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Lexington-Fayette Urban County Planning Commission  
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government  
101 East Vine Street, Suite 700  
Lexington, KY 40507

**Re: Crossroads Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Application**

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

Our firm represents Crossroads Community Church, Inc. ("Crossroads") that owns the property located at 4128 Todds Road (the "Property"), which is zoned Expansion Area Residential (EAR-1) and has substantial frontage along I-75 and Todds Road. Crossroads is requesting a text amendment to Article 17-7 governing the signage for churches in the Expansion Area Zones.

As part of its recent rebranding efforts after a merger with the Crossroads Community Church in Cincinnati, Crossroads began the process to update the signage at its location along Todds Road. After examining the signage regulations governing churches in the non-ED zoning categories of the expansion area, it was determined that signage is grouped into two categories: residential use or business/office use. Residential uses are limited to 32 square feet while business/office uses are provided significant signage as allowed for a neighborhood shopping center. Since a church is a principal use in various residential zones, it was determined that churches are limited to signage of 32 square feet. However, anyone familiar with modern day churches recognizes that these properties – especially ones the size of Crossroads – attracts its congregation more similarly to businesses and requires signage of similar size to said businesses. This requirement is accentuated based on Crossroads location along I-75 and its regional congregation. As such, Crossroads believes that the treatment of churches in than expansion area needs to be updated as 32 square feet is inadequate for routing the traveling public in an efficient manner.

The intent of Article 17, governing signage, is to promote legitimate signage needs without unduly distracting from the overall aesthetics of the community and provides for improved public safety by minimizing the undue distraction of the motoring public. It is without question that the signage for churches is of vital importance due to the volume of traffic that the sites generate at the same time periods. Any slight confusion as to the location of the use, can lead to significant backup on the public roads surrounding the church before the various church services. Despite this clear importance, the existing Zoning Ordinance does not provide any specific regulations geared towards churches in the expansion area. This use is lumped in with every other principal "residential use" that limits signage to 32 square feet of available signage. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the Zoning Ordinance

does make special considerations (including increased signage height/square footage) for uses like Professional Office Projects, construction sites, movie theaters, drive-thru restaurants, indoor and outdoor stadiums, hotels/motels, and shopping centers. Simply put, it is the Crossroads' position that signage for churches should be regulated differently than other principal residential uses and the importance of visibility of churches is more comparable to the similar uses listed above. The need for visible signage for churches clearly fits with the public safety focus of the intent of the Sign Ordinance.

The text amendment proposes signage regulations only applicable to churches adjacent to interstate highways in the Expansion Area; specifically, the request proposes to amend 17-7(q)(1) to add:

(a) One free standing identification sign for a permitted church that is adjacent to a designated interstate highway, the total surface area shall not exceed one and one-half (1½) square feet per linear foot of street frontage, with a maximum of one hundred and fifty (150) square feet in area, with a maximum height of fifteen (15) feet, with a minimum setback of ten (10) feet; in addition, one wall mounted sign a total maximum area of fifteen percent (15%) of the wall area to which it is attached.

The proposed text closely mirrors the existing regulations for neighborhood business signs. The proposed size based on frontage helps ensure that the size is proportional to the individual parcels and will not adversely impact a true residential setting.

The text amendment is consistent with many of the goals, objectives and planning themes of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. These goals, objectives and themes include, but are not limited to the following:

Theme A – Growing Successful Neighborhoods

Goal 3: Provide well designed neighborhoods and communities.

Objectives:

b. Strive for positive and safe social interactions in neighborhoods, including, but not limited to, neighborhoods that are connected for pedestrians and various modes of transportation.

Theme C – Creating Jobs and Prosperity

Goal 1: Support and showcase local assets to further the creation of a variety of jobs.

Objectives:

e. Encourage the development of appropriate attractions and supporting uses that promote and enhance tourism.;

Goal 2: Attract the world's finest jobs, encourage entrepreneurial spirit, and enhance our ability to recruit and retain a talented, creative

workforce by establishing opportunities that embrace diversity with inclusion in our community.

**Objectives:**

- d. Provide entertainment and other quality of life opportunities that attract young professionals and a workforce of all ages and talents to Lexington.

**Theme D – Improving a Desirable Community**

**Goal 1: Work to achieve an effective and comprehensive transportation system.**

**Objectives:**

- c. Improve traffic operation strategies.

**Goal 2: Provide for accessible community facilities and services to meet the health, safety and quality of life needs of Lexington-Fayette County's residents and visitors.**

**Objectives:**

- a. Encourage public safety and social sustainability by supporting Secured by Design concepts and other policies and programs for the built environments of neighborhoods to help reduce opportunities for crimes.
- b. Collaborate with educational and healthcare entities to meet the needs of Lexington-Fayette County's residents and visitors.

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the need to create well designed neighborhoods and help create a sense of place, all while ensuring that Lexington provides for the health and safety of our residents and visitors. This minor addition to the Sign Ordinance will have lasting public safety impact while having a minimal impact on existing conditions.

We look forward to presenting this text amendment to the Planning Commission for its favorable consideration during the January meeting.

Best Regards;

Stoll-Keenon Ogden PLLC

Nick Nicholson

