



WHERE COMMUNITY AND SPIRIT MEET®

## **WORK SESSION MINUTES**

A work session of the Kirkwood City Council was held on October 16, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. at Kirkwood City Hall, 139 S. Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood, Missouri. Present were: Mayor Gibbons, Council Members Jaksetic, Luetzow, McLean, Rheinnecker, and Schaefer. Also in attendance were Chief Administrative Officer Russell Hawes, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer David Weidler, City Clerk Laurie Asche, Planning & Development Services Director Jonathan Raiche, Director of Public Services Chris Krueger, Director of Finance Mary Sprung, Deputy Fire Chief Dave Smith, City Communications Manager Jessica Winter, and City Attorney Jackie Graves. Council Member Zimmer was absent and excused.

### **WELCOME OF INTERIM DIRECTOR OF ELECTRIC**

Chief Administrative Officer Russ Hawes introduced the Interim Director of Electric, Rick McKinley. The Council welcomed Mr. McKinley and thanked him for stepping into the interim role.

### **APPROVAL OF SPECIAL OCTOBER 8, 2025 AND REGULAR OCTOBER 9, 2025 WORK SESSION MINUTES**

Motion was made by Council Member Schaefer and seconded by Council Member Jaksetic to approve the minutes of the Special October 8, 2025 and Regular October 9, 2025 work session meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### **ROUTE 66 INTERACTIVE SIGN**

Chief Administrative Officer Russ Hawes presented the Route 66 Interactive Sign project, explaining that Kirkwood had been selected to receive a fully reimbursable grant through the Missouri Route 66 Centennial Commission for the installation of a commemorative Route 66 Interactive Sign. The project aligns with the 100th Anniversary of Route 66, to be celebrated statewide in 2026.

The grant provides up to \$25,000 in reimbursable funds, covering the purchase of the sign itself. Installation, maintenance, and insurance will be the City's responsibility. The agreement requires installation by January 1, 2026, and specifies that the sign must be placed in a publicly accessible and well-lit location approved by the Commission.

The proposed location is at the current 'KISS' sculpture site directly across from the Kirkwood Train Station. That location offers visibility, pedestrian accessibility, and ties to downtown's tourism corridor. The KISS sculpture would be removed and stored for future relocation. The sign will be approximately 12 feet tall and 11 feet wide, constructed of durable composite material with large cut-out '66' numerals, designed for visitors to stand within for photographs. The sign is not internally lit, but existing street and ambient lighting in the plaza area will provide visibility after dark.

Following discussion, motion was made by Council Member McLean and seconded by Council Member Rheinnecker to authorize the Mayor to execute the Missouri Route 66 Centennial Commission Sponsorship Agreement and approved the City's participation in the program for a total cost of \$20,000, to be fully reimbursed by the grant. The motion carried unanimously.



## **VISION ZERO/SAFE STREETS 4 ALL DISCUSSION**

Planning & Development Services Director Jonathan Raiche and Director of Public Services Chris Krueger provided a detailed presentation and update on the Vision Zero and Safe Streets for All programs. The initiative aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2042 through implementation of the Safe Systems Approach, which integrates safe design, equitable mobility, and data-driven decision making.

The presentation reviewed the background of the City's Vision Zero efforts, which originated with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and expanded through adoption of the Complete Streets Policy and Traffic Calming Guide. The Vision Zero Action Plan, adopted in 2022, serves as a framework to coordinate policies, infrastructure projects, and educational outreach.

Staff summarized crash data collected from 2011 through 2020, showing that an average of approximately 750 crashes occur each year, with 101 resulting in severe or fatal injuries. Sixty-one percent of all crashes were concentrated on just seven percent of city streets, primarily along major corridors. Pedestrians and bicyclists were involved in only two percent of total crashes but represented twenty-seven percent of severe injuries. These data points were used to develop the City's High Injury Network, identifying priority corridors such as Kirkwood Road, Manchester Road, and Big Bend Boulevard.

Questions were asked how frequently the data are updated and whether the City relies solely on state statistics. Staff explained that both local and state data are used and synchronized annually to ensure consistency. There was discussion about how trends in vehicle design, including taller profiles and brighter headlights, influence pedestrian safety. Staff noted that these considerations are integrated into design standards emphasizing reduced speeds near crossings and pedestrian-heavy areas.

Questions were also raised regarding public participation in the program and how citizen input is used to shape priorities. Staff described the formation of a multi-agency steering committee and noted that nearly four hundred responses were collected through public surveys and outreach events. This input helped inform the Vision Zero Toolbox, which organizes strategies by policy, design, and programs, each with performance metrics and timelines.

The discussion then focused on implementation results. Temporary traffic-calming demonstration projects were conducted in multiple neighborhoods using paint and cones to narrow lanes and test configurations. These pilot projects achieved speed reductions ranging between five and seventeen percent. Permanent improvements, such as the Longview Boulevard reconstruction project, have added sidewalks, speed humps, and curb extensions, resulting in measurable safety benefits and regional recognition.

Additional improvements included pedestrian beacons and raised intersections along Geyer Road and new raised crosswalks at several downtown and school-adjacent locations. The installation of seventeen speed feedback signs across the city has produced a measurable reduction in average speeds by approximately thirteen percent.



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Staff emphasized that the combination of education, enforcement, and engineering continues to yield positive outcomes.

Staff provided an overview of four supplemental planning efforts funded through the 2022 Safe Streets for All Grant: a citywide speed limit study, a public Vision Zero dashboard, the Southeast Kirkwood Connectivity Study, and the Safe Routes to School Plan. The speed study evaluated seventy-five locations and established context-based speed limit criteria. The connectivity study focused on linking neighborhoods, schools, and commercial districts through shared-use paths and safer intersections. The Safe Routes to School Plan reviewed fifteen schools and identified six miles of potential sidewalks and multiple intersection enhancements.

It was noted that the City submitted a \$6.3 million federal implementation grant in June 2025 to fund construction of improvements identified through these plans. A response from the Federal Highway Administration is expected by the end of the year. Future efforts will include additional raised crosswalks, improved connectivity to regional trails, and expanded community education campaigns.

A question was raised regarding the process to petition the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) to reduce the posted speed limit along Manchester Road through the Kirkwood corridor. Staff explained that because Manchester Road is a state-maintained route, any change to the speed limit must be requested through a formal submittal to MoDOT’s District Traffic Engineer, supported by traffic and crash data as well as engineering justification. It was noted that the City’s recent Speed Limit Study provides the necessary documentation to support a potential request, and that staff will continue discussions with MoDOT as part of ongoing Vision Zero coordination.

**MOTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING**

Motion was made by Council Member Schaefer and seconded by Council Member McLean to close the meeting pursuant to RSMo Chapter 610.021 (1 – Legal & 12 – Contract Negotiations).

Roll Call:

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

The meeting was closed.



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### **MOTION TO OPEN THE MEETING**

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

#### Roll Call:

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

The meeting was opened. Since no further matters were to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned.

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Laurie Asche  
City Clerk