

July 14, 2020

Mayor Quinton Lucas
Kansas City, Missouri City Hall
29th Floor
414 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

Dear Mayor Lucas:

In the wake of the protests condemning the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, there has been a renewed call for communities across the nation to look for ways to lessen the need for police intervention on our streets. Along these lines, we welcome your introduction of legislation to do a full review of existing measures in the code of ordinances that may lead to over-policing of Black people in Kansas City.

While we are confident this will be an exhaustive process, **we wanted to draw your attention to several key measures that we believe should be repealed now.** The measures identified below meet two key criteria. First, it is impossible for them to be equitably enforced by officers of the Kansas City Police Department. Second, the effectiveness of these measures in terms of making safer streets for vulnerable road users is dubious.

The measures include:

- **Sec. 70-268. - Wheels and tires to be clean.** Under this section, people can be punished for “dirty” cars or bicycles, a subjective definition that ignores elements of the road that could contribute to that being the case for drivers or cyclists, sometimes without their knowledge.
- **Sec. 70-706. - Inspection of bicycles.** Unless *every police officer* has been adequately trained in how to maintain a bicycle, a measure like this will only lead to further unnecessary interactions with police that black and brown communities want to avoid.
- **Sec. 70-783. - Crossing at points other than crosswalks.** This is the language dealing with jaywalking in the city that doesn’t protect pedestrians, but does expose them to more unnecessary interactions with police. In general, [jaywalking laws tend to be over-enforced on communities of color.](#)

There are additional measures that we believe warrant closer inspection by city officials, but the aforementioned parts of the code of ordinances only serve to criminalize the activities of walking and biking and should be repealed immediately. We also want to note that there doesn’t seem to be any data available to show if or how much these laws are being enforced disproportionately. The recently-adopted Vision Zero resolution places an emphasis on data, and we plan to advocate for that data as we work with the task force. In the short-term, we would appreciate any help that your office can provide on this matter.

We look forward to working with you, and the rest of the City Council, to accomplish this important task.

Respectfully,

Michael Kelley
Policy Manager

Our mission is to redefine our streets as places for people to build a culture of active living.