

April 26, 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
Courtesy Copy to Diane Binckley, Assistant City Manager

RE: Please Support Ordinance No. 260399, 260400 and 260401

Dear Committee Members and Assistant City Manager Binckley:

PWNA Strongly Supports Three Ordinances to Help Prevent Demolition by Neglect

For far too long, the City has allowed developers and property owners to buy or hold properties, let them deteriorate and then call them “blighted” or “dangerous” in order to ask for help or incentives from the City to demolish them to “fix” this self-inflicted wound. Examples of vacant lots and run-down houses exist right now in the Plaza Westport Neighborhood as a result of developers’ shoddy practices. Many are historic buildings or belong to historically significant portions of our neighborhood.

Three ordinances would help ameliorate this situation. These measures are scheduled for consideration by your Committee on April 28, 2026. ***Please recommend for passage each of these three ordinances, as described below.***

“Dangerous” Building Review and Preservation Oversight

(Ordinance No. 260400)

This ordinance amends Chapter 56 to require review by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to demolition of historic buildings, even when those buildings have been declared “dangerous,” except in cases of immediate emergency. The intent is to ensure that preservation review cannot be bypassed through the dangerous building designation process and that alternatives to demolition are considered wherever feasible.

Mothballing and Stabilization Standards

(Ordinance No. 260399)

This ordinance establishes minimum standards for securing and stabilizing vacant buildings. Requirements include maintaining roofs and drainage systems, securing openings, and protecting building envelopes from further deterioration. By addressing conditions earlier, these standards are intended to prevent buildings from declining to the point where they are classified as “dangerous.”

Vacant Property Registration and Monitoring

(Ordinance No. 260401)

This ordinance expands the City’s vacant property registration program, providing criteria for identifying and monitoring vacant buildings. It introduces additional oversight for chronically vacant properties, requires disclosure of ownership intent, and establishes fees tied to ongoing vacancy. These fees would be levied on vacant buildings as well as undeveloped properties. It would have the effect of incentivizing absentee property owners to dispose of un- or under-improved properties to willing buyers.

Our neighborhood has been plagued by developers acquiring existing, and often occupied, residential structures, then allowing them to deteriorate, then tearing them down, and then stockpiling the ground for a period of years. This pattern removes affordable housing without replacing it. Yet the developers are often granted incentives which even then doesn’t prompt rebuilding.

PWNA asks that your Committee, and the full City Council support all three of these ordinances.

Sincerely,



Plaza Westport Neighborhood Association
By Robert K. Martin, President

Cc: Andrea Bough, 6th District At-Large Councilmember
Johnathan Duncan, 6th District Councilmember