



April 8, 2016

Mayor Jim Gray  
Office of the Mayor  
200 E. Main Street  
Lexington, KY 40507

Dear Mayor Gray,

As president and CEO of the Lexington Center Corporation, I am intimately familiar with infrastructure needs of downtown Lexington. The Lexington Center is the region's most popular multi-use entertainment, convention, and shopping complex. It includes a 130,000-square-foot convention center, a 23,000-seat arena, an historic opera house, shops, two hotels and Triangle Park, which is an important downtown green space and gathering spot.

Within a day's drive of 75 percent of the nation's population, Lexington Center is a gathering spot for hundreds of thousands of people each year – more than 120,000 annually for basketball alone. In fact, some would argue that the basketball arena is the heart of our entire state.

Unfortunately, the people coming to our center each year are not as connected to the rest of downtown as they should be. Pedestrian crossings are inadequate, and in some key points nonexistent. There is not the sort of bike infrastructure that would encourage cyclists to attend our events and attractions without a car. In short, our guests can feel like they are "on an island" – with no clear, safe or inviting way to fan out into the city, experience its amenities or support its businesses.

That's why we support the Town Branch Common Corridor project. This is an opportunity to transform downtown Lexington in a fundamental and powerful way – strengthening the arteries that connect the "heart of Kentucky" with the city that supports it.

New bike lanes would not only lead to the Lexington Center but would cross our center to connect with trail ways that lead throughout the region. And it will ensure that the planned Town Branch Park will become an interconnected, multi-modal "destination" for our community and visitors. It will make the already beloved Triangle Park easier for families to access.

The Lexington Center is a vital gathering point for Lexington and our entire region, but this plan will help it better integrate into the fabric of downtown in a truly transformational way.

Sincerely,

Bill Owen  
President and CEO  
Lexington Center Corporation

**Lexington Center Corporation**

430 West Vine Street • Lexington, KY 40507-1654 • (859) 233-4567 • Fax (859) 253-2718  
www.lexingtoncenter.com • www.rupparena.com • www.lexingtonoperahouse.com