



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Development in Missouri: Legislative Action in 2000

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Legislators in the Missouri General Assembly were more inclined to approve development-related bills for the entire state. Bills that were designed for specific areas of the state had a much more difficult time making it through the political process.

The 2000 Missouri General Assembly considered many bills pertaining to future development within the state. The legislative proposals dealt with a variety of tactics to regulate new development, redevelopment, or development on natural and agricultural lands. The varying approaches included tax credits; infrastructure investment; the authorization of newly established commissions, acts, and offices to address growth related topics; redevelopment; and land acquisition. Although, the majority of bills relating to some form of development did not receive approval from both the House and the Senate for various reasons, those that were approved by the General Assembly should have a positive impact on the future of economic, social, and environmental development within the state of Missouri.

APPROVED LEGISLATION LINKED TO DEVELOPMENT

Legislators in the Missouri General Assembly were more inclined to approve development-related bills for the entire state. Bills that were designed for specific areas of the state had a much more difficult time making it through the political process. The approved bills lend a financial and authoritative helping hand in Missouri's quest for well-planned smart growth. Below is a detailed list of the approved legislation from the Missouri General Assembly's 2000 Session.

- HB1238 (Sponsor: Hoppe): Revises the law on property taxation, enacts several local government provisions relating to economic development,

and enacts the Community Comeback Act. HB1238 permits Community Improvement districts in Kansas City to administer a sales tax, if approved by voters, for economic development purposes. It will also include multiple unit condominiums to receive tax credits allowed under the Rebuilding Communities and Neighborhood Preservation Act. HB1238 establishes the Community Comeback Act for St. Louis County. If approved by voters, a trust will be established to prevent neighborhood decline, to assist in the demolition of abandoned buildings, the cleaning of polluted sites, and to promote the redevelopment of existing neighborhoods. The Community Comeback Act establishes a board of directors who will notify all municipalities within St. Louis County to develop a planning process as well as adopt their own individual community comeback plan. The board will then provide funding from the established trust to implement these community plans if the proposed plans are realistic, creative, resourceful, efficient, and benefit the community's core. The funding provided is to be based on how the reinvestment needs of a neighborhood will be met by reducing obstructions to home buying; building infrastructure to accommodate the promotion of the job market; and improving public health, morals, safety, and welfare. HB1238 also adds St. Louis County to the definition of "city". This addition allows St. Louis County to qualify for



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- SB894 (Sponsor: Quick): Numerous provisions relating to economic development, taxation, and land use law. The approval of this bill tightens the requirements for the issuance of tax credits by the Director of the Department of Economic Development. Beneficiaries of tax credits will be denied approval if they cannot provide the Department with proper documentation. SB894 earmarks \$500,000 in tax credits for community bank or community development corporation investment.

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- HB1120 (Sponsor: Franklin) Appropriates funding for planning, expenses, lease-purchases, and for capital improvements, including but not limited to major additions and renovations, new structures and land improvements. Funding will be distributed to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Higher Education, as well as to a number of state-run colleges and universities for the planning, design, and construction, and improvements, of facilities. The Department of Transportation will receive some funds for road and bridge improvements. From the funding provided by HB1120, the Department of Social Services will benefit by building a youth services facility in St.

Louis City adjacent to City-donated land. After all funding has been distributed, over \$161 million will be appropriated by HB1120 through the Missouri State Treasury for the fiscal period between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2001.

- HB1082 (Sponsor: Crump): Allows the federal government to acquire land in Missouri for reforestation, recreational or agricultural uses only upon statutory approval by the General Assembly. Under HB1082, land may also be acquired for nuclear or toxic waste storage or disposal as well as Native American gaming. As the federal government purchases land the local tax base decreases. This bill is an effort to combat the decline of the local tax base.

AN OVERVIEW OF UNAPPROVED LEGISLATION LINKED TO DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to establish well-planned, smart, and creative development, Senators and Representatives put many bills on the Legislature's agenda. The majority of development-related bills were not approved. Many of the bills that failed to receive approval were designed to benefit a region of the state. New commissions, acts, and offices were proposed for St. Louis City and County as well as for the Kansas City area, but only the Community Comeback Act prevailed. HB1338 would have allowed for a Metropolitan St. Louis Growth Advisory Commission within East-West Gateway Coordi-

nating Council. This commission would have been designed to study and develop recommendations for growth management for the region including St. Louis City and County, St. Charles, Jefferson, and Franklin Counties. HB1811 and SB925 were important bills designed to protect agricultural, horticultural, and forestry lands as well as protect farms throughout the state from negative impacts. These are important bills that would have aided in protecting green spaces from further development if they would have won approval from the Assembly. HB1305, HB1706, and HB2003 would have benefited the redevelopment of brownfields, abandoned properties, and contiguous properties throughout Missouri. These bills were proposed to encourage the redevelopment of properties versus allowing dilapidated buildings and vacant lots to continue to go unattended creating visual blight and health risks. Various bills pertaining to tax increment financing (TIF) also went unapproved by the Missouri General Assembly. These bills range from limiting the areas in which TIF may be used (HB1629) to revision of the criteria for evaluation

REFERENCES:

Additional information about the Missouri General Assembly can be found at:

www.moga.state.mo.us/

Information regarding bills from this article as well as any bill introduced during the 2000 Missouri Legislative Session can be found at:

www.house.state.mo.us/ **OR** www.senate.state.mo.us/

LIVABLE communities don't just HAPPEN. They are CREATED by the PEOPLE who LIVE in them.