

**From:** [John Fish Kurmann](#)  
**To:** [Public Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Please Support Ordinance 220961  
**Date:** Monday, February 6, 2023 8:43:31 AM

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Good day, everyone. My name is John Fish and I am a resident of KCMO, living at 4328 McGee. I am also Lead Coordinator for 350KC, the local arm of the [350.org](#) international grassroots climate justice movement.

I write today in support of Ordinance 220961, scheduled to be considered by the City Plan Commission and Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee this week.

Preserving as many mature trees as possible when land is newly built on is essential to both the short- and long-term livability of our city. Trees simply make cities feel better in ways that both can and cannot be quantified. Under current policy, we are projected to lose an average of 330 acres of tree canopy every year, and that is untenable.

Trees not only make our city more beautiful, they help counter the urban heat island effect, cooling our homes and other buildings in the summer, and provide windbreaks in the winter, keeping our homes warmer. This reduces energy use and costs as well as lowering the amount of pollution caused by using that energy, including heat-trapping CO2 and methane.

Our Climate Protection and Resiliency Plan has committed us to increase our tree canopy to both mitigate (through carbon sequestration) and adapt to (through their cooling effect) climate change. Cutting down trees to build typically results in the release of the carbon sequestered in them to the atmosphere, and even if young trees are planted, it will take decades for them to grow large enough to sequester as much carbon as the mature trees did.

There will be those who argue that this would make 'development' more difficult in KCMO, and they are in some sense right. But it shouldn't be easy to act in ways that undermine the livability of the planet.

Please support Ordinance 220961.

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"You can never get enough of what you do not really want." - Huston Smith, scholar of religious studies