

**From:** [Michael Kelley](#)  
**To:** [Public Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Support Ordinance #220961  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 22, 2022 3:32:10 PM

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Members of the City Plan Commission:

On behalf of BikeWalkKC, I wish to submit the following comments in **support** of Ordinance #220961.

Our organization is supporting this legislation for the following reasons:

- **We have to protect our existing tree canopy.** As has already been pointed out by others on this topic, Kansas City's tree canopy is under significant threat. As the Urban Forest Master Plan states, some 60% of trees in our inventory "were rated to be in fair or worse condition." The proposed ordinance is needed to stabilize and reverse this trend and to support our broader sustainability goals.
- **Taking this step can protect our most vulnerable residents.** Because our tree canopy is particularly limited in predominantly Black, Brown, and under-resourced communities, it means that the residents who live in these neighborhoods are missing out on the benefits a tree canopy brings: lower daytime temperatures in warmer months, reduced traffic noise, and better-managed stormwater as rainfall and flooding becomes more frequent. This legislation is necessary to give city leaders guidance on how to replenish our tree canopy in a way which helps protect these communities already suffering from decades of neglect and marginalization.
- **It aligns with efforts related to lowering traffic violence.** Preserving and expanding trees across the city help contribute to the *perception* that a street is narrower, which encourages more responsible driving at a reasonable speed. By contributing to lower speeds among drivers, our streets become safer for them as well as pedestrians, people with disabilities, transit users, and people who bike.

Tree preservation and protection is something that everyone in our city should get behind because the benefits it creates support so many of the goals we collectively aim to achieve. It is for these reasons and more that BikeWalkKC asks you all to

**support** Ordinance #220961.

**Michael Kelley**

Policy Director

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*[Click here to support BikeWalkKC's mission](#) to redefine our streets as **places for people** to build a culture of active living.*

