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Councilmember Andrea Bough (andrea.bough@kcmo.org)
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RE: Brookside Shops Community Improvement District

Dear Mayor Lucas & Councilmembers:

On behalf of the petitioning property owners, this letter addresses the criteria for establishment of a Community Improvement District in accordance with Kansas City Municipal Code Section 74-303. We appreciate your consideration of our petition to approve and establish the Brookside Shops Community Improvement District (the "District"). The petition to establish the District is supported by all property owners within the District. I have attached the District boundary map, showing that the District would be bounded generally by Wornall Rd and Brookside Blvd on the East, W. 62nd Terrace on the North, Main St on the East, and W. 63rd St on the South except that in the case of the Country Club Right-of-Way, it will extend from 62nd Terrace to 59th Street. The Cosentino's grocery store north of W. 62nd Terrace is also within the proposed boundaries, as well as the trolley track trail from W. 63rd St north to 59th St. The proposed district includes some of the most well-known restaurants and entertainment establishments in the City, and the Brookside Shops are known for their cherished history.

I have also attached the District Budget and the 5-year plan showing the projected revenue, as well as the estimated costs of the proposed improvements and services. The District will be funded primarily through a 1% sales tax, if approved by the qualified voters of the District. Additionally, the CID will receive grants, loans, or other sources of funding from property owners within the District or other interested parties.

The CID if approved would formalize a private-public partnership between the City and District property owners and businesses to finance and build environmental, aesthetic and public improvements. GRI Brookside Shops, LLC, which is the primary property owner within the District has agreed to advance $1,000,000 in up-front contributions to implement the plan for aesthetic and environmental improvements. GRI's investment in Brookside is contingent upon the City's construction of Phase I of the Trolley Trail Connecter between 62nd Terrace and 63rd Streets. The Phase I Project connects the Trolley Track Trail along with redevelopment of the parking facility. The Phase I Project is estimated by the City to have hard costs of $1,300,000 of which costs the

District would reimburse the City for $200,000 out of District generated revenues over a term of eight years following completion of the Project. The Budget for the District also includes PIAC contributions for public infrastructure. The primary purpose of the District is to provide these improvements throughout its boundaries. The improvements will include signage, wayfinding, monuments, and environmental design improvements, exterior space and landscaping improvements, sculptures and lighting throughout the boundaries, public art, as well as partnerships with the businesses within the District for façade and other aesthetic improvements.

The Board representatives consist of representatives of the property owners and operators of businesses within the District, as well as an independent representative.

Prior to approving a petition to establish a Community Improvement District, Section 74-303 of the Municipal Code instructs the City Council to consider:

(1) alignment with City goals expressed in the city's comprehensive plan, area plans, and economic development policies;

(2) benefits to the community with preference for petitions that allocate at least ten percent of the CID's total projected sales tax revenues toward community benefits and services, including blight remediation;

(3) whether there are any existing CIDs within the boundaries of the proposed CID and if such existing CIDs support the establishment of the proposed CID as evidenced by a letter or similar evidence of support;

(4) the current tax rate and a breakdown of taxes being imposed within the proposed CID boundaries, how the proposed overall tax rate compares to neighboring cities in Missouri, and any impact on the city's ability to impose additional taxes; and

(5) whether a shorter term is desirable based upon the nature of improvements and services and the projected budget.

1. Alignment with city goals expressed in the city's comprehensive plan, area plans, and economic development policies

The proposed District is located within the Country Club Waldo Area Plan (the "**Area Plan**"). The proposed District aligns with key objectives of the KC Spirit Playbook. As described below, the priorities of the District align with and would support the vision and goals laid out in the Area Plan and the KC Spirit Playbook. The District would promote strong, accessible neighborhoods and encourage a high quality of life. The infrastructure and amenities proposed under the five-year plan would improve pedestrian connections and strong neighborhoods. The already excellent connectivity within the proposed District would be improved. The Vision Statement of the Country Club Waldo Area is as follows:

> *The Country Club Waldo area will be a community of desirable urban neighborhoods which provides a high quality of life by offering diverse choices for housing, transportation, shopping and services, employment, quality schools, culture, and recreation in a safe and well-maintained environment. Neighborhoods, businesses, and institutions will reinforce and support each other. The walkable and*

> *historic character will be preserved to create a special sense of place in the community to attract, retain and maintain quality development and lifelong residents.*

The Area Plan lays out the goals, which work toward the vision, and tactics, which help accomplish each goal. As you'll see, the priorities and vision of the District align directly with and will work towards the Area Plan vision and utilizes many of the same tactics to accomplish the goals of the Area Plan.

a. Preserve and Create Desirable Neighborhoods

This goal intends to "[r]evitalize neighborhoods and provide needed services and amenities" through, among other tactics, prioritizing public infrastructure improvements, improving neighborhood safety, identifying organizations to champion area neighborhoods and revitalization efforts, and ensuring infrastructure and services adequately serve neighborhoods within the area.

The Brookside Shops is a beloved commercial area within the Brookside area, steeped in character and history, and furthering the desire to live in the nearby neighborhoods. The goals and priorities of the District will work to preserve and enhance this character through public improvements, public arts, and aesthetic improvements throughout. Further, the public improvements will enhance the safety of pedestrians and motorists visiting and passing through the District. These improvements will cement the Brookside area as one of the most desirable in the entire City.

b. Create a Walkable Community

This goal intends to "[i]mprove connections and transportation options" including reinforcing or recreating the historic walkable development pattern in areas which are automobile oriented. To accomplish this goal, tactics should be implemented including increasing pedestrian connections, improving dangerous street crossings, enhancing both on-street and off-street bike routes and multi-use trails, and improving neighborhood connections to the Trolley Track Trail.

This goal is a high priority for the District, in light of the location of the Trolley Track Trail through the middle of the proposed boundaries. The Trolley Track Trail is key for the district, both aesthetically in increasing the curb appeal of the area, and practically, in allowing pedestrians to access the shops within the proposed District in a number of ways. The partnership with the City and private stakeholders contemplated will highlight this extraordinary asset. Further, the public improvements within the District will bolster the pedestrian connections within the area to improve street crossings, and pedestrian ingress and egress within the District. The signage and wayfinding priority will also further these aesthetic and security initiatives within the District.

c. Promote Placemaking

This goal intends to "[c]reate and reinforce a sense of place through quality design in public spaces and private development," through design, character, and transitioning areas. This goal is accomplished through requiring the highest quality of development and implementing streetscape improvements on area primary image streets, preserving historic sites and structures, and implementing a system of historic signage, and interpretive markers to identify sites and direct visitors.

Major arterials run through the proposed District, including both of Brookside Boulevard and W. 63rd St. Noting the importance of these roads and the historic character of the District, the District's priorities include upgrades to the streetscape and landscaping to provide additional “curb appeal” to the District while maintaining its historic significance. The improvements to the façade of District businesses will enhance, rather than diminish, the historic significance and the memorable character of the District. The wayfinding plan to be adopted throughout the District will help to identify sites and direct visitors in a safe manner.

d. Create and Support Thriving Business Districts

Finally, the last goal of the Area Plan intends to “[S]upport and invest in the existing commercial areas, while fostering an environment that attracts and retains quality businesses.” To accomplish this goal, tactics should be implemented including pursuing strategies to improve business attraction and retention, improving transit and trail improvements to improve access to high traffic areas, and to create CIDs which champion and provide services for commercial districts, including specifically on 63rd Street.

While establishment of the proposed District speaks for itself with respect to the final goal, the District's priorities seek to further enhance the Brookside business district and the businesses located within the District. The improvements contemplated by the District will work to retain existing businesses through aesthetic and connection improvements, increasing the potential customer traffic visiting the area. The improvements to the Trolley Track Trail and connections to it contemplated in the overall project will improve access to the area.

2. Benefits to the community and CID’s total projected sales tax revenues allocated toward community benefits and services

As further described in the attached five-year plan, after covering for administrative and overhead costs of the District, an estimated 90% of the sales tax revenue generated within the District will be used for improvements benefiting the public, whether that be Brookside community members or visitors. These include improvements to the public infrastructure and pedestrian connections, wayfinding and signage, enhanced lighting, and public art and sculptures within the public areas of the District.

3. Existing CIDs within the boundaries of the proposed CID

The Brookside Community Improvement District includes properties both north and south of 63rd Street and would partially overlap with the boundaries of the proposed District.

4. Tax information

The current tax rate within the District area is 9.4750%, made up of the following amounts:

- 4.2250% Missouri Sales Tax
- 1.3750% Jackson County Sales Tax
- 3.2500% Kansas City Sales Tax
- 0.1250% Kansas City Zoological District Jackson County Sales Tax
- 0.5000% Brookside Community Improvement District

In addition, any food establishment (as defined by the Municipal Code Section 68-551) is subject to a 2% tax of the gross receipts derived from the retail sales of food. If approved by voters of the district, the District will impose a Sales Tax of 1.0000% within the district, bringing the total sales tax within the district to 10.4750%.

Neighboring cities in Missouri have a slightly lower sales tax rates: in Downtown Lees Summit, the total tax rate is 9.4750%; in Raytown, the total tax rate is 8.4750%; and in Grandview, the total tax rate is 8.7250%. In the nearby Romanelli Shops CID, the total tax rate is currently 10.4750%.

5. Term

Based upon the nature of the improvements and services and the projected budget, the petition requests that the District have a term of 20 years, as permitted by Section 74-302 of the Municipal Code. A 20-year term will enable the district to obtain a greater number of the stated objectives and to improve the area and the environment. This impact will help the neighborhood and have a positive fiscal impact for the City. As has been shown in neighboring CIDs, a shorter term would frustrate accomplishing the purposes of the district.

We will make representatives of the proposed District available at the hearing for any related questions and we appreciate your consideration of the Petition that has been filed. On behalf of the District, please consider voting for the ordinance approving and establishing the District and making this important improvement to this area of the City.

Very truly yours,

Lathrop GPM LLP

Jerry Riffel
Senior Counsel

Attachments

cc: Michelle Pitsenberger
Andrea Hidalgo
Alex Reed