PLAZA WESTPORT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

October 14, 2025

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 Sara Copeland, City Planning Manager

Re: **Ordinance No. 250876**

Dear Mayor Pro Tem and Committee Members:

Plaza Westport Neighborhood Association (PWNA) is asking the Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee not to recommend for passage Ordinance No. 250876 at this time. We are concerned that any principal use permitted in an R district could have a digitalized monument sign provided it meets the minimum acreage requirements. That is a very broad and potentially invasive aspect of this Ordinance upon the City's residential neighborhoods. That breadth does not limit the applicability to churches and schools which uses were suggested as the rationale for such Ordinance in earlier supporting testimony before the City Plan Commission on August 20, 2025 [Case No. CD-CPC-2025-00128]. However, we need to be mindful that places of religious assembly and schools are permitted in *any* residential district, with a Special Use Permit. Offices are similarly permitted in four residential districts: R-1.5, R-0.75, R-0.5, and R-0.3 based on Use Table 110-1 in the Zoning Code. The first three zoning categories are very prevalent in our Plaza Westport Neighborhood. Admittedly, the acreage size limits even what places of religious assembly or schools may rely upon these proposed changes, fostering a trend toward larger institutions at the expense of those that are smaller and neighborhood focused.

We are concerned about the use of the term of "major arterial" to allow a lower threshold of three acres upon which to allow a digitized monument sign. A street's designation may change over time creating inroads into residential neighborhoods, such as Plaza Westport. Based on the current Parcel Viewer Map, neither Broadway or Wornall were categorized as a "major arterial" within our boundaries of W. 43rd St. to W. 47th St. But could they be? Possibly, with a stroke of an administrative process of the major street plan. The major street plan is fluid and provides no assurance to neighborhoods that their residential streets won't become deemed a "major arterial" with expanded commercialization with the accompanying digital monument signs.

We believe it is important to preserve our City's parks, and the parkway and boulevard system. Accordingly, we appreciate that the proposed language of Section 88-445-06.4(e)(2) would limit digital monument signs along established boulevards and parkways or within 150 feet of a park. Within the Plaza Westport Neighborhood, St. Luke's parcels are of a sufficient size to qualify for digital monument signs. Mill Creek Parkway is an established Boulevard based on Parcel Viewer. Therefore, based on the proposed language of Section 88-445-06.4(e)(2) would prevent digital monument signs along that

Robert K Martin, President – PWNA
plazawestport.association@gmail.com

frontage. However, Broadway and Wornall are not shown on Parcel Viewer as an established boulevard or as an arterial street within our neighborhood (43rd to 47th). Digital signs could be placed on those frontages along Broadway and Wornall due to the large size of the St. Luke's parcels. Already drivers are distracted in those areas trying to access health care. Digital signs would create more safety hazards.

Madison (the northbound trafficway) is labelled as a "thoroughfare" so does that qualify it as a "major arterial" street as used in the lead into Section 88-445-06.4(e)? It may well be. There are both office and institutional uses along Madison, *that if they are at least 3 acres*, then we may face a proliferation of digital signs along Madison, which is PWNA's western boundary. Madison carries a lot of traffic, and distracted drivers could potentially lead to more accidents.

The other street to be concerned about is W. 43rd St. It is shown on Parcel Viewer as a "local link". West of Madison, it is shown as a heavier use category. Categorizations of streets can change with time, but "major arterial" is the term used in this suggested text amendment to the Zoning Code, and something not yet shown as such, may be so designated that in the future. This street cuts through what once a part of a historic Steptoe neighborhood, of which there are now only remnants to remind us of what was once a thriving community. Digital monument signs would degrade the character of those remnants.

PWNA's request is for you to not recommend Ordinance No. 250876 for passage due to the overly broad application and expansion of digital monument signs into residential neighborhoods for any permitted principal uses far beyond the stated rationale to support schools and places of religious assembly.

Respectfully,

Robert Martin, Pres. PWNA

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

Johnathan Duncan, 6th District Councilmember

Robert K Martin, President – PWNA
plazawestport.association@gmail.com