



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Police

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: February 16, 2026

Re: Adopting an ordinance to prohibit the operation and maintenance within the City of certain electronic gaming machines that offer a monetary prize to the user.

Executive Summary

Amending Chapter 16 of the City's Code of Ordinances, by enacting a new Section 16-252 for the purpose of prohibiting the operation and maintenance within the City of certain electronic gaming machines that offer a monetary prize to the user.

Discussion

At its October 20, 2025 meeting, the City Council requested an ordinance be brought forward to address concerns regarding the proliferation of unregulated electronic gaming machines that offer monetary prizes - commonly referred to as "gray machines" or "no-chance machines" - within the City. The City is currently assessing the number and locations of such machines throughout the City and, to date, has identified more than a dozen businesses in which they are operating.

The ordinance makes it unlawful for any person within the City to maintain or offer for use any electronic gaming machine that provides a monetary prize. Violations are punishable by a fine not exceeding \$1,000, imprisonment for a period not exceeding 30 days, or both.

Section 1-2 of the City's Code of Ordinances defines "person" to include corporations, firms, partnerships, associations, organizations, and any other group acting as a unit, as well as individuals.

An "electronic gaming machine" is defined as any device that accepts legal tender or other forms of digital currency in exchange for video lottery game credit that is available to play or simulate the play of a video lottery game through an electronic, mechanical, or electromechanical process, in which a player may receive a monetary prize for winning plays. The terms "monetary prize" and "video lottery game" are further defined in the ordinance. The definition of "electronic gaming machine" does not include unlawful gambling devices under state law or gambling devices that are licensed and regulated by the Missouri Gaming Commission or Missouri State Lottery Commission.

While the ordinance, and the prohibition therein, will become effective upon passage, enforcement of the ordinance may not begin immediately due to the need to update administrative processes, charge codes, and related systems.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: No impact.

Long-Term Impact: No impact.



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Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Safe Community, Secondary Impact: Inclusive and Equitable Community, Tertiary Impact: Resilient Economy

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Secondary Impact: Economic Development, Tertiary Impact: Land Use & Growth Management

Legislative History

Date	Action
	Not applicable.

Suggested Council Action

Adoption of the ordinance.