

March 10, 2026

City of Kansas City, MO
Neighborhood, Planning and Development Committee
414 E 12th St
Kansas City, MO

Re: Health Forward Foundation support of Resolution 260257 - adopting the Health Commission's 2026-2029 Kansas City Community Health Improvement Plan ("KC-CHIP") as the City's guiding framework for improving population health and strengthening community well-being

Chair Parks-Shaw and Members of the Neighborhood, Planning and Development Committee:

On behalf of the Health Forward Foundation (Health Forward), I submit this testimony in support of Resolution 260257, which adopts the 2026–2029 Kansas City Community Health Improvement Plan. Health Forward is a public health foundation committed to strengthening communities by advancing equitable access to health care and improving health outcomes.

Community Health Improvement Plans represent a collaborative approach to addressing the most pressing population health needs identified by the community through the Community Health Assessment (CHA) process. This process helps ensure that policies and strategies reflect the lived experiences of Kansas City residents and respond to the needs of those experiencing the greatest health inequities.

In Kansas City, people of color experience systemic barriers to access to care and economic opportunities which drive health inequities.¹ Any plan that aims to reduce health inequities and improve health outcomes must consider these barriers and other factors that influence health.

Adoption of the 2026–2029 KC-CHIP will provide a strategic framework for cross-sector collaboration and accountability as Kansas City works toward improved health outcomes. The plan establishes shared priorities and promotes coordinated action among health systems, public agencies, community-based organizations, and residents to address complex public health challenges.

Health Forward appreciates the Health Commission's leadership and the many community partners who contributed to developing this plan. We respectfully ask the Committee to vote in favor of Resolution 260257 and support the implementation of the 2026–2029 Kansas City Community Health Improvement Plan.

Sincerely,

Emma Shankland
Impact Strategist – Policy
Health Forward Foundation

ⁱ Radley, D. C., et al. (2024, April 18). *Advancing racial equity in U.S. health care: The Commonwealth Fund 2024 state health disparities report*. The Commonwealth Fund.
<https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/fund-reports/2024/apr/advancing-racial-equity-us-health-care>.