

March 31, 2026

Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee
City of Kansas City, MO
414 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

Re: Health Forward Foundation Support for Resolution 260306 — Expedited Permits and Fee Waivers for Affordable Housing

Chair Parks-Shaw and Members of the Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee:

On behalf of Health Forward Foundation (Health Forward), I submit this testimony in support of Resolution 26030, expediting permitting approvals and waiving fees for eligible affordable housing development projects. Health Forward is a public health foundation committed to strengthening communities by advancing equitable access to health care and improving health outcomes. Access to safe, stable, and affordable housing has a positive impact on health outcomes, improving chronic disease management, reducing health care costs, and supporting the mental health and economic well-being of individuals and families.ⁱ We support this resolution because it will decrease regulatory and permitting barriers to the development of affordable housing, and ultimately, increase the supply of affordable housing units.

The Kansas City region faces significant housing challenges across all pathways, with rising costs outpacing wage growth and creating barriers for families working to build stable lives. In Kansas City, there is a shortage of approximately 64,000 affordable units, and rents have continued to rise.ⁱⁱ Over 53% of Black renters in Missouri are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing, compared to 38% of white renters.ⁱⁱⁱ Families who are cost-burdened are forced to make impossible tradeoff between things like housing or prescriptions, groceries or preventive care.^{iv}

Resolution 260306 is a targeted, high-impact tool to increase the production of affordable homes. This resolution directly addresses regulatory barriers that add cost, delay, and uncertainty to affordable housing development by directing the City Manager to expedite permit approvals, waive permit fees for qualifying projects serving households at or below 70% of median income, and designate an Affordable Housing Permit Navigator. Otherwise, these additional costs often show up as higher rents and fewer units built. To maximize impact, we encourage the Committee to recommend clear reporting metrics and proactive outreach to ensure the navigator role reaches small, nonprofit, and community-based developers who serve those with the greatest need.

Every Kansas Citian deserves access to safe, stable, affordable housing in a neighborhood where they can thrive. Resolution 260306 is a meaningful step toward making that possible by decreasing regulatory barriers that hinder the development of affordable housing.

Health Forward respectfully asks the Committee to vote yes on Resolution 260306. For more information on how housing shapes health, we invite the Committee to access Health Forward's *Housing is Health* policy brief on our website. Please contact eshankland@healthforward.org if you have any questions or would like additional resources.

Sincerely,

Emma Shankland
Policy Impact Strategist
Health Forward Foundation

ⁱ Center for Housing Policy, *The Impacts of Affordable Housing on Health: A Research Summary* (Washington, DC: Center for Housing Policy, 2015).

ⁱⁱ Mid-America Regional Council, "Assessing the Affordable Housing Gap," April 4, 2023, <https://www.marc.org/news/economy/assessing-affordable-housing-gap>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Missouri Foundation for Health. *Housing*. St. Louis: Missouri Foundation for Health, 2020. <https://mffh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Housing.pdf>.

^{iv} Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Housing and Health Problems Are Intertwined. So Are Their Solutions," June 29, 2022, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/housing-and-health-problems-are-intertwined-so-are-their-solutions>.

Re: Health Forward Foundation Support for Resolution 260306 — Expedited Permits and Fee Waivers for Affordable Housing

From Emma Shankland <eshankland@healthforward.org>

Date Wed 4/1/2026 1:35 PM

To Public Testimony <Public.Testimony@kcmo.org>

 1 attachment (254 KB)

Health Forward Support Resolution 260306.pdf;

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside the kcmo.org organization. Use caution and examine the sender address before replying or clicking links.

Hello,
I wanted to confirm that you received this.

All the best,

Emma Shankland | Policy Impact Strategist

816-241-7006 Ext. 1028

2300 Main | Suite 304 | Kansas City MO 64108

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Every day we work to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems. Learn more about our [purpose plan](#).

From: Emma Shankland <eshankland@healthforward.org>

Date: Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 10:06 AM

To: public.testimony@kcmo.org <public.testimony@kcmo.org>

Cc: Parks-Shaw, Ryana <ryana.parks-shaw@kcmo.org>, eric.bunch@kcmo.org <eric.bunch@kcmo.org>, nathan.willett@kcmo.org <nathan.willett@kcmo.org>, melissa.pattersonhazley@kcmo.org <melissa.pattersonhazley@kcmo.org>

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Sincerely,

Emma Shankland
Policy Impact Strategist
Health Forward Foundation

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- [i] Center for Housing Policy, *The Impacts of Affordable Housing on Health: A Research Summary* (Washington, DC: Center for Housing Policy, 2015).
- [ii] Mid-America Regional Council, “Assessing the Affordable Housing Gap,” April 4, 2023, <https://www.marc.org/news/economy/assessing-affordable-housing-gap>.
- [iii] Missouri Foundation for Health. *Housing*. St. Louis: Missouri Foundation for Health, 2020. <https://mffh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Housing.pdf>.
- [iv] Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Housing and Health Problems Are Intertwined. So Are Their Solutions,” June 29, 2022, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/housing-and-health-problems-are-intertwined-so-are-their-solutions>.

All the best,

Emma Shankland | Policy Impact Strategist

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