From:	Don Wallace
To:	MayorQ; Lucas, Quinton; Loar, Teresa; Bunch, Eric; ONeill, Kevin; Robinson, Melissa; Shields, Katheryn
Cc:	MO Chapter, Thomas Hart Benton Group ExCom; Public Testimony
Subject:	Comment regarding proposed ordinance 210966
Date:	Tuesday, December 14, 2021 3:40:11 PM
Attachments:	image.png

To: Transportation, Infrastructure, and Operations Committee,
Kansas City, City Council
RE: Comment regarding proposed ordinance 210966

Chair Lucas, Vice Chairs Loar and Bunch, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Sierra Club Missouri Chapter, **we wish to raise several concerns regarding this proposed ordinance 210966**. We see this legislation as possibly not ameliorating the issue it purports to address and likely will hinder efforts by the city to achieve its goals.

The Thomas Hart Benton Group (THBG) of the Missouri Sierra Club agrees with the view of Councilmember Robinson that bike lane infrastructure is a sign of a healthy community. We see that offering ample opportunity for alternative transportation is a key aspect of creating healthy, more connected communities. Further, 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.

Yet, in our support of designated bicycle lanes, **we are mindful of the critical importance of stakeholder input in the development of this essential infrastructure**. Sierra Club has voiced support for more inclusive and meaningful stakeholder processes in infrastructure initiatives that impact our neighborhoods and city. For example, we have been voicing this concern on the city-wide LED street light conversion project, the processes for adopting energy efficiency standards for the building codes, and the implementation of Resolution 200005 (regarding the Climate Protection and Resiliency Plan).

Though we understand much effort was taken to engage the public ahead of the bike lane development, proposed ordinance 210966 and public comments by some impacted residents identify areas where efforts have fallen short of achieving KC's goal of meaningful stakeholder input and addressing community concerns. This is unfortunate 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.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, proposed Ordinance 210966 would be improved by providing a cogent means for addressing these issues. It clearly identifies, but does not address the issue here, which is a need for improved 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 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. Instead of pitting two necessary forms of infrastructure against one another, **resources should be allocated to provide for facilitation of both sidewalks and bike lanes.** Also, there clearly is a need to update the Complete Streets ordinance so that it provides meaningful stakeholder processes and that it covers all modes of transportation, notably sidewalk repair. Further, the Council should make the effort to ensure stakeholder inclusion in the ongoing development of designing and installing specific bike lanes. **Council needs to preserve and extend bike lane infrastructure throughout the City. In this, there clearly is a need for passage of a master bicycle plan for the city.**

Because the concern arises from the historical underinvestment in the Third District, compounded by frustration in witnessing new infrastructure being placed alongside crumbling older infrastructure, we 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.

Sincerely,

Don Wallace, Co-Chair Legislative Committee
Thomas Hart Benton Group, Sierra Club Missouri Chapter

cc:// Executive Committee, Thomas Hart Benton Group, Missouri Sierra Club

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