



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, May 22, 2026

Statement by Historic Kansas City KCMO City Council Approval of Country Club Plaza MPD

Historic Kansas City has maintained a productive relationship with the Gillon Group, owners of the Country Club Plaza, and we look forward to working with them for many years ahead as the stewards of one of our region's most vital historic commercial districts. The Plaza is significant as the first comprehensively planned, automobile-oriented regional shopping center in the nation. Its distinctive character and historic Spanish Revival buildings remain important as ever as they surpass a century in age.

We are disappointed by the KCMO City Council's approval of the Country Club Plaza Master Planned Development (MPD) without additional safeguards to ensure compatible development within the five redevelopment sites outlined in the plan. Yesterday's Council approval of the MPD included lax parameters governing new construction within the District. Overriding the conditions imposed by the City Plan Commission, Councilmembers decided to permit new vertical construction reaching 15 stories or higher on most of these development sites. Four blocks on the Plaza's south and east ends could see towers rise directly adjacent to one- and two-story historic storefronts. The MPD also includes provisions that could allow future redevelopment proposals on these sites to proceed with more limited public engagement once the preliminary plan is approved. Historic Kansas City will continue advocating for preservation of the Plaza's historic buildings and for new construction compatible with the district's long-established scale and architectural character.

To the surprise of many residents and visitors alike, the century-old commercial buildings of the Country Club Plaza are not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, despite their obvious significance. Nor are these buildings protected by Kansas City's local historic register.

The future of the Plaza's historic character now rests heavily in the hands of its ownership and development teams. Generations of residents and visitors have developed a strong attachment to its historic buildings, public spaces, traditions, and view corridors. It is clear that many stakeholders will continue seeking meaningful involvement in the District's future. Historic Kansas City will continue to ensure that reinvestment in the Plaza respects the architectural character and human-scaled environment which remain essential to its long-term vitality.

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