

Missouri Museum and Cultural District Act

Sections 184.800 to 184.880 of the Missouri Statutes

The Missouri Legislature passed Senate Bill 397 during the most recent legislative session, making a one-word change from “five” to “fifteen” in section 184.815, thereby allowing a District to be formed within fifteen years “after a Presidential declaration establishing the disaster area.” This extends the OPPORTUNITY to form a District to May of 2026.

This legislation was sponsored by Senator Bill White and Representative Lane Roberts. It passed the Senate as a “clean bill” by vote of 33-0 and passed the House as a “clean bill” by vote of 140-3 with 17 abstentions.

The Missouri Museum and Cultural District Act allows for non-contiguous property owners to form a District within an approved redevelopment plan area as adopted by municipal ordinance within three years after a Presidential declaration. The District is to be used for the purposes of promoting community culture and the arts, recreation and knowledge, including for purposes of supporting or promoting the performing arts, theater, music, entertainment, public spaces, public libraries or other public assets.

Section 184.840 states that a district may receive and use funds for the purpose of planning, designing, constructing, reconstructing, maintaining and operating one or more museums and cultural assets, and conducting educational programs in connection with the museum or cultural assets.

The funding source may be in the form of a sales tax collected at a retail operation of a participating property owner at a rate of either one-half of one percent; three-fourth of one percent; or one percent. Or it may be in the form of an admission fee at a rate no more than one dollar per seat or admission. Or it may be a combination of a sales tax and admission fee.

The Board of Connect2Culture initiated this entire process by letter dated January 25, 2019 to the Joplin City Manager, stating “In light of the present discussion of a Joplin Arts District being established in the downtown area of Joplin, this one-word change to the State Statutes at least gives Joplin the opportunity to develop a possible Museum and Cultural District within the language of the existing Statute.” The City Manager agreed and made contact with the City’s Lobbyist Gary Burton, and through his efforts and those of our area legislators, we have arrived at the point of Senate Bill 397 becoming law as of August 28, 2019 with the planned signature of Lieutenant Governor Mike Kehoe in Joplin on Monday June 24, 2019.

Connect2Culture pursued this effort for possible mutual operating benefits to museum and cultural non-profits in the City of Joplin. This action was also a component of the final recommendation of the citizen-driven Vision Joplin 2022 to the City through its Quality of Life – Arts & Entertainment Committee.