14 July 2020

Lawrence City Commission

Lawrence City Hall

6 East 6th St.

Lawrence KS 66044

Re: 2021 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan

Mayor Ananda and members of the Commission:

On behalf of LiveWell Douglas County’s Healthy Built Environment Work Group, I am writing to express our appreciation and support for pedestrian and bicycling projects in the City Manager’s proposed budget and 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Plan.

Projects of note that we believe are important to include in the final budget and plan include:

1. LPRD funding for layout/design and construction of the Lawrence Loop from Peterson Road to Michigan. The city has already received a KDOT grant for over $1 million, and city funding will support necessary matching funds;
2. Ongoing funding of the sidewalk improvement program, including funding to help cover costs of sidewalk replacement for low-income residents and fund city-owned sidewalk replacement;
3. Sidewalk/bicycle/pedestrian projects, which are generally vetted and approved through the Multimodal Transportation Commission;
4. Green pavement markings applied to locations where 8-10’ Shared Use Paths cross major streets or commercial driveways. It is critical the city do more to develop a truly connected bikeway network, and this is a cost-effective way to improve safety and better denote the city’s key bikeway corridors;
5. Development of bike/ped infrastructure as part of the reconstruction of Naismith Drive from 23rd Street to 19th Street. Plans are already in place to build a sidewalk on the east side of 19th, but we think this stretch of roadway is an absolutely critical bikeway network, and would like to see construction of some type of protected bikeway (like the cycle track noted in the budget document) happen.
6. Ongoing ADA improvements on the sidewalk network.
7. Purchase of 900 E. 11th St. which would allow an expansion of Hobbs Park and make possible a more gradual incline of the Loop than is possible without acquisition of that property (this is unfunded in the City Manager’s budget).

Thank you for your ongoing support of efforts to make walking and bicycling (and other modes of active transport, including use of assistive mobility devices) a safe, effective alternative to use of the personal automobile. As our city continues to grow, ensure adequate infrastructure for active modes of transportation will be key to manage congestion (a top resident priority), reduce greenhouse emissions (a top strategic priority), and promote healthy life styles.

Sincerely,

Chris Tilden

Chair, Healthy Built Environment Work Group