Bike Walk **Kentucky**

# Legislative Advocacy Package

Resources supporting active living, Complete Streets, community health, safety, and economic vitality across Kentucky.

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Prepared for Legislators, Committee Staff, and Community Leaders

# Complete Streets in Kentucky

**Understanding local policy frameworks for safe, accessible communities.**

As Kentucky communities grow, local leaders need flexible transportation solutions that serve everyone—whether they are driving, walking, cycling, or using assistive devices. Complete Streets is a design approach that ensures roads are planned, operated, and maintained to safely accommodate all users, regardless of age or ability.

**KENTUCKY IS LEADING THE WAY!**

Kentucky's Complete Streets, Roads, and Highways Manual earned a **national engineering excellence award** and is now being implemented statewide through KYTC.

## What It Is

- **A Flexible Design Approach:** A policy framework tailored entirely to a community's unique, local traffic patterns and geometric constraints.
- **Safety for All Users:** A proven method to reduce pedestrian fatalities and vehicle crashes through smart street design.
- **An Economic Driver:** A tool that boosts local businesses by creating welcoming, walkable downtown districts and increasing property values.
- **An Equity Equalizer:** A commitment to independent mobility for children, seniors, and Kentuckians living with disabilities.

## What It Is Not

- **A Mandated "One-Size-Fits-All":** It does not force rural county roads to adopt the exact same infrastructure rules as major metropolitan areas.
- **An Anti-Car Mandate:** It does not seek to ban motor vehicles or eliminate necessary lanes. It simply balances the existing right-of-way safely.
- **An Immediate Fiscal Burden:** It does not require local governments to tear up existing roads overnight. It can be integrated into routine paving cycles or future capital projects.
- **A Purely Recreational Utility:** It is not just about adding weekend bike paths. It is about creating vital, everyday connection networks to work and school.

## Why This Matters to Local Officials

Adopting a Complete Streets policy helps communities maximize infrastructure investments, leverage funding opportunities, and remain competitive for families, businesses, and tourism.

# The Multiplier Effect of Complete Streets

**How modern street design yields compounding returns for Kentucky communities.**

Investing in infrastructure that welcomes all users isn't just a transportation initiative—it's an economic, health, and civic catalyst. When we plan streets for people, local leaders unlock measurable benefits that strengthen the municipal bottom line and elevate quality of life across the Commonwealth.

## Economic & Fiscal Returns

- **Booming Commerce:** Foot traffic drives retail revenue. Foot-accessible districts see higher retail sales, lower commercial vacancy rates, and increased private investment.
- **Property Values:** Real estate data consistently shows that residential and commercial properties near safe walking and biking infrastructure experience sustained value growth.

## Public Health & Safety

- **Safer Corridors:** Proven street configurations like pedestrian refuge islands and protected lanes reduce pedestrian injuries by up to 50% and vehicle crashes overall.
- **Active Generations:** Providing safe spaces to walk and bike builds routine physical activity into everyday life, fighting chronic diseases and lowering municipal healthcare burdens.

## Social & Civic Vitality

- **Stronger Connections:** Walkable neighborhood streets foster routine community interaction, improve neighborhood pride, and significantly reduce social isolation for older residents.
- **Independent Seniors:** Welcoming streets ensure that children, seniors, Kentuckians living with disabilities can safely access everyday destinations without relying on a car.

## Long-Term Infrastructure ROI

- **Smarter Investments:** Complete Streets improvements are often incorporated into planned paving and reconstruction projects, reducing the need for costly standalone upgrades later.
- **Future-Proof Infrastructure:** Designing roads for all users from the beginning helps communities avoid expensive retrofits while maximizing long-term value.

## The Bottom Line for Municipal Budgets

Complete Streets turn static right-of-ways into active public assets. By optimizing our existing roadways to safely serve pedestrian and bicycle traffic alongside vehicles, local governments capture higher tax revenues from thriving business districts while mitigating the steep long-term costs of emergency services and premature roadway maintenance.

# Adopting a Complete Streets Policy

**A clear, step-by-step framework for Kentucky municipal leaders.**

Transforming community infrastructure doesn't happen by accident—it requires an intentional policy framework. Adopting a local Complete Streets resolution or ordinance provides municipal agencies with the clear directives and design standards needed to routinely build safer, more accessible roadways during everyday maintenance and development projects.

1

## Step 01 Establish the Vision

Define clear community goals. Formally state that all transportation projects must safely accommodate users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists.

2

## Step 02 Tailor the Policy to Your Community

Create an ordinance or resolution tailored to local context. Build in flexibility so solutions match community needs and roadway conditions.

3

## Step 03 Align Agency Workflows

Integrate the new standards into routine public works. Update municipal subdivision regulations, comprehensive plans, and regular paving cycles so Complete Streets design is automatic, not an afterthought.

4

## Step 04 Measure & Review Progress

Establish metrics to evaluate performance. Regularly publish progress reports to maintain accountability and track local infrastructure improvements.

### Accountability and Local Control

A local Complete Streets policy does not strip authority away from city council members or fiscal courts—it strengthens it. By establishing clear local standards up front, elected officials ensure that public tax dollars are consistently spent on highly durable, future-proof infrastructure projects that serve the entire community.

# Funding Complete Streets in Kentucky

**A summary of key state and federal resources to advance Complete Streets projects in Kentucky communities.**

Communities with a formal Complete Streets policy are often more competitive for discretionary federal grants because they have already demonstrated a commitment to safety and multi-modal transportation.

Implementing a Complete Streets policy unlocks diverse **state and federal funding streams**. Local governments can combine these resources to plan, design, and construct safer infrastructure.

| | Programs: | What It Covers: |
|---|---|---|
| **Federal Formula Funds** | Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program | Pedestrian facilities, bicycle infrastructure, sidewalks, trail projects, and safe routes to school initiatives. |
| | Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) | Flexible funding for state and local transportation needs; fully eligible for incorporating bike/ped accommodations into larger roadway projects. |

| | Program: | What It Covers: |
|---|---|---|
| **Federal Competitive Grants** | Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) | Planning and safety-focused grant opportunities for local communities and MPOs working to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries. |
| | Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program | Planning and project funding opportunities to address infrastructure barriers that limit local connectivity. |

| | Program: | What It Covers: |
|---|---|---|
| **State & Technical Assistance Resources** | Kentucky Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) | Data-driven state safety funding targeting high-risk corridors; highly applicable for systemic pedestrian safety counter-measures. |
| | SPAN Active Living Resources | Dedicated technical assistance and state-administered matching programs to help smaller communities meet federal grant requirements. |

Funding availability and eligibility requirements may change. Communities should consult current program guidance.

# Active Living in Kentucky

## Building Healthy, Vibrant, and Connected Communities

Active living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines. When communities make it safer and easier to walk, bike, and access everyday destinations, residents are more likely to stay active, healthy, and connected. Investments in active living support public health, strengthen local economies, and improve quality of life for Kentuckians of all ages and abilities.

### Physical Health

#### Preventing Chronic Disease

Regular physical activity helps reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and other chronic conditions. Safe walking and biking options make movement part of everyday life.

### Mental Wellness

#### Reducing Social Isolation

Walkable neighborhoods, trails, and public spaces encourage social interaction, strengthen community connections, and support mental well-being.

### Youth Mobility

#### Safe Routes & Healthy Habits

Safe walking and biking routes help children build confidence, develop healthy habits, and travel independently while increasing driver awareness near schools.

### Independent Aging

#### Supporting Mobility for Older Adults

Safe sidewalks, crossings, and connected routes help older adults remain active, independent, and engaged in community life.

### Stronger Communities

#### Connection Through Place

Walkable downtowns, connected neighborhoods, and welcoming public spaces strengthen local identity and encourage community engagement.

### Long-Term Value

#### A Smart Community Investment

Active living supports public health, transportation choice, community safety, and economic vitality while making healthy choices easier for residents.

### The Bottom Line for Kentucky Communities

Active living supports public health, safety, economic vitality, and transportation choice while making healthy lifestyles more accessible.

# Bike Walk Kentucky

**Connecting active living, safety, health, and community vitality across the Commonwealth.**

Bike Walk Kentucky works alongside local governments, public health agencies, schools, planners, business leaders, and community advocates to help create safer, healthier, and more connected communities. Through education, advocacy, technical assistance, and statewide partnerships, we help communities turn active living goals into practical local action.

## Advocacy

**A Voice at the Table:** Advocating for policies, funding opportunities, and planning practices that support safe walking, biking, and active transportation throughout Kentucky.

**Statewide Leadership:** Working with legislators, state agencies, local governments, and community partners to advance practical active living solutions.

## Education & Safety

**Building Local Capacity:** Providing communities with tools, training, workshops, and resources that help local leaders identify opportunities and move projects forward.

**Supporting Safer Travel:** Promoting programs and strategies that improve safety for people walking, biking, and using active transportation.

## Community Vitality

**Strengthening Local Communities:** Supporting efforts that connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, businesses, and community destinations.

**Highlighting Success Stories:** Documenting and sharing Kentucky examples that demonstrate how active living investments improve quality of life and economic vitality.

## Why It Matters:

Bike Walk Kentucky serves as a statewide connector, helping communities access resources, share successful models, build partnerships, and identify opportunities that support safer, healthier, and more vibrant places to live.

# The Economic Impact of Active Transportation

**How walking, biking, and connected communities strengthen Kentucky's economy.**

Investments in walking, biking, and active transportation are not just quality of life improvements. They are economic development tools that help communities attract visitors, support local businesses, strengthen property values, and remain competitive for future growth.

## Tourism & Visitor Spending

### Outdoor Destinations Drive Travel

Connected trail networks, greenways, and active transportation corridors help communities attract visitors who spend money at local restaurants, hotels, retail shops, and tourism destinations.

## Downtown Business Growth

### Foot Traffic Supports Commerce

Walkable downtowns encourage residents and visitors to spend more time in business districts, increasing visibility for local businesses and supporting long-term economic vitality.

## Talent Attraction & Quality of Life

### Communities Compete for People

Families, young professionals, and employers increasingly consider quality-of-life amenities when choosing where to live, work, and invest.

## Property & Infrastructure Value

### Smart Investments, Lasting Returns

Connected transportation networks support property values, attract private investment, and maximize public infrastructure dollars.

## The Bottom Line for Kentucky Communities

Active transportation investments help communities strengthen local economies, attract visitors, support businesses, and improve quality of life. When Kentucky communities become more connected, they become more competitive.