From:	William Davies
To:	Public Testimony
Subject:	Public Comment: Oppose Ord. 230092
Date:	Tuesday, January 31, 2023 5:15:08 PM

Chair Lucas, Vice Chairs Loar and Bunch, and Members of the Transportation, Infrastructure and Operations Committee

As a Kansas City resident who cares for the health and well-being of all in our community, I write to state my opposition to and request the City Council vote "NO" on proposed ordinance 230092. I do not make this decision lightly; and I do so because this legislation will not resolve the issue it purports to address, and it would set a bad precedent that will hinder efforts by the city to achieve its goals.

Bike lane infrastructure is a sign of a healthy community. Further, offering ample opportunity for alternative transportation is a key aspect of creating healthy, more connected communities. Development of this infrastructure will be important in Kansas City's effort to protect pedestrians, lower pollution from reliance on automobiles, and address climate change.

Notwithstanding the benefits of bike lanes, city leaders must be mindful of the critical importance of community stakeholder input in the development of essential infrastructure. Residents and numerous KC organizations have rightly voiced support for more inclusive and meaningful stakeholder processes in infrastructure initiatives that impact our neighborhoods and city. This is a critical goal of Kansas City's recent;y-adopted Climate Protection & Resiliency Plan and is a necessity for better governance in our city.

Despite efforts by city staff, it is clear from comments by some impacted residents in the Truman Rd. corridor that, in this instance, efforts have fallen short of achieving KC's goal of meaningful stakeholder input and addressing community concerns. This is unacceptable and ***must*** be addressed going forward or else we do a disservice to sound policy initiatives, our city, and most importantly to communities that have been disproportionately burdened by a lack of investment in addition to gentrification. We must do better. At a recent community meeting, it appears commitments were made to address this issue while also fixing issues related to the Truman Rd. bike lanes to address concerns of impacted Kansas Citians.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, proposed Ordinance 230092 would not fix this issue at this time. It clearly identifies, but does not resolve, the issue of improving public engagement and more investment in community infrastructure in disinvested areas. Furthermore, Council should recognize the dangers of a precedent that would allow entire council districts to withdraw from city policies that serve our communities by increasing pedestrian and driver safety, while preparing Kansas City for the future of a changing climate. This proposed ordinance could induce troubling cascading effects, where other districts withdraw from Complete Streets policies, as well as where districts withdraw from other important policy measures.

The Council should be directly confronting the shortcomings in the policies that are leading to the frustrations being felt in the Council district at issue in this proposed ordinance. There clearly is a need for staff to do better to provide meaningful stakeholder processes to ensure decisions are made through a robust policy-making process. Further, the Council should make the effort to ensure stakeholder inclusion in the ongoing development of designing and installing specific bike lanes.

Because the concern motivating the proposal of this ordinance appears to arise in no small part from the historical underinvestment in the Third District, compounded by frustration in witnessing new infrastructure being placed alongside crumbling older infrastructure, I hope that the discussion on this ordinance leads the Council to a concerted effort to provide for improved stakeholder engagement and infrastructure resources that prioritize historically burdened areas.

Thank you for your time and service.

CC: City Manager

Sincerely,

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