work with current property owners in Meacham Park to facilitate new housing development on vacant land. (no Legislation)
  - Market key development sites in Downtown Kirkwood to facilitate new multi-family development with a mix of unit sizes and price points. (no Legislation)

Some discussion took place as follows:

- A question was raised asking what cost-burdened households are making more than \$75,000
  - Between 2010-2021, Kirkwood housing cost increased by 66%, and the US housing market increased by 80%
- A question was raised about whether the income is based on the household or individual.
  - It is based on the Household.
- A question was raised about whether households with multiple incomes affect the chart.
  - The issue is a national trend.
- A question was raised about whether ADUs are already allowed in the code.
  - ADUs are structures that are fully separated dwelling and would require a Special Use Permit.
- A question was raised about The James and having a price point agreement regarding less expensive rentals.
  - No, the city never dictated a form of ownership or rental rates for multi-family housing
- A question was raised about mix-use developments and only allowed a certain percentage how would that operate.
  - That's one of the recommendations in the study.
- A suggestion was made that the Council look over the provided recommendations and determine which one of these recommendations the Council would be interested in looking into further.



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**COLOR TEMPERATURE OF STREET LIGHTING DISCUSSION**

Mayor Gibbons opened the discussion about the color temperature of the street lighting. Kirkwood Electric powers all the city street lights. The City of Ellisville has enacted Dark Sky's recommendation that street lights should be below 3,000 kelvin into its code. According to Dark Sky, the higher the kelvin, the bluer the light, which has been shown to harm humans, plants, and animals. Dark Sky's recommendation is to be below 3,000 kelvin. Some of the discussion is as follows:

- Concern was raised that the lower kelvin lights do not provide enough lighting.
- Light fixtures could be focused straight down so that light does not bleed.
- Question was raised regarding if light fixtures should be adjusted and more light poles added before changing the lighting to a lower kelvin.

This topic will be placed on a future work session agenda for further discussion.

**MOTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING**

Motion was made by Council Member Zimmer and seconded by Council Member Rheinacker to close the meeting pursuant to RSMo Chapter 610.021 (1 – Legal).

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinacker	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	“Yes”
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”

The meeting was closed.

**MOTION TO OPEN THE MEETING**

Motion was made by Council Member Schaefer and seconded by Council Member McLean to open the meeting.

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinacker	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	“Yes”
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”

The meeting was opened.



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There being no further matters to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned.

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Laurie Asche  
City Clerk