



To: Knoxville - Knox County Planning Commission Members  
From: Isaac Thorne, Director of Transit for the City of Knoxville  
Date: June 7, 2023  
Re: Ordinance Amendment 8-A-22-OA

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Transit service operates where people need to go – in Knoxville, this is often along major corridors, where jobs and shopping opportunities keep our economy working for everyone. A key component of quality transit service is pedestrian comfort. KAT considers essential any effort by the Planning Commission and individual developers to make the pedestrian environment safer and more comfortable.

Whether we create the infrastructure or not, pedestrians already use these spaces, in particular much of the area proposed as exempt from this ordinance. KAT serves Chapman Highway as far south as South Grove shopping area. We do this because job opportunities exist all along this corridor for those taking transit. The same is true of Broadway, and along Kingston Pike all the way to the Cedar Bluff area, and to the east past Prosser Road. Pedestrians are getting on and off transit buses throughout these corridors. Build-to-zones and build-to-percentages are an excellent way to use the design process to enhance pedestrian access to the corridor, make transit work more efficiently, and create a safer experience for those with mobility limitations and others traveling without a car.

When new developments are approved, the reality is that people without cars will also need to use these spaces. Exempting areas with already existing transit service only perpetuates the pedestrian experience as more difficult, uncomfortable, and dangerous. KAT does our utmost to get people to destinations that matter to them, but this very often means serving areas with no sidewalks or pedestrian comforts. KAT encourages every redevelopment opportunity along these corridors to include design features that improve the pedestrian experience, and build-to-zones and percentages are an excellent way to accomplish that. We recommend that the ordinance apply to all corridor areas served by transit. However, it is our opinion that this ordinance should apply to the entire corridor, as transit will continue to expand as development does, leaving the same challenges at a future date for any exempted areas.