



WILDWOOD

July 11, 2022

The Honorable City Council
The City of Wildwood, Missouri
16860 Main Street
Wildwood, Missouri 63040

Re: Historic Route 66 Revitalization Initiative Work Update (**Wards – All**)

Council Members:

BACKGROUND >>> In April 2022, the City initiated a grant application process with Missouri Main Street Connection, an organization with a national brand and expertise in preservation-based economic development. The Department of Planning and Parks proposed, given the park project was already in-progress, that it would be an opportune time to engage the community in a planning process for its historic Route 66 corridor, particularly that section of Old Manchester Road, from Bethel Church on the west to Taylor Road to the east. The grant, if awarded, would provide two (2) years of coaching and consulting to an established leadership group, leading to the development of a community vision for revitalization and roadmap for achieving it. This proposal garnered unanimous support from the Economic Development Committee, Historic Preservation Commission, and City Council. As part of this application, a community engagement and kick-off event was held on April 28th, 2022, with invitations to 1600 stakeholders within a quarter of a mile of the corridor, in-person canvassing of business owners, church leaders and institutional leaders, and invitations to regional entities involved in tourism, history, art, economic development, and planning. This event and application process successfully engaged the broader community around revitalization of the historic corridor.

In May 2022, the City was informed by Missouri Main Street Connection that it would not be awarded the grant, given the absence of a traditional central business district along the subject corridor. While this setback was a disappointment to the City, the groundwork for a Route 66 revitalization initiative was now solidly in-place, so the Department of Planning, under the direction of respective City commissions, continued forward in its efforts to expand engagement for the Route 66 Roadside Park Project, establish a Student Route 66 Taskforce, and plan a Route 66 component into the 2022 Celebrate Wildwood event. Additionally, the Department began (and continues) to pursue alternate means of instituting a revitalization planning process for the corridor, keeping tabs on federal grant opportunities and those funding options offered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

If the City had received the grant, a first step would have been to form a Steering Committee. This leadership group would have undergone the various trainings offered by Missouri Main Street Connection and would have ultimately held responsibility for starting the initiative (ex. securing funding,

identifying the scope of the initiative, determining its organizational structure, attending relevant trainings and conferences, providing guidance throughout the planning process, etc.). The Historic Preservation Commission is now proposing that a similar group be formed, containing a diverse set of representatives who can ultimately carry this initiative forward.

Potential members could include (*note, the Department has been keeping a list of interested individuals*):

- Mayor
- City Administrator
- City Council Member(s)
- Historic Preservation Commission Member
- Economic Development Committee Member
- Economic Development Manager
- Student Route 66 Taskforce Member
- Business leaders
- Property owners
- Residents
- Department of Planning staff
- Church leader(s)
- Institutional leader(s)
- Wildwood Historical Society
- Wildwood Business Association

It is recommended this Steering Committee be established by the end of August in preparation for a new grant application through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that may alternately fund a revitalization plan for the City's historic Route 66 corridor.

REQUESTED ACTION >>> The Historic Preservation Commission requests an action from the City Council establishing a Route 66 Steering Committee.

CONTACT INFORMATION >>> If any of the City Council Members should have comments or questions regarding this information, please feel free to contact the Department of Planning and Parks at (636) 458-0440. A presentation is planned on these matters at tonight's meeting. Thank you for your consideration of this information and discussion of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

CITY OF WILDWOOD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Jan Stevens, Chair

ATTEST:

Joe Vujnich, Director
Director of Planning

CC: The Honorable James R. Bowlin, Mayor

Historic Preservation Commission Members

Steve Cross, City Administrator

John A. Young, City Attorney

Melanie Rippetoe, Assistant Director of Planning and Parks

Travis Newberry, Senior Planner

Robyn Keefe, AICP, Planner