

**JCSO**  
Jefferson County  
Service Organization



December 12, 2013

Lawrence City Commission  
6 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Dear City Commissioners,

I am writing in support of the changes to Standard Traffic Ordinance Section 69, Subsection A, as proposed by Jennifer O'Brien. I am supporting the changes that will allow Lawrence OnBoard or other similar ridesharing programs to operate within the city limits, while still maintaining traffic and public safety.

I'm a Jefferson County Commissioner and the Director of the Jefferson County Service Organization that provides general public transportation to the residents of Jefferson County. I'm aware of the need for additional public transportation options, like the ridesharing programs, in Jefferson County.

I understand the traffic and safety issues and if the changes can be made it would be a benefit to Jefferson and Douglas county residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynn Luck".

Lynn Luck  
Jefferson County Commission  
Executive Director, Jefferson County Service Organization

Lawrence OnBoard is featured in a paper to be presented at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board in Washington, DC in January 2014.

**COMMUNITY RIDESHARE FOR A SMALL CITY:  
PRELIMINARY RESULTS FOR LAWRENCE ONBOARD PROTOTYPE PROGRAM**

**J. O'Brien**  
Director, **Lawrence OnBoard**

**A. Dunning, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor, **University of Kansas Department of Urban Planning**

## **Abstract**

Empty seats in private vehicles move across regions at high frequency over a large service area. Decades of publicity campaigns have denounced hitchhiking as dangerous despite a lack of objective evidence indicating increased security risks. Even so, drivers in and around the small metropolis of Lawrence, Kansas, have demonstrated they are willing to share their empty seats with people using the Lawrence OnBoard rideshare system, which is based on hitchhiking. Lawrence OnBoard has gathered data on 121 rides in initial system trials, interviewed 18 riders, and solicited mail-in surveys from participating drivers. For more than half of the 121 trips, riders waited fewer than five minutes on the roadside before someone provided a ride. Two important factors contributing to quick pick-up were the rider's choice of pickup location and a clear declaration of desired destination presented on an official-looking ride board. The 5 percent of trip attempts that proved fruitless were quickly remedied by a change in pickup location. Rider interviews indicated people felt anxiety before pickup and then felt comfortable with their drivers as long as the vehicle had adequate room, working seat belts, and no smoking. Lawrence OnBoard's experience can serve as a possible model for increasing rideshare and mobility in cities smaller than the typical major metropolises known for dynamic carpool (a.k.a. slugging) systems.

## **Peer Reviewers Knowledgeable in Rideshare Initiatives across America**

"Interesting concept. Glad to see ideas like this being tested."

"This is a very interesting paper and project. A refreshing look at the concept of dynamic ridesharing."

"This paper would be perfect for publication and could serve as a model for further implementation in other areas."

"This is a very interesting paper and useful idea."



# City of Lawrence

SUSTAINABILITY  
ADVISORY BOARD

December 11, 2013

Mayor Michael Dever and the City of Lawrence Commission  
6 East 6<sup>th</sup> St  
Lawrence, KS 66044

RE: Standard Traffic Ordinance 69, subsection A and support for Lawrence OnBoard

Dear Mayor Dever:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Lawrence Sustainability Advisory Board to encourage you and your fellow commissioners to change language in Standard Traffic Ordinance 69, subsection A to allow for Lawrence OnBoard and similar ridesharing activities to operate within the city limits in a way that will not compromise traffic safety.

There are a number of reasons we believe in the concept of the Lawrence OnBoard program. This program will enable people to reduce single-occupant driving, which in turn will reduce traffic congestion, energy use, and greenhouse gas emissions. It provides another mode of travel to those with fiscal constraints in a manner that makes use of vehicles already on the road. Also, early results indicate that catching a ride in the manner advocated by Lawrence OnBoard may be faster than other public modes of transportation. In any case, we believe that ridesharing has the potential to be an efficient way to get around the city, but believe it should be done in a manner that will not have a negative impact on traffic safety.

Since our current traffic code currently forbids the soliciting of rides, we encourage the City Commission to amend Standard Traffic Ordinance 69, subsection A in such a manner that would make it possible for riders and drivers in a rideshare program to legally engage in this mode of transportation. Keeping traffic and personal safety in mind, we believe that such a change is possible.

Sincerely,

Scott W. White, Chair

Sustainability Advisory Board, City of Lawrence

**Bobbie Walthall**

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**To:** Casey Toomay  
**Subject:** RE: Letter in Support of Lawrence OnBoard to the City Commission of Lawrence

**From:** Thad Holcombe [<mailto:tjholcombe@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 09, 2013 6:38 PM  
**To:** Casey Toomay; [jenny@lawrenceonboard.org](mailto:jenny@lawrenceonboard.org)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Lawrence OnBoard to the City Commission of Lawrence

Lawrence City Commissioners,

I am communicating with you as a strong supporter of Lawrence OnBoard. This very creative way of supplementing transportation in Lawrence can be effective and fill in some "gaps" in Lawrence's public transportation. It will be helpful to those who may not be close to a bus line or have scheduling difficulties. I have discussed with Jenny O'Brien, the person initiating this endeavor and heard her speak publicly and have come away impressed with the attention to details and her openness to questions. This has been through LET-US (Lawrence Ecology Teams United in Sustainability), an inter-faith network of 10 (and growing in number) faith communities and the University Community Forum, sponsored by Ecumenical Campus Ministries at KU. Her presentation at ECM is available at [ecmku.org/programs](http://ecmku.org/programs).

I think this program can especially be helpful to students, but not limited to them. What I also like is that both the drivers and passengers have to be "certified" and have proper ID for both the automobile and the individual. It is also a wonderful way for individuals to meet "strangers" and after riding have made a new acquaintance. In addition, it is a program that is helpful for those who are seeking transportation into or out of Lawrence. I do think that the Lawrence OnBoard website is helpful in giving more of an overview of the program - it is at [www.lawrenceonboard.org](http://www.lawrenceonboard.org).

Thad Holcombe  
1817 Learnard Ave.  
Lawrence, Ks. 66044



# Sustainability Action Network

Local Solutions for Transition to a Sustainable Economy

P.O. Box 1064, Lawrence KS 66044  
a Kansas 501(C)(3) not-for-profit

Michael Dever, Mayor  
Lawrence City Commission  
6 East 6th St.  
Lawrence KS 66044

13 December 2013

re: Lawrence OnBoard request for City ordinance revision

Mayor Dever & Commission:

Lawrence OnBoard, a roadside ridesharing system, is a program of Sustainability Action. It is intended to fulfill that part of our mission to help reduce fossil energy use by automobiles in rural Douglas, Jefferson, and Leavenworth Counties. Jenny O'Brien, one of our organization's Board members, originated the program, and is its Director.

Along with our advocacy for transportation solutions involving walking, bicycling and transit, Sustainability Action considers roadside ridesharing to fill a significant gap in regional transportation choices. People traveling between local communities or out into rural areas have few options other than driving, which is highly energy intensive.

Transportation accounts for 67% of U.S. petroleum consumption, 60% of which is by light vehicles. Most travel takes place in private cars, and 79% of those trips are single occupant. The principal feature of Lawrence OnBoard is to reduce the number of vehicles on the road by filling those empty seats with riders. It is a methodical system that incorporates elements like security protocols, destination signaling, and driver incentives to make it safe, easy and reliable.

After more than one year of planning, test rides, data gathering, and gaining national recognition, Lawrence OnBoard has run into a snag with a Kansas Standard Traffic Ordinance Section 69, Article A, "No person shall stand upon or along a street or highway for the purpose of soliciting a ride". As a City of the First Class, we believe Lawrence may adopt a substitute ordinance. Ms. O'Brien has worked with City Transportation Planner, Todd Girdler, and City Attorney Maria Kaminska to craft optional wording that would enable roadside ridesharing in Lawrence, from which most of the local trips originate.

Please make the revisions to our local City Code to allow participants in the Lawrence OnBoard program to engage in legal and safe ridesharing.

Thank you,

Michael Almon

## Casey Toomay

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**From:** katrina mcclure <anirtak79@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 16, 2013 12:39 PM  
**To:** Casey Toomay  
**Subject:** KU Student Farm Letter of Support for Lawrence On Board

Dear Mayor Mike Dever and the City Commissioners,

I am writing today to support Jenny O'Brien's proposal to change STO section 69, subsection A. The language as it reads now would not allow her program, Lawrence OnBoard, or any other similar ridesharing programs, to operate within the city limits. Our student members, and KU students in general, would benefit greatly from this program. Our location is in north Lawrence just north of Prairie Moon school. Many of our students currently bike to the site but are very interested in other options. We have discussed the opportunities that the Lawrence OnBoard program creates for our members and have been extremely supportive. We never want transportation to be an issue for students wanting to learn how to garden. Therefore we are committed to supporting programs and services that create safe and environmentally conscious alternatives.

Even though Lawrence has an excellent bus system, there are significant gaps in service area and times of operation. Any person living or working outside the city limits has no option for public transportation. If and when gas prices rise, many people in our community find it difficult to afford transportation, which has a devastating economic and social impact, especially on low income households. Lawrence OnBoard provides a flexible, inexpensive alternative to driving a private car, and also has the potential to build community connections and trust.

Many communities are providing innovative solutions in transportation, like bicycle rental services and car sharing programs. Lawrence should be a city that promotes such programs! Ms. O'Brien has done extensive research on the safety and efficacy of her concept, but she is unable complete that research and roll out a pilot project unless the city approves changes to STO 69. As members of this great community we welcome these projects and encourage an amendment to the aforementioned ordinance.

Thank you for your time in considering these important changes.

Sincerely,

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Katrina McClure  
KU Student Farm President  
NSF C-CHANGE IGERT Trainee  
Graduate Research Assistant  
Institute for Policy & Social Research  
Department of Geography  
University of Kansas  
[anirtak79@yahoo.com](mailto:anirtak79@yahoo.com)  
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