

FEBRUARY 23, 2026

TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE,

We, the *UMKC Planning & Design Students Organization (PDS)*, wholeheartedly support the passage of Ordinance 260219.

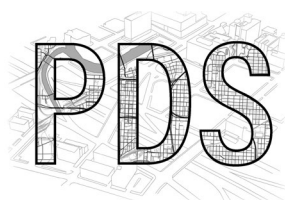
We concur with the sentiments expressed by several local planning professionals and advocates. Eliminating off-street parking requirements for the urban core benefits Kansas Citians by supporting local infill development, making housing more affordable, creating a more walkable built environment, and by expanding the tax base with less suburban sprawl. We are eager to see the passage of this ordinance, and hope that it signals further actions to address resident concerns regarding adequate access to transit and safe, walkable streets.

Additionally, we want to highlight the positive impact this ordinance may have on the lives of college students in the community. Much has been said to connect the proliferation of parking facilities and the cost of housing. Where fewer parking spaces are required, more housing units may be built, which may lower the overall cost of housing within the local economy.

The cost of housing is especially felt by students and recent graduates, who may not make as much money as their peers. In other cities, reducing or eliminating parking minimums has been shown to reduce housing costs. In Minneapolis, for example, after minimums were reduced for multifamily housing, rent prices in some areas dropped by almost 17% (Spivak, 2018, as cited in USDOT, 2025).

Several students at UMKC walk or take transit as their primary mode of transportation. These students may choose not to own or simply cannot afford to own a car. Of those who do drive, many do not by choice, but out of necessity. They live in a metropolitan area which has been primarily built for cars for nearly a century.

Those students who do drive not only incur typical costs for their vehicle (such as monthly payments, insurance, fuel, and maintenance) but must also pay for parking at their institution. Regular, all-day student parking passes at UMKC range in cost from \$135 for one semester to \$338 for Fall, Spring, and Summer combined (Strategic Marketing and Communications | University of Missouri Kansas City).



UMKC provides an opportunity for upward social mobility for many underserved members of our community. Several UMKC students work through their degree programs. Nearly half qualify for Pell Grants, displaying an exceptional need for financial resources (US News & World Report, 2024), (U.S. Department of Education, 2025). For those students who travel far to get to school, the costs associated with private transportation modes can create a barrier to education.

For those who *can* choose to walk or bike, the denser, walkable development patterns that this ordinance promote encourage them to use active transportation (walking, cycling) to get to and from classes. Comprehensive scientific research suggests that active transportation can significantly help people meet daily recommended physical activity goals and can significantly reduce diseases related to obesity, such as diabetes (Pucher et al., 2010). A review of related literature found that mixed land use and higher density are correlated with more walking (Saelens et al., 2008). Such a development pattern is achievable when more urban space is used for homes, businesses, schools, and parks, instead of parking for cars.

Fewer cars on the road also means fewer harmful emissions and a healthier streetscape for pedestrian commuters. The proliferation of parking facilities induces demand for car use. Inversely, fewer parking facilities may encourage other modes of transportation like walking or transit. This reduces the number of cars on the road and by extension the level of dangerous pollutants like Carbon Monoxide (CO) and Particulate Matter (PM).

Perhaps most importantly, reducing car use is vital in reducing traffic fatalities, especially for vulnerable road users like pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrians are 9% more likely than motorists to die as a result of a collision and they are 16% more likely than motorists to receive incapacitating injuries (USDOT, 2023). Reducing the volume of cars on the street reduces the risk that a collision will occur.

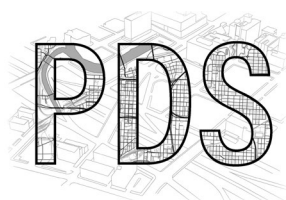
Table 54
People Killed and Injured, by Person Type and Injury Severity, 2023

Person Type		People Killed	Incapacitating Injuries Incurred	Total Killed and Injured	Probability of Injury Severity	
					Probability Incapacitating	Probability Fatality
Vehicle Occupants	Driver	19,553	97,292	1,651,427	6%	1%
	Passenger	6,164	35,049	597,451	6%	1%
	Unknown	29	9	604	1%	5%
	Total	25,746	132,349	2,249,481	6%	1%
Motorcyclists	Motorcyclists	6,335	26,219	88,899	29%	7%
	Total	6,335	26,219	88,899	29%	7%
Nonoccupants	Pedestrian	7,314	16,597	75,558	22%	10%
	Pedalcyclist	1,166	7,533	51,155	15%	2%
	Other/Unknown	340	2,369	18,389	13%	2%
	Total	8,820	26,499	145,101	18%	6%
Total	Total	40,901	185,067	2,483,482	7%	2%

Sources: FARS 2023 ARF, CRSS 2023

Note: Starting in 2022, people on motorized bicycles are classified as pedalcyclists instead of motorcyclists.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Traffic Safety Facts Annual Report, generated 02/22/2026 at 11:43 PM



In September of 2024, UMKC student Yuxi Wu was killed after being struck by a car while crossing Troost Ave at 51st Street on her scooter. Swift advocacy and political action brought about the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection, following her death, but little has been spoken to the development patterns that contribute to such tragedies. Improving traffic safety is not *just* about dieting roads and widening sidewalks. We must also confront the fact that by subsidizing the use of the automobile by requiring parking, we are guaranteeing that such tragedies will continue to occur.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

Best,

UMKC Planning and Design Students' Organization (PDS)

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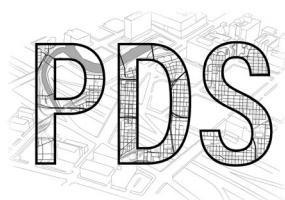
SAMUEL TEKLIT

TERESA THOMAS

MASON WOODS

KOBY MCKINDRY

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