

February 23, 2026

Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee

Mayor Pro Tem Ryana Parks-Shaw, Chairperson

4th District Councilmember Eric Bunch, Vice Chairperson

1st District Councilmember Nathan Willett, Committee Member

3rd District At Large Councilmember, Melissa Patterson-Hazley, Committee Member

Supplemental Copy to City Clerk at public.testimony@kcmo.org and Daliah West at deliah.west@kcmo.org

Courtesy Copy to Jennifer Reinhardt, Lead Planner, Playbook Implementation at jennifer.reinhardt@kcmo.org

Re: **Ordinance No. 260219-** CD-CPC-2025-00143

Dear Mayor Pro Tem and Committee Members:

The Midtown Neighborhood Alliance (MNA) is a group of leaders, representing Midtown neighborhood associations, who work together on mutual concerns. Through various engagement activities and meetings, parking and development patterns were identified as top priorities for our community. There was limited public engagement after the City Plan Commission meeting, but we are concerned that effort was “window dressing” without meaningful changes made to address our concerns. What City Planning wanted to achieve remains unchanged and disregards the input provided to staff.

Ordinance No. 260219 as introduced does not resolve our concerns but intensifies them. There is a balance that needs to be struck not yet incorporated in Ordinance No. 260219. Our request is that your Committee hold Ordinance No. 260219, and direct staff to strike a better balance between the concerns of existing Midtown neighborhood residents who have already invested in their homes, sustainable density and the pressure from developers to make their massive developments even more profitable.

The balance that we envision can be done in these five ways, as more fully outlined below:

1. **Distinguish between large and small developments.** Continue to require minimum parking requirements on large scale developments being more than 20 dwelling units or more than 8,000 square feet of structures (sizes drawn from Section 88-517 and 88-518) and allow for deviation of the minimum parking requirements on a case-by-case basis with the oversight of the Council after public engagement. However, concert venues, live entertainment and taverns as defined in Section 10-1 have more negative spillover impact on residential neighborhoods should be kept to existing parking standards.

2. **Encourage small neighborhood-oriented businesses.** Incorporate parking exemptions for small businesses that provide services that benefit neighborhoods. For consistency purposes, small businesses would be those with less than 8,000 square feet as used in Section 88- 518 for which project plans are not required to already facilitate and expedite review of plans (provided the use is not a concert venue, live entertainment or tavern as defined in Section 10-1 for purpose of Regulated Industries regulations) as smaller businesses are less intrusive to neighborhood safety.
3. **Support Reasonable Infill.** Recognize that infill standards already eliminate parking requirements for smaller infill developments of 8 units or less that are more readily woven into the fabric of the community.
4. **Limit Urban Core Area to TDDs and Implement in Stages.** Narrow the Urban Core Area to existing Transportation Development Districts that already fund rapid transit, including the Streetcar and expand to additional Transportation Development Districts when they are authorized and created by state statute. Further implement in stages. Stage 1 would be north of 31st St., and then after three years from the effective date of the ordinance, an evaluation with public engagement, on the effectiveness of regulatory changes, sequentially implementing the remaining with Stage 2, from 31st St. to 47th St./Emanuel Clever Blvd., and finally after another three year period and subsequent evaluation of effectiveness Stage 3 for the remaining portion to 85th St.
5. **Provide Dedicated Funding for Bus Service and other Rapid Transit.** Expand the Urban Core Area only when there is a dedicated and consistent funding source for more frequent and improved and reliable bus service or other rapid transit.

More explanation to substantiate our neighborhoods' concerns are:

- Pursuant to proposed Section 88-420-03-A.3 all properties within the Urban Core Area (which includes all of Midtown and Plaza being from the Missouri River south to 85th St., and State Line Road to the Blue River) are **exempt** from any minimum off-street parking requirements.
 - It makes no distinction between small businesses and large multi-family complexes, when obviously the latter have much more impact on on-street parking in residential neighborhoods.
 - It is reasonable to make such a distinction.
 - Small businesses and small residential complexes can more readily be absorbed into the fabric of a residential neighborhood, whereas large multi-family complexes or other intensive uses generally do not and to the contrary tear the fabric of a neighborhood.

- The term "all properties" as used in Section 88-420-03-A.3 is literally all properties, including those that generate much traffic and parking needs such as hospitals, event venues, cultural exhibit centers (museums), offices, hotels and schools.
- If this is so good for the Urban Core Area, why not apply it throughout the City?
 - If this is to encourage the use of public transportation not as readily available in other parts of the City, then is it better to apply a modified off-street parking exemption (making distinctions between large and small development) to more narrowly the transportation development districts created to support public transit, such as the Streetcar?
 - Residential areas within the TDD are paying special assessments to support the Streetcar, the rest of the entire Urban Core Area and the rest of the City do not. However, with that said, the parking exemption is essentially causing an added burden on existing residents, some with financial consequences.
 - If a development is a design that meets minimum parking requirements (modified as described above), then they could be considered eligible for property tax abatements.
 - Developers are systematically applying for property tax abatements, citing often the costs of providing parking.
 - If a developer is not providing minimum parking (as modified above), then they should be denied the opportunity to obtain property tax abatements from any source subject to City approval or control.
- Section 88-420-03-D.3 already requires no off-street parking or loading spaces for rehabilitation or reuse of an official local or national historic landmark.
 - Eliminating off-street parking requirements on all properties in the Urban Core Area disincentivizes the rehabilitation and reuse of such historic structures, and discourages declaring eligible structures to such protected status.
 - This too diminishes the historic character of the unique Midtown and Plaza neighborhoods.
- Areas around rapid transit stops [Section 88-420-03-D.4] and affording housing development [Section 88-420-03-D.5] currently are granted benefits of reduced parking ratios that are nullified by exempting all properties within the Urban Core Area.
 - With this proposed language there is no incentive to construct near rapid transit stops or affordable housing, unless you are building outside of the vast Urban Core Area.

- The exemption from parking minimums should apply to areas around rapid transit stops and to affordable housing.

We strongly feel that maintaining minimum parking requirements in the “Urban Core Area” will not only encourage thoughtful design responses but also stimulate creative solutions such as shared parking agreements that we’ve already seen successfully applied at many historic reuse and urban redevelopment projects.

We thank you for your consideration,

MIDTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

Plaza Westport Neighborhood Association

Volker Neighborhood Association Rockhill Homes Association

Valentine Neighborhood Association

Coleman Highlands Neighborhood Association

Old Hyde Park Historic District

Southmoreland Neighborhood Association