

Public Comment on Ordinance No. 260401
Submitted to the Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee
By the Kansas City Regional Association of REALTORS®

Chair and Members of the Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee:

The Kansas City Regional Association of REALTORS® (KCRAR) appreciates the City's commitment to addressing nuisance properties, protecting neighborhood quality, and encouraging responsible ownership throughout Kansas City. REALTORS® live, work, and invest in these neighborhoods every day, and we share the City's goal of creating safe, stable, and thriving communities.

However, several provisions contained in Ordinance No. 260401 would unintentionally discourage investment, create unnecessary compliance burdens, and undermine property security without materially improving enforcement outcomes. At a time when Kansas City needs continued housing rehabilitation, redevelopment, and private investment, it is critical that regulations target true problem properties without penalizing responsible owners and small housing providers.

For these reasons, KCRAR respectfully urges the Committee to amend the ordinance by removing the following provisions:

Remove Section 56-574 — Posting Requirement

KCRAR strongly opposes the requirement that owners post exterior notices identifying a property as vacant.

This provision creates a serious and unnecessary public safety concern. Posting signage that openly advertises a property as unoccupied effectively invites vandalism, trespassing, copper theft, squatting, and other criminal activity. In many cases, vacant homes are already vulnerable targets. Requiring visible public notification only increases that risk — not only for the property itself, but also for neighboring homes and residents.

Responsible property owners frequently invest substantial resources into securing and maintaining vacant properties during renovation, probate, transition, or sale periods. A mandatory posting requirement undermines those efforts and may accelerate deterioration rather than prevent it.

Importantly, the City already has the tools necessary to identify and enforce compliance on vacant properties through inspections, code enforcement, and direct owner communication. Public signage does not improve the City's enforcement capabilities; it simply broadcasts vulnerability to the general public.

Remove Section 56-573(d)(2)(a) — Monthly Inspection Requirement

KCRAR also urges removal of the mandatory monthly inspection requirement.

While regular property oversight is important, imposing a rigid monthly inspection mandate on all vacant properties is overly burdensome, impractical, and unnecessary. This requirement would disproportionately impact:

- Elderly property owners
- Out-of-state owners
- Military families
- Heirs managing inherited property
- Small housing providers
- Owners managing multiple parcels

For many responsible owners, property monitoring schedules are already tailored to the condition, occupancy history, and risk level of individual properties. A one-size-fits-all inspection mandate adds administrative costs and logistical challenges without evidence that it would meaningfully improve compliance or neighborhood conditions.

More importantly, Kansas City already possesses strong nuisance abatement and property maintenance enforcement mechanisms. If a property becomes neglected or creates neighborhood impacts, the City can already intervene and compel corrective action.

This ordinance should focus enforcement on actual nuisance behavior and demonstrable maintenance failures — not impose blanket procedural requirements on compliant owners who are not contributing to neighborhood problems.

At a time when Kansas City needs more housing rehabilitation and reinvestment, adding unnecessary operational burdens risks discouraging the very individuals and businesses willing to improve aging housing stock.

Remove Section 56-573(g)(7) — Statement of Intent Requirement

KCRAR further requests removal of the requirement that owners disclose their intended plans for a property.

Mandatory disclosure of whether an owner intends to rehabilitate, sell, hold, redevelop, or otherwise utilize a property raises serious concerns regarding business confidentiality, investment strategy, and economic competitiveness.

Real estate investment and redevelopment decisions are often fluid and highly sensitive. Small developers, neighborhood investors, nonprofit housing organizations, and entrepreneurs

routinely evaluate multiple options before determining the most viable path forward. Requiring premature disclosure of those intentions may:

- Discourage redevelopment activity
- Expose proprietary business strategies
- Create market complications
- Increase financial risk for investors
- Reduce flexibility needed to successfully complete projects

Kansas City's housing challenges cannot be solved without private investment. Policies that create uncertainty or discourage redevelopment will ultimately slow neighborhood revitalization and reduce opportunities to return vacant properties to productive use.

Critically, disclosure of an owner's future plans is not necessary for the City to enforce maintenance standards or nuisance codes. Property condition — not speculative future intent — should remain the basis for enforcement.

Conclusion

KCRAR firmly believes Kansas City can protect neighborhoods while also encouraging responsible ownership, housing rehabilitation, and economic investment. Ordinance No. 260401 should target truly problematic properties without creating unintended consequences for responsible owners and redevelopment partners working to improve the city's housing stock.

Accordingly, we respectfully urge the Committee to remove:

- Section 56-574 — Posting Requirement
- Section 56-573(d)(2)(a) — Monthly Inspection Requirement
- Section 56-573(g)(7) — Statement of Intent Requirement

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to the residents, housing providers, and neighborhoods of Kansas City.

Respectfully Submitted,

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