



City Council Study Session Minutes

June 24, 2024 6:00 PM

Council Chambers - 111 E. Maple Ave.

PRESENTATIONS

1. 2024 State Legislative Update

Chris Roby – John Bardgett and Associates

Legislative Update

The following are the top legislative priorities for the City of Independence for the 2024 legislative session. The corresponding pages in the policy provide additional information:

The City opposes any changes to Economic Development tools, such as Community Improvement Districts (CID) that would hamper development and redevelopment.

The ability to utilize Community Improvement Districts (CID), Chapter 353 tax abatement, and Transportation Development Districts (TDD) is critical for development and redevelopment in Independence. This is especially true in blighted or distressed areas that would not otherwise support investment at market rates. These tools are essential to communities throughout Missouri when engaging in public improvement and economic development projects. Historic Preservation Tax Credit The City supports the Historic Preservation Tax Credit.

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The City opposes any reductions, caps or altering of the local sales tax rate.

In 1980 Missouri voters approved the “Hancock Amendment” to the Missouri Constitution Article X Section 22. This provision states that a majority of the qualified voters of the political subdivision must vote to approve any increases in local taxes. In the last several years several bills were filed that would cap or otherwise alter sales taxes. This legislation would tie the hands of local leaders in addressing

future needs and could result in the reduction or elimination of City services that our citizens require and have come to expect.

The City opposes any legislation that takes away the right of cities to manage public rights of way in regard to pole attachments or to charge fees to telecommunication and video service providers that use the public right of way.

Independence Power & Light has the responsibility of managing the safe and reliable delivery of electrical power to Independence ratepayers. This mission is often complicated by the competing needs of telecommunications companies that seek to attach to utility poles and related rights-of-way and infrastructure. The City has worked closely with telecommunications providers to develop new ordinances and applications to accommodate small cell wireless attachments on utility poles. The City must maintain authority to impose reasonable regulations to protect its assets and the public interest. In addition, flexibility is necessary to impose fees to recoup the costs of maintenance, inspections, plan reviews, etc. and to ensure the private business costs of telecommunications and video service companies are not displaced to the citizens of Independence.

The City supports increased funding for mental health services in Independence and Eastern Jackson County.

1 in 5 adults and 1 in 6 youth in the United States experience a mental health disorder each year. The 2022 Independence Health Assessment indicated that Mental Health was one of the top public health concerns by our residents. Independence has a higher suicide rate than Eastern Jackson County, Kansas City, the State of Missouri, and the United States in 2020.

The City supports funding support for City Tourism Assets including enhancements to the Historic Preservation Tax Credit (Page 3).

Independence has a thriving tourism industry built upon its rich historical heritage and resources. The State Historic Preservation Tax Credit is a key tool to preserve and protect the community’s historic assets. Taxpayers may access credits equal to 25% of the eligible costs of rehabilitation of historic structures. Studies have shown that for every one dollar of tax credit issued there has been approximately four dollars of reinvestment.

2. Independence Economic Development Partnership Update

Independence Economic Development Partnership Update by Yvonne Hall and Tom Lesnak

Overview of economic development project activity

Progress report on the partnerships strategic plan

Overview of key performance indicators and economic development related data

History of the Partnership

- Contract for services approved In December 2022. 2 year term with option for extension
- Operates as a public/private partnership under the Chamber umbrella
- Economic Development division of the Chamber Is led by Ron Finke who serve as IEDP Board Chair
- Advisory board Is made up 20 members and meets quarterly
- Updated strategic plan adopted In April 2023

First two Northpoint Industrial buildings drawing Interest

Retail shifting towards developments that provide an “experience”

Strong continued Interest in housing projects

Business license feedback survey

Assisting Innovation Center graduates In finding space In Independence

Strategic Plan Implementation

Website: Inepartnership.biz

- Business assistance and incentive information
- Commercial real estate database
- Community demographics
- Workforce training programs
- Monthly development update video

Workforce Development

Creation of workforce development committee comprised of over 20 organizations engaged in workforce training and sills enhancement.

Jobs Board

Indepjobs.com

Launched in May, this digital jobs board provides free listings for employers to post jobs and job seekers to post their resumes.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DATA

Success in economic development is difficult to measure on a daily basis but looking at “big

picture” data can indicate if we are achieving our goals for growth

Areas to measure:

- Commercial property vacancy
- Business licenses Issued
- Building permits Issued & their value
- Employment Levels

Commercial vacancy in Independence

Industrial: went from 1.1% in 2023 to 6.1% in 2024

Retail: went from 10.7% in 2023 to 7.2% in 2024

Office: went from 7.6% in 2023 to 8.5% in 2024

Multi-Family Occupancy went from 93.9% in 2023 to 92.2% in 2024

Total Employment went from 55,972 in 2023 to 55,723 in 2024

Total Unemployment went from 3.6% in 2023 to 3.8% in 2024

Building Permits

Residential: \$14.6M in 2023 to \$16.8M in 2024

Commercial: 26.1M in 2023 to \$56.2M in 2024

3. Independence Square Master Redevelopment Plan Presentation

Members of the Square Master Redevelopment Group presented their ideas for redevelopment. Kopeck and Brooks and Olsson and Associates

A Civic Center would replace the current City Hall and Police Dept.

Contents of the Civic Center could include a grocery store, amphitheater, etc.

The planned redevelop and utilize nearly every area of the square from Walnut to Truman and Noland past Spring.

The alleyway corridors could be used for walking points around the square.

There would be historical corridors, streetside dining, festive thoroughfares and Noland Road improvements.

Other ideas or artistic utility access and restaurants through alleyways.

Events could include nights on the town, market days, planted plazas and artistic courtyards.

Additional living areas could include zero lot line units, townhomes, rooftop amenities and mid-rise apartments.

Tourism for the square could include boutique hotels, home-away-from-home AirBNBs, and historic stays

Market Analysis:

RETAIL

- Independence Square has lower retail supply per capita compared to neighboring areas
- Projecting an increase of 100,000 to 150,000 square feet over the next several years

MULTIFAMILY

- No multifamily construction in Independence Square for over 20 years, despite potential household growth.

- Surrounding submarkets have exceeded demand projections.

OFFICE

- No significant new demand for office space expected; existing supply sufficient to meet projected needs.
- Increased population, pedestrian traffic, tourism, or external demand could alter office space projections.

HOSPITALITY

- An upscale select service hotel would suit Independence Square's repositioning, targeting leisure and group travel.
- Demand drivers include historic and cultural attractions, family visits, shopping, sports events, and local festivals.

MASTER BUSINESS PLAN

Land Control Strategy

- Identify key parcels Conceptual Development Timeline
- Redevelopment Plan Adoption
- Land Control
- Public and Private Financing
- Design and Construction Developer Outreach
- Master Plan Presentations
- Market Tours

MASTER ECONOMIC PLAN

Bond Analysis

- Assessment of Independence's current and projected bonding capacity Comprehensive Public Development Budget
- Land Acquisition
- Public Infrastructure
- Municipal Facilities
- Commercial Facade Improvements Public-Private Partnership Strategy
- Currently Adopted Tools
- Proposed Tools for Adoption

4. Municipal Capital Financing "Bonds 101"

This was a presentation and discussion of what a General Bond would be like if it were to pass. The presentation is attached to the agenda.

Sections include:

1. What is a municipal bond?
2. Bond issuance process
3. City of Independence credit
4. City of Independence - Potential funding options

INFORMATION ONLY

1. **Please Note:** In accordance with RSMo. 610.021, the City Council may convene in an Executive Session during or after the meeting, in the Council Chambers and move to

Conference Room D for the closed meeting, on matters of litigation, legal action, and/or attorney client communications, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(1), on matters of personnel, as permitted by Sec. 610.021(3) and personnel records, as permitted by 610.021(13), on matters of contracts, as permitted by 610.021(12), on matters of real estate, as permitted by 610.021(2) and/or matters of labor negotiations, as permitted by 610.021(9).