**Office of the City Manager**
602 S. Main Street
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Enhanced Citizen Engagement

Background: For a healthy community, it is important to encourage engagement with citizens and businesses so that there is a shared understanding of community issues and plans. Citizen engagement occurs in many ways but a proactive engagement plan, to increase communication between residents and elected officials could be possible through changing or improving access to elected officials. One idea, such as "Council in the Park" could offer the community a less formal, more casual interaction with the Mayor and Council.

Proposed Plan for "Council in the Park"

Beginning, October 14, 2024, every third month, in place of a work session, a group of Council members will meet with residents and businesses owners in one of the City's park facilities. Below is a draft schedule:

| Meeting Date: | Location: | Attendees |
|---|---|---|
| Monday, October 14, 2024 | Ewert Park | Mr. Copple<br>Dr. Farnham<br>Ms. Carlin<br>City Staff |
| Monday, January 13, 2024 | Joplin Historical Museum | Mr. DeTar<br>Mr. Bard<br>Mr. Lawson<br>City Staff |
| Monday, April 15, 2025 | Joplin Athletic Complex | Mr. Cortez<br>Mr. Jackson<br>Mr. Shaw<br>City Staff |
| Monday, July 14, 2025 | Cunningham Park | Mr. Copple<br>Dr. Farnham<br>Ms. Carlin<br>City Staff |

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1. Meeting Details: Council in the Park meetings are informal in nature with no formal business, voting, or presentations. A meeting notice will be posted by the City Clerk without an agenda and no minutes taken.
2. In advance of the meeting, city staff will setup tables, chairs, and portable microphones for the public to use. Small refreshments (drinks and cookies) will be provided.

After a year, city staff will prepare a summary of activity from the Council in the Park engagements and reports findings to the City Council to see what, if any, changes need to be made to strengthen engagement efforts.

Alternate Ideas

More citizen engagement might be possible by joining existing community gatherings. In doing so, it could lessen the need for citizens and business owners to add one more event to what could already be busy personal calendars. Some alternate ideas include:

- A "Meet your councilmember" booth at the following events:
  - Third Thursdays
  - Outside the entrance to highly-attended sporting events
  - Empire Market
- Council members attending public meetings/hearings devoted to a single topic such as:
  - Ewert park planning meetings
  - Dora bike park public meetings
  - MoDOT public meetings
  - Other project-specific public hearings/meetings