

# STREET PATTERNS & CONTINUITY

## SUBDIVISION REGULATION AMENDMENT

QUESTIONS

### Why now?

Residents have repeatedly made it clear that they want safer transportation and more options. Lexington’s current regulations are designed for cars, and we’ve built precisely that; a car-centric city that produces congestion and discourages bike and pedestrian activity. The proposed changes actually improve the conditions for cars through better traffic distribution, but also provide a street pattern that allows for a more walkable and bikeable environment.

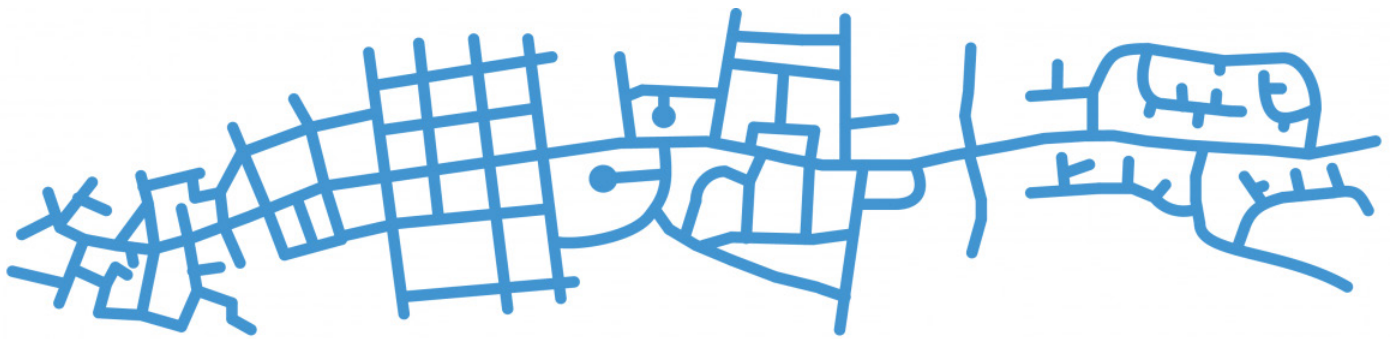
### What are the shortcomings of our current standards?

Nationally, most new desirable neighborhoods provide a high proportion of four-way intersections, few dead-end streets and small street block sizes in the range of 250 to 600 feet. However, currently, in Lexington:

- Maximum block lengths allowed are roughly three times the national standard
- About 25% of all intersections lead to a cul-de-sac (the least connected)
- Only 10% of all intersections are 4-way (the most connected), and most of those are located inside New Circle Road

### The Evolution of Street Patterns Over Time

Road systems began as a series of interconnected paths which evolved into a walkable grid. Following World War II, the increased use of automobiles began to lead to longer block lengths and curvilinear streets, and eventually to a system of disjointed cul-de-sac streets.



## What is changing?

A more connected street network creates safer, more desirable neighborhoods with reduced congestion and improved bicycle and pedestrian options. Traffic bottlenecks, emergency response times, walkability and overall network continuity can be improved by proactively looking at Lexington's standards for new development street patterns:

- Revised standards for more manageable blocks:
  - Maximum block length from 1,600 ft to 800 ft.
  - Remove 500 ft minimum block length.
- Revised standards for cul-de-sacs
  - Maximum cul-de-sac length from 1,000 ft to 500 ft
  - Prohibiting cul-de-sacs off of cul-de-sacs
- Revised standard for access to adjacent developments
  - Require street connections into adjacent developments or vacant land every 1/4 mile
  - Existing or proposed public facilities (parks, schools, open spaces, greenways) must have the majority of the facility front onto a street in new developments

## Why change it?

Improving the layout and continuity of our streets has a number of benefits:

- Supports the [Mayor's Commission for Racial Justice & Equality](#) goal of integrated, walkable, transit-accessible neighborhoods for all residents
- [Improves emergency service response time](#)
- [Reduces severe and fatal crashes](#)
- [Reduces congestion through better traffic distribution by increasing network capacity without adding extra lanes to major roads](#)
- [Reduces speed on major neighborhood streets](#)
- [Encourages the use of non-motorized transportation](#)
- [Better transit access](#)
- [Supports the development of desirable neighborhoods and sets up future development for success with ample access](#)
  - Click [here](#) for quick access to the full list of resources related the benefits of street continuity in urban environments.

[READ THE FULL PROPOSAL](#)



### Street Patterns & Continuity in the Comprehensive Plan

[Theme D – Connectivity](#) of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, Imagine Lexington, is dedicated to policies that prescribe a complete and connected transportation network. A set of [action items](#) derived from these policies serve to guide the direct implementation of these concepts, as they call for amendments to the Land Subdivision Regulations (such as this one) and the continued employment of the goals within the Lexington Area MPO Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan.

[Theme D, Connectivity Policy #1](#) specifically calls for context sensitive street designs that complement different land uses and add to sense of place. [Connectivity Policy #2](#) presents the need for multi-modal street networks that satisfy all user needs. [Connectivity Policy #4](#) recommends the intentional design of “street networks that provide alternative route options, which reduces traffic congestion.”