

MEMORANDUM

TO: PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
FROM: JONATHAN D. RAICHE, PLANNING & DEV. SERVICES DIRECTOR ADR
SUBJECT: ANNUAL UPDATE – ENVISION KIRKWOOD 2035
DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2024
CC: AMY LOWRY, PLANNER II
 LAUREN HOERR, PLANNER I



WHERE COMMUNITY AND SPIRIT MEET®

As recommended in the “Implementation, Monitoring, & Metrics” chapter in the EnVision Kirkwood 2035 Comprehensive Plan, Staff has prepared the following annual update. In addition to the quarterly update format that uses the Quick Guide format for updates on the goals and objectives, Staff is providing a more in-depth report that focuses on progress on goals and objectives, and a summary of progress in the areas of land use and sub-area studies.

Separately, the Plan mentions that the annual report provides an opportunity to identify any revisions and updates needed in the Plan. It is important to note that the City conducted its first 5-year review of the plan between April and October of 2022 that resulted in very minor adjustments to the plan. The City has now conducted two annual reviews after the 5-year review was completed in October of 2022.

GOAL & OBJECTIVE PROGRESS

As part of the quarterly reports for EnVision Kirkwood 2035, Staff has provided the updated Quick Guide with information provided in the Status column for each objective of the plan. The plan includes a total of 18 goals and 52 objectives between the following four categories; Housing & Neighborhoods, Mobility & Infrastructure, Active Living & the Environment, and Economic Growth & Vitality.

In the first seven years of the plan, progress has been made in all 18 goals and 43 of the 52 objectives as indicated in the table below. There have also been 20 of the 52 objectives completed, but 10 of these 52 objectives have an “Ongoing” duration. This means of the 42 objectives that can be completed, 10 have been completed. In the following table, any objective that has reached the ongoing stage of implementation is considered to be complete. The fact that there are no overall goals completed is partly because 5 of the 18 goals have at least one objective that has an “ongoing” duration with no anticipated completion. Similarly, 5 of the 18 goals have an objective with a long-range priority that were anticipated to begin after year 7.

Chapter	# of Goals (Objectives)	# of Ongoing Objectives	# of Goals (Objectives) with progress	# of Objectives Completed
Housing & Neighborhoods	5 (12)	2 of 12	5 of 5 (8 of 12)	5 of 12
Mobility & Infrastructure	4 (15)	5 of 15	4 of 4 (15 of 15)	4 of 15
Active Living & Environ.	4 (12)	3 of 12	4 of 4 (10 of 12)	7 of 12
Econ. Growth & Vitality	5 (13)	0	5 of 5 (10 of 13)	4 of 13

Noteworthy areas of progress in the past year include the following:

1. Continued implementation of recommendations from the Downtown Master Plan which will help encourage higher density residential and mixed-use.
2. Issuance of the RFP for redevelopment of the public works center site.
3. Commencement of the Safe Routes to School and Southeast Kirkwood Connectivity plan to help increase safe bicycle and pedestrian connections throughout Kirkwood.
4. Major capital projects have been completed and are ongoing in with Kirkwood Electric and Kirkwood Water.
5. The City received another grant through East-West Gateway Council of Governments for construction of Phase 2 of the Grant's Trail/Gravois Greenway trail extension. This is the final funding piece for the full extension into downtown Kirkwood.

LAND-USE/ZONING SUMMARY

The City has received three rezoning requests in the past year. Each of these requests have been in an effort to allow smaller multi-family projects. One of the projects was approved, one was denied, and one is still under consideration. While not a rezoning action, notable land-use approvals include the final site plan approval for a 5-story mixed-use building with 42 condominium units and approximately 5,000 sf of commercial space located at the southwest corner of the intersection of South Taylor Avenue and East Monroe Avenue. This project is now under construction. The City also approved its first Comprehensive Marijuana Dispensary via a Special Use Permit for the property at 10855 Manchester Road.

Staff believes that the Land Use portion of the EnVision Kirkwood 2035 does not need to be revised based on any of the land-use actions that occurred this past year.

SUB-AREA STUDIES

Chapter 7 of EnVision Kirkwood 2035 identified six sub-areas of the City that would benefit from further in-depth study. The Downtown Master Plan & Parking Study was completed in 2018 and a refresher presentation was provided by DPZ Partners in January of 2020. To implement a recommendation from that plan, Staff hired PGAV to conduct an in-depth analysis of the Downtown Commercial Market. This study was conducted over the 4th quarter of 2019 and presented to the City Council in early 2020. The results have been shared with the Special Business District, Kirkwood – Des Peres Area Chamber of Commerce, posted on the City's website, and referenced by City Staff in discussions with multiple property owners, business owners, and/or developers. The City has seen renewed development interest with construction completed for a 5-story mixed-use building on the former UMB site (The James), downsizing of the Commerce Bank building to make way for a 4-story mixed-use building on the remainder of the Commerce Bank site, construction of an adaptive re-use for the former Down By The Station retail store into a full-service restaurant, and construction commencing of a 5-story mixed-use building across from the Kirkwood Performing Arts Center. In addition, the City has received 3 requests related to small multi-family projects in the Downtown Master Plan Study Area.

The City also conducted a specific commercial market analysis for the Kirkwood Road and Big Bend area identified in the plan. The analysis involved various property and business owners within the area and resulted in recommendations for potential uses in the area. Since that study, development interest in this area has been renewed with the completion of a new Plaza Tire at 915 S. Kirkwood Road, completion of a new office building (KirkWork) between Prospect and Big Bend, the completion of a dog day-care at 902 S. Kirkwood Road, the recent opening of the Hi-Pointe restaurant at 951 S. Kirkwood Road, and the recently completed day-care at 10555 Big Bend Boulevard.

While a formal sub-area study has not been conducted, the City has partnered with MoDOT on a Route 100 project for Manchester Road. The City's participation in the project has allowed the project to expand beyond the typical sidewalk installation for ADA access to include increased pedestrian safety and aesthetic enhancements. This project has successfully integrated 4 of the 5 recommendations from EnVision Kirkwood 2035 into the project. The corridor improvements include the following:

1. Reducing private access points wherever possible to provide safer access management.
2. Providing a landscape buffer between the sidewalk and the travel lanes for increased pedestrian safety.
3. Providing decorative stamped concrete areas with landscaping at key intersections, small entryway monuments at key locations, enhanced bus-shelters, and pedestrian-scale lighting throughout the corridor.

Construction of Phases 1 and 2 of this corridor improvement project were completed this past year. A land-use corridor study is scheduled in the City's strategic plan for the FY2027 budget.

The two sub-areas that have not yet had significant additional study completed at this point are the Meacham Park area and the Leffingwell Industrial area. The City has recently begun a Southeast Kirkwood Connectivity plan that will analyze the pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between Meacham Park and the rest of Kirkwood. This study will specifically address one of the recommendations from the sub-area portion of the EnVision Kirkwood 2035 plan.

Staff believes that the above mentioned studies and projects indicate clear progress in four of the six sub-areas identified within the EnVision Kirkwood 2035 within the first six years of implementation along with progress being made in a fifth sub-area. Continuing more formal study on the Manchester Road sub-area and pursuing the studies for the Meacham Park and Leffingwell areas will continue to be pursued by the City.