



serving Knox County, the City of Knoxville, and the Town of Farragut

October 4, 2017

Dear MPC Commissioners:

**Community Health
Council**

Kristy Altman
Martha Buchanan
Jim Dickson
Lara Fleming, *Chair-elect*
Gaye Fortner
Pam Frye
Kindall Hurley
Viren Lalka
Dorothy LaMarche
Laurie Meschke
Joe Miles
Mitch Olszewski
Patricia Robledo
Jimmy Sherrod
Danielle DuFur Sims
Eve Thomas, *Chair*
Karen Tindal
Lisa Wagoner
Amanda Weber
Ellen Zavisca, *Past Chair*

We are writing to urge you to support the version of Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations that would require sidewalks in all new developments. As currently written, the Subdivision Regulations say that the Metropolitan Planning Commission “may” require sidewalks. As a result, sidewalks are required only on a case-by-case basis. This results in inequities between different neighborhoods, and also uncertainty for the development community. Revising the Regulations to require sidewalks in all new developments would increase walkability, decrease inequity, and positively impact the health of our community.

In 2016, the Community Health Council (CHC) serving Knox County, the City of Knoxville, and the Town of Farragut approved a [Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#) based on an extensive [Community Health Assessment](#). Both of these documents are available online at healthyknox.org. The CHIP identified increasing access to safe parks, greenways, and sidewalks as one of our most important health priorities for furthering our vision of “A healthy life for all.”

Access to sidewalks and greenways relates to community health in several important ways (as noted in our *Community Health Assessment*):

- Sidewalks make children safer and healthier by increasing opportunities to walk to school safely, and reducing traffic-related pollution.
- Lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure is a key cause of pedestrian fatalities.
- Those who live in walkable communities are twice as likely to meet physical activity guidelines, and are at reduced risk of obesity and developing diabetes as those who do not.



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In addition, our *Community Health Assessment* suggests that most people prefer living in neighborhoods with sidewalks and good places to walk (84% of Knox County residents reported that sidewalks are “somewhat or extremely important” for improving the quality of life in the county). Also, time to sell is shorter for homes with sidewalks. The investment in infrastructure for active transportation benefits a substantial portion of the population, with 11% of all trips are taken by walking or bicycling. Finally, getting street design right the first time, rather than having to come in and build sidewalks later on, saves our local governments money.

Given the relationship between walkability and bikeability to community health, we have made increasing access to sidewalks and greenways one of our top health priorities. We urge you to do the same and support the version of the Subdivision Regulations that would require sidewalks in new developments.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you have regarding our position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joe Miles'.

Joe Miles
Chair, Policy and Advocacy Committee
Community Health Council



Betty Jo Mahan <bettyjo.mahan@knoxmpc.org>

[MPC Comment] Sidewalks, please!

1 message

DEBRA <vanmetes@comcast.net>

Tue, Oct 10, 2017 at 12:02 AM

Reply-To: vanmetes@comcast.net

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Dear Commissioners,

Please support the inclusion of sidewalks on all streets of the new subdivisions to be built in Knox County.
Thank you for moving Knox County forward.

Sincerely,
Debra Van Meter
[8700 Darien Ct.](#)
[Knoxville, TN 37922](#)

Sent from XFINITY Connect Mobile App

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org