

MEMORANDUM ON BIKE PEDESTRIAN INTERFACE FOR NEW CIRCLE ROAD EXPANSION



**TOWN BRANCH TRAIL, INC.
2.14.14**

Beginning with the first public meeting on the New Circle Road Expansion on 11.29.12, Town Branch Trail, Inc., a citizen-led 501-c-3 non-profit (founded in 1998 and incorporated in 2001), has been working with the city of Lexington and Engineering Staff from District 7 of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to integrate the goals of Town Branch Trail, a city-wide greenway trail with the state's highway expansion project.

As a result of months of discussion and review, Town Branch Trail, Inc. proposes that the Expansion of New Circle Road between Georgetown and Versailles roads fully integrate the bicycle and pedestrian goals of the greenway trail within its immediate urban neighborhood that is bisected by this limited access state road, a railroad line, and the Town Branch Creek. Because this has been a long-standing community project and a major goal of the city, this parallel non-vehicular corridor is a vital component of integrated transportation that will benefit air quality, congestion mitigation, economic development, and quality of life for the entire region. This proposal is grounded in national transportation policy, current AASHTO standards, dozens of existing precedents around the

country, and will save taxpayers money in the long term while adding only 1% to the road expansion scope of work and expense. **Summary of the reasons we believe this to be a cost-effective priority for the state's New Circle Road expansion project:**

- 1) *Fully supported by current federal transportation policy regarding bridges and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. (See Secretary LaHood's Memorandum of 3.11.10 below)*
- 2) *Consistent with current national AASHTO and state guidelines (see exhibits)*
- 3) *Dozens of major national precedents (see list and links to existing precedents).*
- 4) *Town Branch Trail has legitimate standing to participate as a long-developing greenway imminently planned to reach the New Circle Road expansion area.*
- 5) *Adding the proposed Town Branch Trail bicycle-pedestrian tunnel and bridge will be most cost-effective use of taxpayer funds for trail construction when compared with alternative schemes when issues of connectivity, land access, and construction costs are fully considered. (see alternative routes and costs)*
- 6) *Inclusion of this critical bike/pedestrian component of New Circle Road will add 1% or less to the project budget while greatly advancing non-vehicular urban circulation in this dense and growing urban area. This state investment will be matched by local funding to optimize trail development.*

Appendix is included at the end for additional background materials.

DETAILED DISCUSSION OF EACH POINT FOLLOWS BELOW:

1) This request is consistent with current federal transportation policy.

Ray LaHood, Secretary of the US Department of Transportation, stated on 3.11.10: " The (USDOT) is providing this Policy Statement to reflect the Department's support for the development of fully integrated active transportation networks. The establishment of well-connected walking and bicycling networks is an important component for livable communities, and their design should be a part of Federal-aid project developments." Among the Recommended Actions are "considering walking and bicycling as equals with other transportation modes", and "integrating bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on new, rehabilitated, and limited access bridges: DOT encourages bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on bridge projects including facilities on limited-access bridges with connections to streets or paths", and "improving non-

motorized facilities during maintenance projects: many transportation agencies spend most of their transportation funding on maintenance rather than constructing new facilities. Transportation agencies should find ways to make facility improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists during resurfacing and other maintenance projects.” It concludes: Increased commitment to investment in bicycle facilities and walking networks can help meet goals for cleaner, healthier air; less congested roadways; and more livable, safe, cost-effective communities. Walking and bicycling provide low-cost mobility options that place fewer demands on local roads and highways.”

(The full memorandum is included in the appendix.)

2) This request is consistent with multiple national and state transportation policy manuals. Excerpted below. The longer version of this in the appendix.

AASHTO Guide for Planning, Design, and Operation of Bicycle Facilities, DRAFT 2010 for bridges and underpasses: p. 162 (with illustrations 5.11 & 5.12) “There are often opportunities to retrofit path structures to existing highway or railroad bridges. Using an existing bridge can result in significant cost savings and provide path continuity over large rivers or other obstacles. These retrofits can be accomplished in several ways, including cantilevering the path onto an existing bridge, or by placing the path within the substructure of the existing bridge (...)

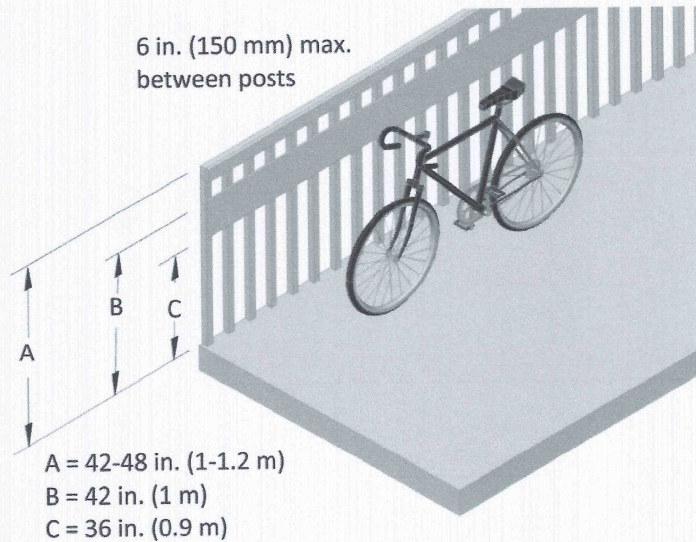


Exhibit 5.11. Example Bridge Railing

Bridges should be designed for pedestrian live loadings. Where maintenance and emergency vehicles may be expected to cross the bridge, the design should accommodate them. On all bridge decks, special care should be taken to ensure that bicycle-safe expansion joints are used, and that decking materials are not slippery when wet.

A longer AASHTO excerpt on this subject is included in the appendix.

3) **There are DOZENS of successful national precedents for this proposal to emulate. See excerpt below with longer version in the appendix.**

Website info: Bicycle paths on interstate freeway bridges
<http://mobikefed.org/2006/05/bicycle-paths-interstate-freeway-bridges>



Page Avenue, Missouri River Bridge bicycle/pedestrian path, St. Charles, Missouri

“Some have objected that such facilities are rare, difficult, or dangerous. In fact, as the following list shows, such facilities are increasingly common in the United States.”

Interstate freeway bridges in the United States with bicycle/pedestrian crossings:

Note: This is only a partial list.

- [Scudder Falls bridge on I-95](#) between Pennsylvania and New Jersey
- I-80 [Carquinez Bridge](#) linking Vallejo and Crockett CA - separated bicycle/pedestrian path. ([CalTrans fact sheet about the path](#))
- Interstate 90 floating bridges across Lake Washington, Seattle - motor traffic lanes plus bike/ped lane immediately adjacent, separated by a cement barrier. ([Read a bicyclist's account of crossing the I-90 bridge.](#))
- I-494 over the Mississippi River near Minneapolis, Minnesota - path is immediately adjacent to the freeway, separated by a stone barrier.
- Squaw Peak Freeway in Phoenix AZ
- Appalachian Trail at I-80 Delaware Water Gap NJ-PA
- Wonders Way on the Ravenel Bridge Charleston S.C. (new)
- I-84 Newburgh Beacon Bridge over the Hudson River, NY
- I-84 Bulkley Bridge over the Connecticut River, Hartford, CT - sidewalk on south side of bridge for bicycle/pedestrian use, separated by concrete barrier
- I-278 Triboro Bridge, New York City
- I-295, Tukeys Bridge, Portland, Maine - separated from the freeway by a jersey barrier; no known incidents
- I-279 over the Allegheny River in Pittsburgh--12 ft ada compliant ped/bike lane cantilevered off the superstructure
- I-95 Gold Star Memorial Bridge over the Thames River, New London, CT

- George Washington Bridge I-95 NY-NJ includes a sidewalk accessible to pedestrians on the south side and a path accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians on the north side
- Ben Franklin Bridge I-76 PA-NJ
- I-494 bridge over the Mississippi River near Minneapolis, Minnesota
- [I-95/I-495 \(Woodrow Wilson\) Bridge over the Potomac](#) on the Capital Beltway in Washington, D.C., has an adjacent shared-use path on the bridge for more than a mile
- I-90 bridge over the Fox River in the Chicago area has a bicycle path underneath the main bridge
- I-80 crossing the eastern reaches of San Francisco Bay has an adjacent bicycle/pedestrian path
- I-680 crossing San Francisco Bay in California will have an adjacent bicycle/pedestrian path (under construction)
- I-10 over the Colorado at Blythe, CA
- I-80 Yolo Causeway bridge, between Sacramento and Davis, CA - approximately 3-mile section over the Yolo Bypass that includes a bike path physically separated by a barrier from the westbound traffic lanes
- I-82 Columbia River bridge between Washington State and Umatillan, OR
- I-5 bridge over the Columbia River at Vancouver, WA--sidewalks on both sides.
- Woodrow Wilson Bridge I-95 MD-VA (proposed)
- The Record of Decision for two planned new interstate highway bridges across the Ohio River in or near Louisville includes separated bicycle/pedestrian facilities for both bridges
- Interstate 395 bridge across the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. (immediately adjacent sidepath separated via jersey barriers)
- Interstate 66 bridge across the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. (immediately adjacent sidewalks on each side separated by guard rail)
- The I-395 and I-66 bike/ped facilities have existed for more than two decades without any safety problems related to their immediate proximity to the roadway.

(long report on integrating bike/ped facilities on highway projects in the appendix.)

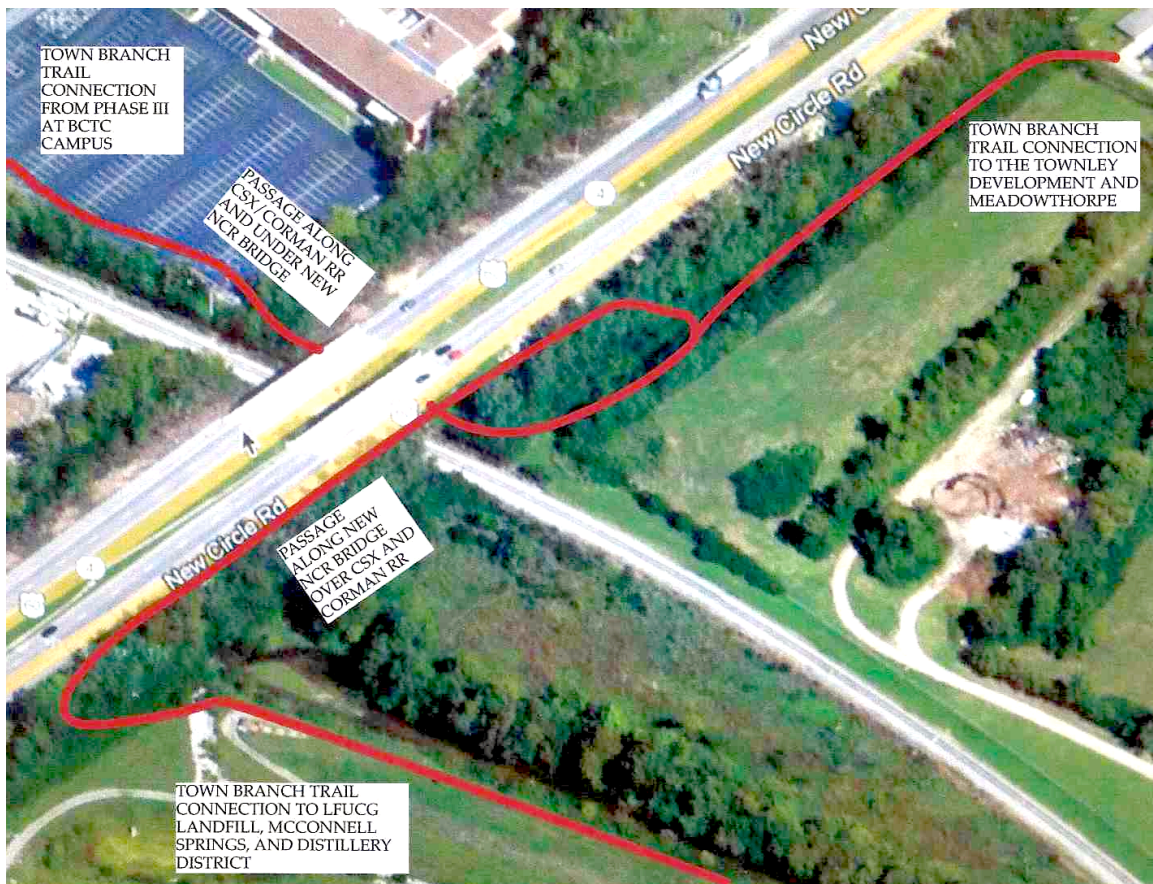
4) Town Branch Trail has standing to participate as a critical stakeholder in the expansion of New Circle Road.

Town Branch Trail, Inc. is a 501-c-3 non-profit corporation recognized by the KY Secretary of State since 2001 whose transportation oriented mission has been incorporated by the Leestown Road Expansion, Newtown Pike Extension (Oliver Lewis), LFUCG masterplans for greenways, Downtown Design, Downtown Streetscape, the Rupp District, and Town Branch Commons. LFUCG has received over \$1.5 million for this project in Federal funds administered by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. There is a corridor feasibility study and a local bond issue of \$2.2 million to design and develop the trail corridor in conjunction with the Lexington Distillery District.

For more information on this award-winning community non-profit log in at www.townbranch.org.

5) It would be most cost-effective use of taxpayer funds to build bicycle and pedestrian facilities as an integral component of the NCR expansion.

Members of the non-profit approached KTC engineers through public meetings and follow-up meetings to request consideration and to determine whether taxpayers would save money by building bike/ped facilities along with the NCR expansion. Thanks to design work produced by District 7 of the KTC, it is clear that it would be most cost-effective to build facilities during highway expansion when all related factors are considered (i.e. land costs and connectivity to key adjacent destinations).



This is the image Town Branch Trail, Inc. shared with staff of District 7 at the March 26th 2012 meeting where we requested a study of the most practical and cost-effective method for providing bike-ped access parallel with New Circle Road where it crosses the railroad and Town Branch Creek.

See draft plan of versions 3, 4, and 5 generated by district 7 engineers and staff to assess the best location and most cost effective design below. When considering railroad easements, land use (LFUCG), and basic connectivity of the trail, version 5 recommended by Town Branch Trail, Inc. is the most cost-effective.

6) The proposed addition is 1% of the total NCR expansion budget. It is not a significant expense when viewed as a mandated component from federal guidelines.

The \$872K estimated additional cost is not significant considering the \$80 million estimated cost for the entire project. Town Branch Trail is one of two citywide trail systems that will ultimately serve thousands of Lexingtonians daily and relieve air pollution, vehicle congestion, improve public health, property values, and economic vitality.

The Time is NOW! Make your voice heard!

Lexington needs the Transportation Cabinet to help extend Town Branch Trail to connect with McConnell Springs and Downtown.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC) is in the final planning stages for a New Circle Road expansion project located between Georgetown and Versailles Roads. This is a once in 40-year situation. Town Branch Trail, Inc. a local advocacy non-profit, has formally requested that a section of the proposed Town Branch Trail that intersects and parallels the highway expansion be constructed by the state. Where the highway crosses the Town Branch Creek and the CSX/RJ Corman rail line between Leestown Road and Old Frankfort Pike, it can provide a passage underneath as well as a parallel bridge over these shared obstacles. This request would add less than 1% to the total project budget. Our request is in keeping with federal mandates, national transportation guidelines, and dozens of existing precedents from around the country. Thus far the Cabinet staff has refused our request. This is a rare opportunity for Lexington to reduce the overall cost of the trail while speeding up the project's eventual connection with the distillery district, Rupp Arena, and Downtown. It is only practical that when the highway reconstruction occurs, parallel and interrelated bike/pedestrian transportation be included in the project. The economy of scale and integration of logistics will lower taxpayer expense and time horizon for this long planned project to be realized, while preserving the continuity and viability future sections of the Trail. . With greater citizen requests and input, we believe that the Cabinet will come around to acceding to this practical The completed two-mile section of the trail has already attracted strong public support and heavy use.

The time is short and we need your voice to be heard ASAP.

Town Branch Trail has been part of Lexington and state transportation long-range planning for over a decade. Putting bicycle and pedestrian facilities along highway bridges is now considered standard practice by national transportation guidelines. The US Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, *specifically* calls for this type of integration. Adding a trail section will be a tiny fraction of the overall budget for the New Circle Road project, yet would achieve a huge leap forward for the trail, saving taxpayers time and money in the long run. The connectivity this will benefit the Masterson Station, McConnell's Trace, Marehaven, Townley and Meadowthorpe neighborhoods. It will also connect the Leestown V.A., Military Reserve,

and BCTC campuses with this citywide greenway corridor. It will decrease traffic congestion, improve air quality, increase recreational opportunities and otherwise contribute to a better quality of life. Investment and rising land values are very strongly correlated with the construction of these trails.

Please sign our online petition and write a letter of support!