

CITY PLAN COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

CD-MISC-2026-00002

Prospect-Hickman Mills Vision Plan



April 1, 2026

Docket # 2

Request

Prospect-Hickman Mills Vision Plan

Applicant

City Planning and Development Dept.
City of Kansas City, Missouri

KC Spirit Playbook Alignment

CD-MISC-2026-00002, High Alignment

Major Street Plan

Prospect Avenue and Hickman Mills Drive are identified as Thoroughfares.

Approval Process



Overview

The Prospect - Hickman Mills Vision Plan is a community-driven effort to reimagine and revitalize Prospect Avenue, Hickman Mills Drive, and the surrounding neighborhoods in South Kansas City. The plan provides strategies for land use and development, mobility, community development, and green infrastructure to support long-term growth and sustainability.

Existing Conditions

The study area for this corridor plan encompasses approximately 1.7 square miles in south Kansas City, bounded by 75th Street to the north, Bruce R Watkins Drive to the east, 87th Street/Blue River Road to the south, and The Paseo to the west. The area includes Prospect Avenue and Hickman Mills Drive, which span approximately 1.87 and 1.61 miles, respectively through the study area.

Public Engagement

Public engagement was central to the development of this plan. Engagement activities included a walking tour, a community visioning workshop, a public open house, a public survey, and a dedicated project webpage. An engagement summary is included; see Attachment #1 Appendix.

Project Timeline

The project began in February 2025 with a three-step process. See Plan Review for more information. No scheduling deviations have occurred.

Professional Staff Recommendation

Docket #2 Approval

VICINITY MAP



PLAN REVIEW

Background

The Prospect - Hickman Mills Vision Plan is a community-driven effort to reimagine and revitalize Prospect Avenue, Hickman Mills Drive, and the surrounding neighborhoods in South Kansas City, Missouri. Spearheaded by the Marlborough Community Coalition and funded through the Public Improvement Advisory Committee (PIAC), the plan provides strategies for land use and development, mobility, community development, and green infrastructure to support long-term growth and sustainability.

Anchored by major employers like Alphapointe and GENESYS and supported by community assets such as Arleta Park, Rachel Morado Plaza, Marlborough Community Center, Marlborough Park, and the Dodson Industrial District, the area holds immense potential as a key gateway into Kansas City's urban core. Despite its strengths, the area has faced continued disinvestment and vacancy that is

impacting long term livability for residents and neighborhoods, diminishing overall quality of life and limiting the area's ability to thrive.

The area faces several challenges related to mobility, housing, and land use that limit opportunities for growth and reinvestment. Support for alternative transportation modes is limited, and disconnected sidewalks create unsafe or inconvenient walking conditions. Many sections of existing sidewalk networks are not ADA compliant, making travel difficult for residents with mobility needs. These barriers are compounded by the fact that transit service is limited south of 75th Street, restricting access to reliable public transportation.

Physical development constraints also pose significant obstacles in the area. A large number of vacant lots detract from the neighborhood's appeal and create a fragmented development pattern. Housing choice remains limited, with most homes consisting of low-density, single-family structures. This lack of diversity makes it difficult for residents to find options that allow them to age in place or transition between different housing types as their needs change. With little density and few alternative housing forms, the neighborhood cannot fully support a varied or accessible housing market. Combined with limited housing diversity, existing zoning regulations, and floodplain conditions, new housing development in the area is highly constrained.

The economic environment is similarly challenged. There are very few neighborhood-oriented businesses serving residents' daily needs, and commercial activity is overshadowed by auto-oriented and industrial uses. This dominance creates land use conflicts, reduces walkability, and detracts from the development of a vibrant, community-focused neighborhood.

Purpose

Since 2009, the Marlborough Community Coalition and the City of Kansas City, Missouri have secured over a million dollars for improvements in the area. Building on these achievements and past successes, like the Prospect MAX bus route and the Marlborough Village Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay, this plan seeks to create a safer, more vibrant, and economically resilient corridor. With recent capital investments and projects already beginning to reshape the area, the community is seeking a cohesive vision and revitalization strategy to continue that momentum.

Planning Process

The planning process began with a comprehensive analysis of existing conditions to establish a baseline understanding of the area. Area demographics, housing and mobility data were collected and compiled into a story map briefing to serve as the existing conditions report.

The second step focused on engaging the community to discover and shape a vision for the area's future. See the Community Engagement section below for more details.

The final step involved translating both the technical understanding and community input into actionable recommendations to achieve that vision. The project team worked with the Neighborhoods and Public Works departments to vet recommendations that address cleanliness

and safety as well as improving the streetscape. These recommendations were then presented to the community before finalization to ensure they adequately addressed their concerns.

Community Engagement

Throughout 2025, the city conducted a series of engagement activities—including Advisory Team meetings with community members, business owners, and local partners; a walking tour; a community workshop; and a public open house. During these events, residents and stakeholders shared their perspectives on the study area’s strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Several key themes consistently emerged: building on the community’s strong identity and existing assets; a significant need for infrastructure and streetscape upgrades; concerns about safety and cleanliness; a desire for new housing and redevelopment; and strong interest in beautification and placemaking efforts.

KC Spirit Playbook Analysis

The Prospect-Hickman Mills Vision Plan advances the goals of the Swope Area Plan and the KC Spirit Playbook. The KC Spirit Playbook establishes broad, long-range goals for creating a connected, healthy, equitable, and well-designed city, this vision plan translates those citywide aspirations into more specific, context-sensitive strategies shaped directly by community input. In doing so, it supports all ten KC Spirit Playbook goal areas. A few examples of implementation strategies that support the KC Spirit Playbook goals include;

- MO-10 “Install traffic calming elements such as bump outs, intersection treatments, etc. within the roadway on Prospect Ave. from 75th St. to Hickman Mills Dr. as shown in the Conceptual Corridor Map” to address creating safe environments for all road users,
- LU-1 “Review land use regulations for opportunities to remove barriers or add strategies to increase and diversify the housing stock” to strengthen and revitalize neighborhoods, and
- GI-5 “Establish maintenance agreements with the local neighborhood associations to maintain native plantings in traffic islands and along the green walk through the Marlborough neighborhood” to promote sustainability, elevate design, and foster equitable economic opportunity within the community.

For more details on the recommendations, see the attached Vision Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Prospect-Hickman Mills Vision Plan

PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECOMMENDATION

City staff recommend APPROVAL.

Respectfully submitted,



Lauren Young

5th District Planner, Project Manager

City Planning and Development