From:	Gretchen Blain
To:	Public Testimony
Subject:	Oppose 210966
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Mayor Quinton Lucas and Members of the City Council:

I Strongly support multi-modal transportation and strongly oppose Ordinance 210966. The proposed Ordinance is a regression for many of the City's goals and contradicts the mission set forth by the Complete Streets Ordinance and adopted Vision Zero Resolution. Bicycle lanes improve safety for our streets.

Globally, 1.35 million people a year are killed on roads; a quarter of these are pedestrians or cyclists. In Kansas City in 2019, 79 people were killed on Kansas City's roadways. The 3rd District where I reside had the highest number of fatal crashes with 24 fatalities. The fourth district (nearby me) had the highest number and share of bicycle or pedestrian fatalities, recording 5 of 15 in 2019 (NHTSA FARS, 2019).

Protected bike lanes provide safe infrastructure for bicycle riders on our streets that are often dangerous and intimidating places to ride. But adding bike lanes also benefits all roadway users. By right-sizing roadways, bike lanes reduce excessive speeding and result in more cautious driver behavior. A direct example of this is the recently completed new bike lanes on 27th street. Since their addition the pedestrian safety on sidewalks has been greatly increased. Many families use 27th street to access Dietrich Park with their inclusive playground. The road diet has made the walk substantially safer.

According to the Federal Highway Administration's Proven Safety Countermeasures, bike lanes can reduce crashes for all road users up to 57% (FHWA, 2021). Bicycle ridership directly answers the KCMO Climate Emergency. The average bicyclist produces 92% fewer carbon emissions than the average single-person vehicle (European Cyclists' Federation, 2011). Bicycle lanes provide an environmental benefit to the city by promoting a mode shift away from cars, reducing carbon emissions. Bicycle lanes empower people with choices. Transportation costs account for 26% of middle-income family budgets and 34% of single-parent households in Kansas City (HUD/USDOT Location Affordability Index, 2016). Bikes enable mobility for all ages and a broad spectrum of abilities (especially when considering trikes, e-bikes, or e-trikes). They can turn a long walk to a transit stop or other destination into a much quicker bike ride. They can reduce the need for multiple automobiles per household, preventing people from turning to automotive debt just to move around.

Removal of existing bike infrastructure throws away our tax money. Typically, the construction of these bicycle lanes occurs during a street resurfacing project. The City must paint streets regardless of configuration. Quick-build projects like Gillham add relatively little cost to a roadway maintenance project. Spending time and money to remove bike lanes takes resources away from the city to spend on other positive improvements, such as sidewalk repairs. There are better ways to engage the public on safer streets. The politics of how we allocate space on our streets is complex. Fortunately, the professional planning, engineering, and public involvement staff in Kansas City know exactly how to guide the public fairly through this process. Some successful examples of this process include the Gillham Cycle Track plan, Midtown Complete Streets Study, Making Grand Grand Plan, Linwood Corridor Complete Streets Study, Greenline Study, and BikeKC plan. These are great examples of

technical experts engaging with residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to make streets safer and more inclusive for all users.

This existing process for engagement is inclusive, comprehensive, and a testament to the model of professional management that Kansas City uses. Councilmanic veto is a bad precedent and will cause harm to Kansas City's most vulnerable road users. Let's continue our progress. Please update the Complete Streets policy to match current national best practices. Please adopt the Bike KC Plan which was based on extensive public outreach and developed by the City of KCMO. I encourage the City Council not to pass Ordinance 210966.

Respectfully,

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