

# Summary Report

22 February 2022 - 23 January 2026

# City of Columbia, MO

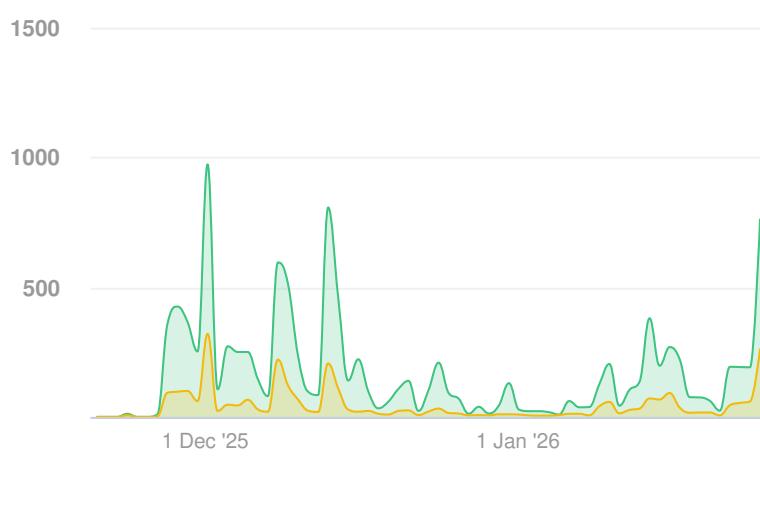
PROJECTS SELECTED: 1

Pedestrian Safety Ordinance

FULL LIST AT THE END OF THE REPORT



## Visitors Summary



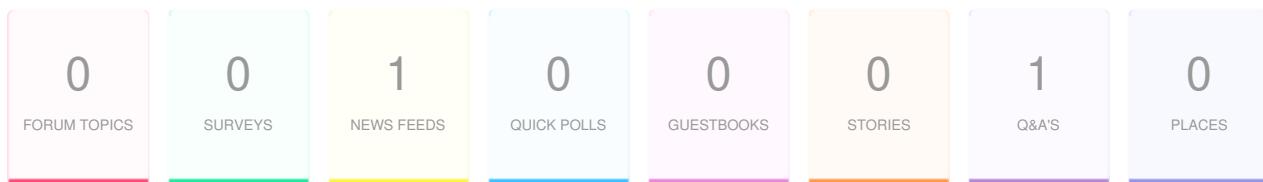
## Highlights



## PARTICIPANT SUMMARY

ENGAGED		265 ENGAGED PARTICIPANTS			TOP PROJECTS	
		Registered	Unverified	Anonymous	Participants (%)	
INFORMED	Contributed on Forums	0	0	0		
	Participated in Surveys	0	0	0	Pedestrian Safety Ordinance	264 (10.4%)
	Contributed to Newsfeeds	0	0	0		
	Participated in Quick Polls	0	0	0		
	Posted on Guestbooks	0	0	0		
	Contributed to Stories	0	0	0		
	Asked Questions	1	0	0		
	Placed Pins on Places	0	0	0		
	Contributed to Ideas	109	155	0		
* A single engaged participant can perform multiple actions						
AWARE		1,383 INFORMED PARTICIPANTS			TOP PROJECTS	
		Participants			Participants (%)	
INFORMED	Viewed a video	0			Pedestrian Safety Ordinance	1,383 (54.5%)
	Viewed a photo	0				
	Downloaded a document	461				
	Visited the Key Dates page	36				
	Visited an FAQ list Page	0				
	Visited Instagram Page	0				
	Visited Multiple Project Pages	935				
	Contributed to a tool (engaged)	265				
		* A single informed participant can perform multiple actions			* Calculated as a percentage of total visits to the Project	
AWARE		2,538 AWARE PARTICIPANTS			TOP PROJECTS	
		Participants			Participants	
INFORMED	Visited at least one Page	2,538			Pedestrian Safety Ordinance	2,538
* Aware user could have also performed an Informed or Engaged Action						
AWARE		* Total list of unique visitors to the project				

## ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



1

NEWSFEEDS SUMMARY	
1	NewsFeed
67	Visits
67	Visitors

TOP 3 NEWSFEEDS BASED ON VISITORS	
67	Visitors to
City Council tables Pedestrian Safety Ordinance, seeks public input	

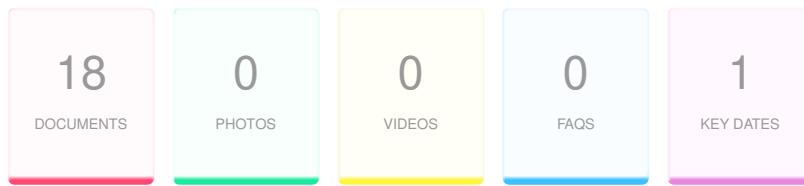
Q & A SUMMARY	
1	Q&As
1	Contributors
1	Questions

TOP 3 Q & A BASED ON CONTRIBUTORS	
1	Contributors to
Questions	

IDEAS SUMMARY	
1	Ideas
264	Contributors
933	Contributions

TOP 3 IDEAS BASED ON CONTRIBUTORS	
264	Contributed to
Comments	

## INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY



DOCUMENTS		TOP 3 DOCUMENTS BASED ON DOWNLOADS		
18	Documents	373	153	35
461	Visitors	Downloads	Downloads	Downloads
696	Downloads	Pedestrian Safety Ordinance B265-25	Columbia Pedestrian Safety Study Nov. 3 2025	Map - Locations of pedestrian crashes across Columbia 2022-2024

KEY DATES		TOP 3 KEY DATES BASED ON VIEWS	
1	Key Dates	37	Views
36	Visitors		
37	Views	Pedestrian Safety Ordinance	

## TRAFFIC SOURCES OVERVIEW

REFERRER URL	Visits
m.facebook.com	900
lm.facebook.com	274
www.google.com	175
l.facebook.com	145
www.komu.com	98
www.columbiamissourian.com	66
www.facebook.com	52
link.sbstck.com	23
android-app	22
cbormls.launchdashboard.io	20
www.como.gov	18
l.instagram.com	17
duckduckgo.com	8
substack.com	6
mail.google.com	5

## SELECTED PROJECTS - FULL LIST

PROJECT TITLE	AWARE	INFORMED	ENGAGED
Pedestrian Safety Ordinance	2538	1383	265

Bmink

**This is \*not\* a "pedestrian safety" ordinance, vote NO on B265-25!**

I am going to list out the many issues with this bill in as succinct manner as possible to truly drive home why this is the wrong step for Columbia to go down.

- The true intent of this bill when dissecting the language of the bill itself, as well as of many proponents/opponents and media, and additional context about who all is using medians for extended periods of time, it becomes clear this is a bill meant to target panhandling. These laws generally have been found to be unconstitutional as violating the 1st Amendment when strict scrutiny is applied to them, and lengthy amounts of federal and state case law confirm this.

- Reed vs Town of Gilbert, McLaughlin vs City of Lowell, Singleton vs City of Montgomery, Dumiak vs Village of Downers Grove, Norton vs City of Springfield, Fernandez vs St. Louis County, others

- This bill would lead to tickets and possible jail time for those found violating the ordinance if they do not pay their fine or make their court date. This is a criminalization of poverty and homelessness under the guise of a safety ordinance.

- This bill also would restrict protestors from holding signs in medians, including in many prominent "porkchop" medians between traffic and turning lanes which are popular places for protest. I do not think the city would have a compelling and overwhelming enough public interest to restrict time and manner of speech in this way to withstand legal scrutiny when combined with the aforementioned legal issues.

- The enforcement of this bill will be the responsibility of CPD and they will be the arbiters of when to hand out tickets or usher people along. I believe that this will result in unfair targeting of some communities over others, and am particularly concerned with CPD being the arbiters of whether someone's mobility is restricted enough to where the 2 light cycles mentioned in Sec. d, clause 2 does not apply. CPD Chief Schlude has said officers will use "common sense" when applying this clause, but what about if someone has an invisible disability not immediately present to an officer? Do people have to now have receipts of their entire medical history on hand to provide to officers now? This also seems like a scenario where the city could face legal liability.

- The Bicycle/Pedestrian Commission voted unanimously 7-0 at their November general meeting to oppose B265-25 as it is currently written due to the concerns above as well as having the belief this does not actually address pedestrian safety in a meaningful way despite being titled such. There are many other approaches the city could take other than just this ordinance to help make our streets safer for all road users, and the fact the commission was not asked for input by council until they had their November meeting is improper as that is the relevant commission to help draft strategies to improve pedestrian and cycling safety.

- There was no real tangible data in the study the city commissioned that really pointed to the hard data surrounding whether this would meaningfully improve safety in Columbia. The study posits that pedestrians being in unexpected areas waving signs can be distracting for drivers and cause error, but I would contend seeing pedestrians in one of the traffic medians is not something that should be overly distracting as to warrant regulating pedestrian behavior to this degree. I believe if driver error and

distractions are of concern, the main focus should be on slowing down drivers with speed reductions and make sure they are aware they are sharing space with other road users with infrastructure or ordinance changes.

- These reasons to me combined with city staff being unprepared to answer relevant questions about the ordinance which will be important for enforcement, accessibility, and surviving legal challenges, indicate to me it would not be in the city's best interest to pass this at this time. I would instead recommend we focus on other strategies to improve safety for all road users, including pedestrians. As a nonriver and who mostly walks places who has already been hit on a city street that does not have a median, I do not think this ordinance would make me safer.

EP

**I support this 100%**

I am in support of this city ordinance. People occupying the medians not only put themselves in danger but also those driving motor vehicles. On numerous occasions I have had individuals occupying the medians erratically walk out into the street in front of my car or a car in front of me. Those who use the medians to beg for money also congest traffic due to the citizens who choose to give them money. This is a serious concern for both traffic flow and accidents. These individuals are also often seen sleeping on medians which is a safety concern in and of itself. I urge the city council to pass this ordinance so that Columbia can take a step towards becoming a safer community.

TC

**I support this ordinance**

I am in support of this ordinance. I have seen those on medians near extreme speed and high traffic areas far too often step into traffic and cause distractions. I have also seen unattended pets on medians in these areas. Even if they themselves are extremely careful, they are one distracted or drunk driver away from a terrible incident. There is a reason that MODOT workers on the side of highways set up concrete barriers and vehicles to protect themselves.

I think that the other side of this issue comes from a place of genuine concern and I appreciate that, but in my view this is a safety issue. I'm not an attorney so I cannot claim that the ordinance is written perfectly and there may be improvements to be made, but perfect should not be the enemy of the good.

Jake

**Safety first**

As someone who frequently observes reckless and dangerous activities along the busy roads of our commercial districts it is imperative that this ordinance be put into effect. I unfortunately have seen pedestrian walking through traffic, causing accidents and fighting over locations on the medians. This

behavior is not only disruptive to traffic but it genuinely harms local businesses. These practices need to be curtailed and this ordinance would be a step in the right direction.

Stephanie

I support this ordinance. Individuals in the median of busy roads are a hazard to the individual as well as drivers. Please pass this.

Kay M

**For safety, please pass!**

People on medians are distracting to drivers no matter who they are. Distracted drivers are a danger to everyone around them, including those on the median. With the mission of stopping traffic deaths, this needs to pass.

Moritz

**Opposing the “Pedestrian Safety” Ordinance**

I am writing as a Columbia resident and someone who is in community with members of the public who would be most impacted by this ordinance. Many of the local organizations that support unhoused neighbors, low-income residents, pedestrians, and transit riders are opposed to this measure. We are rooted in Columbia, we understand the realities on the ground, and we are committed to making this city safer. I encourage the City to prioritize the voices of local residents and groups rather than the commentary of people outside Columbia who do not show an ongoing commitment to this community.

It is also important to note that available crash data does not show that people standing on medians are causing pedestrian crashes in Columbia. The recurring factors are well known: missing or deteriorating sidewalks, high vehicle speeds, limited safe crossings, wide arterial roads, and insufficient lighting. These infrastructure issues, not people who are present in medians, are what consistently place pedestrians at risk.

If the goal is pedestrian safety, Columbia should invest in strategies that are proven to work such as building and repairing sidewalks, slowing traffic, improving lighting, and designing safer intersections and crossings. Punitive measures toward vulnerable residents will not reduce harm. Infrastructure investment will.

Anon

I support this measure, they are to exposed to harms way

KingsQueen

**The safety of the many drivers should outweigh the very few median campers.**

I drive nearly the entire length of Providence Rd and at least half of the Business Loop every weekday, twice a day. The use of the very skinny medians at stoplights is an absolute safety issue for both the occupant and drivers. I've lost count the number of occupants I have witnessed sleeping, passed out, sitting with limbs in the roadway, or stumbling and falling off into the traffic way. This is not safe for anyone, and even more of a safety concern now that it is dark during the evening commute. In addition, I am concerned for my own safety when being stopped at a red light next to a median, as more than 1 occupant have become belligerent when I don't give them anything - I should not have to deal with being spit on while minding my own business. Our once great city has catered to homeless, panhandlers and addicts for way too long, and this ordinance is long over due. It is absolutely a no-brainer. My only suggestion is to revamp the ordinance to include ALL medians in the entire city without regard to the size of the median or amount of traffic. The occupants are not going to pay attention to qualifying/non-qualifying medians anyway. It is also a major safety issue in the areas near I-70 and Hwy 63 which not only has so much construction but is used by out of town visitors and travelers. They have a hard enough time navigating unfamiliar roads/reduced lanes without having to look out for people camping out on these medians. One final reminder: The population of CoMo is over \$130,000 as opposed to the 300 homeless population. Please stop putting their interested above your tax-paying citizens!!!

Lkdooley

**Safety for both drivers and pedestrians are at issue**

I live near the Hwy 63 and I-70 corridor and Clark Ln, where many people linger on the medians. I am surprised more people have not been injured. I have personally witnessed a number of near misses of pedestrians versus vehicles. We are not doing anyone any favors by allowing unsafe behavior and adding more distractions for drivers. The City Council needs to do the right thing and curtail the unsafe practice of allowing people to linger on medians, especially in these busy traffic areas.

TJR

**Pass it! Should apply to all medians, not just <6ft.**

It's simply just not safe for everyone when you allow people to camp and panhandle near/in-between roadways. We should ban panhandling all together as this only encourages and enables our homelessness issue as well as reoccurring scammers that visit our area. (Ex: fake violin players w/bluetooth speakers, collecting money for fake sick kids) Many people are fed up with our cities inability to come up with working solutions for homelessness and our Mayor leaves her comments off on her posts because she doesn't care what we think. The way you get treated by law enforcement should not change based on your wealth/status. The way things are enforced right now, you can get away with just about anything if you're homeless. The law shoulf he applied equally. Who in the world would want to raise kids in a city that is okay with homeless people who trash every property they camp

on, use/consume substances in public, indecently expose themselves for everyone on the roadway to see, harass people into giving them money, etc...

Kyle

**Oppose this for now**

I think the driving force for actions like this is discomfort with seeing/interacting with unhoused people. While we have seen an increase in deaths we have seen an increase in population as well. I'd like to see more direct correlation that this will help keep unhoused individuals safe before we pass a law that makes their life harder.

Scott S

**It is not safe for anyone anywhere to stand on a two foot wide median with cars rushing by at 35+ mph.**

I am baffled by the arguments that the proposed regulations would hurt panhandlers and the unhoused population. The ordinance appears to give law enforcement the tools it needs to keep the unhoused population and others who use the medians SAFE and out of harms way. It seems like common sense to stay out of the middle of the roadway, but when common sense fails it falls on our local officials to make enforceable rules reflecting that common sense. I have heard people say if they want to get hurt then let them get hurt. The problem is much greater. The driver will be sued because they hit someone. And the driver may have PTSD and flashbacks of hitting and killing a person. Get people off of the roadways before someone gets killed and it ruins multiple lives! The death of any person who is lingering on a median in the middle of a street where traffic is flying by is preventable now by regulating human conduct and should be on the conscience of any person who votes no. What is their solution? Build concrete huts for people to safely stand in the medians? Stop the insanity and vote yes.

Carl

In favor of the ordinance

Cullan

I oppose this ordinance

Tpxyz

**Having attended the 11/17 mtg and heard the Councillors Q's it is clear this ordinance is not in any shape to be passed. I vehemently oppose**

I take many issues with this ordinance, first and foremost that it claims to protect pedestrians. As a non-driver who commutes by walking, biking, and bus, this ordinance would create significant barriers to navigating our city. Many of our major roads do not have sufficient crossings and I find myself making illegal crossings, and lingering on so-called "pork chops" longer than two light-cycles in order to complete a regular commute within Downtown Columbia. Those who have a personal vehicle may not be as aware of the challenges of navigating our city, but this ordinance will make quick work of punishing those of us who do not, or cannot, drive. For those who cannot afford to pay the tickets associated with the ordinance, the court system is ruthless and you can find yourself caught in the legal system with a warrant too quickly. This is injustice. Our Councillors heard from many residents on this issue and I trust will not pass such a deeply fraught and incomplete ordinance under the guise of safety.

Sarahhelen91

**I oppose the ordinance**

This ordinance is not data informed. There are many data informed pedestrian safety /traffic calming measures the city can take and this isn't it. This is meant to target a certain population and it will end up harming pedestrians.

Mwebster

**I vehemently oppose this ordinance. It's a gateway to banning public camping, standing & "being unhomed." DO BETTER BY OUR NEIGHBORS, COMO**

We've seen this exact trick of an ordinance passed "for public safety" used in other states to gateway outlawing the condition of being unhomed itself, and to demonize, impound and ghettoize homeless humans in the harshest terms. This is not Missouri. Columbia needs AGAIN to be known as a city that is KINDNESS FIRST. As an observant social worker, I can say that the vast proportion of panhandlers I've seen in Columbia in the narrow median strips mentioned, are: (a) not homeless though they may dress shabbily to give that impression. (b) highly organized perpetrators of fraud, especially those waving signs about donating to sick children. Here's a solution. Stop donating to those soliciting in this manner. Don't be made a fool by being taken in by their marketing and advertising (clothes, signs, verbal patter) or the need to give to salve your own conscience. Here's a much better way to help: set up regular donations to every organization serving our unhomed neighbors that you possibly can. Donations can be \$10 or \$20 - the cost of a few lattés can feed 10-15 people a nutritious hot meal. Your donation needn't be in the hundreds unless you can afford it. And if you can, then by all means give generously. Make your donation stations Como Mobile Aid, the Food Bank (actual cash donations aid purchase of infant formula, and appropriate food for medical needs diets etc) and independent non-funded volunteer run organizations such as Food Not Bombs, of which I am a member volunteer. FNB gives away organic veggies and vitamins every Saturday at 4pm at 9th & Broadway in Columbia to anyone who rolls up, no questions asked. This ordinance would hurt many giving organizations' ability to provide roadside assistance to hungry people, or for Food Not Bombs to provide our Wednesday 5:30pm hot meals in Flatbranch and Field parks in Columbia. Think deeply about how much you want to deprive people who

have \*nothing\* of the very few services they still can get through organizations like this Choose to make it easier on our very hard pressed, very human neighbors, Columbia. Thank you.

Rachel

**I oppose this ordinance**

This ordinance WILL NOT make people safer. Instead it creates a pipeline to incarcerate people for the crime of being poor in public. The greatest danger to pedestrians is irresponsible drivers flouting traffic laws. Enforce the existing laws against speeding, and put traffic calming measures around the colleges and high schools. Installing protected bike lanes would also go a long way towards preventing pedestrians from being injured and killed. The study the City paid for clearly shows that people standing in medians IS NOT a leading cause of injuries or accidents. Please focus on enforcement of existing laws instead of restricting citizen's ability to peacefully exist in public spaces.

Norgardp

**Opposed to Ordinance Passage**

This ordinance targets panhandling, but panhandling ordinances are unconstitutional so this is the "creative" solution the City has come up with. Pulling in various groups to lend legitimacy to a bad decision is poor form, and increases mistrust of City Council's motivations. If we cared about public safety, then we'd fix (or install) sidewalks and aggressively enforce traffic laws.

LB

**This seems like a common sense rule to me.**

This rule seems like a reasonable one. I'm nervous when I drive by someone who is panhandling or waving a sign on a skinny median in a busy road. Some have pets with them which just makes it worse. I would hope police would enforce this like they enforce jaywalking—by liberally ignoring what they can and giving out warnings and tickets only when it's clearly necessary.

HC

I oppose this ordinance

PS

**I will call all medians "pork chops" forevermore.**

If you want drivers to hit fewer pedestrians, change behavior of drivers!

Nurse Joy

I oppose this ordinance. Make a safe place for the unhoused to be as an alternative, and stop infringing on our first amendment rights.

AF

I oppose this ordinance. Let's actually help homeless people instead of just making their lives harder and more criminalized.

Rodney G

**Of course the ordinance will limit panhandling, that's the purpose of it!**

If the the council would scientifically research the opinion of its residents, it would be an 80/20 issue.80% in favor of it!

Ron

**Don't punish pedestrians for bad road design**

I bike and walk far more miles than I drive, and I have been hit by a car while on my bike when they blew through a stop sign near Ash/Stadium. So I am sympathetic to all sides of the safety issues. In general though, I would love to see more infrastructure to support pedestrian/bike safety and convenience, and more enforcement and infrastructure to reduce reckless and dangerous vehicle driver behavior. From what I have read and understand of the ordinance, a lot of it makes sense, but should probably be more focused and limited to address specific behaviors that are causing problems. Making it illegal to cross a road except at an intersection seems a bit too broad, and further punishes pedestrians for bad road design.

Kwelsk

Please Pass!!! Standing or sitting in a median with cars driving by is very dangerous situation for everyone!

SMeyer21

I oppose this ordinance. This is simply making it a crime to be homeless. Let's address finding shelter for our neighbors instead.

Joe.Jefferies

**This ordinance is a thinly-veiled attack on our homeless neighbors. Vote it down. Do not punish the vulnerable over poor infrastructure!!!!**

Just because our infrastructure can't handle the volume of traffic it has to and because the Universities won't take accountability for their enormous part in that overburdened infrastructure does not mean we can use this as an opportunity to punish our homeless neighbors. The idea that people in medians are the root cause of our unsafe streets is frankly laughable. Oppose this ordinance. Period.

Comocello

**The current proposed ordinance is flawed and should not be adopted.**

As a pedestrian and driver, it disturbs me that the City is not doing more to penalize drivers who run red lights, speed, and use hand-held devices while driving. All of these activities are already illegal and are significant safety concerns. Higher vehicle speeds in particular are associated with higher rates of fatalities and serious injuries to pedestrians and vehicle drivers. I do not see solutions being enacted to deal with these issues. I believe that diverting officer enforcement from driver behavior to pedestrian behavior is a poor use of limited city resources and is not supported by facts and evidence.

Renee

**Safety first - please approve**

We moved to Columbia a few months ago from St. Louis to be near our grandchildren. We have lived in 10 major cities across the US. The amount of pedestrians/panhandlers on medians in Columbia is shocking to us. In other cities, we've encountered firemen raising money on medians, someone selling flowers, homeless, etc — but Columbia is extreme and ALL of these people, regardless of who they are, are standing in areas where it is unsafe for them and for the drivers. When you exit I-70 at Hwy 63, the intersection is so busy, that with panhandlers there (who sometimes are on the road and in-between cars), it makes it extremely dangerous for everyone. As a driver, it is distracting and disorienting. Many other medians & exits and around town cause the same distraction for drivers, which include many young college students and visitors who come from out of town for college activities. Also, when you consider all the construction on these major roads, and drivers needing to be extra aware and alert of traffic flow changes, adding panhandlers to the medians makes it even more unsafe. We want to love Columbia, we want to spend our money here, we want to donate to organizations who help the homeless, but we do not feel welcome here. We feel the city is more focused on favoring the panhandlers and not focused on safety for everyone.

**Reply from Kfs:** SO you admit, this is about panhandling? Interesting. I'm sure the city's lawyers will appreciate this when they consider the liability of banning a first amendment right. Thanks for helping the cause. Vote no.

Jay S

Yes, please pass this ordinance. While not perfect, no government legislation ever is. This will help keep pedestrians safe.

Meg P

**Do not pass the ordinance**

This is blatantly anti-homeless legislation coached in public safety verbiage. I would be more in favor of an ordinance like this if there were actual solutions in place to help the homeless. In a time where more and more people are finding themselves without a safety net, instead of a helping hand they will soon find themselves locked up or tangled in legal battles, simply because they had nowhere else to go, and no one else to ask. Columbia can do better.

**Reply from HSB:** It affects more than just the homeless, it affects anyone who gets around by foot or wheelchair. Not driving a car in a city with insufficient infrastructure shouldn't be a crime.

Sam N

Please pass the ordinance!

Kari

**Absolutely pass it!**

It's ridiculous to see people hanging out on the medians at the connector where they're barely 2 feet wide. If that person stumbles or rolls into traffic, they will get hit. While we're at it, get a better crosswalk system in that area or a pedestrian bridge

Hambone

Pass this ordinance. There is no good reason to have people mixed in with traffic on our roads.

Susancomo

**This ordinance is neither about pedestrians, nor safety. It just outlaws public poverty**

Actual pedestrian safety requires barriers for bike lanes, traffic calming measures and a variety of engineering incentives to encourage drivers to pay attention. Most pedestrians are hit in intersections and shoulders. All this does is outlaw public poverty

JT

As someone who lives near the 70/63 area, I say pass the ordinance. It's for the safety of everyone involved.

IcaremoreaboutPPLthanroads

**Once you effectively attempt to help the homeless by providing basic needs-shelter, food, clothing then maybe this would be a topic of convo..**

& again just maybe. These people are humans are feel helpless. If it pains you so bad to see these individuals- donate AND assist.

Mizzou Tiger

**Please pass the pedestrian safety ordinance. It's needed to protect pedestrians and drivers. Public safety should be the priority.**

The city has an obligation to place public safety as a priority, including protecting those who apparently don't want to protect themselves. This is a common sense ordinance that should've been addressed and passed a long time ago.

SadieS

Please pass this ordinance!

C Cott

Please pass this ordinance, Ward 2 representative said she had not heard from anyone in her ward that this sb passed, now she has.

Desiree Lemke

Please pass this ordinance!

Derrick H

It is imperative for the safety of both pedestrians and motorists that you must pass this ordinance. The overwhelming majority support it.

**Reply from bmink:** I do not support this ordinance, as it would put the city at significant legal liability if we lose an inevitable court case when challenged. How much money do supporters of this bill believe

the city should light on fire so we can try to make struggling folk's lives a little bit more difficult? It isn't making any sense or cents to me.

**Reply from amin7d:** I share this persons perspective. I fear a vocal minority of highly politically engaged citizens will drown out the majority of Columbians who are in favor of this bill. Almost hitting people or their animals on medians is wildly dangerous and inhumane to all parties.

**Reply from Kfs:** In your echo chamber, maybe...Those of us who care about our neighbors say no

**Reply from HSB:** I would also vote no.

**Reply from John H:** I would vote no.

Common Sense

Obviously people should not be loitering in the middle of roadways or trespassing to setup camp

HSB

**Absolutely not! Who does this help?**

People cross large streets because of a lack of infrastructure, not because they want to. Have you tried to walk across business loop or some of our other roads?? The lights are incredibly far apart and adding an extra 15 minutes just to cross the street is ridiculous. And I always see people walking along the interchange with their fast food uniforms on too. I really don't think we should be criminalizing poor people trying to get to and from work and the store just because they can't afford a car and we barely have a bus system. Not to mention, the homeless people panhandling don't hurt anymore. They may make you uncomfortable, but who cares, just look away. If they have a reason to be there, it isn't my business and I don't think we should make laws to police innocuous behaviors. The safety study we spent a bunch of money on even says that them standing there doesn't meaningfully contribute to roadway accidents.

Martinm5257

I've heard we already have a ordinance prohibiting loitering in crosswalk and median? If so why are we going through this and why isn't it e

TCIslandTime

**I'm begging you to Please Pass Ordinance B265-25!**

The study commissioned by the City addresses public safety. This ordinance is about pedestrian safety and has nothing to do with the unhoused or panhandling. I almost hit a lady pushing a shopping cart in

my driving lane at the I-70/63 connector after dark. I had a crippled, elderly man step in front of, and bounce off my car while trying to retrieve cash from a driver next to me. Just last week, there was a man on the Stadium/Ash island jumping up and down, rolling on the median, screaming, yelling, and inadvertently stepped in front of a car making a left turn that had to swerve at the last second to avoid hitting him. At any road intersection, I want to be fully aware of vehicle traffic as well as pedestrian traffic; however, I should not be distracted by people trying to distract me.

**Reply from bmink:** I do not think this is the best approach to actually make pedestrians like myself safer. This would actually make me feel less safe in major intersections if passed and fear it would lead to increased profiling of pedestrians in medians. Not only this, but the city will be forced to pay a massive amount of money in a settlement if and when they are sued and this ordinance is found to be unconstitutional. That is even more money the city could have spent toward actually making pedestrians safe so that they can virtue signal to drivers about handling the issue, meanwhile, the city and supporters of this ordinance won't admit one of the inevitable side effects of passing this is that it will instead lead to more panhandling in and around parks and downtown.

**Reply from G-Daddy:** Yep vote yes

**Reply from Kfs:** Nope. Vote no.

MBF

**Please do not pass this ordinance. It would not enhance pedestrian safety.**

I am a frequent pedestrian commuter, but also sometimes use my car or bicycle to get around town. I feel like I have a pretty good handle on issues caused by each mode of transportation, and this proposal would solve nothing. By far, the most problems are caused by inattentive, impatient and/or uneducated drivers. I would rather see our resources directed to better, safer infrastructure and driver education. I know there have been courses offered for safe city cycling. We could really use some education effort for drivers to learn how to pay attention and coexist with other forms of travel. I do not want Columbia to become a town where the only way to get anywhere is in a car. But passing this measure would be a step in that direction.

Kfs

**Don't pass this thinly veiled anti-panhandling ordinance just because the local fb hate group has an army of semi-persuasive trolls**

The study that this ordinance relies on says clear as day that the pedestrians that have been injured are college students near downtown. The actual intersections where our unhoused neighbors fly signs were not the problem areas of the study. Also, panhandling is a first amendment right, and this ordinance, if passed, won't hold up to legal proceedings against it. Don't be cowards and cave to the hate. Be brave, care for ALL of our neighbors.

**Reply from TCIslandTime:** Yes, I agree. Panhandling is a 1st amendment right and efforts to ban panhandling with city ordinances and state laws are ALWAYS defeated in courts. However, this is not a

panhandling ordinance; it is safety ordinance that addresses 47 specific unsafe crossings in Columbia. And I also agree no one should ever cave to hate.

Bsmith

I'm not sure which frustrates me more: the lies about this ordinance's true inspiration or the lack of empathy for its vulnerable targets.

Amin7d

### **Strong Support for the Ordinance**

Dear Mayor Buffaloe and City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for Council Bill B 265-25, which would add important new safety protections for motorists, pedestrians, and vulnerable road users on Columbia's busiest and most dangerous corridors and intersections.

As a daily commuter and parent, I have personally witnessed the growing risks created when individuals stand in travel lanes or narrow medians on high-speed, high-volume roads such as Providence Road, Stadium Boulevard, Grindstone Parkway and others to solicit money or distribute materials. These activities force drivers to brake suddenly, distract us at critical moments, and place the individuals themselves in extreme danger.

Only last week I was forced to swerve out of the turn lane at Broadway and Stadium as a dog (who was accompanied by a gentleman panhandling in the median) walked into the turn lane as I was approaching. This could of been a horrible accident with my children in the car.

These common-sense restrictions mirror ordinances already upheld as constitutional in cities across Missouri and by multiple federal appeals courts. They are narrowly tailored to advance the city's compelling interest in traffic safety without banning the underlying speech—only its most dangerous location and method.

While a handful of voices may speak loudly at public hearings, I believe this ordinance reflects the common-sense safety concerns of the vast majority of Columbia residents who travel our major corridors daily to get to work, school, medical appointments, and home to their families. Most of us never have the flexibility to attend evening council meetings, yet we are the ones who experience the close calls, sudden braking, and traffic backups this ordinance is designed to prevent. Passing this bill would send a clear message that the Council prioritizes the safety and daily experience of the overwhelming majority of citizens over the preferences of a small but vocal minority.

I respectfully urge the Council to pass Bill B 265-25 without weakening amendments that would undermine its safety purpose.

Thank you for your leadership in making Columbia's streets safer for everyone.

Alexbohannon

**Please Vote No from Ward 1**

Even many in the vote-yes camp want to see more safety features critical to pedestrian safety: better crosswalks, improved signaling, and stronger regulations on driver behavior. Can we re-focus a pedestrian safety ordinance to focus more on these things? Can we ask how can we curb poor driver behavior to prevent pedestrian accidents? Instead, we're looking at potentially codifying, for example, what disabled people look and act like while ambulating for the police to enforce? Additionally, would this statute even be enforced if it is so challenging to get officers to the scene to enforce speed limits, no phone use, etc?

Gthompson

**Please pass the pedestrian ordinance**

No ordinance is perfect but this proposed ordinance will absolutely improve safety on our roads for drivers and pedestrians. This is an opportunity to take action before more serious accidents or injuries occur. It's a common sense approach.

**Reply from G-Daddy:** I agree 100%

Twheitmann

**Ordinance is not supported by the study**

There are many things wrong with the proposed ordinance but the fact that the data in the study does not in any way link the width of a median to direct hazards should be at the top of the list. I also note from Table 1 that the highest accident rate intersections (College at University or Rollins) are not ones where pedestrians typically linger on a median. There are many more effective ways to promote safety for pedestrians at intersections that should be considered first. These intersections would be much better served with longer walk lights and better street lighting. Furthermore, the fact that the data in the report show an uptick in pedestrian injuries and death since the great recession should ring alarm bells, especially given the obvious pretext for criminalizing panhandling. What even will the penalty be? A fine? For people who often don't even have money for food? This is more about hiding a problem than fixing one.

Como2025

**Pass the ordinance!**

Common sense needs to prevail! Pass the ordinance.

JD01

**VOTE NO | This ordinance cannot achieve what it says it can, and will only result in worsening the current issues.**

I'm all in favor of improving public safety but the way this ordinance does not achieve that. Build better roadways and pedestrian infrastructure if that's what you are concerned about. Support local non profits addressing the roots of the problem, the outrageously high cost of living, and support policies that keep people in their homes and jobs. Build more public housing, approve more low income housing. Do not criminalize the people you are in power to support. Do not put bandaids on bullet holes. A vote yes for this ordinance is a vote to send our neighbors in need into jail - Where the taxpayer will pay for their wellbeing (or lack thereof, still costly to us either way). IDK about you but I'd rather just let them be or find another way to address the situation directly with respect for the actual cause of the problem. The safety report concludes that that particular part of the ordinance will have no effect on public safety. I can never be in favor of a bill that puts more people in chains with no benefit to the common good. These people will eventually be released anyway, because standing ain't a real crime, into an even worse situation in likely worse shape mentally and economically, which leads to more...\*CRIME!\* this ordinance is an absolute failure in policy and would be disastrous in practice.

**Reply from LadyErma:** You are so right. This is just another attack on the homeless and another way to hide a problem rather than to solve a problem. Atypical for Columbia.

SteveS

**In support of the ordinance.**

I witnessed a car making a left turning movement from Providence onto Green Meadows almost rear end another one because it stopped to give money to someone. It came very close to being a tragic situation for the person seeking money and his dog. This same scenario occurred at Stadium and Broadway with someone entering traffic lanes to take money even though the light was green and cars in adjacent lanes were moving. This ordinance needs to be passed for the benefit of the City.

Seileach67

**100% OPPOSED to this ordinance which will criminalize disabled people needing to rest while traveling**

As a disabled person, I believe that rather than criminalizing protestors, disabled people needing to rest while traveling along city streets, and unhoused fellow human beings, the city should improve pedestrian safety with better sidewalks and better enforcement of driving regulations.

Little old pedestrian

**The proposal is not supported by the data in the report. Downtown and campus appear to be the problem spots.**

If safety is the issue, focus on the data. Speed is crucial as slower speeds are proven to reduce both number and severity of accidents. Reduce speed limits and enforce them.

LittleFish

**5th Ward resident asking for a 'No' vote on the median ban.**

Imagine if we had spent the \$95K from the minimally informative study to instead support the co-responder program, so that if there is someone in crisis or under the influence of drugs on a street median they could get the care and referrals they need. This city keeps throwing good money after bad. The study done, although greatly flawed, gives us data that shows the most impacted areas for injury are on/near the MU campus, yet this ordinance offers no remedy for those areas. This ordinance is a mildly veiled attempt to disappear the unhoused from public view. If this should pass and the unhoused are then forced to move their panhandling from the medians to other 'safer', heavy foot-trafficked areas don't you think you'll next hear complaints about them now bothering folks in other public areas (The District, MU campus, parks, etc)? You will create a different problem. Instead, maybe focus efforts to assist those that are impaired or unsafe. I imagine that distracted driving is a much greater factor in most pedestrian-vehicle accidents than the width or location of the median. We'd know, if the report you paid for was worth the paper it is printed on.

SNOOPYDOG

I am worried about safety, especially in the dark. People tend to wear dark clothes and dangerously close to end of medians!

**Reply from LadyErma:** I believe there is an ordinance all ready on the books that says they can not be there after sunset. That should be enforced. If it is not being enforced, that is the city's fault not the homeless's fault. They are just taking advantage of the situation. And I can tell you that IF they are out after dark, they are jonesing for a fix. My youngest daughter was a crack addict and her and her husband would stand out until they got enough to get high, go make the buy, get high, come down and go back out again. Both are in heaven now. Do not give money after dark!!!

G-Daddy

**As a 35 year retired MoDOT employee who attended 2 funerals of coworkers killed in traffic please pass this ordinance for all persons**

Involved. Taking an animal into a high traffic area is wreck less behavior that needs to stop.

Safety for whom?

**Opposed in Ward 2**

If pedestrian safety is truly the goal, then slow cars and add more/better pedestrian infrastructure. Cops and more punishment don't equal public safety. Don't give them more tools to immiserate the vulnerable and desperate. Don't push social and economic problems into courts and incarceration. Help fix these problems. Tax the wealthy for more housing and other avenues to provide a decent life for all Columbians.

TS

**There are many issues with this ordinance. Instead solving the root problem ( unaffordable living), it criminalizes those who are unhoused**

This will also cause those who are unhoused in Columbia to move elsewhere which doesn't solve the issue of homelessness. It's like putting an ice pack on a knee that needs surgery

**Reply from Zoey S:** Hello, I believe that this ordinance would not have much of an effect on the unhoused people in Columbia. It is for their safety as well. It is dangerous to be standing that close to moving vehicles. If there was a car crash, they may be in the way and get injured themselves, which no one wants for them. Also, it may help some people attempt to get into shelters and seek help since they cannot be at those medians. I think that this ordinance would help the entire, general public of the city if they want to address it without immediate arrests of the unhoused.

COMONative1828

**Please pass the ordinance. I have worked extensively with the homeless and this is needed for their safety.**

I worked with a homeless individual who was struck by a car while panhandling and hospitalized. He still went to the same intersection after getting hit. It posed a danger to himself and was a liability and danger to law biding drivers. If they aren't willing to do the safe thing, give the police the tools to make it safe via the ordinance.

**Reply from bmink:** Paternalism

Marhuck

**Pass the ordinance**

This should include all medians no matter how big they are or what the speed is. Medians are made to stop for a moment while crossing the road. Having people camp out on them for extended periods is dangerous and distracts drivers.

MadinCoMo

**I think we should look at the root of the problem instead**

We need better infrastructure? The unhoused community keeps growing because the cost of student housing made other landlords raise their rent prices too. By all means, we should make pedestrian safety a priority, but making the medians SMALLER would mean that people waiting to cross the street are even closer to cars? That doesn't sound all that safe to me. We should improve our roads, fix the lighting, sidewalks, and repaint lines. (Seriously there are several areas in CoMo that are practically invisible in wet and dark conditions. We shouldn't be doing guess work based on the outline texture changes of the paint on the road.)

Shea

**Stop finding ways to criminalize homelessness and address the root causes.**

Medians aren't the problem. The unhoused population has grown massively because rent has increased much faster than wages. Placing the focus on the visibly homeless doesn't address the root causes and keeps the public focused on blaming the victims of a broken housing market. A few corporate landlords have artificially inflated rents to the point that my partner and I were homeless for a month this spring. We are employed (he's a veteran with thirty years of trade experience; I have a master's degree and taught English at universities for ten years). We faced an unexpected transition and our income didn't qualify us for the cheapest apartment on the market. I graded MU student finals from our homeless camp. We've since scraped our way into a (crappy) apartment but I am not surprised that others are struggling. Please address housing and stop enabling the scapegoating of desperate people. I promise you no one's top choice is to stand in the elements and pollution to beg for a few bucks. Taking away that option only serves those who are more comfortable pretending the problem doesn't exist as long as they don't have to see it. Use city resources on real solutions or it is only going to get worse.

**Reply from Clint Shannon:** Your story is compelling. I encourage you to keep sharing.

Mun Choi stated that the root causes of homelessness need to be addressed but that doing so shouldn't delay action towards improving short-term safety. I agree with his point. But this ordinance is not the way to do so. There are better ways to improve pedestrian and driver safety.

**Reply from Lady Erma:** You GO! This is so true!! Well said!

Jgil

Please pass the ordinance.

LongTimeCoMo

**Not a criminal ordinance, no one gets criminalized. A prudent and responsible preventative public safety measure, the rest is just noise.**

Don't caught up in the hyperbole and whataboutism. Removing people and animals from small dangerous spaces in the middle of traffic, regardless of activity or housing status, it's as common sense

as it gets. Rework the ordinance a bit, get it legally sound, and pass it. Anything else is unacceptable and a dereliction of duties.

Daustin

This ordinance needs to be passed and enforced. Several years ago the city had a goal of zero pedestrian deaths where has that gone.

**Reply from AmandaPanda:** Several years ago our public transportation was the best it ever has been in my lifetime. We also had affordable housing (I.e. Trailer parks and low income multifamily apartments)

MeMe

Pass an ordinance to outlaw panhandling and hanging out on all medians in Columbia

**Reply from LadyErma:** You understand that this is aimed at a certian part of the population.

IF it passes they can ALL go together, get a lawyer and sue the city for discrimination against them. And the lawyer will do it for free just to set a precedent!

And from what I have been hearing they have already gotten that attorney ready to go.

Pass this will cost "US", the tax payers even more, then just leaving these people alone.

Does no one look at the bigger picture any more????

What is wrong with society today!!!!

LadyErma

**This is just another way to get rid of our homeless population. Leave people alone. I have NEVER heard of one accident due to panhandling!**

As is the norm for Columbia "Covering it up / white washing a problem" rather then facing it head on and fixing it seems to be the preferred way. I am sure you are aware this is the only way MOST of them get money to get food and fuel for heat. They will/can not go to places to stay warm in the cold weather as a lot of them have dogs, and pets are NOT allowed into these warming places. Yes, I do understand, why do you have a pet when you can not even take care of yourself, not our decision to make. If you are uncomfortable giving them monies, yet WANT to help, give them food, back packs, blankets, SOCKS, gloves!!! The women really need personal care items, they would love for you to give them those, and undies. They have told me honest to not give them actual cash because most will just go get alcohol or illegal drugs with it, If you were homeless and cold would you perhaps want to be in an altered state to deal with it??? I do understand that Columbia is supposedly building a housing complex for the homeless, which most of the homeless will probably not use due to the rules imposed on them there, most of them are very free spirited and have a hard time following the normal rules. Also what about their animals will they be allowed there. If they are a couple and not married, because marriage is not

the end all and be all to a lot of people in the world, will they still be allowed to be together in this place. If not, again they may not stay there. So are they really just putting a bandage on a problem so they can say they did something, or are they really there to help these people? Personally, all I see is that most peoples in Columbia thumb their very imperfect noses at the homeless and the reality of it is most of us in just a few missed paychecks would be right out there with them. If you do not want to help them at least leave them in peace. Do NOT take away the one way they have to get monies to get food and warmth, what else they get is really none of our business to be honest!

Grnan

### **Pass the ordinance**

Why in the world would anything think it is a good idea to stand in the middle of a busy intersection and panhandle, they themselves need help. Fine the drivers who are stopping traffic to hand out money. If you want to help these people go seek them at their camps and give them food.

Michael Carmody

### **Fails to meet best practices.**

1. Speed Limit of 35 mph or Higher FHWA Safe System Framework identifies vehicle speed as the strongest predictor of injury severity. Facts: • FHWA guidance states that 35 mph and above creates a high likelihood of death or serious injury for pedestrians. • The Safe System Approach requires speed management, including design changes, not just rules or enforcement. (Ref: FHWA Safe System Approach; FHWA Pedestrian Safety Guide) Safe System status: ✓ Correctly identifies a high-risk condition X Does not, by itself, satisfy Safe System countermeasure requirements (physical changes are required, not only operational rules) — 2. Traffic Volumes > 15,000 Vehicles per Day FHWA and AASHTO both classify 15,000+ AADT as a threshold where: • Crossing difficulty increases • Driver yielding decreases • Pedestrian exposure risk is high High-volume roads require engineering treatments, such as: • pedestrian beacons (PHBs) • raised medians • protected left-turns • reduced lane widths • signal timing changes (Refs: FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures; AASHTO Guide for Pedestrian Facilities) Safe System status: ✓ Recognizes a legitimate risk factor X Does not satisfy Safe System best practice unless paired with design interventions — 3. Median Width Less Than 6 Feet FHWA states: • 6 feet is the minimum refuge width for a pedestrian safety island. • Narrower medians increase exposure time and reduce safe crossing opportunities. (Ref: FHWA Pedestrian Safety Island Guidelines) Safe System status: ✓ Correct threshold X Does not meet Safe System best practice unless median width is physically increased or a PHB, LPI, or protected crossing is added — Safe System Conclusion (Purely Factual) ✓ The ordinance identifies valid high-risk conditions, all recognized by FHWA. X But Safe System best practices require engineering and design changes, not just rules. A Safe System-aligned policy must: • Reduce speeds (design, not signage) • Separate conflict points (PHBs, protected turns, LPIs) • Shorten crossings (medians  $\geq$  6 ft, curb extensions) • Increase pedestrian visibility (lighting, raised crossings) • Use crash-cost and severity modeling to guide decisions Simply defining thresholds does not meet Safe System standards unless the ordinance also mandates the corresponding

countermeasures. This is consistent with FHWA's exact position: "Identifying risk is not enough; the Safe System Approach requires system-wide treatments that reduce the likelihood and severity of crashes." (FHWA Safe System Approach)

AmandaPanda

**As a pedestrian I am 100% against this ordinance. This ordinance will force unsafe and unreasonable restrictions on pedestrians.**

This law would not only make walking in this town even more impractical, we would be violating this new law when walking between dead end sidewalks the city has never connected. If such strict laws are going to be implemented we as a population can not morally do so with put fixing the root cause. We need to bring back affordable housing and zoning for multiple uses such as multiple families or home and business in one district. This proposed law does not solve any problems more is there any way to reliably enforce it. This is an attack on pedestrians and poverty in all honesty. We have a right to help those in need and no-one would be in the medians unless they had no other choice or skill. We could educate them?

Harley

**I'm in support of any ordinance to remove loiterers on the medians.**

I drive through the Loop every day and there's almost always people posted up in the medians- standing or in chairs. Sadly, a young frequent offender sometimes can be seen swaying with a 40oz nearby. This won't fix the loop completely (because some of these businesses need to reinvest in their buildings/signage!) but it will help.

Veridici

**Please pass the ordinance.**

This ordinance would be an improvement. There is, of course, more work to be done on root causes of homelessness, but this is a reasonable, safety-oriented step to address a very real issue. Pass this and then work on the rest but don't let arguments about the rest distract from the fact that this ordinance would be an improvement.

**Reply from Robin Zakrewski:** People doing anything in the medians is a complete distraction to drivers. Does not matter if they are panhandling or protesting . I have had to swerve to avoid hitting one of the panhandlers who was clearly intoxicated and fell into the road.

Jlinsenb

I support the ordinance as proposed. It will improve the safety of pedestrians and motorists by keeping space between pedestrians and cars.

Dj

**Please Pass the Ordinance**

I support the ordinance. I am terrified of hitting either a stopped car or a person when I go through one of these intersections. Also, it begs a larger question why city policy softly encourages pan handling and the homeless. Nothing says welcome to our wonderful community than seeing beggars on the corners. My confidence in the city leaders is tested.

Zoey S

**Pass the ordinance for all Columbia residents!**

This may be seen as an anti-unhoused people ordinance (as I have heard from some of my peers), but I view it as a means of helping them as well. In passing this, not only would drivers be safer, but also the unhoused community of Columbia. There are plenty of other places where those people can go safely, without being in the streets or on medians that tend to be small. One car accident that hits a median and those people may be injured, or even killed. This ordinance will be beneficial for everyone, not just drivers!

Jim McNeely

**Safety**

Too many of the homeless people are mentally ill or addicted. Walking around the busiest roads in Columbia is dangerous for all of us, more so for these people. Do the right thing and pass the ordinance to protect these homeless people from potential harm or even death.

MM

**Anti-homeless policies masquerading as pedestrian safety**

Can you explain how the proposed policy changes are supported by the study? The data indicates most car-pedestrian collisions involve students. This does not explain how outlawing giving a dollar to someone standing on a median will make anyone, especially those asking for money, any safer. For what it's worth, I live next to an intersection where, most days, someone is standing on a (perhaps 3ft) median asking for money and this intersection is not mentioned as a dangerous intersection.

Sgf

**Please pass this ordinance**

Pedestrians do not belong in medians, on curbs, or in the roadway. This is obviously hazardous to both pedestrians and drivers. On a number of occasions, I have seen pedestrians step off of roadsides and medians into the roadway and even block exits from I-70. It is absolutely ridiculous that such behavior should be allowed. This ordinance needs to be passed and enforced for the safety of all citizens.

Hawk

**Don't pass this. It's a clear attack on pedestrians and homeless in Columbia**

When I first saw the proposed policy I got excited because the unsafe roadways and lack of sidewalks in Columbia have caused so many pedestrian accidents. But no. Of course it's the fault of the homeless people and the pedestrians. It's the fact that the roads described in the policy proposal are clearly just further restricting pedestrians, people who already have to yield for vehicles on most roadways. This also sends the message to Columbians who exactly you are looking out for. And I'll give you a hint. It's not the safety of the low income individuals who routinely walk all the way down broadway to just get the food they need. Instead of asking "what are the pedestrians doing to get themselves killed" instead try asking "I wonder if the motor vehicle centered, non pedestrian friendly roadway is the cause?" This policy is going to hurt many people and send the wrong message out to our town. Restart rethink, rewrite.

Boonebaby78

**I understand the concern that this is viewed as an attack on vulnerable individuals in the city. I do not agree.**

There are a lot of individuals in this city that like to pour vitriol on unhoused community members and absolutely see this as a way to "clean up the streets" which is a disgusting and hateful viewpoint. I do think those people are a loud minority and activists use them as proof that this ordinance is aiding in their hate mongering. The activists are also a minority. I believe most people in Columbia sit right in the middle and believe that this ordinance is a positive necessity for improved safety since simply asking individuals to stay out of medians isn't working. I care about the welfare of all of our community members - no one, regardless of housing status, should be hanging out near the roads. Personally experienced problem situations I have encountered due to people spending extended time in medians include: a) stalled traffic when the light is green during peak rush hour times when people are in a hurry (due to conversation with individuals sitting in the median) - people in this town are terrible, impatient drivers and road rage is abundant - eventually some lunatic will get angry create an accident; b) individuals with animals sitting with them - this endangers everyone, especially the animals. As a member of the animal rescue community, I know how unpredictable even the calmest of dogs can be. Intersections are dangerous for everyone and one sound can send a dog running; c) Intoxication and erratic movement of individuals - a driver can only predict movements so much. It is just as much the responsibility of pedestrians as it is drivers to behave safely near roads. Pedestrians with impaired capacity are just as dangerous as drivers with impaired capacity. Solutions to pair with ordinance:

Creating safe spaces in public for unhoused individuals and their pets to spend time - they should be allowed to exist in public and everyone should be allowed to travel safely, whether on foot or in car. Animals should not be put in danger. Let's actually work on making viable, safe, non-automotive corridors so we don't have to keep having conversations like this. Both sides need to stop pointing fingers. A solution needs to start somewhere and this in a simple ordinance - let's start here. It's not written in stone and can be edited in the future.

**Reply from Clint Shannon:** I appreciate your moderate viewpoint. But I don't think this ordinance should be the starting point. Its language is too vague.

MODad

**Shocked this isn't already an ordinance**

I have lived in multiple towns and cities in Missouri where ordinances like this already exist. While people who are against this ordinance focus solely on the impoverished, just this summer there were two groups soliciting money for organizations that I encountered at the intersection of Stadium and Bernadette who were actively stalling traffic during the workday lunch rush. CPD had to intervene in both cases. This created dangerous situations for drivers and those soliciting donations. Under the new ordinance these groups would be required to apply for a permit, follow rules of the permit and would likely not be allowed to set up at an intersection with such a constant flow of traffic. Columbia also has a large issue with people running across major highways outside of crosswalks which I have personally seen result in several accidents, and several near misses. Columbia does need to work on improving sidewalks and making them more available as there are sections of Stadium and Broadway that lack sidewalk access or reasonable crossings for large distances (when considering someone walking) or the sidewalks are in a state of disrepair.

H4x344x0r

**BEWARE: This ordinance be weaponized against protestors, street vendors, and the city's own efforts to promote non-motorized transportation.**

This ordinance does nothing for actual public safety. It's just more toxic "we can solve all our problems if we can be mean to marginalized people!" baloney. The reality is that it will be just weaponized against legitimate protestors, street vendors, and people like me who do public flow arts performances, and any other effort to promote non-motorized transportation. It will drive people away from dense retail areas like The District where people would otherwise walk around and shop. It doesn't help homeless people, it doesn't improve public safety, it just legitimizes cruelty toward others. If you want real safety improvements, go after guns, go after speeding and other reckless driving behaviors. If you want to reduce problems associated with homelessness, providing services and resources is a way more cost-effective, and far more successful, than just being mean to them, and giving up everyone else's rights to exist in public spaces in the process. I am adamantly opposed to this ordinance as written.

MBoehner

### **Design Better Streets and Intersections**

Proposed Ordinance conflicts with State Law. A median/curb is intended to be safe refuge for pedestrians. If people shouldn't be on the median, design intersections that don't require medians. Most medians in question exist because safety for people crossing is not the priority. Roadway design guidelines and details are 70-80 years old and are responsible for nearly every pedestrian injury and fatality at an intersection. Unfortunately, the users are always to blame or it is considered "an accident" ... never the fault of the roadway designers. 300.375. Pedestrians' right-of-way in crosswalks.

1. When traffic control signals are not in place or not in operation the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way, slowing down or stopping if need be to so yield, to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling, or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger. 2. No pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield. 3. Subsection 1 shall not apply under the conditions stated in subsection 2 of section 300.390. 4. Whenever any vehicle is stopped at a marked crosswalk or at any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection to permit a pedestrian to cross the roadway, the driver of any other vehicle approaching from the rear shall not overtake and pass such stopped vehicle.

Columbianus

### **I completely support the ordinance.**

Don't let a small vocal minority destroy this. There's data in support of this - be truthful to your approach, instead of shaking in your boots you hear loud extreme opinions. You have the support of the city's majority to get this done.

Safety

### **This is NOT a homeless, mental health, addiction problem - it is a SAFETY problem.**

We need this now. My only concern is how difficult it will be for police to enforce it. I don't want our officers doing this all day. Maybe a non-law enforcement city official needs to manage this.

CoMo M0M

### **Safety first**

The study has concluded that lives will be saved by following these safety measures, so why is this controversial? Is it because it makes TOO much sense? Someone wants pedestrian deaths in town?? Honestly, let's pass this already.

Mbenton158

**Really badly thought out**

This bill is too narrowly tailored in some parts and too broadly tailored in others. For narrow, there need to be better exceptions - if protesters exercising their first amendment rights would be exempted, this needs to be in the bill specifically - I don't want to hear about "special events" I want you to use the word protesters. There also need to be options for diversion from the criminal justice system for the homeless, an officer should be able to make a determination if a person is destitute when enforcing this specific law and divert destitute people away from the criminal justice system. For too broad, the bill seems to focus mostly on panhandling/median concerns without taking into account other distractions - Christmas lights, house lights, bill boards, decorated cars, and etc. - is this about safety or just something else under the guise of safety? I see LEO are exempt from this law - does this mean I can get stung by the police with a panhandling honey pot and get charged with "engaging with distribution" (and if not, why not write that in to the law)? Generally, the exceptions need a lot of work - what is the "scope of duty" and why are police officers treated differently than all other public employees in this law. How are "officer official duties" different than public employees "scope of their duties" and why is this not explained in the bill? What is "an opportunity to cross the roadway?" I'm telling you right now if this is passed I will completely ignore d.1. That's just parochial. If you really want to pass this to improve public safety, then I think you're going to need to start all over again. The current draft is quick and dirty. You will need to actually use your creativity to think about what actually needs to happen to accomplish actual public safety and improve the lives of Columbia's most vulnerable, rather than just toss them in a cell. There's nothing in there about what the penalty would even be! Thank goodness this was tabled, let's hope it will be enough!

Ponderer

I am a frequent pedestrian (sometimes run 6k to commute), bicyclist, and driver, and annually donate \$1000s to local groups providing services for people experiencing homelessness, so I can empathize with many of the comments. (And yes, Columbia can certainly *\*also\** improve ped/bike infrastructure, but that's irrelevant?) Overall, it seems reasonable to not let people hang out in places that are not designed to be safe for hanging out, but the ordinance draft begs questions about enforcement, which have been raised in other comments. Do we want to take CPD time away from other activities to enforce this? Probably not; but maybe some other sort of "public safety" officer can deal with it. Do we want to jail somebody who's too poor to pay a fine? Probably not (well, not most of us...); but we also don't want to let someone break all our laws just because they can't pay a fine. I think some additional detail about enforcement would help allay some of the concerns raised in other comments.

Mneale

**School Pedestrian Safety**

Though news reports make this seem like an issue with our unhoused population, I'd like our city to consider making more equitable choices about how to best mark and slow traffic around area schools.

Despite speed limit signs, crosswalks, and crossing guards, traffic on West Boulevard does not often slow while school is in session. Staff and families alike have had close calls with cars just plain not paying attention. Reports have been made to the City citing safety and citizens have been referred to traffic enforcement which then refers those people back to the city. Traffic calming measures are used by Mary Paxton Keeley and Benton STEM. Better signage is available at Parkade and Mill Creek Elementary. When updates were made to Rock Bridge Elementary, land was annexed in to accommodate a larger parking lot that would help with traffic on Old Plank and Route K. If we are concerned about pedestrian safety, my hope is that we could consider pedestrian safety at our little school on West Boulevard, specifically at Again and West Boulevard and Hope Place and West Boulevard. Thank you and good luck!

Jg5087

This is a no brainer. There is no 1st Amend. violation and the council needs to get out of the weeds on this. Pass it!

Joe

I agree with the city of Columbia recommendation especially those allowing pedestrians only in designated pedestrian areas and not medians

Dfinley

**The study shows the most pedestrian crashed around the University. What is Choi doing about this?**

Also, data about what the pedestrians were doing at the time of the crash would be good information along with time. Were they crossing road? Were they standing for long times in the medians? Were they crossing against the light? The behavior of the pedestrian is needed in order to determine the best course of action.

Proste

**Oppose B 265-25. The study did not identify panhandlers on medians as causing accidents, deaths. Don't criminalize these people. Help them**

Re: Council Bill No. B 265-25 "Rights and duties of motorists and pedestrians in major corridor roadways and major corridor intersections" I oppose this ordinance. The report "Street and Intersection Pedestrian Safety Study, City of Columbia, Missouri DRAFT 06.11.2025" did not identify that panhandlers on medians were the cause of accidents or deaths. The ordinance would, however, criminalize a person on the median who accepts money or food from someone in a car. These people need support, not legal harassment. As someone who hands money to a person on the median, I would also be breaking the law. This ordinance is solving the wrong problem. Please reject it.

Alan

Please pass the ordinance. Save our city.

**Reply from bmink:** "Save our city" from what exactly? People having to see unhoused folks while driving? Ordinance isn't going to hold up in court and if so I think only the vocal proponents of it should be on the hook for the tax bill instead of all constituents.

Jmc

I strongly oppose. it's a clear violation of our protected 1st amendment. No more big brother government

Bmink

**How much legal liability are supporters of B265-25 and the city willing to take on when we lose in court over this?**

While the city's legal team should definitely know better than to try to pass off an ordinance like this, I want to make it crystal clear what exactly supporters of this are advocating: a panhandling/protest ban under the guise of a pedestrian safety ordinance targeting behavior in medians. These two forms of speech are among the most protected by our First Amendment and usually require overwhelming amounts of evidence and a compelling public interest to enforce restrictions, none of which are apparent here. In fact, many cities have already lost court cases and paid out losses and attorney fees or chose to rescind similar ordinances to this when they were challenged by groups such as the ACLU, other groups, as well as other advocates and homeless people themselves. Below is just a sample of court cases cities and entire states have lost trying to enforce similar laws before, just so people have an idea of what we would be up against in court and whether we think our city's legal team is skilled enough to advocate for a not narrowly tailored law such as this one being constitutional. So I again ask supporters and the city: How much are you willing to put us on the hook for on this and if we lose and are forced to pay out a ton of money can we make it to where only people who supported this measure's taxes are impacted? McLaughlin vs City of Lowell, MA 2013 <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/federal-judge-strikes-down-lowells-anti-panhandling-ordinance-and-strikes-blow-speech/> Speet vs Schuette (MI) 2013 <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/13a0226p-06.pdf> Ballas vs City of Anchorage, AK 2014 [https://www.acluak.org/sites/default/files/ballas\\_v\\_anchorage\\_lawsuit.pdf](https://www.acluak.org/sites/default/files/ballas_v_anchorage_lawsuit.pdf) Cutting vs City of Portland, ME 2015 <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/ca1/14-1421/14-1421-2015-09-11.html> Champion v Commonwealth of Kentucky 2015 <https://law.justia.com/cases/kentucky/supreme-court/2017/2015-sc-000570-dg.html> Reed vs Town of Gilbert, AZ 2015 (SCOTUS) <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2014/13-502> Norton vs City of Springfield, IL 2015 <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/ca7/13-3581/13-3581-2015-08-07.html> Blitch vs City of Slidell, LA 2017 <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/louisiana/laedce/2:2016cv17596/191803/41/> Dilbeck vs Minor (Rogers, AR) 2018 <https://arktimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/pdf-panhandle.pdf> Rogers vs Stachey (Hot Springs, AR) 2019 [https://media.arkansasonline.com/news/documents/2019/04/01/order\\_2019-4-1.pdf](https://media.arkansasonline.com/news/documents/2019/04/01/order_2019-4-1.pdf) Rodgers

vs Bryant (Arkansas Statewide Panhandling Ban) 2019 <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/ca8/17-3219/17-3219-2019-11-06.html> McCraw vs City of Oklahoma City, OK 2020 <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/ca10/19-6008/19-6008-2020-08-31.html> Fernandez vs St. Louis County, MO 2021 <https://fox2now.com/news/missouri/homeless-man-wins-150000-settlement-against-st-louis-county/> Dumiak vs Village of Downers Grove, IL 2021 <https://www.aclu-il.org/en/cases/dumiak-and-simmons-v-village-downers-grove> Brewer vs City of Albuquerque, NM 2021 <https://www.ca10.uscourts.gov/sites/ca10/files/opinions/010110610058.pdf> <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmlr/vol55/iss2/6/> Scott vs City of Daytona Beach, FL 2024 <https://www.clickorlando.com/results-2024/2024/07/20/daytona-beach-panhandling-ordinance-declared-unconstitutional/> Singleton vs City of Montgomery, AL 2025 <https://www.splcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/singleton-city-montgomery-affirmance.pdf>

AM

**Support safety!**

The study clearly indicates a safety issue that needs to be addressed. This is not a 1st Amendment/Protect the Panhandlers issue, but a common sense safety concern for all.

Jparsh

Strongly oppose this proposed ordinance

If the city truly wants pedestrian and roadway safety improvements, there are many studies that give clear direction, and that direction does not align with his proposal. Removing people from the medians is targeting a population of people, rather than aiming to improve safety.

Anew

Please pass the ordinance, for the safety of our city and the pedestrians.

Jonessami1191

**Strongly Opposed**

Do not pass this ordinance. I was at the last council meeting when this was brought up. The research done was neglectful, the answers for the research were only done by one group, it is too broad, and doesn't do anything to protect pedestrians. Also the statement from police chief that "common sense" would be used during ticketing process and stops is not clear and would cause more issues as not all disabilities are visible violating ADA and opening the CPD to lawsuits. The responsibility to prevent injury to pedestrians via vehicle is on the drivers not pedestrians. This also violates first amendment rights to individuals who have participated in protests at intersections. Forcing people to cross at crosswalks in a certain amount of time does nothing to help us and does everything to punish individuals for spending

time. Things such as longer crossing times and creating sidewalks along every major roadway would go significantly further in providing pedestrian safety and a more accessible Columbia. This also unnecessarily punishes our unhoused population who is already vulnerable. Passing this bill is cruel and poses violations of individual rights provided. Do not pass this ordinance.

Grabaua

Support, it makes our community safer. Safety & dignity are not competing values, used together makes all systems & people safer.

AGK78

**Strongly oppose B 265-25**

This is an unnecessary ordinance. The study conducted was hastily done and the ordinance will unfairly target our unhoused population. Perhaps the city would be better off helping our neighbors in need instead of punishing them while they are already experiencing challenging life circumstances. If the city is genuinely concerned about pedestrian safety, this ordinance does not accomplish that, it merely targets an already vulnerable population.

RStrodtman

Strongly support safety. Sidewalks are for 1st amendment, not medians.

Hoagie

Maybe we should ensure that there are sidewalks along all roads before criminalizing people not being in the "right" place

CoMO Resident

Strongly support. Please pass the ordinance and help support safety of columbia residents.

**Reply from irounkles:** This needs to pass eliminating panhandling at busy intersections. Every city outside of Columbia has passed laws to eliminate panhandlers standing in medians collecting money. If they can't collect free money panhandling, they will move on

Ju174

**Will this accomplish anything? Or is it just smoke to pretend we are doing something about an serious issue?**

Pedestrian safety has been a serious concern in Columbia for a long time. Still, instead of investing in better crossings, sidewalks, or roads, we penalize those who have no other option but to cross a busy road.

Pard31

**Does not address the biggest pedestrian safety issues**

The proposed ordinance is fundamentally flawed. It is not a data-driven safety measure but rather a legal tool aimed at addressing panhandling, which misdirects city resources away from the true epicenters of pedestrian danger. The city's own crash data, police reports, and official memos demonstrate conclusively that this ordinance ignores the real problem and will do little to improve safety for residents and motorists. A truly comprehensive "safe systems" approach would prioritize countermeasures targeting the most frequent and deadly behaviors, which in this case means improving driver yielding compliance at intersections. The ordinance fails this test completely. The data is very clear in cases like Figure 7 on Pg. 9 of the supplemental study that the majority of of crashes actually happen at intersections without medians! If we truly want to work towards meeting the Vision Zero policy put forth by the city, we should be addressing the most serious problems first, and according to the city's own data that is drivers' failure to yield. The city's primary justification for focusing on medians is a handful of anecdotal complaints and service calls, not the comprehensive crash data from their own safety study. Furthermore, the supplemental council memo's legal analysis strongly suggests the proposed ordinance is designed as a "content-neutral" way to replace the unenforceable anti-solicitation law, making it a legal tool to address panhandling rather than a data-driven safety measure.

**Reply from Clint Shannon:** Thank you. The ordinance is not evidence-based.

Kattoomey5561

**Ordinance is more punitive than safe for the people most impacted**

This ordinance will have the biggest (negative) impact on people experiencing homelessness. We should focus on safety for our whole community, not on a small issue that is ultimately punitive for the members of our community most affected by the proposed ordinance. Sidewalks and clear, continuous, and usable bike lanes would better support safety for a larger number of people.

Citizen2

**This ordinance simply enforces common sense.**

Roadways are for transit, cars, bikes etc. They are not for loitering, asking for money, taking a nap or intoxicated people dancing half naked. All those activities are clearly dangerous for all parties and need to be addressed.

**Reply from bmink:** "Roadways are for bikes" The bill as it stands is so poorly written one of its clauses may actually ban non-motorized bikes from being in roadways, along with pedestrians that have

mobility issues who have no sidewalks available to them. Maybe we should reconsider passing such a flawed bill that could create more problems for commuters.

Matt

**Strongly Support**

I almost killed somebody walking in median on Grindstone, they fell off it early in the morning as I was starting work, and I'll never forget it. This is a sensible and reasonable ordinance. To those that concerned about the panhandlers, remember that this city has spent millions and now food and shelter will be available 365 days a year to all who avail themselves of it. We must treat them with compassion, but the frequency they stand a major intersections is a real danger to themselves and others.

MakeCOMOBetter

Please pass this! Simply look up the definition of "pedestrian"...

People against this ordinance talk about more focus needed on "pedestrian safety", which is a convenient smokescreen. I would simply ask you to ask them if they know the definition of the word pedestrian. Pedestrian - n - a person walking along a road or in a developed area. NONE of the people this ordinance is geared toward are "pedestrians" (moving/walking). They are panhandlers - n - a person who lives by asking for food or money in the street. PLEASE ensure that you highlight the difference here - this will eliminate confusion, should remove arguments against. Thank you for your efforts in making Columbia safer, cleaner, and better positioned to retain and grow population.

**Reply from Clint Shannon:** Thank you for your comment! Everyone for this ordinance needs to highlight that they are anti-panhandling, not pro-pedestrian safety. This eliminates all of the unneeded confusion and rhetoric.

**Reply from bmink:** So you agree, the city is in effect trying to enforce an anti-panhandling ordinance (which many courts have found unconstitutional)?

BeterComoForAll

**Panhandling ordinances are unconstitutional and do not address pedestrian safety**

If the real issue is pedestrian safety, then invest in public infrastructure and healthcare. Stop criminalizing poverty.

Nerfnada

**Roads are for cars**

The summary of area of effect: A speed limit of 35 mph or higher Traffic volumes greater than 15,000 vehicles per day Medians less than six feet wide From discussion it seems like many scenarios are extending the parameters. First Amendment advos worry me a bit, sounds like a stretch for protecting the pedestrians in circumstances that common sense think...not good outcome for the pedestrian. Drivers are not trying to run over pedestrians. Then I thought, what if a spontaneous Christmas Carol group decided to do an event in the middle of College Ave?! Maybe beautiful, maybe endearing...But not if its in the middle of the road. Not if you're in the jam up, not if you need to be somewhere, not if you're delivering something...sandwiches or patient. Imagine a post Christmas situation where another group exercises their 1A right by gluing their hands to the road on Stadium Blvd on game day to protest some cause du jour. Not to give them ideas, but, total chaos. We haven't seen that here, and I commend the city and pd for that, but we may need rules in place so citizens on foot and in vehicle know the rules, explicitly. Panhandling and homeless, no comment. Pedestrian awareness encouraged. Further restrictions on motorists not supported. An economist stated to the class: You want to end traffic accidents? Put a giant metal spike out of the steering wheel pointed to the driver...that would change behavior. That reasonable? I mean, if we're going for ZERO as the goal.

**Reply from bmink:** "Further restrictions on motorists" is how you actually make pedestrians safer.

Leam

I support passing this safety ordinance without reservation.

Just as we wouldn't allow our children to play on busy medians due to the obvious risks from traffic, we shouldn't expose nonprofits, volunteers, or anyone else to those same dangers by permitting them to stand, hold signs, or solicit there. Our sidewalks offer ample, safer space for these activities, reducing the chance of accidents and ensuring everyone can exercise their rights responsibly. To those worried about restricting freedoms, remember that thoughtful regulations like this aren't about limiting expression—they're about protecting lives. Governments have a duty to set reasonable boundaries that prioritize public safety, much like speed limits or crosswalk rules. This ordinance strikes a compassionate balance, fostering community engagement in secure environments. Let's prioritize well-being and approve it.

Annaden

#### **Safety Comes From Design, Not Criminalization**

I'm asking City Council to vote against the proposed Pedestrian Safety Ordinance. I understand the desire to improve safety, but this ordinance puts too much responsibility on pedestrians, especially people who are already more vulnerable, instead of addressing the real issues that make our streets dangerous. Policies that criminalize things like panhandling or restrict where people can walk do not actually improve safety. They shift the burden onto individuals rather than fixing unsafe street design and infrastructure gaps. The City's own study points to high speeds, heavy traffic, and narrow medians as the main risk factors. Those are design problems, not pedestrian behavior problems. If the goal is truly safety, the focus should be on traffic calming, safer crossings, better lighting, wider medians, and

infrastructure that makes streets safer for everyone. Columbia has the chance to take a more effective and humane approach. I urge Council to reject this ordinance and instead invest in proven, people-centered solutions that improve pedestrian safety without penalizing people for existing in public space.

Felecia

Safety is a real issue for pedestrian need to fill and comfortable im any mode of travel for there choice. We need to make sure our life

Gboyet

I encourage passage of this ordinance.

Allen.Shepard

**I oppose this ordinance as written. If pedestrian safety is truly the issue, then we need infrastructure improvements.**

The ordinance is too vague as written. For example, what institutes on “opportunity to cross?” I suspect the audience is written vaguely on purpose, to obscure its true intentions, but that vagueness creates enforcement issues and makes the law difficult for pedestrians to follow.

Kaden

I support the passing of this completely. Long overdue

CharlieN

I oppose the proposed ordinance.

The ordinance is too focused on behavior of those not driving cars, and it appears to target Columbia's unhoused community. There are legitimate concerns about pedestrian safety that can be addressed through street design and working with people driving cars, riding bikes, and walking.

Keya

I oppose this ordinance. Nothing about this decision provides safety for pedestrians or fixes the traffic issues.

Denny

**Based on several years of walking my dog in Columbia I am opposed to this ordinance.**

I often walk my dog along Garth, Blue Ridge, and Providence. I believe the cross walks are often the most unsafe location to cross the street. There are lot of rolling stops, people blocking the crosswalk at the stop sign, and just pulling out in front of me while I'm in the crosswalk. More than once I've been crossing at a roundabout and a driver has gone through the roundabout in clockwise direction which is obviously unexpected. Also, there are still a lot of people using their cell phones while approaching intersections or pulling into the intersection after checking for cars but not pedestrians.

Dan

I suggest the City enforce the ordinance that is already on the books. Show leadership and do the right thing.

ATR

After much contemplation, I support passing this ordinance. It's not perfect, but it will be a step in a positive direction.

**Reply from bmink:** Respectfully disagree as a full-time pedestrian in this community. The flaws of this bill are very valid reasons not to pass it in my view, and we should not pass bills with very obvious flaws in them that will lead to possible confusion or lawsuits. There are many better ways to protect pedestrians.

Clint Shannon

**I oppose this ordinance.**

We all know that its intent is to push the homeless population out of sight and out of mind. If safety was the issue at hand, the ordinance would focus on more relevant solutions, e.g. implementing better pedestrian infrastructure and reducing instances of distracted driving.

Castanea

I completely support this ordinance. I speak for the majority of folks who know that panhandling only perpetuates drug use and street life.

**Reply from bmink:** If you're advocating for a ban on panhandling (which the city has refused to admit this is, despite many people commenting so here as their wish behind this passing), that has been found unconstitutional by courts before and restrictions on time and manner are held to the highest level of scrutiny.

Jacksonhotaling

**We need road diets on overbuilt roadways, not criminalization of existence in public space**

The data from Table 1 of the CBB Study demonstrates that the top four 'intersections with pedestrian involved crashes (2015-2024)' are all high-capacity and high-speed MoDOT-owned roadways. The top two intersections are also highlighted as a specific need for a Vulnerable Road User Safety Project by MoDOT's November 2025 Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment (p.51). College Avenue between Paris and Rollins, along with a section of Clark Lane, are the only two recommended 'VRU Safety Projects' for MoDOT's entire Central District. To address these safety challenges, it would be reasonable for the city to work with MoDOT (the road owner), Mizzou (where the top 3 intersections with pedestrian crashes are located), and the broader public to come together to tackle this issue. It would then be reasonable for this team to work together to implement any of the eight Pedestrian/Bicyclist Proven Safety Countermeasures (defined by the Federal Highway Administration), such as Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements, Medians and Pedestrian Refuge Islands, and Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). I am assuming that the College Ave crashes highlighted above are Mizzou students, not unhoused people, and therefore I question whether the ultimate goal of this ordinance is about safety at all. Unfortunately, this ordinance appears to criminalize pedestrians for widespread and reasonable pedestrian behavior (trying to walk across the street), rather than implementing evidence-based proven safety countermeasures that would make the roadways safer for all road users. The section limiting crossing the street is one area that concerns me. With transit as limited as it is in Columbia, many people are forced to walk long distances to reach everyday destinations. Some people in our city walk several miles to get to work, home, school, the grocery store, or elsewhere. Other cities, like Kansas City's City Council, voted unanimously in 2021 to remove jaywalking and two nuisance bicycle laws as crimes, because, according to the Council, "minor infractions get enforced in biased and arbitrary ways that hassle people of color without doing much to improve public safety" (KCUR). Despite strides made in other areas, Columbia seems to be heading in the opposite direction with this ordinance: punishing people who are already facing challenges. One additional concern I have is this section about crosswalks: "No person shall cross a major corridor roadway at any place except in a crosswalk. Where there is no crosswalk, a person shall cross only where a pedestrian-control signal is located. Where there is no crosswalk or pedestrian-control signal, a person shall cross only at an intersection." It is completely unreasonable to make people face financial penalties for not meeting these criteria—this ordinance will set pedestrians up for failure, and it tells folks who have to walk for transportation that we do not value their time. Columbia has many major roadways that have a half-mile or more between intersections, and a large number of them have no signals. An extreme example is Business Loop between Rangeline and Conley: there is not a single signalized crossing on Business Loop for 1.9 miles, in a location that will get significantly more dangerous for pedestrians once the new I-70 interchange onto Business Loop is opened. Even if you cross legally, according to the ordinance, the "legal" way to cross some of Columbia's intersections is more dangerous than any alternative. Crossing Stadium at Bernadette, the legal way requires you to cross 22 separate driving lanes, a length longer than a football field (350+ feet for a single street crossing). All of this tells me that yes, we do have some major structural issues with pedestrian safety. However, we need to target the issue areas with infrastructure solutions, rather than criminalization of existing outside in public space. MO's 2025 Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment:

[https://www.modot.org/sites/default/files/documents/MoDOT\\_Statewide\\_VRU\\_Safety\\_Assessment\\_P](https://www.modot.org/sites/default/files/documents/MoDOT_Statewide_VRU_Safety_Assessment_P)

DFUA.pdf FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures> KCUR quote about Kansas City removing jaywalking ordinance: <https://www.kcur.org/news/2021-05-06/kansas-city-is-dumping-jaywalking-tickets-because-they-mostly-go-to-men-and-african-americans>

Molly Housh Gordon

**I oppose this ordinance because, regardless of its intent, its outcome will be a criminalization of poverty and homelessness.**

Support pedestrian safety by making vehicle traffic safer, not by blaming pedestrians!

Jrentschler

I support the proposed ordinance 100%. It is a common sense not to allow people in traffic .

Randa Rawlins

This is a safety issue. I support the ordinance. Pedestrians should not be standing in narrow medians for any length of time. Common sens

DC

If you want to help the homeless get off of the streets, then pass this ordinance. The success of the Opportunity Campus depends on it!

**Reply by bmink:** That's certainly a theory some believe, but Voluntary Action Center (group running the Opportunity Campus) has said no such thing or given any input about this ordinance. Nor have any of the other groups providing services there.

TF

I support the ordinance. The comments that say that you're "criminalizing" the homeless are ridiculous. It's about safe streets.

Trtryfrst

I strongly support the ordinance the current situation puts not only the pedestrian but the driver at risk.

JS

This ordinance is LONG overdue, and I am in complete support of the ordinance and its implementation

OG

**As a daily downtown pedestrian and dog mom, I vehemently oppose this ordinance.**

I walk my elderly dog in the downtown area nearly daily. I walk to and from work daily — sometimes multiple times a day around and through several of the most dangerous intersections listed in the study. This ordinance says it promotes “pedestrian safety” but a lot of the listed intersections don’t have medians. It seems like some INFRASTRUCTURE updates would be in order rather than an ordinance that is very clearly being pushed to criminalize pedestrians and discriminate against homelessness. Columbia seriously needs to figure out ways to better support our homeless population as an aside. I’ve been extremely disappointed with the ways homeless people are spoken about and dismissed as being less than human beings. I walk to work at 4:30 AM multiple times a week, often passing by homeless people and never feel unsafe. Often, I’m greeted with a, “good morning!” or something of that nature. Please spend money and energy to evidence- based strategies for improving pedestrian safety rather than spinning this study as a way to “fix” the problem.

JIS

**Study suggests solution, ordinance not based on them**

The study pinpoints the problem intersections in Columbia. Not surprisingly they are in areas of high pedestrian traffic and high car traffic—mainly the university and downtown. Two other intersections are listed. The commissioned study made it clear that the most dangerous intersections have: 1) speeds of 35 mph or higher on one intersecting street, 2) traffic of 15,000 or more on one intersecting street or 3) medians of less than 6 feet width (p.49). The city can address each of these issues without an ordinance. In addition, the city does not need an ordinance to implement the seven suggestions to safeguard both pedestrians and drivers (Pp. 18-19 and 26-27). Based on the study the problem appears to be in the design of infrastructure and speed limits. Criminalizing behavior does not address these two issues.

LizR liznrolfes

This ordinance does not properly address the issues.

The issues would be better addressed with improved infrastructure, not by criminalizing behavior. We need more sidewalks, more crosswalks, wider medians, etc. We don't need more opportunities to give people citations. Pedestrians are more vulnerable than motorists, and in my opinion they should be given preference. This ordinance would also disproportionately and unfairly affect homeless people. Homelessness is a hot topic in Columbia right now; the best way to support this community would be to provide better resources and more affordable housing, not to criminalize their existence.

Ma222

**I support this ordinance and hope it passes.**

I am in support of this ordinance.

Adam Thorp

**The proposed legislation fails to address either pedestrian safety (the stated goal) or the problems that contribute to homelessness.**

Supporters of this legislation seem split between saying it is meant to prevent panhandling and "address" homelessness and indignation that anybody could believe its about anything other than pedestrian safety. They'll need to sort this messaging problem out among themselves. It solves neither problem. People are not homeless because they enjoy panhandling. Banning people from standing on medians will not cause people to rent housing they cannot afford. The theory that escalating police attention on homeless people will chase them out of Columbia or result in their incarceration is maybe a little more credible -- but hardly a strategy worthy of a compassionate community, which should be concerned about addressing the reality of extreme poverty, not pushing it out of our line of sight. On the pedestrian safety side I have seen no indication that the behavior banned by this legislation is an at all significant contributor to pedestrians being hit by cars in Columbia. I frequently get around Columbia by walking. The city could certainly do more to improve the situation for pedestrians, but this ordinance would be so far down the list of reasonable ideas to do so that calling this a pedestrian safety ordinance strikes me as a little absurd.

Bfolk

The ordinance is ambiguous and gives too much discretion to automobiles. We need to protect those that walk and bicycle!

Glinda2317

**If this ordinance were really about improving pedestrian safety it would be about infrastructure investment. This is to punish panhandling.**

Available data, including in the \$96,000 CBB Study Columbia commissioned, does not list people standing on medians as the cause of pedestrian crashes. This ordinance hits vulnerable people first. People who walk and ride transit are often low-income, disabled, or unable to drive. Our unhoused neighbors and people asking for help are already at risk. A policy that targets people in public space does not make pedestrians safer. When policies target "behavior" in public space, the people most likely to feel the impact are those with the fewest resources. Pedestrians, especially pedestrians of color, should not have to fear being cited or moved along when they are just trying to get where they need to go. Panhandling is protected speech, and targeting people who ask for help does not address the real

safety issues on our streets. Regulating where people can stand or hold signs does not improve safety for pedestrians. If Columbia wants to reduce poverty, we need services and housing not criminalization. Real solutions for pedestrian safety are infrastructure solutions: Build and repair sidewalks Add crosswalks to high traffic corridors Slow traffic with design

Kindness 4 All

**As someone who walks a great deal, I am against this ordinance! It is about harassing homeless individuals and not about safety!**

As someone who often walks to appointments and the store often in Columbia, I have experienced the struggle to cross roads safely. Columbia roadways need wider margins and better crosswalks! However, this ordinance is designed to make it look like the city government cares about safety while harassing homeless individuals!

Joseph

**The discussion here seems to focus on the politically-charged issues of homelessness and food insecurity.**

The first is irrelevant since nobody lives on the islands. Food is often available at shelters but the island people often tell reporters they don't like being at the shelters, which is not our problem. Food is available there. The islands were not designed for pedestrian occupancy, except for brief waits for traffic lights to change. People wander into lanes of traffic, consume alcohol on the islands and use pets as sympathy props for their panhandling. Are drivers responsible for injuries to panhandlers if they step or fall in front of moving cars? This is a dangerous safety risk for both panhandlers and drivers and should be discontinued. I support the ordinance.

Joyce R.

**Let me determine my own way of walking!**

Hello, I am an inveterate walker and resident of Columbia for over ten years. I wanted to "put my two cents in" about the whole issue of using medians in the city. I must say that I do not trust the attention (or lack thereof) of the drivers in Columbia and surrounding towns (Jefferson City in particular). Many is the time when drivers are "surprised" to see me in the crosswalk, often with apologetic looks (or sometimes not). I am especially concerned on Stadium Blvd, with "right turners" not wanting to accommodate the walkers just trying to get across the street. I do admit, that I oftentimes use the median between Broadway and Ash Streets because it is so dangerous to cross at the corner.

Additionally, there are only three crosswalks at the intersection of Broadway and Old 63. Since I live on Old 63 North, it is most convenient for me to go across Broadway by Scooter's, the one place with no crosswalk! I end up using that median "in stages" to get across the street. Again, to be perfectly honest, I always walk "defensively", always making eye contact with drivers to make sure I am seen. The number of "distracted drivers" is staggering, and I will not put my life in their hands! I would really hate to think

that I would be "hassled" (and possibly ticketed) for just trying to find the safest route across a street for myself. I trust my own judgment, not necessarily less "aware" drivers. For these reasons, I am vehemently against the median ban. Please pass my letter along to the "proper eyes and minds" so that we can again restore some "sanity" to this issue! Thanks so much, Very Concerned Walker Joyce R.

Nanasandmilk

**Pedestrian Rights to the City!**

The proposed ordinance places the burden of "safety" on pedestrians and those who get around using non-motorized vehicles. The study clearly demonstrates that the primary concerns relate to the movement of cars and those behind the wheel: speed, distracted driving, and limited visibility (SUVs and trucks continue to get unreasonably larger). What are we doing to address this major threat on our roads? It outlines effective roadway designs, which, once again, pedestrians have absolutely no control over. How many of Columbia's intersections and roads actually follow these principles, and who is responsible for creating systems that promote safety --- not pedestrians, but planners and policy makers! It is clear that the root cause of accidents and unsafe conditions is not pedestrians themselves, but the fact that Columbia severely lacks safe road design and prioritizes the "efficient" movement of vehicles. Our policies should support safety through infrastructure improvements, investments in transit to reduce vehicle traffic, safer bike lanes, and connected sidewalks. Instead, the proposed ordinance relies solely on individual actions, especially among the most vulnerable road users (pedestrians, transit users, and those without personal vehicles). Do not pass this ordinance!

TizzyTiger

**This proposed ordinance does not adequately address the lack of intentional, high-quality planning for pedestrian life in our city.**

This proposed ordinance does not adequately address the lack of intentional, high-quality planning for pedestrian life in our city. Rather than prioritizing safe, accessible walkways, crossings, and public spaces, it appears to place additional penalties on individuals. Effective pedestrian safety should begin with mandates for our local government to design and maintain infrastructure that allows people to move, gather, and exist safely before relying on enforcement or punishment.

LauraWacker

**This is not an ordinance I would favor. There are many reasons people may be in the median or street - far beyond the exceptions listed.**

We do not need the ordinance. It will not make me feel safer whether I am a pedestrian or in a vehicle. Are we going to arrest everybody crossing the street for football games? If not, is this law specifically targeted a certain population?

Kperry12000

**I support the ordinance and safe streets!**

Let's not wait until something terrible happens.

AWaters

**Passing this ordinance is the right thing to do**

Medians were not designed as a place for pedestrians to interact with motorists. It's not safe for either.

**Reply by Wilmah**

Please pass the ordinance to protect both the pedestrians and the drivers. I always feel so stressed when I approach a median with people camping there no matter what they are there for. Horrible unsafe.

Tigerfan

I support the ordinance. This is just one piece in a greater effort to support pedestrian and driver safety.

Tootie Burns

I support the ordinance. It supports safe practices for drivers and pedestrians.

Voting citizen

I support the ordinance. It will be safer for drivers and pedestrians while giving clarity to law enforcement. Please pass!

Pat Kelley

**The "Pedestrian-Safety Ordinance" doesn't appear to have anything to do with pedestrian safety.**

Few people have walked through Columbia as much as I have. I would have suggested more crosswalks and traffic medians, slower traffic, trees and sidewalks on both sides of major streets.

ewobbel

**I actually read the ordinance. Here is the Play-by-Play.**

Pedestrians are Vulnerable Road Users who make up a disproportionately large percentage of traffic deaths and serious injuries, with most of them in Columbia occurring on MoDOT roads. I do believe that occupying narrow medians on busy roads can be a serious safety issue, especially after dark. In addition, some pedestrians are less likely to use a crosswalk, if the median is occupied. This was observed for some Hickman High School students during the City's October 2025 Road Safety Audit of Business Loop 70.

However, I oppose the ordinance - as presented during the City Council Meeting on November 15, 2025, because this ordinance appears to put all responsibility for safety on the pedestrians and none on drivers or towards improved infrastructure. In addition, the wording of the ordinance needs important clarifications or changes to avoid unintended consequences.

Detailed Review of Section 14-587:

1. Paragraph (a) (1) includes a caveat that the purpose of this paragraph applies to roads "that are open, improved, and in actual use for vehicular travel". It appears this phrase should be moved to the lead sentence of this Paragraph (behind "major corridor intersections") to apply throughout. This change would exempt roads that may be closed for events from the ordinance and put the stated purpose in line with the exception listed under (e)(6) regarding special events.

2. Paragraph (c) allows the designation and listing of "major corridor roadways", but no mechanism for delisting. Delisting may become appropriate with future infrastructure changes.

3. Paragraph (d) (1) requires crossing to take place only at crosswalks or intersections.

3.a. There are numerous places where intersections are far apart and walking to an intersection and back would significantly lengthen the trip. This would be especially hazardous where there are no sidewalks on both sides of the roadway.

3.b. An intersection may not be the safest place to cross. A cyclist got killed within days of the Loop 70 Road Safety Audit while crossing a major roadway at an intersection in full compliance with this ordinance. Like at many of our major roadway intersections there was no crosswalk. If he had had a safe way to cross mid-block, perhaps he would still be alive. However, neither road, the one he was traveling along, nor the one he was crossing, had a sidewalk and there was no safe alternative to cross nearby.

4. Paragraph (d) (2) relates to the requirement to leave a median after two consecutive opportunities unless the person's mobility is restricted. This Paragraph leaves way too much to interpretation. May I stay in a median indefinitely if I bring a cane or if I am under the influence? Is my mobility impaired if I am traveling with a child? or I can't hear or see well? What is an "opportunity"? Who is the judge?

5. Paragraph (d) (3) should strike "vehicular or medical". There are many types of emergencies and this shouldn't be narrowed down.

6. Paragraph (d) (4) disallows being on a major roadway if not in a vehicle. This appears to prohibit cycling in a designated bike lane and walking on the shoulder in places where there is no sidewalk. This

Paragraph is unacceptable as people who walk or cycle on major roadways usually do so only because there is no reasonable alternative for them.

7.Paragraph (d) (6) lists some exceptions to the prohibition of "distribution conduct".

7.a.Paragraph b. appears to allow stopping in the driving lane of a "major roadway" to exchange items with a person on the sidewalk. This scenario would place a stopped vehicle into the driving lane with the driver leaning over the passenger seat to interact with the pedestrian, rather than paying attention to traffic which may turn into the road or change into the right lane during this interaction.

7.b.This Paragraph would encourage people who are seeking to participate in "distribution conduct" to dwell on the sidewalk rather than the median. This could cause other pedestrians to be uncomfortable using this sidewalk and crossing the road to the other side in an unsafe location, similarly to what is happening now at intersections with medians.

8.Paragraph (d) (7) exempts "invited" passengers. Even those of us fortunate enough to have lived in places with extensive public transportation have never been "invited" to ride a bus or cab. The word "invited" should be deleted. The paragraph also needs to be reworded to cover passengers of different types of transportation services.

9.Finally, the ordinance specifies no penalties or fines.

9.a.Do jaywalking tickets apply? What is the penalty for those unable to pay? Could an infraction of this ordinance lead to a warrant, additional fines, court costs and even jail time?

9.b.This ordinance is directed at pedestrians, often residents in the lowest income bracket. I do not believe that pedestrian safety will be increased by adopting an ordinance that is either unenforceable or imposes escalating legal penalties on those whose safety we are seeking to protect.

Proposed Solutions: In order to address the above concerns, I would like the City to consider the following solutions:

1.Recognizing the fact that meaningful improvements take time, we are in dire need of infrastructure improvements.

1.a.This ordinance appears to be based on the premise that narrow medians are not safe. In this case, major roadways shouldn't have medians that are less than 6 feet wide.

1.b.We need to provide sidewalks with buffers to traffic along both sides of all major roadways.

1.c.Every leg of every major roadway intersection needs to have at least a painted crosswalk, whether it would connect to a sidewalk or not. This is the fastest and lowest cost improvement and could have helped to prevent the needless death of the cyclist crossing a major roadway at an intersection in October.

2.There appears to be a lack of education and enforcement of the rules of the road. Speeding and not stopping for pedestrians in crosswalks are frequent offenses that put all road users at risk. It appears many drivers are not aware that the law gives users of crosswalks the right-of-way.

2.a.I would like to see extensive education campaigns and increased enforcement that is targeted towards all road users rather than focusing on the most vulnerable and most likely the poorest residents, those without cars.

3.If the City's goal is to prevent soliciting from medians, then the ordinance should be rewritten in a way that it focuses on that issue without causing the many unrelated and unintended consequences that the current ordinance does.

3.a.The biggest danger with "distribution conduct" stems from the vehicle, not the vulnerable road user. I suggest specifying penalties in the ordinance that will be imposed on a driver who stops in the travel lane of a road to engage in "distribution conduct" rather than the pedestrian. There are many other, more meaningful and more targeted ways to donate.

3.b.Nearly all prohibitions of the current ordinance do not further this goal and should be eliminated.

I appreciate your consideration of our comments and urge you to draft major revisions to focus on the stated intent to protect pedestrians.

Win Grace

**100% Against This Ordinance**

This is clearly another attempt to disappear and punish our unhoused population who are being targeted by many as the source of crime. Instead of helping to solve the increasing problem with homelessness, there are those who want it out of sight. Unconscionable.

Rachel S

**I do not support this ordinance. City staff did not even know how many deaths occurred from people in medians. It doesn't solve a problem.**

This ordinance is a red herring to ostracize our unhoused population and also will limit free speech for our community members that protest in our streets. we have may local studies that show real solutions to infrastructure problems that will protect pedestrians far more than criminalizing them and adding more work to our police to enforce these new regulations.

sebkqrull

**Firmly OPPOSED**

This ordinance is a poorly planned attempt to punish our homeless population under the guise of public safety. The creators of this ordinance cannot show any genuine evidence of something like this being needed. They cannot even say how many pedestrian deaths have occurred while standing on or in a median, which should be the focal point of this entire ordinance. It is poorly written and depends on police using "common sense" and personal discretion to enforce. It is far too vague and will impact only

the most vulnerable in our community. It does nothing to address dangerous driving practices or unsafe road conditions/infrastructure and places the responsibility solely on pedestrians. It is not an issue of safety, as there are no actual safety measures or improvements in the ordinance. I stand firmly opposed to this ordinance and urge city council not to be fooled by its illusion of caring about our city.

NPP

I do not support this ordinance. There is no evidence that there is any reason to have this ordinance. Enforcement will be arbitrary.

Bill D.

If the city had the data showing the number of pedestrians injured and /or killed AND they supported the ordinance it would've been in CBB

ava

I do not support this ordinance. It fails to truly address the issues at hand. Columbia can do better.

Fie

This ordinance fails to truly address the problems it claims to tackle, instead it increases difficulties faced by the unhoused.

Adrienne Luther Johnson

**Ordinance is misguided and ableist. It dismisses infrastructure issues and masquerades as advocacy. Overlooks disabled experiences. Vote no**

This ordinance is frustrating because it overlooks the experiences of actual pedestrians navigating our infrastructure. Many people rely on the median to help them make their way across busy streets. For Columbia to continue to grow into itself, we have a responsibility to invest in our pedestrian structures so we can be a walkable, safe town. By limiting access to the median, we make it harder for people crossing the street. There are several issues in this ordinance that don't address concerns for pedestrianism. I suggest voting no and instead investigating ways to alleviate homelessness issues that are not redirecting focus from pedestrian advocacy and accessibility work.

VBK

As a pedestrian and bicyclist, I am impacted by unsafe drivers . This ordinance does not address safety issues. Vote no on the ordinance.

Beth H

**Opposed! As a pedestrian, this doesn't address my safety. Fix current sidewalks, build more, and add crosswalks .**

I feel unsafe because i have to walk in the road when the sidewalk ends or i have to dash across the busy street where there isn't a crosswalk or where i have to tiptoe around the broken concrete trip hazards and overgrown sidewalks.

I just walked 1 and a half miles earlier today to the health department to get a vaccine. A lot of the sidewalks are all broken up and/or grown over with grass. At one point it the sidewalk abruptly ended mid-block and i had to run across the street with no crosswalk. I commonly have to adjust which path i take to get where I'm going so i don't have to walk in the street.

And getting to and from bus stops safely is often a real problem.

It seems like this "safety" ordinance isn't helping Columbia pedestrians - its' targeting poor people who need help because they can't afford to live here.

We need decent sidewalks for everyone, affordable housing for the poor - that will get them off the streets - and keep us from having to walk in the street because there aren't sidewalks.

Vote no on the ordinance. it totally misses the mark.

Tylerdavis

**I do not support this ordinance, as I believe it seeks to further displace our unhoused neighbors.**

The intent seems not to be public safety. It seems that the intent is to push our unhoused neighbors from public view. There are many other ways that the city can work to improve traffic/pedestrian safety. Not to mention the police have enough to do. The jail is overwhelmed, and this will only perpetuate the criminalization of homelessness. It is not a helpful community solution. This will hurt people. Please do not pass this, city council.

Sreneecarter58

**This ordinance is about panhandling. You have no evidence collected that supports the need. Support walkable neighborhoods instead.**

Start using Local Motion to help you design our community to better support pedestrians and bikers. I vote no on the ordinance.

Kristen F

Opposed! My daughter walks to school daily while motorists just zoom right thru; Police that to keep pedestrians safe. Not panhandlers

Arch K

**Opposed. I live in downtown Columbia, and I know policing medians more aggressively will not improve pedestrian safety.**

We have so many infrastructure failings that need addressed to improve pedestrian and cyclists safety. This ordinance targets homeless people which need our help not political targeting or villainization.

Alice carter

**As a lifetime resident of Columbia and current Mizzou student who has lived in a sorority house, I'm vehemently opposed to this "resolution"**

As many others have pointed out, we have many infrastructure failings that must be addressed in order to improve pedestrian/cyclists safety, and protect students. This ordinance does neither. It specifically targets unhoused people, and criminalizes students as well as all other community members who can't afford daily access to cars.

RitaYen

Opposed. Use our tax dollars to make our city more walkable and improve infrastructure.

Dr.T

Opposed. This resolution is more about targeting our unhoused neighbors than safety. Invest in solutions that address the root causes.

Textgrrl

Opposed. This ordinance is poorly-written in such a way that it will be difficult to enforce, and enforced against houseless folks.

YesforCommonSense

**Passing a legally sound ordinance is the prudent course of action. Opposition is solely rooted in whataboutism and hyperbolic rhetoric.**

There are several very disingenuous and misguided “concerns” being voiced by those who oppose an ordinance. Two of those being:

- (1) “The data doesn’t show we have a problem, so there is no need to do anything.”
- (2) “We could get sued, so we shouldn’t do it.”

So let’s address both of these faux concerns and put them to bed:

(1) This is a preventative safety measure; therefore, the argumentum ad ignorantiam (argument from ignorance) is invalid. The fallacy here is: “There is no evidence that X will happen (because it hasn’t happened before); therefore, X will not happen.” The absence of past occurrences is treated as proof that a future occurrence is impossible or negligible. Absence of evidence ≠ evidence of absence.

Examples of similar fallacy-based arguments would be:

- “This building has never caught fire, so we don’t need sprinklers.”
- “I’ve never been in a serious accident, so seatbelt laws are pointless.”
- “We’ve never been hacked, so we don’t need to invest in cybersecurity.”
- “That bridge hasn’t collapsed yet, so there’s no need to inspect or reinforce it.”

Safety policy isn’t based on what has happened—it’s based on what could happen. Preparedness exists precisely because catastrophic events are rare, not because they’re common. The absence of past harm is not proof of future safety.

(2) This is another disingenuous and manipulative objection. The possibility of being sued exists for almost any ordinance. If we avoid acting every time litigation is possible, we effectively give veto power to anyone willing to threaten a lawsuit. The risk of litigation alone is not a reason not to act—what matters is whether the ordinance is lawful and defensible, which the council and city attorney are working hard to ensure. This ordinance mirrors the pedestrian safety ordinance from Springfield, which has stood unchallenged for almost a decade. There is ample precedent for ordinances that can withstand constitutional challenges.

I ask that council members prioritize common sense and responsibility over emotion and intellectually dishonest dramatization as you work through this process to implement a needed preventative safety policy.

Dr. Dubs

**Opposed! Please use this time, energy, and money on infrastructure that would actually make folks who walk, bike, and use transit safer.**

This feels like a very thinly veiled attempt to put the unhoused out of sight and thus, out of mind. If the goal is to see less unhoused folks, we could always just... house them? If the goal is pedestrian safety, we could increase transit access, protected paths, create traffic bottlenecks and intentionally slowing architecture, or even just put in more sidewalks and crossings in high traffic areas.

The title of this proposal is a misnomer and it's hard not to read it uncharitably. But, to engage with it critically, medians are quite literally meant to be a refuge. If a refuge for pedestrians is unsafe to stand on, what's the point? Data actually support that raised medians reduce traffic fatalities and do act as refuges. So if they're safe... what's the issue? Is it potentially less about the safety of the user than who the user is, and whether that user deserves to be safe and seen?

Please do not approve this.

Blkwmn1

I oppose this discriminatory policy. It is only being done because working class and rich White folks don't want to look at the poor people.

RTJ

I oppose this ordinance which is an attack on homeless folks. The 90k for the study=a living wage for every Columbia City Worker!

Cinmuck

This ordinance is obviously a thinly veiled attempt to make panhandling illegal. Focus attention on solutions, not making things harder.

If it were really about pedestrian safety, it would address infrastructure changes, such as speed calming tables and lower speed limits. It's about visible poverty being unpleasant to many people. Panhandling is an important source of income for the unhoused. Let's not make that more difficult for them!

low

Opposed. Please invest in making pedestrians and bicyclists safer, not in criminalizing them and unhoused neighbors.

KDY

**Opposed. I frequently walk from my office on Locust Street to Schnucks and Crunch as well as jog in the vicinity. I'm nearly hit monthly.**

Cars turning onto Providence from Locust or from the parking lot do not yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. I am always in the crosswalk, following the directions of the walk signals. Instead of an ordinance that is more about panhandling than pedestrian safety invest in things that actually protect pedestrians: signage reminding drivers turning at intersections to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks; connect crosswalks; repairs sidewalks; trim hedges that overhang sidewalks; start pulling people over that law enforcement witnesses not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks. (Stewart Rd between Garth and Providence is just one example of issues with sidewalks.) Thank you for taking public input.

Paradise\_In\_Misery

**Ted Farnen is correct - pass the ordinance please.**

[https://www.columbiamissourian.com/opinion/guest\\_commentaries/passage-of-safety-ordinance-is-best-bet-for-pedestrians-motorists-and-liberals/article\\_e0dd44e1-dc8c-4ec2-8660-7a631e91da4b.html](https://www.columbiamissourian.com/opinion/guest_commentaries/passage-of-safety-ordinance-is-best-bet-for-pedestrians-motorists-and-liberals/article_e0dd44e1-dc8c-4ec2-8660-7a631e91da4b.html)

There is no safe reason for anyone to occupy busy street medians for extended periods of time. Many other commenters have stated a need for increased sidewalk safety which I also agree with. It is concerning to see opposition to this ordinance; it is reckless to enable our residents to continue to occupy busy street medians.

jparshall

Opposed. The proposed ordinance does not address our most pressing safety needs, and I do not believe that it can be effectively enforced.

jcmeye128

In favor. This ordinance must be passed. I have passed by people who were passed out on a median and were just inches from being killed.

This is not a 1st amendment issue. People can still protest at their favorite intersection, highly visible 5-10 yards over on the sidewalk.

YesforCommonSense

**The ordinance would not “criminalize” anyone by housing status. That is hyperbolic rhetoric and BS.**

I want to respectfully address the talking point that the proposed median ordinance would “criminalize” homelessness. I believe that characterization is both inaccurate and unhelpful to a productive discussion. This ordinance does not criminalize a person’s housing status. It regulates specific activities in specific and inherently dangerous locations - traffic medians - primarily for public safety reasons. Communities routinely regulate where activities can occur without criminalizing the individuals involved, and this is no different.

More importantly, this ordinance should be viewed in the broader context of the city’s investments in homelessness response. At the same time we are considering limits on median activities, we are opening the Opportunity Campus with comprehensive wraparound services designed to move people toward stability and permanent housing. That matters. Policies that reduce reliance on street-based survival strategies are most effective when meaningful alternatives exist - and in this case, they do.

While often motivated by compassion, informal exchanges at intersections can unintentionally make it easier for individuals to remain disconnected from coordinated services. Redirecting those interactions away from medians and toward established support systems is not punitive; it is a shift toward solutions that are safer, more dignified, and more likely to result in long-term outcomes.

We can hold two values at the same time: concern for the safety of everyone using our streets, and compassion for those experiencing homelessness. This ordinance reflects an effort to balance both, not to criminalize poverty, but to encourage engagement with the services our community has committed significant resources to providing.

I urge the council to consider this ordinance as part of a comprehensive approach - one that prioritizes safety, reduces harm, and supports pathways out of homelessness rather than maintaining the status quo.

cgk

**Opposed, not targeting the right safety issues**

Please address the behavior of drivers with traffic calming measures and better visibility rather than targeting pedestrians in the name of their own safety. People can make their own choices when on foot with no physical harm to others. It's cars and trucks that are deadly.

Cher

In favor. The people in the median are a danger to themselves and motorists.

Emm

**Support! This needs to be passed!!**

I have been driving in this town for over a decade and in that time it has decreased significantly!

The amount of people that stand in medians is absurd! It's a distraction to drivers! I have seen people passed out. Head hanging over the curb on to the road. I have seen body parts that nobody should see just hanging out in the open.

I know somebody that had a man jump out in front of her vehicle and put his body on her hood to scare her! It worked she was terrified to the point she had to find a safe place to pull off and cry!! Tell me that if that man wasnt allowed to be on the median would that have happened to her!?

Don't be blinded by how it "hurts the unhoused" but how it helps not only the drivers be better aware of their surroundings to ensure the safety of The Pedestrian that is walking from point A to point B without having to weave though the cars because they don't feel safe walking pass someone that is panhandling in the median crosswalk that was meant to be used by said Pedestrian!!!

KRZYHRS

I am opposed to this ordinance.

Amyy

This targets behaviors the homeless rely on to survive. It seems less about safety and more about pushing the unhoused out of visible spaces

Kate

**I oppose this ordinance**

Panhandling is just asking for help. The proposed ordinance criminalizes asking for help and giving help. I've lived in Columbia for two years. Whether downtown or in a suburban street, people in public asking for help from strangers is NOT a safety problem. Also, the proposed ordinance would make our city more hostile to pedestrians.

Beckym622

**I oppose this ordinance. Does not address most pertinent pedestrian safety issues**

This ordinance is not data driven. Per the CBB study, most pedestrian deaths and injuries are centered to areas adjacent to the university, not medians. This is a misuse of funds and does nothing to protect pedestrians.

jeffk

**I oppose the proposed pedestrian ordinance because the supporting study does not justify the broad measures being proposed.**

The data show that pedestrian-involved crashes are highly concentrated near the University of Missouri and Hickman High School and disproportionately involve college- and high-school-aged pedestrians. This pattern suggests the need for targeted, location-specific safety interventions, not a citywide ordinance that fails to address where and why these incidents actually occur. If we enact the ordinance, it is not likely to affect the number of accidents involving pedestrians, while limiting our freedoms.

If there are concerns about standing on medians for panhandling, that is a separate matter, and I would prefer to see a separate proposal that spells out the details of those problems and the proposed solution.

NeonDeone

**I support this ordinance.**

As long-time residents and motorists in Columbia, we have on many occasions encountered situations where this ordinance, if implemented, would improve safety and protect pedestrians, animals, and, yes, motorists.

Our office and residence are located in the Fifth Ward, within a mile or so of eight such intersections. From personal experience, we have seen animals, some limping, with their owners on their way to stand in the tiny median area. It makes us fear for all involved, knowing the trauma that anyone would feel should something happen at one of these exchanges. Several times, near collisions have occurred right in front of us due to cars honking and stopping without warning. This is not an uncommon occurrence. Also, traffic flow is not operating correctly when cars line up in the furthest lane from the median to avoid an encounter with someone encamped on the median. This is a SAFETY ISSUE, not a FREEDOM OF SPEECH issue. Those of you who know Kas and me know that we are the type of people who want solutions, and this is a way to that end.

pumpkinshade

I oppose the proposed ordinance. Pedestrians aren't the problem - it's the cars.

gilping

**I oppose this ordinance**

It seems more designed to punish unhoused people than to promote pedestrian safety.

jparsh

**I opposed the proposed ordinance. It does not prioritize pedestrian safety.**

This ordinance does not protect pedestrians. Instead, it targets folks unfairly. Additionally, if the city really wants to prioritize pedestrian safety, there are much more impactful changes that could be made.

Vic

**I oppose the proposed ordinance.**

If you really want to protect pedestrians, invest in pedestrian pathways. This ordinance isn't actually helpful to those citizens without access to motorized transportation.

E. Jane

**Proactive community protection. This is a preventative measure—not punitive—designed to keep Columbia residents safe before tragedy occurs.**

I support.

amanda61502

**I strongly support this ordinance protecting both drivers and pedestrians!**

I support the proposed ordinance because safer and more clearly defined pedestrian zones benefit everyone, drivers and pedestrians alike. This change will help reduce confusion and prevent accidents in our highest-traffic areas. Clear rules, applied consistently, create safer streets and stronger neighborhoods.

AF

**I strongly oppose this measure that distracts from real solutions.**

Cars and bad road design is the problem here. Not unhoused people and pedestrians. This measure only serves to harm innocent people.

sodarling

**Public Safety Over Median Loitering: Prioritize Protecting Thousands of Drivers and Pedestrians Across Columbia**

As a Columbia resident who drives across our city multiple times each day for work, school, and errands, I have had countless firsthand encounters with unsafe conditions caused by individuals loitering or

panhandling in active roadways and on narrow medians. I am writing to express my support for Council Bill B265-25, the proposed “Pedestrian Safety” ordinance.

This is not about one part of town or any specific population—it is about protecting all residents and visitors who use our roads daily. Each day, I see people weaving through moving traffic, standing on extremely narrow medians with signs or pets, and stepping into intersections to approach vehicles. As a driver, I’ve had several close calls, including one near TGI Friday’s where an individual routinely walked between stopped cars. Tragically, that same person was later struck and killed on Keene Street in a similar incident—something many of us who regularly drive that corridor feared would eventually happen.

Drivers are operating multi-ton vehicles in areas designed for traffic flow, not pedestrian congregation. When people remain in these high-traffic zones, both they and drivers are put at risk—and when tragedy occurs, it is often the motorist who bears the emotional, legal, and financial consequences. This ordinance provides necessary clarity and safeguards before another preventable death takes place.

It’s also important to distinguish between pedestrian travel and loitering.

Pedestrian travel means walking with purpose—using sidewalks, marked crosswalks, and pedestrian facilities to move between destinations. Loitering means remaining stationary on medians or in traffic lanes, often interacting with vehicles. These are two entirely different behaviors with significantly different risk profiles.

While advocacy groups have expressed concerns about how this ordinance may affect a small number of individuals who panhandle, it is important to recognize the scale of impact. This vote prioritizes the safety of tens of thousands of Columbia residents and visitors who commute across our city daily—far outweighing the fewer than 100 individuals who panhandle on medians at any given time. Public safety policy should reflect the broader public interest, especially in situations where life and liability are involved.

The City’s own commissioned study already confirmed that narrow medians and high-volume roadways pose elevated danger for pedestrian presence. Similar ordinances in Kansas City, Tulsa, Little Rock, and Oklahoma City have reduced pedestrian injuries and accidents, and those cities paired their legislation with outreach programs connecting individuals to shelter, mental-health support, and job placement resources. This demonstrates that compassion and safety are not mutually exclusive.

National safety research also supports the proposed ordinance. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends that pedestrian refuge areas be at least six feet wide—anything less fails to provide adequate safety or reaction space. The AAA Foundation and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) consistently identify mid-block and median-area pedestrian presence as high-risk scenarios, particularly in multi-lane arterial corridors, where driver visibility and reaction times are compromised. In simple terms: these environments were not engineered for lingering pedestrian use, and the data shows it. Columbia’s proposal aligns directly with these national standards and evidence-based practices.

For all these reasons, I urge the Council to move forward with adopting Council Bill B265-25 rather than tabling or delaying action. This ordinance represents a thoughtful, necessary, and evidence-supported

measure to protect all who use our roads—motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians alike. The goal is not to punish, but to prevent tragedy and promote safety for the entire community.

wright.matt.a

**Not about pedestrian safety!**

This is not a pedestrian safety ordinance - it is solely designed to criminalize panhandling, homelessness, and potentially peaceful demonstration. The study that the city commissioned, and is cited as part of this ordinance, doesn't even support the proposed ordinance. That study focused on actual issues related to pedestrian safety - particular locations where vehicle/pedestrian crashes have happened, and engineering controls (better sidewalks, crossings, curb cuts, etc.) to actually make pedestrians safer from distracted drivers. If you want to pass an ACTUAL pedestrian safety ordinance (which we should, or at least enforce what's on the books already) then council should implement what the study we paid for actually says. Otherwise, just call it what it is - a panhandling ordinance - and implement it without any backing of data. But don't hide behind an irrelevant study just to do what you want to do anyway. That's honestly embarrassing.

I support efforts to make Columbia's streets safer for everyone who walks, bikes, rolls, and drives, which is why I support Complete Streets policies, Vision Zero work, and other great efforts already underway by the city - and NOT this inhumane "policy" in disguise. Do better.

GB

**This safety ordinance is not the boogeyman they want you to believe it is.**

"If the progressive majority on the Columbia City Council can't do something as simple as telling citizens that they shouldn't dangerously assemble on narrow street medians, then the stereotype of ineffective liberal governance will be justified." Ted Farnen, liberal commentator.

CW

I strongly support this ordinance. Safety on the streets of Columbia is of utmost importance.

KRH

I support the proposed ordinance. We should continue to look for other support and safety solutions, but this is a needed start.

COMOres

The ordinance doesn't address all potential users inc. bicyclists. This creates conflicts w/ current use, published guidance & rec. policy

jc

**There has been no evidence presented that this ordinance will in fact make anyone 'safer' or that pedestrians in the median endanger drivers**

Criminalization of the homeless will not make them disappear. Real solutions don't target vulnerable populations to protect the feelings of those offended by the visibility of their poverty.

DF

**I support the proposed ordinance.**

I support the proposed ordinance because it is a clear and necessary safety measure. Last year I witnessed a person get pinned by a vehicle at the Stadium/Broadway intersection, and it underscored how dangerous these areas are for both pedestrians and drivers. I am sure it traumatized the pedestrian, his dog who immediately took off down Stadium Blvd, and the driver. It makes me anxious everytime I pull up to an occupied median now. Medians are not designed for people to occupy, and allowing it puts lives at risk. This ordinance is about preventing serious injuries and deaths before they happen. It does not take away anyone's right to protest, ask for money, or cross the street.

TJ

**We shouldn't waste city resources cracking down on panhandling.**

Panhandling alone is protected by the First Amendment and poses no risk to pedestrian safety. We shouldn't force police officers into needless confrontation with our vulnerable neighbors who are already struggling so much.

**Reply from Anonymous:** Then we should tell them to go downtown and panhandle on the sidewalks. Or maybe in front of your house.

SRNdive

**Transportation corridors are meant for movement**

The point of our roadways, crosswalks, bicycle lanes and medians is for the transportation of people and goods. The mode of transportation varies, but the goal is still to move from one location to another. When a vehicle or pedestrian becomes stationary, risks increase for them as well as all others attempting to utilize that transportation corridor.

I am becoming more and more concerned about my ability to safely navigate through intersections that are being used in ways other than for transportation. People sitting on a median in the middle of an intersection makes it where other pedestrians are unable to use the safety of the median and the crosswalk. Often those persons who are occupying the medians are waving large knives and often behaving in a menacing fashion. I am not comfortable to drive past them, but if I get stopped at the light next to them I am have a legitimate fear of what they will do with the weapon in their hand. Therefore, I am taking detours to avoid the intersections or choosing to make purchases online and avoid the need to visit businesses in our community so that I can avoid the very real threat created by a person who feels the need to turn a median into a city park.

**Reply from HSB:** ICE considers cars deadly weapons. I'd say you're more than defended against a \*checks notes\* ... knife. If someone genuinely tries to attack you through your car door, I think you can just move your car a bit.

Taxpayer

I am in support of the ordinance. Roads are for motorized vehicles. Keep the pedestrians in the sidewalks

acs

**the world does not exist primarily for cars, stop pushing legislation that makes it easier to recklessly drive than to exist in public**

People who are safely maneuvering their vehicles should not be driving their cars in the areas this ordinance is trying to regulate. I am not in favor of the government using the guise of safety to regulate where people can put their bodies in a public space when we can clearly see this very same government does not care if the unhoused population lives, dies, starves, freezes, or what have you. The Columbia MO government should take some time to look into real ways to prevent civilian deaths, instead of passing legislation that favors cars on the road over human life and gives cops more permission to hassle vulnerable people.

JL

**How many cops ticketing and/or arresting folks for being in a median are going to block and hinder traffic if this passes?**

CPD's use of common sense in determining if people are to be ticketed or arrested while standing in the median will still result in cops having to also block traffic or stand in medians to have a discussion with individuals in the median, effectively causing more distraction (rubbernecking) and lanes being blocked due to cop cars parked in turning lanes or traffic lanes to discuss why someone is standing in the median. This also will most likely result in tickets being written and consequently unpaid resulting in more warrants being issued and persons being jailed due to unpaid tickets, costing taxpayers more

money to jail individuals instead of providing actual services or assistance to those who stand in the medians to make food/shelter/prescription money.

Victoria Sights

This is just hostile policy rather than hostile architecture. This is not how I want my taxes spent.

Anonymous

**High-traffic medians are unsafe, not public spaces. This ordinance protects pedestrians, drivers, and saves lives. That's responsibility.**

This is not about punishing anyone or limiting free expression. It is about recognizing that some locations are inherently dangerous and should not be treated as public gathering spaces. Crosswalks exist for crossing safely, not for lingering. When medians are occupied all day, it creates additional risks:

Drivers' sightlines are blocked at intersections and turn lanes.

Other pedestrians are forced into unsafe positions to get around them.

Traffic flow becomes unpredictable, increasing the chance of collisions.

As a community, we have a responsibility to set reasonable boundaries that protect both pedestrians and motorists. We already do this with speed limits, seatbelt laws, school zones, and construction areas — not to restrict freedom, but to save lives.

If we truly care about people's safety, we should not normalize behavior that puts them directly in harm's way. We can support vulnerable populations, protect constitutional rights, and still agree that standing in narrow medians on high-traffic roads is unsafe and unnecessary.

This ordinance is a proactive step toward fewer tragedies, safer streets, and a more responsible balance between individual activity and public safety.

Anonymous

Pedestrians do not belong in the median. It is unsafe.

Bud

**It's one thing to be crossing the road and wait in the median strip for traffic but standing , setting, laying there is dangerous**

We have already had one or more people setting on a median strip killed here and it happens all across the country. It's a commonsense thing.

Like most parents would say "don't play in the street"

Anonymous

Boone County Fire Department had to stop fund raising in the street so should the privet sector

CRP

**The very best safety measures are those that PREVENT harm. Dwelling on medians eventually will lead to a pedestrian being struck.**

Some who lack knowledge of safety protocol are trying to convince us that because the data shows that most peds versus cars are not median related then we should not have an ordinance. They are also trying to use a lousy excuse that the city might get sued. The odds of harm increase with the incidence and duration of people dwelling on medians in the midst of traffic. Just imagine the lawsuit when someone is maimed or killed and we have proof the city ignored safety recommendations from the engineering consultants. Common sense.

COMO\_Resident

**I am against this ordinance that criminalizes the unhoused population (which is already disproportionately subject to criminal punishment)**

We need better designed roads with traffic calming measures and more robust public transportation, not this waste of public funds which just makes unhoused people's lives harder

Don't punish poverty

**This is less about safety and more about erasing panhandlers and public displays of desperation in a cruel, callous society.**

The question is how can we support people who feel the need (because panhandling must work) to take risks. The ordinance would be a harsh response to poverty and dispossession. Shoving these people in cages should not be the city's answer; if it is, well then it's another stark example of who governments work for: the wealthy and the vindictive.

Anonymous

**Its common sense not to hang out in the median.**

Its a shame we have to protect people from themselves. This is a matter of safety. Common sense tells you its not smart to hang out in the median. If you are homeless and need money find another place to raise it. As many people are sticking up for you I am sure they wont mind you going downtown to panhandle on the side walks.

pplacier

Looking at the map of pedestrians being hit by cars it looks like MU is the hot spot. Yet people keep focusing on homeless people. Get real.

**Reply from HSB:** There are way more pedestrians in that area than any other part of town. It's not that the area is more dangerous, there are just way more pedestrians. It's like saying that people in Minnesota are worse at driving in the snow than people in Florida because there are more snow related crashes in Minnesota

COMO\_Resident

**Framed as safety, this would harm unhoused residents and criminalize survival. Data is unclear. We need housing and outreach not citations.**

I oppose Ordinance B265-25. While framed as a safety measure, it appears to disproportionately impact unhoused residents who use medians and islands out of necessity, effectively criminalizing poverty rather than addressing its root causes. The safety data cited is vague, and it's unclear how many pedestrian injuries actually involve people standing on medians under the conditions described. Before restricting public space, Council should demand clearer evidence and ask whether this is truly a top safety priority for Columbia. If we care about safety and wellbeing, we should invest in housing, outreach, and inclusive public spaces not displacement and citations. I urge a no vote and a more compassionate, data-driven approach.

CW

Restricting medians won't fix safety or homelessness. It pushes vulnerable people out of sight without evidence it reduces harm. Do better!

Simon

**Called the pedestrian safety ordinance, but it says if you intend to cross the street (aka being a pedestrian) they cant give you a citation**

So police driving by are just going to have to judge with their eyes if someone standing on the median is intending to cross the street or not. Citations prolong homelessness. This would only help keep people homeless (and probably back on the median to ask for money to pay for the citation lmao). And If people are sleeping on the median then our answer should be to make accessible and affordable places to sleep. Dont get fooled by this bill.

Anonymous

I strongly support this ordinance passing. If you want to end road deaths together using the CoMo to Zero approach, you will pass this.

Drew

**Calling this a safety ordinance is farcical. This is an attempt to criminalize poverty.**

Not only are the intentions behind this bad, its effects are too. Medians are public infrastructure, they should be accessible to public. There is no meaningful distinction between standing on the median to hold protest sign, standing on the median to raise money for charity, and standing on the median to ask for money to eat.

HSB

**This was a horrible idea in November and a horrible idea now.**

It's absurd that I have had to come back to this awful website a second time to express my outrage for a policy that is so clearly a bad idea. It is clearly not about safety, just about the upper class feeling safe from having to think about others. Stop giving the rich another stick to wield against the rest of us.

Steve

I think this is a reasonable approach to a definite safety issue at busy intersections. It is my understanding the police agree.

BallGame

This should not only be for the higher traveled roads, but for all roads. It is just common sense for people to not loiter in the median.

ERP

I strongly OPPOSE the proposed safety ordinance, as both a bike commuter and a driver. This criminalizes poverty rather than improve safety.

human being

**I am opposed to this ordinance.**

The proposed ordinance does not make sense based on the data/evidence gathered from the safety study.

The study showed that the areas where we should be focusing the most on pedestrian safety are around the MU campus and downtown.

In other parts of the city, traffic calming measures, improved sidewalks, and more/protected bike lanes would be beneficial.

This ordinance doesn't address the core safety issues and seems to be a backhanded way to try to outlaw panhandling and protesting at intersections.

Lahermann

**Firmly opposed to this ordinance**

While I share the city's goal of reducing pedestrian fatalities, this specific policy is a misguided approach that fails to address the root causes of traffic violence while unfairly targeting our community's most vulnerable members. Not only would this ordinance have a high discriminatory impact, it fails to address structural roots such as improved infrastructure, traffic calming, and other tools that would actually prevent accidents. Despite the investment in the external study, this ordinance does not reflect the outcomes the majority of our citizens want - please look to vision zero! Finally, this ordinance will be difficult to implement fairly and will place an unnecessary burden on our already overextended police department. It's terrible policy and it should be reimagined.

CW

As a Columbia walker, I am opposed to this ordinance. This will not make Columbia a safer place to walk.

TD

**I am firmly opposed to this ordinance.**

It does not address the core underlying issues of pedestrian safety - more sidewalks to make CoMO walkable, more crosswalks, and more public gathering spaces that do not penalize people for just existing.

AP

**100% in support of the ordinance**

Such a bad look with homeless people gathering on every median. They leave garbage, approach cars at stop lights and weave in and out of traffic. This is not allowed in most cities- why is it here?!

gabijacobs14

**This ordinance is not how CoMo achieves real pedestrian safety.**

What is pedestrian safety—it is:

- curb extensions
- lowering VEHICLE speeds through narrowing driving lanes for example
- better driver education

These are just some examples of ways we can better pedestrian safety in our community. Please consider making real infrastructure change to our streets to enhance pedestrian safety instead of restricting the mobility of folks walking around our community.

Better infrastructure = less road deaths. The proof is in the pudding (tons and tons of research out there already).

John K

**Strongly support. Keeping people off medians when not crossing street is common sense. It is simply not safe for cars or people.**

Medians are not designed for people to camp out. How can this city be for safety yet allow people to sit within a few feet of traffic? This is not a political issue, simply common sense. Why would anyone think it is safe to allow someone camp next to traffic? It creates a traffic hazard.

Anonymous Nonplussed

This is a completely inappropriate way to address traffic safety and simply tries to punish and hide the unhoused. I am FIRMLY opposed.

abm

**I strongly OPPOSE this ordinance, it fails to address traffic safety issues and further criminalizes poverty.**

This ordinance is not backed by data suggesting it would improve pedestrian safety. The city is ignoring other evidence based approaches to improving pedestrian safety in favor of this punitive ordinance. I am against an ordinance that would punish our neighbors experiencing poverty. They are victims of systemic failings and deserve support and care, not further policing.

#### **Safe Street Enjoyer**

I am opposed to this ordinance as it does not appropriately address the problem at hand.

abm

**I oppose this ordinance. It's a cruel attempt to criminalize poverty instead of addressing the systemic issues leading to pedestrian deaths.**

The cruelty is highlighted by the time and energy spent on this pointless ordinance instead of helping our unhoused neighbors survive the upcoming storm.

a pedestrian

**Definitely opposed to this silly proposal. It just makes it illegal to be on foot in the middle of the street!**

It's already dangerous, and this ordinance makes it illegal too, as if making things worse for people will solve the problem. If you want safer streets, how about improving infrastructure so that there are better/more convenient crosswalks, and reducing traffic speeds?

**Emails sent to John Ogan, BeHeard page admin (my email is on the BeHeard page)**

Good evening Mr Ogan:

I am in favor of banning pedestrians on medians, especially the ones panhandling. This activity creates hazardous conditions for both the panhandler and the drivers.

Thank you very much.

Ruben Lopez

Columbia, Mo.

Good afternoon!

I hope this finds you all well. In reviewing the supporting study, it seems to lack credence to support the pedestrian safety ordinance. The study is not well done. The money outlaid for this shows an actual problem, firms such as these taking our tax dollars to deliver subpar studies that could be put together in a couple of days by a college intern using public data and ai.

The data does not draw any conclusions on what to do or what the actual problem is. The study therefor is not supportive of the pedestrian ordinance.

Conclusions one might draw from the areas of higher crashes and the age bands is from that of college students not safely crossing the road...

We have had an uptick in citizens that would seem to find ways to demonize the unsheltered. From our own city government clearing “encampments” to business owners dehumanizing this population. Of the study, it does not have demographic information of those injured, etc. Yet this ordinance seems to stem from those upset with panhandling.

Probably the most important part to consider is “unintended consequences”. What if this ordinance passes, and those panhandling end up fined. Will crime increase because they can’t get money on the medians? I think Crime could become an unintended consequence.

Anyways, I could continue to go on. I just hope common sense, rational thought, and actual quality studies with real solutions could be brought to the table.

Thank you for your time and wishing you all the best,

Steven Hermann

410 S Glenwood Ave

This practice is just unsafe.

Mary A. Laffey

573-424-8324

This ordinance is not about public safety. It is about banning panhandling which only affects the homeless. If the city were truly interested in increasing safety they would first start by repairing all the damaged and crumbling medians. This alone would increase the safety of those panhandling to the point that they wouldn't need to stand in the streets.

The city fails to realize that the homeless are not the only people who panhandle. As Someone who does homeless outreach on a daily basis I can tell you that there are many housed people who panhandle to make ends meet because they are on fixed incomes or or have low paying jobs. Is the city willing to compensate these individuals for lost income? Then there are the various organization that solicit donations during funding drives...the annual fire department boot drive, university organizations and high school organizations advertising their car washes. The city cannot make special exemptions for these activities which would defeat the purpose of the safety ordinance.

Let's not leave out CPD. They will be responsible for enforcing this ordinance. CPD officers already spend much of their shift harassing the homeless. This will just give them another reason to ramp up that harassment. Increased ticketing will clog up an already bulging Community Support Docket and will direct law enforcement from solving/preventing real crimes.

Lastly, the committee wants to increase pedestrian safety. How about stationing CPD officers at Providence and Business Loop during Hickman's lunch hour and ticketing all those high school students who jay walk and cross against the lights? How about stationing officers at the Clark Lane and 63/70 interchange and ticketing all the vehicles that block the intersection so that when the lights turn no one can cross.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Laura E. Harris, BS, HOS/CSS

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(573)443-0405

I am in favor of any ordinance that gets those folks off the streets, dividers, curbs etc. it is dangerous for them and for drivers. Your study indicates no one killed. I am told that is incorrect. If so, maybe we need a refund.

Jim Madigan

CoMo

Sent from Jim's Woodshop 

Maybe an ordinance to stop people giving money to pedestrians in traffic medians would be more effective way to solve this problem. Large fines could possibly redirect money to local resources who provide services for this population.

Removing the reason they are there makes more sense than a ban to me.

Building on pedestrian safety initiatives, several U.S. cities have adopted ordinances that explicitly or effectively fine drivers (or vehicle occupants) for handing money—or any items—to panhandlers in traffic medians. These laws frame the prohibition as a traffic safety measure to prevent pedestrians from entering roadways, reduce driver distractions, and minimize collision risks, rather than targeting panhandling directly (which is protected under the First Amendment per rulings like *Village of Schaumburg v. Citizens for a Better Environment*, 1980). However, enforcement often focuses on median interactions, and critics (e.g., ACLU) argue they disproportionately affect homeless individuals and chill free speech.

Fines typically apply to both parties (donor and recipient) and escalate with repeat offenses. As of November 18, 2025, no major nationwide changes have occurred since mid-2024, but local debates continue amid rising pedestrian fatalities (up 60% nationally since 2009, per NHTSA).

Les Sapp

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