



Dear Historic Preservation Committee members

We are writing today to strongly advocate for Kansas City University (KCU) and its effort to build a new, modern, state-of-the-art health sciences facility on its campus in place of Smith Hall. Independence Avenue Community Improvement District firmly believes this project will support the long-term success of the neighborhood and the City of Kansas City.

KCU has served as a dedicated and engaged anchor institution in the Historic Northeast for more than a century. Even during periods of economic hardship—when many others left—the University remained, expanded programs, invested in its surroundings, and brought new energy to the neighborhood.

KCU's contributions to the Historic Northeast are extensive.

Over the past decade alone, KCU has invested more than \$100 million into its campus. This investment has helped Kansas City secure over \$30 million in a Choice Neighborhoods grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development—the foundation of the transformative Paseo Gateway Project.

In addition, a few examples of KCU's dedication to the historic Northeast include:

- Score 1 for Health, which provides free health-screening exams for children and helps families connect with needed resources.
- The Student-Run Clinic, supporting both KC Care Health Clinic and Care Beyond the Boulevard.
- Student organizations that volunteer throughout the community, including sports physicals at Della Lamb and tutoring local children in reading and math.
- Partnering with the City of Kansas City, Missouri to purchase and close the Capri Hotel, ending persistent criminal activity at the site.
- Renovating the former Children's Mercy Hospital building for administrative use, preserving an important structure and bringing it back to productive life.

KCU now plans to make another significant investment.

KCU's vision to take the next step in being an anchor in the Historic Northeast community is to replace Smith Hall—an obsolete, crumbling facility, with a cutting-edge building dedicated to research, population health, and community well-being. University leaders have shared that this new facility will support programs providing essential physical and mental health screenings for elementary students and will work directly with local organizations to help eliminate barriers to care.

And, in recognition of the site's history, KCU has also committed to preserving items of historic significance, including the clock tower.

A positive for the future.

This investment in replacing Smith Hall will create new employment opportunities, expand academic and research capacity, and further strengthen KCU's positive economic and public health impact on the Historic Northeast.

We hope you see the benefits of this vision. We ask that you enthusiastically endorse KCU's plan for a cutting-edge health sciences facility, which is crucial for the strength and well-being of our community and helps to support KCU's vision of advancing health care.

Sincerely,

Independence Avenue Community Improvement District Board of Directors

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