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**Executive Director**  
Knox van Nagell, J.D.

LFUCG Urban County Council  
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May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Dear Vice Mayor Kay and Council members,

My name is Knox van Nagell, and I am writing this letter on behalf of Fayette Alliance.

Through our advocacy efforts at government and beyond, Lexington can become the model for sustainable growth, by connecting and balancing its vibrant city with its unique and productive Bluegrass farmland.

In furtherance of this mission, Fayette Alliance **supports the recommendations of the Downtown Lexington Traffic Movement and Revitalization Study.**

Please visit <http://fayettealliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Two-Way-Streets-Study.pdf> for the study presentation.

Beginning in 2012, Stantec Engineering spearheaded the effort to assess the impacts of converting downtown's "one-way" streets to "two-way" arterials. Using traffic studies, operational considerations, and public feedback, the report is an important step in assessing this complex, yet pivotal planning issue for the city of Lexington.

The question of one-way and two-way streets has been on Lexington's radar since the 1950's.

Originally, all downtown streets were two-way and were converted to one-way beginning in the 1950's, to move traffic—and specifically people, goods, and general commerce—from our urban core as efficiently as possible.

Under this scheme, downtown was a pass-through, not a destination...and its one-way streets played a significant role in the flow of capital to our city's perimeter.

Growing outward created new markets and benefits to the community...but it came at a price that we are addressing today.



Over time, downtown and older neighborhoods suffered from depressed property values, reduced economic activity, social disparity, and diminished quality of life. We also lost Bluegrass farmland at an alarming rate, leading to a World Monument Fund designation for Lexington and the inner Bluegrass region in 2006. As we grew, new carbon footprint and water infrastructure challenges also surfaced throughout the community, confronting Lexington in unprecedented ways.

These factors, along with the great recession, the rise of the knowledge-based economy, demographic changes, peak oil, limited natural resources, and increased environmental regulation require that Lexington—and cities across America—function in a more compact, efficient, and sustainable way.

Once again, the question of two-way streets has an important role in Lexington's future. As demonstrated by countless cities all over the nation and world, the prevalence of two-way streets makes downtown a more attractive place to live, work, and invest.

For example, two way streets in Louisville, Raleigh, Denver, Minneapolis, and Vancouver have benefitted their urban cores in many ways, from calming traffic and improving retail activity, to increasing residential development, way-finding and business.

When feasibly constructed, two-way streets can unlock the economic potential of downtown, creating an urban core that can anchor infill redevelopment, and in turn farmland preservation efforts in Lexington. This hand-in-glove- strategy is both acknowledged and recommended by the 2006 Downtown Master Plan, the 2007 and 2013 Comprehensive Plans, and Destination 2040.

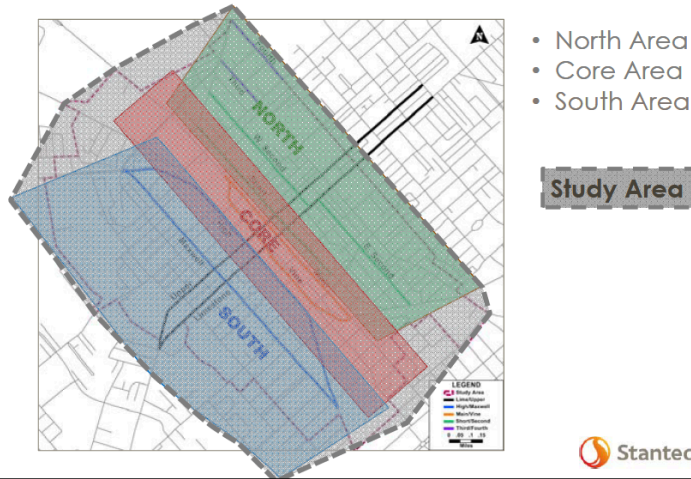
Therefore, pursuant to our local planning authorities and community's vision, Fayette Alliance supports the recommendations of the Downtown Lexington Traffic Movement and Revitalization Study. They are summarized below, and please see the full report for additional details:

### **Pedestrian Safety**

1. Consider implementing HAWK (High-Intensity Activated CrossWalk) Signals downtown where feasible. HAWKs allow for protected pedestrian crossings, stops auto-traffic only when needed, and is a more sophisticated alternative to standard traffic signals.
2. Consider eliminating "Right-of-Turn-on-Red" (RTOR) downtown. RTOR has limited benefits at most intersections, and yet it endangers pedestrians as drivers making RTOR frequently don't look both ways. RTOR is already prohibited at some downtown intersections.
3. Consider eliminating channelized turns.

## Two-Way Street Conversion

### Focus Area Studies



1. North Area: Pursue operational and design plans to convert Short, West Second, North Upper and North Limestone Streets. Public feedback and budgetary considerations will inform how and when this transition occurs.
2. South Area: No conversion of High, Maxwell, South Upper, South Limestone and Winslow Streets, due to substantial traffic delays and operational challenges.
3. Core Area: Delay any decision to convert Main and Vine Streets until after the Newtown Pike Extension and Town Branch Commons Projects are completed.

The Downtown Lexington Traffic Movement and Revitalization Study is an important first step in assessing the pivotal issue of two-way traffic in downtown Lexington. We respectfully request that you adopt its recommendations, understanding that further analysis is needed to examine the design, operations, property-value, and pedestrian impacts of the study.

Nonetheless, the recalibration of Lexington's growth model is connected to the presence of two-way streets in downtown, and we support their construction where feasible.

Thank you for your consideration of our position, and your leadership as we sustainably grow our city and promote our farms in Lexington-Fayette County.

All my best,

*Knox van Nagell*

Knox van Nagell, J.D.