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Environmental Management Commission of Kansas City Missouri

January 31, 2023

To: Mayor Lucas and the Members of the City Council

Re: Ordinance No. 260638; Appointment of EMC Liaison as Voting Member

- **The Environmental Management Commission (EMC) recommends passage of Ordinance No. 260638 establishing the Kansas City Data Center Transparency Task Force (Task Force) to benefit planning, regulation, and operation of data centers to enhance transparency, protection, coordination, and community value and engagement. Furthermore,**
- **EMC recommends that the ordinance includes in Section 3 an EMC appointee as liaison and voting member of the Task Force, and**
- **EMC recommends the Council prioritize flexibility to the Mayor to ensure timely appointments that demonstrate experience identified in Section 3. Also,**
- **EMC recommends Section 5 authorizes the Task Force to adopt rules to govern its conduct, including the ability to convene working groups to expedite topic discovery, representation, and engagement.**

The EMC's recommendation that the Kansas City Data Center Transparency Task Force includes an EMC-appointed liaison and voting member reflects the important role that environmental considerations will play in the planning, development, and long-term operation of data centers within the City. As Kansas City evaluates opportunities associated with continued data center growth, issues relating to energy demand, water use, land-use compatibility, stormwater management, air emissions from backup generation, sustainability objectives, and potential community impacts are interconnected with planning and economic development considerations.

The EMC is uniquely positioned to provide subject matter expertise and a forum for evaluating environmental issues that may arise as the Task Force considers policy recommendations and best practices. Including an EMC representative as both a liaison and voting member helps ensure environmental considerations are integrated into discussions from the outset, rather than after decisions have been made. This participation would promote coordination among City departments, provide continuity between the Task Force and existing environmental advisory functions, and support informed decision-making grounded in technical and regulatory considerations.

Moreover, the proposed ordinance identifies transparency, protection, coordination, community value, and public engagement as core objectives of the Task Force. An EMC liaison would advance those goals as a conduit between the Task Force, EMC, and interested stakeholders, helping to communicate community concerns and environmental priorities while facilitating the exchange of information and expertise. Inclusion of an EMC appointee would strengthen the Task Force's multidisciplinary approach and enhance public confidence that environmental impacts are being meaningfully evaluated alongside economic and technological opportunities.

For these reasons, the EMC believes that an EMC liaison as a voting member of the Task Force would improve cross-functional collaboration, strengthen the quality of the Task Force's recommendations, and help ensure that Kansas City's approach to data center development remains transparent, balanced, and responsive.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed by:
Jennifer Hackman
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Jennifer E. Hackman, Chair, Environmental Management Commission

cc: Mario Vasquez, City Manager

The Kansas City Environmental Management Commission was created to make policy recommendations to the Mayor and City Council, staff and all other boards and commissions of the City concerning the issues of environmental planning, management and compliance with Federal, State and local regulations and programs.