

STAFF REPORT ON PETITION FOR SUBDIVISION REGULATION AMENDMENT

SRA 2019-1: AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 6: SIDEWALKS AND SHARE-USE PATHS

INITIATED BY: Urban County Planning Commission

PROPOSED TEXT: See attached. Amendments to Article 6 are shown in red with additions underlined and deletions ~~stricken through~~.

STAFF REVIEW:

The LFUCG Planning Commission initiated an amendment to Article 6 of the Land Subdivision Regulations in order to update the requirements for sidewalks and shared-use paths at the request of staff. The proposed amendment seeks to provide connectivity and equity as it relates to the transportation network in urbanized areas. As proposed, these amendments promote greater connectivity and will impact how the built environment directly effects economic growth, public health, and the quality of life of Lexington's current and future residents. Sidewalks and shared-use paths are part of the required infrastructure in our community, as they protect the health, safety and welfare of the community. A greater emphasis on connectivity should be applied to future development, taking into account context sensitive design as it relates to multi-modal transportation networks. Design of this infrastructure should include both micro- and macro-views of the context of current and future use, so that more sustainable development patterns are promoted. In an effort to ensure that the preferred types of multi-modal networks become the normal development type, the amendment provides guidance for the development of multi-modal transportation networks.

Over the course of the last 75 years, the Urban County and the development community have designed primarily for the safe and adequate movement of single occupancy vehicles, while providing less attention or diligence for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists. Those portions of our transportation network that lack sidewalks or shared-use trails serve as barriers to equitable and safe pedestrian movement unless a traveler is utilizing a vehicle. Additionally, the safety of pedestrians has been overlooked in those areas that have extremely long block lengths, which encourage dangerous mid-block crossings, and highway interchanges in urbanized areas that do not provide adequate or safe connections. By requiring facilities that are sized appropriately at all locations, there will be more diverse transportation options for all residents and visitors.

The proposed amendment incorporates the findings of the Lexington Area MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and increases the width of sidewalks and shared-use paths to provide both safer and more diverse transportation options for the Lexington community. The text proposed for Article 6, includes an increase of sidewalk widths based on the roadway type. By "right sizing" sidewalks based on use of roadways, these facilities will be safer and provide greater separation between pedestrians and vehicles. At a minimum, sidewalks are proposed to increase for local roadways from four (4) feet to five (5) feet, as in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Additionally, the amended text defines the minimum width of a shared-use path, as ten (10) feet, which is at a level that alleviates potential safety conflicts between users of shared-use paths.

Bringing the minimum standards for development in line with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's Design Guidelines and complying with the United States Access Board's standards for access in the public right-of-way will also comply with federal requirements for accessibility and align with LFUCG efforts to provide a more comprehensive transportation network. The proposed Land Subdivision Regulation changes also support LFUCG's larger safety and transportation goals, which emphasize the well-being of people of all ages and abilities across all modes of transportation operating within the public right-of-way. This text amendment supports development that serves the needs of all people consistent with the community's equity goals.

Lastly, this amendment to the Land Subdivision is in agreement with the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. The proposed text amendment will work to achieve an effective and comprehensive transportation network (Theme D, Goal #1), by supporting the Complete Streets concept, prioritizing a pedestrian-first design that also accommodates the needs of bicycle, transit and other vehicles (Theme D, Goal #1.a).

The Staff Recommends: Approval of the Staff Alternative Text, for the following reasons:

1. The proposed amendment to Article 6 of the Land Subdivision Regulations to update the requirements for sidewalks and shared-use paths will provide a more diverse transportation network with options for residents and visitors to our community, while also promoting economic growth, public health, and the quality of life of the Lexington's current and future residents.

2. The proposed text amendment will work to achieve an effective and comprehensive transportation network (Theme D, Goal #1), by supporting the Complete Streets concept, prioritizing a pedestrian-first design that also accommodates the needs of bicycle, transit and other vehicles (Theme D, Goal #1.a).
3. The proposed text amendment meets the minimum design standards established by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, the United States Access Board, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

ST/HB/TLW

7/31/2019

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