



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Monday, January 12, 2026
6:00 PM

Work Session

City Hall
Council Chamber
701 E. Broadway
Columbia, MO

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Buffaloe called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: 6 - Buffaloe, Waterman, Peters, Carroll, Sample, and Elwood

Absent: 1 - Foster

Pedestrian Safety Ordinance Discussion

Attachments: [Proposed B265-25 Ordinance](#)

[Street and Intersection Pedestrian Safety Study - CBB Presentation](#)

[Pedestrian Safety Study - Final](#)

[November 2025 - CPD Communication to Council](#)

[BeHeard Comments](#)

[Human Rights Commission Feedback](#)

[Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Feedback](#)

[Public Transit Advisory Commission Feedback](#)

[Disabilities Commission Feedback](#)

The Mayor provided a brief overview of what would be discussed during the meeting. She asked Nancy Thompson, City Councilor, for clarification. Brian Rensing, senior transportation engineer with CBB provided a brief overview of the study. He noted over the last ten years there had been an increase in crashes involving pedestrians, adding the 32% resulted in a fatality. The study evaluated the locations in Columbia and highlighted the locations with injury crashes. He noted there had been 9 injury crashes involving a pedestrian in Columbia from 2015-2024. He shared a local example of an injury crash involving a pedestrian in an unexpected place on Broadway that led to a severe injury.

He reviewed efforts to address pedestrian safety, specifically from the State with Show Me Zero. He added the City follows national standards and guidelines related to pedestrian safety. He highlighted that Columbia was one of the first cities to adopt a Vision Zero policy.

He recommended designated pedestrian areas, temporary traffic control set up as needed due to special events or maintenance, designated shared spaces for motorists and pedestrians on particular roadways with low speed and low volume.

One area of concern was related to the speed of the roadway, with increased speed leading to riskier circumstances. Another area of concern was related to the volume of

traffic. Median width was also an area of high concern, noting that a 6 ft width is the minimum protected width.

The recommendations from the study included metrics around those three areas of concern.

He also covered the peer cities with median ordinances, and the specifications included in those ordinances.

Council member Carroll asked about data in the chart featured on slide 2. Brian clarified that the 11% on the chart referenced the increase from 2015 and 2024, noting that it was a small dataset. The Mayor recommended more detailed information on the slide, and asked about incorporating historical data from the City's police and public works departments.

Council member Elwood asked about safety for pedestrians on the sidewalk without any barrier between the street. Brian noted that the concern with the median is that it has traffic on both sides, rather than sidewalks which are only adjacent to roadways on one side. The Mayor asked about standards with sidewalks in other spaces, noting grassy areas separating sidewalks and streets. Carroll asked about any bike lane issues on Business Loop 70 due to the narrow lanes. Shane Creech, Public Works Director, noted the Business Loop is a MoDOT maintained roadway. The width of bike lanes are what is permitted within MoDOT's guidelines. He added that the City has been working on grants that would help improve pedestrian and bike users on Business Loop.

Council member Elwood asked about the recommendation to use the median as a temporary pedestrian refuge. Brian noted that there were medians that could be used as pedestrian refuge as they cross the road. He noted that it was generally accepted for the pedestrian to wait as long as needed, within reason, to cross the roadway. He added that it was generally accepted that it would be within two cycles. He added that they do not recommend medians with pedestrian refuge to be less than six feet due to safety concerns. The Mayor asked for clarification related to cycle timing. Brian noted that engineering standards estimate 3.5 ft per second for an average pedestrian. Elwood asked about pedestrians with mobility restrictions being able to get around when the individual is moving slower. Shane highlighted existing ordinances that would protect individuals in the process of crossing the road. He added that the City utilizes national standards on cycle timing.

Elwood raised concerns that traffic signals being built for the normal pedestrian would put other pedestrians at risk. She raised concerns about some vehicles being too high up to see an individual in a wheelchair.

Shane and Lee White, Assistant Public Works Director, provided a staff presentation. Council member Peters asked for clarification on the ordinance, related to individuals crossing the roadway. Deputy Police Chief Matthew Stephens noted that Columbia Police Department (CPD) staff would not write a ticket for an individual needing extra time to talk across the street.

Shane reviewed the timeline for the ordinance. He covered the feedback received from the boards/commissions Council referred it to.

He also covered the BeHeard comments, with 81 comments in favor of the ordinance and 66 in opposition. He shared the staff's response to the themes of the opposing comments. He shared questions submitted by Council members along with staff

responses. He covered the purpose of the ordinance.

Elwood asked CPD how they would determine an individual's ability to cross the street within two cycles. Police Chief Jill Schlude provided some examples from CPD's perspective. She emphasized reasonable judgment and voluntary compliance. She added that officers are not medical professionals, so they would not ask specific health related questions. They would just offer to help cross the street. Council member Sample asked about risk of lawsuit if the ordinance was passed as is. Nancy noted that she believed the risk was low. Council member Don Waterman noted that Springfield's ordinance has been standing for years. Carroll asked about the risk of losing a lawsuit or risk of being sued. Nancy reinforced that anyone could file a lawsuit. Carroll noted that she's heard from residents on both sides, and asked about any analysis.

The Mayor asked about tying this to annual reporting. While this isn't something that could be tied, Nancy noted that Council could make these decisions with their budget recommendations. The Mayor asked about a Vision Zero report.

Carroll referenced the swiss cheese model for the variety of recommendations to increase safety. She asked about a longer term strategic plan for completing pedestrian orientated projects as a whole. She added concerns that it is easier to pass an ordinance and not make the other safety recommendations. De'Carlton Seewood, City Manager, referenced staff's success at getting grants to support the built environment. Carroll clarified that she wanted information on the projects that are outstanding and to ensure other projects related to safety would be moved forward. Shane highlighted several specific projects, including a Pedestrian Comfort Map, but noted that there is only so much funding available for pedestrian safety in the Capital Improvement Sales Tax (CIST). Shane clarified the CIST included a 10 year list of projects that voters approved. Shane reinforced that all projects would be considered with improving roadways for all road users. He noted that much of the discussion on the projects took place with a different Council. Carroll emphasized that conversations should be happening for safety now.

The Mayor requested having the ordinances that were included in the staff presentation may be helpful for the February 2 council meeting. She also requested the letters received from other agencies in town to be attached to the agenda. She also noted a potential educational campaign and what that may look like.

Sample asked about a public list or map of the major corridors in the city. Nancy clarified that, while they wouldn't be listed specifically in the ordinance, the list could be made available on the website. Elwood clarified that it should be clear that the document should not be utilized in the zoning process. Sample added some suggested clarifications to the ordinance.

Elwood asked for clarification on which medians on the listed roadways - if it were all medians or the ones which are 6 feet or less. Lee clarified that it would have to be any one of the three areas of concern (width, speed, or volume). The Mayor confirmed that speed and volume were the highest areas of concern. Nancy clarified that it was the major corridor roadway or the major corridor intersection that would trigger the ordinance.

Carroll noted that a map would be helpful, and requested the map provided would have better resolution. Sample referenced the section alluding to the two consecutive cycles and noted her concern especially related to liability. She raised some additional suggested edits and questions. She also requested more clarification on obstructions.

The Mayor clarified with Nancy that this would go to civil court. Elwood asked for

additional clarification on when this would be applied.

The Mayor noted that BeHeard would still be open for two weeks.

II. ANY OTHER ITEMS COUNCIL MAY WISH TO DISCUSS

None.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:49 p.m.