

Environmental Management Commission of Kansas City Missouri



March 15, 2023

To: Mayor Lucas and the Members of the City Council

Re: FY 2023 Budget Priorities and Current Staffing Vacancies

The Environmental Management Commission (EMC) is concerned that personnel shortfalls in the proposed 2023 budget will hamper the City's ability to implement the Climate Protection and Resiliency Plan and address the city's broad environmental priorities.

- The EMC recommends 2023 funding for five additional positions in Community Development and Planning to support transition to more sustainable building and development practices.
- The EMC also recommends funding for two additional positions in the Office of Environmental Quality to support communication, grant funding, and partnership opportunities while maintaining vital inter-departmental environmental training and compliance responsibilities.

Kansas City needs to be fully staffed to operate efficiently and maximize opportunities to partner with the private sector to implement resiliency initiatives. Vacancies across all departments limit the city's capacity to deliver the exceptional services Kansas City aspires to provide.

Vacant positions are also contributing to frustration and pushback against Kansas City's sustainability efforts. Permitting and code enforcement timelines are adding significant opportunity costs to private developers and investors. The availability of clean energy and energy efficiency resources and tax incentives are subject to deadlines that are hard to meet with limited staff. Short-staffed departments are hard pressed to implement new initiatives.

Resolution of Kansas City's high staff vacancy rates is imperative. The EMC recommends that Kansas City act now to undertake a thorough review of barriers to hiring and develop strategies reduce the number vacant positions across all departments.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Carol T. Adams in blue ink.

Carol T. Adams

Chair, Environmental Management Commission

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.