

June 9, 2020

Dear Chair Katheryn Shields and members of the Finance, Governance and Public Safety Committee:

**We are writing to voice our support for Ordinance No. 200421 to fund KCATA.**

What does public transit funding have to do with access to healthy, affordable food?

More than 20,000 households in Kansas City, Missouri have no access to a vehicle and often live in areas without a grocery store nearby. For them, a trip to the grocery store can be challenging, especially for mothers participating in WIC as their options are even more limited.

We know that inconsistent access to food, or food insecurity, negatively impacts the health of infants, kids and adults in our community. Birth complications and low birthweight; health, behavior and academic outcomes in kids; and chronic diseases like diabetes are all related to food insecurity.

In Jackson County, Missouri:

- 16.2% of residents and 18.1% of kids experience food insecurity<sup>1</sup>
- 10.4% of households have no access to a vehicle<sup>2</sup>
- 22.3% of residents live more than 1 mile from a supermarket<sup>3</sup>

Bus riders told us that to improve grocery shopping by bus, bus fares need to be reduced, especially for riders with low incomes.<sup>4</sup> Bus riders also want to feel safe and comfortable getting to and from the grocery store. **KCATA needs full funding to provide public transit that is safe, accessible, efficient and affordable for bus riders who rely on it to access healthy, affordable food.**

We support Ordinance No. 200421 to improve access to healthy, affordable food and the health of kids and families in our community by ensuring KCATA receives 95% of the Public Mass Transportation Fund.

Sincerely,

**Andrea Clark**

Policy & Planning Associate  
Greater KC Food Policy Coalition

**Erin Gabert**

Sr. Community Health Director  
American Heart Association

**Tracy Russel**

Executive Director  
Nurture KC



**GREATER KC  
FOOD POLICY  
COALITION**  
kchealthykids



American  
Heart  
Association.



<sup>1</sup> Feeding America. "Map the Meal Gap 2019: Overall and Child Food Insecurity by County in 2017." 2019.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. 2017.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. "Food Environment Atlas." 2015.

<sup>4</sup> KC Healthy Kids. "Better by Bus: Ways to Improve Grocery Shopping by Bus in the Kansas City Metro." 2018.