

Chapter 5A

Policy Recommendations



Chapter 5.

Recommendations to Accommodate Biking and Walking

The need and public desire for improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodations were documented in Chapters 3 and 4. This chapter focuses on recommendations ranging from facility construction to local and regional support of bicycle and pedestrian programs, policies and regulations. The following recommendations have been developed based on public input, goals and objectives and the inventory and analysis of existing conditions.

5.A Policies, Programs and Regulations for Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel

The following actions are considered necessary to make our region more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly and to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in Chapter 2.

5.A.1 Balanced Transportation System

In recent years, the term “complete streets” has come to define how a well-balanced transportation system is created. Completing the streets means constructing and retrofitting our transportation corridors so that travel by bike, on foot and using public transit is just as desirable and convenient as driving a vehicle. Complete streets result in public right-of-ways that serve all citizens in a community whether they are young, old, able-bodied or not.

Greenway trails that are well-integrated with on-street bike and pedestrian facilities also contribute to a balanced, convenient and desirable non-motorized transportation system. Trail facilities provide connections not offered by the roadway system and can reduce trip length. Trail facilities connect key destinations and also offer bicycling and walking opportunities in natural and scenic environments.

The following actions are considered necessary to achieve a balanced transportation system:

General

- Adopt a “complete streets” policy and develop design standards to ensure all urban streets are built to appropriately accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists (and transit users if applicable).
- Develop a decision-making model for road improvement projects that considers a constant or reduced level of service for motor vehicles to improve the level of service for bicycling, walking and transit.
- Revise street design standards to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian-friendly design elements (such as street trees, buffer strips, pedestrian-scale lighting, etc.)
- Revise subdivision regulations to ensure appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities are constructed on roadways in and adjacent to new developments, including state maintained roadways.
- Include appropriate bicycle and pedestrian accommodation in all municipal, county and state roadway construction and reconstruction projects.
- Develop a strategic plan to bring all urban streets and intersections into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Ensure bicycle and pedestrian facilities and improvement projects are geographically distributed equitably across neighborhoods and regional communities.

On-road Bike Facilities

- Accommodate bicyclists on all urban arterial and major collector streets. Bike lanes should be used to the greatest degree possible; however, other bike facilities may be appropriate due to street geometrics, safety, traffic volumes, etc.
- Provide bicycle facilities on minor collector streets if traffic volumes, safety, connectivity or expected users warrant such a facility.



- Provide paved shoulders on all rural primary roads. Shared use paths may be constructed in addition to shoulders to accommodate cyclists who prefer not to ride on the roadway.
- Install signage on select rural secondary roads based upon bicycle use, safety, destinations and connectivity to adjacent counties.
- Identify and map bike routes that use low-volume streets to promote bicycling to less-skilled bicyclists. Complete small improvements that will enhance safety or connectivity along these routes where necessary.

Sidewalks

- Provide sidewalks of an appropriate width on both sides of all urban streets, except for limited access highways, lanes or alleys.
- Provide a minimum sidewalk width of five feet in residential areas and six feet in commercial areas (or widths compatible with existing sidewalks in infill and redevelopment areas).
- Provide a minimum sidewalk clearance width of 8 feet in downtown areas, increasing the width accordingly for street furniture, street trees, sidewalk cafés or other obstacles.
- Build, retrofit and maintain all sidewalks to ADA standards.
- Establish design standards, city ordinances and enforcement responsibility to ensure sidewalks are unobstructed by signage, utilities, street furniture and other obstacles.
- Establish and fund a sidewalk retrofit program for Fayette and Jessamine Counties.

Off-road Trails

- Fund and build shared use trails according to adopted greenway / trail plans.
- Develop and adopt a greenway / trail plan in Jessamine County.
- Develop a regional trail plan in partnership with surrounding counties.

- Develop walking paths in neighborhoods, parks and other public spaces.
- Develop hiking and mountain biking trails in the region.
- Ensure all trails and walking paths are built to meet ADA guidelines to the greatest degree possible.

Intersections and Crosswalks

- Develop and adopt design standards for accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists at urban intersections.
- Provide for bicycle and pedestrian detection and signal actuation at intersections; ensure adequate clearance times are provided.
- Reduce pedestrian delay at intersections, particularly in high pedestrian activity areas.
- Provide 'countdown' signals and 'advanced walk' timing in pedestrian activity areas.
- Provide pedestrian refuge medians or islands along roadways and at intersections that exceed 70 feet in width.
- Develop a policy and design standards for the installation of mid-block pedestrian crossings.
- Complete an inventory and develop an action plan for bringing urban intersections into ADA compliance.

Transit

- Retrofit transit routes with sidewalks.
- Ensure all bus stops, sidewalks and intersections along transit routes are ADA compliant.
- Provide bus shelters and pedestrian amenities along transit routes.
- Continue providing bike racks on all transit buses.
- Install secure bike parking at the transit center and at appropriate transit stops such as transfer points.



5.A.2 Sustainable Community Development

A person's decision to bike or walk is influenced by many factors. The presence or absence of facilities is one consideration, however, the way in which communities are developed and designed significantly impacts whether people will choose to bike and walk.

Pedestrians and bicyclists are sensitive to their surrounding environment. They dislike long trip distances and desire streets and pedestrian ways that connect them to nearby destinations as directly as possible. Pedestrians also desire streetscapes that provide visual interest, shade trees and adequate separation from traffic.

Sustainable community design principles ensure that transportation options are maximized by providing opportunities for people to get everywhere they need to go on a daily basis by walking, biking or public transit. Sustainable development practices include a mix of land uses, a variety of housing types, and higher densities that make communities more compact and walkable. Neighborhood-oriented retail and commercial centers are provided so that stores and services are located near to where people live. Schools and parks are located and designed so that it is easy for neighborhood children to walk or bike to them.

Such development patterns use land resources more efficiently, can improve air and water quality and reduce energy consumption. Sustainable communities also possess many other characteristics that appeal to bicyclists and pedestrians such as greenspace and natural areas, pedestrian-oriented store fronts, tree-line streets and active civic spaces.

The following actions are based upon sustainable development principles and will result in community development patterns and designs that encourage bicycling and walking:

Development Patterns

- Incorporate a mix of land uses in new developments and infill projects that place retail, schools, parks and professional services in close proximity to where people live to reduce the length of regular, routine trips.

- Create incentives to encourage compact, higher density residential developments as needed to support neighborhood-oriented commercial development and to encourage transit use.
- Create neighborhood-oriented “town-centers” in new developments.
- Investigate opportunities for “town-center” development in Small Area Plans and large infill-redevelopment projects.
- Develop street connectivity standards and requirements for bicycle and pedestrian connections where streets cannot be constructed, at mid-block locations and at dead-end streets and cul de sacs.

School Location and Access

- Encourage the development of school sites that are central to neighborhoods and away from high speed, high volume streets.
- Require the connection of neighborhoods to school sites with multiple access points, sidewalks, trails, bicycle-friendly streets and safe street crossings in new developments.
- Review existing neighborhoods for opportunities to construct sidewalks and trail connections to schools.
- Design school sites that provide safe access and give preference to students arriving by bike or walking; provide bicyclists and pedestrians with adequate separation from vehicular parking and drop-off areas.
- Encourage schools to provide adequate bicycle parking.

Park and Recreation Facilities

- Follow the national recommended standards for neighborhood park locations and size.
- Locate neighborhood parks away from high speed, high volume roadways
- Require the connection of neighborhoods to parks with multiple access points, sidewalks,



trails, bicycle-friendly streets and safe street crossings in new developments.

- Review existing neighborhoods for opportunities to construct sidewalks and trail connections to parks.
- Connect major community and regional parks with the regional bicycle, pedestrian and trail network.
- Construct walking paths, mountain bike and shared use trails in public parks.

Commercial and Residential Design

- Develop pedestrian-oriented design guidelines and incentives for commercial and retail developments such as reduced setbacks, rear parking and window store-fronts.
- Reduce on-site parking requirements for pedestrian and bicycle-friendly commercial developments.
- Require bicycle and pedestrian connections to commercial sites from adjacent neighborhoods in new developments.
- Review existing neighborhoods for opportunities to construct sidewalks and trail connections to commercial areas.
- Require on-site provisions for the safe movement of pedestrians within parking lots, between public buildings, and from public buildings to the street.
- Develop bicycle parking standards for retail, commercial and employment sites.
- Develop pedestrian-oriented design guidelines and incentives for residential developments such as reduced setbacks, garage setbacks, alleys and front porches.

5.A.3 Safety and Security

To successfully increase travel by these modes, bicyclists and pedestrians need a sense of safety and security. Safety can be enhanced through the design and proper maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. A sense of security is created when the interactions between bicyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicle operators are respectful and tolerant. This can be achieved, in part, through public education and enforcement and can contribute to reduced crashes and fatalities involving bicyclists and pedestrians.

The following actions are considered necessary to achieve improved safety and security for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Design

- Ensure roadway design manuals include standards for safe and accessible pedestrian ways and bicycle facilities.
- Design and construct all shared use trails to meet standards established by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO).
- Build and retrofit streets with bicycle-friendly drainage grates, beginning with bike routes and streets with bike lanes.
- Consider the safety and comfort of bicyclists in the placement of rumble strips on roadways. Utilize bicycle-friendly rumble strips where they are necessary for vehicle safety.
- Incorporate pedestrian-friendly design, such as street lighting and windows facing the sidewalk, to increase 'eyes on the street' and enhance pedestrian safety.
- Consider adopting "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" guidelines, published by the National Crime Prevention Council.

Education

- Conduct educational campaigns to increase public awareness of the rules of the road for bicyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicle drivers.
- Develop and implement a "Share the Road" campaign.
- Include bicycle and pedestrian safety information in driver tests and distribute information with drivers license renewals.



- Develop guidelines and install ‘Share the Road’ signage at appropriate locations based upon bicycle use, safety and bike route continuity.

Enforcement

- Provide training on bicycle and pedestrian traffic laws to local police departments.
- Issue citations to bicyclists, pedestrians and drivers who disobey traffic laws.
- Ensure motor vehicle operators who disobey the rules of the road and injure pedestrians and bicyclists are charged and prosecuted.
- Strictly enforce speed limits in high pedestrian activity areas, including school zones.
- Improve the quality of police reporting for bicycle and pedestrian crashes.

Maintenance

- Maintain all streets and trails to provide safe passage for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Increase street sweeping schedules on roadways with bike lanes, paved shoulders and bike routes.
- Establish and fund a trail maintenance program in Fayette County.
- Conduct systematic reviews of sidewalk maintenance needs with the same frequency, or at the same time as roadway condition reviews.
- Conduct a public education campaign to inform property owners of sidewalk maintenance responsibilities.
- Provide adequate funding for the Fayette County Sidewalk Maintenance Assistance Program.
- Establish a Sidewalk Maintenance Assistance Program in Nicholasville, Wilmore and Jessamine County.

- Maintain crosswalk striping as necessary and with the same frequency as roadway striping.
- Install or repair curb ramps during all roadway resurfacing projects as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Create an easy-to-use system for the public to report sidewalk, bikeway, trail hazards and maintenance needs.
- Establish clear procedures and responsible agencies for the maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Establish requirements for maintaining safe bicycle and pedestrian access within the public right-of-way during private and public construction projects. Establish permitting and enforcement procedures to ensure requirements are followed.

Traffic Calming

- Design streets to encourage driving speeds that do not exceed posted speed limits.
- Require new developments to have street patterns and geometrics that have been shown to reduce vehicle speeds. Require the installation of traffic calming devices in developments where planned streets are not likely to discourage speeding.
- Establish criteria for the retrofitting of existing neighborhoods with traffic calming devices.
- Work with city departments impacted by traffic calming features to determine acceptable designs and installations.
- Maintain and/or increase funding for the Fayette County Traffic Calming Program as necessary
- Consider establishing a Traffic Calming Program in Jessamine County.



Safe Routes to School (SR2S)

- Initiate and sustain SR2S programs throughout the region to identify and eliminate barriers to walking and bicycling to school.
- Develop a SR2S coalition and develop a strategic plan for region-wide implementation of SR2S programs.
- Develop guidance on the SR2S program and provide technical assistance and support to local school and neighborhood efforts.

5.A.4 Economic Vitality

A bicycle and pedestrian-friendly region can greatly impact our economic vitality. Vibrant downtowns are pedestrian-friendly downtowns, with high activity levels and many businesses and restaurants. Walkable and bike-friendly communities are routinely recognized and marketed as communities with a high quality of life that attract and retain businesses and professionals.

Bicycling and walking facilities can also expand and enhance tourism opportunities. The contribution to tourism that regional bicycle trails, tours and events can make has been well-documented in many communities.

The following actions are considered necessary to expand and enhance the economic vitality of our region through bicycling and walking initiatives:

Downtown Revitalization

- Establish design guidelines and initiate projects to enhance the pedestrian-friendliness of downtown Lexington, Wilmore and Nicholasville.
- Develop walking tours and bicycling tours of downtown areas and other places of interest.
- Develop and implement pedestrian wayfinding signage in downtown areas.

Tourism

- Connect key tourist sites in the region with bicycle and trail facilities to attract residents and tourists.
- Partner with adjacent counties to sign and promote a regional system of on-road rural bicycle routes.
- Coordinate with adjacent counties to develop and promote multi-regional greenway trails.
- Partner with nonprofit organizations and cycling clubs to develop and promote bicycle touring events.

Marketing

- Identify partners and opportunities to promote the bicycle and pedestrian-friendly qualities of the region to prospective businesses and residents.
- Work to achieve national recognition as a “Bicycle-Friendly Community”.
- Incorporate bicycle touring opportunities in state, regional and national tourism promotional materials.
- Work with realtors and economic development partners to promote pedestrian and bicycle-friendly facilities and activities.



5.A.5 Quality of Life and Active Living

Walkable and bicycle-friendly communities provide a high quality of life for all citizens by providing opportunities for greater mobility, by encouraging active lifestyles and by improving environmental quality. Many communities are now considering social, environmental and public health impacts during land use and transportation decision-making processes for the following reasons:

- Walkable communities allow children, seniors and people with disabilities to have greater independence and provide opportunities for them to be more socially and physically active.
- Studies have shown higher rates of bicycling and walking, and lower rates of overweight and obesity, in walkable and bicycle-friendly communities
- Environmental impacts to air, land and water are minimized through land use patterns and transportation systems that are less oriented to automobile use and more oriented to bicycling, walking and transit use.

The following actions will contribute to improved quality of life and more active lifestyles:

Impact Assessment and Decision-Making

- Establish environmental and health impact assessment models for land use planning and transportation decision-making.
- Conduct outreach and consider the transportation needs of seniors, children, persons with disabilities, and working people in need in transportation, land use planning and site development.
- Promote and support “aging in place” transportation initiatives.
- Survey residents and/or monitor physical activity levels and public health impacts in relation to bicycling and walking.
- Monitor air-quality and respiratory-related diseases in correlation with automobile and alternative transportation use.

Promotion and Education

- Develop and print maps and educational materials to promote bicycling and walking.
- Partner with public health agencies to promote walking and bicycling for health, transportation and recreation.
- Partner with environmental professionals and non-profit organizations to promote sustainable land use and transportation decision-making.
- Encourage employers to promote and support “active commuting” by providing employees with incentives such as reduced health care costs, parking discounts, showers, lockers and secure bicycle parking.
- Encourage employers to support “Live Where You Work” programs that give incentives to employees to live within close proximity to their jobs.
- Partner with public health agencies, non-profit organizations, bicycle clubs and advocates to conduct community events that promote bicycling and walking.



