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Douglas County  
111 East 11th Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

January 3, 2009

David Corliss, City Manager  
6 East Sixth Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Michael Dever, Mayor  
6 East Sixth Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Charles Jones, County Commissioner  
1100 Massachusetts Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Kenneth McGovern, Sheriff  
Douglas County  
11 East 11th Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Ron Olin, Chief of Police  
City of Lawrence  
4820 Bob Billings Parkway  
Lawrence, Kansas 66049

Craig Weinaug, County Administrator  
1100 Massachusetts Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Gentlemen:

In our capacity as members of the Board of Directors, we represent the Lawrence Bicycle Club, an organization formed to encourage cycling in our community and to advocate for the interests of cycling enthusiasts living in the city of Lawrence and Douglas County. We believe the recent bicycle fatality involving a Sheriff's Deputy should be a catalyst for cyclists, motorists and local officials to identify changes to make our roads safer for all who use them.

Therefore, we request a meeting with you and representatives of the cycling community to examine means to enhance road safety. As a focal point, we present here several initiatives for analysis and discussion:

- 1) Implement cycling-traffic training for law-enforcement officers. The challenge of cycling within traffic can only be understood by someone who has actually done so.

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2) Review existing ordinances and statutes that provide law enforcement personnel and legal officials the means to arrest and prosecute any motorist who injures or kills a cyclist or pedestrian. Based on the recent decision to not prosecute the individual responsible for the death of the Sheriff's Deputy, there is justified anger and concern within the cycling community that there are minimal legal consequences for negligent motorists.

3) Address the problem of repeat traffic offenders—including those charged with DUI, exceeding speed limits, and other serious traffic violations—who continue to retain their licenses but then commit subsequent violations. More stringent sanctions directed against these drivers are needed to ensure the safety of all who use the roadways.

4) Address the obvious lack of enforcement of ordinances directed towards "inattentive" drivers, those individuals who engage in other activities (cell phone use, text messaging, etc.) while driving. Such activity results in tragic consequences for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists alike.

5) Implement existing ordinances on a consistent basis to ensure that cyclists abide by all traffic laws. We encourage the Sheriff's Office and Lawrence Police Departments to issue warnings or citations when cyclists are observed violating traffic laws.

6) With the understanding that public funding is limited, we would, nevertheless, encourage local government officials to plan for bicycle lanes and bicycle trails within the context of future transportation improvements.

7) Consider revising the ordinance that requires cyclists to ride single file within Lawrence city limits. This law is contrary to those of most other Kansas municipalities that allow cyclists to ride two abreast, which creates greater visibility and requires a motorist to provide more clearance when passing. The Lawrence-Douglas County bicycle advisory board has previously requested that the City Commission considers revising this ordinance. We request that consideration again be given to amending this ordinance. In conjunction with this revision, we would strongly encourage changing all "Share the Road" signage to include the minimum clearance required for motorists when passing a cyclist.

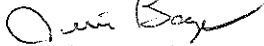
8) In Missouri, a cyclist can report to the state Bike Federation the license tag numbers of any motorist who has passed too closely. This action then generates a letter to the driver, advising of the road clearance requirements as stated in Missouri law. Details of this program can be found at <http://mobikefed.org/motoristcontact.html>. We would like to evaluate the feasibility of developing a similar program here in Douglas county and the state of Kansas.

In conclusion, we appreciate your commitment to ensuring safer roadways for all who access them. Accordingly, we look forward to meeting with you all to discuss further the initiatives that have been proposed. Your time and consideration in reviewing them are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors, Lawrence Bicycle Club

Jim Baze



Randy Breeden



Paul Corcoran



Chris Sprecker

