



City Council Study Session Minutes

June 8, 2026 6:00 PM

Council Chambers - 20201 E. Jackson Drive

COUNCIL SPONSORED ITEMS

1. A resolution directing the City Manager to explore ways to fund and support city-owned Historic Sites (*Sponsored by Councilmember Perkins*)

This item is sponsored by CM Perkins. This is to find ways to fund the historic sites that the city owns so that we don't have to sell them. The funding is for the upkeep and needed repairs for these facilities.

CITIZEN REQUESTS

1. Citizen Requests - Per Council Rules, Sec. 6.4 only "Council Sponsored Items" are eligible

There were no citizens that signed up to speak on this item.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Ennovation Center Update

Danielle DuPree, Executive Director of the Ennovation Center and Dan O'Neill, Board Chair, presented this item.

The Ennovation Center is located in the old Independence Regional Hospital. In 2009, the City of Independence, the Independence School District, and the Independence Economic Development Council came together to develop a business incubator concept for this building. Their vision was to create a place where entrepreneurs, innovators, and small businesses could access affordable space, share resources, mentorship and business development support. In October 2010, the Ennovation Center officially opened its doors as one of the region's most unique

business incubators. The Enovation Center is specifically spelled with an E to emphasize entrepreneurship and education.

Over the years, the Enovation Center has expanded to support food, science and technology companies, serving businesses, not-for-profits, students and emerging entrepreneurs throughout the region. In 2023, it became a fully independent not-for-profit 5013C, and began operating under their own board of directors.

Their mission is to empower people to build sustainable businesses that strengthen our local economy and create lasting community impact.

They provide: commercial kitchens, co-working and labs, free business coaching funding connections, mentorship network and k-12 entrepreneurship.

In 15 years, there has been measurable economic impact.

- 645+ businesses launched
- \$20M economic impact to Independence
- \$40M economic impact to Missouri
- \$30M+ new salaries in the KC Metro area
- 87% business survival rate
- 500+ entrepreneurs mentored

The Enovation Center sits at the intersection of all three pillars of Independence's economic strategy which are Business development, workforce and talent retention and neighborhood revitalization.

This investment matters because there is negative job growth, talent is leaving, underserved entrepreneurs, and small businesses equals job creation.

The Enovation Center has delivered \$20M in local economic impact - while the institutional funding partnership that made it possible has ended. They are operating on earned revenue alone.

What was lost when EDC/ICED wound down

- Institutional salary support for the Executive Director
- Dedicated EDC staff time for business development referrals
- Co-branding and co-marketing of Enovation as city resource
- City's organizational commitment to entrepreneurship infrastructure
- Grant co-sponsorship leveraging federal and state funding programs
- iNtech program funding (via HUD, Missouri Technology Corp, ICED)

What renewed City investment would restore

- Stable operational funding — staff, programming, maintenance
- Renewed co-ownership of Independence's entrepreneurship narrative
- Leverage to unlock 2–3x in matching private and federal grants
- Capacity to serve more entrepreneurs and launch more businesses
- Foundation for a second Enovation location in the Englewood Arts District

- Continued \$28K–\$54K/yr tax revenue per business launched

They also discussed second location options

Option A — 11200 E. Winner Road

- 4,200 SF former medical facility — available now
- Lease at \$2,000/mo (~\$6.86/SF) — 30–43% below market
- 12 rooms + large lobby — direct co-working fit
- 35,087 SF lot with ample parking
- Build-out financing: \$50K at 5% via Promissory Note
- Commercial kitchen must be installed (\$67K–\$188K)
- Can be operational within months of authorization

Option B — Ben Franklin Building

- 30,000 SF (2 floors) — adjacent to Englewood Theater
- Acquisition: \$250K / Rehab: \$8.645M (PGAV study)
- Phased renovation — PGAV explicitly endorses community-group model
- Full commercial kitchen viable in Phase 3 (30K SF = room)
- Creates a true campus with the Englewood Theater next door
- Activates the district's most visible vacancy gap
- Long-term anchor for 15+ years of city investment in Englewood

They asked the City Council for three actions

Renew the partnership

Restore Operational Funding

Invest in Expansion

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

INFORMATION ONLY

1. **Please Note:** In accordance with RSMo. 610.021, the City Council may convene in a Closed Executive Session during or after the 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).