

[Provide input at kentonconnects.org](http://kentonconnects.org)

Kenton Connects plan will promote safety, choices

You may have seen one of the three public service announcements that ran online last month and on Spectrum cable television. These 30-second spots were designed to promote bicycle and pedestrian awareness and to engage viewers in a planning effort called *Kenton Connects* being pursued currently by PDS. Outreach for the plan has begun and will occur throughout its year-long development.

Kenton Connects will include an analysis of existing bicycle and pedestrian issues and recommendations on how to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety in Kenton County. PDS staff is researching existing conditions in the county currently. It will then gather input from residents and examine opportunities to make improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians.

PDS will provide several opportunities for input from the public. Residents are encouraged to visit KentonConnects.org to provide input on bicycle and pedestrian conditions and safety issues in Kenton County. At least one public meeting will be held later this year to discuss the survey results and to gather additional input.

“The public service announcements focused on bicycle, pedestrian, and driver safety,” said Chris Schneider, AICP, a PDS principal planner and project manager of the study. “Helping people learn about bicycle and pedestrian safety issues is a big part of the *Kenton Connects* outreach process.”

The public service announcements were made possible by a generous Paula Nye Grant from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.



Getting around in Kenton County has changed over the past two decades. Gasoline was \$1.50 per gallon in 1999, options like Uber and Lyft were unheard of, and thinking of bicycle and pedestrian transportation as a real travel option was uncommon. But, time changes people's perceptions; active means of transportation are growing more popular by the year.

“We've witnessed these changes firsthand,” said Dennis Gordon, FAICP, executive director at PDS. “They've occurred so gradually in some cases that we don't even consider them to be changes. Red Bike stations are the perfect illustration. Who would've thought that urban areas would be so attractive that people would want to be there and to get around in them in anything but a car? And yet, today they're all over our downtown urban centers”

Kenton County's comprehensive plan — *Direction 2030: Your Voice. Your Choice.* — was adopted just three years ago in 2014. One of the plan's recommendations was to conduct a review of bicycle and pedestrian issues in Kenton County

and then update the community's bicycle and pedestrian plans. *Kenton Connects* is a comprehensive update to the most recent bicycle (1999) and pedestrian plans (2001).

Direction 2030 focused on public involvement and hearing from residents from throughout the community. Many comments received through that input process included issues related to safety, infrastructure, and improving bicycle and pedestrian options.

“*Kenton Connects* will be designed to encourage those who live, work, and play in Kenton County to choose these transportation options

more easily and frequently,” says Schneider. “It will work to promote a higher level of safety, convenience, efficiency, and comfort for cyclists and walkers.”

Kenton Connects will also establish benchmark goals, which can be reviewed in future bicycle and pedestrian plans and updated periodically. One benchmark goal includes investigating existing bicycle and pedestrian crash data and working toward reducing those numbers each year. Another benchmark goal is to identify current bicycle and pedestrian usage at key locations in Kenton County and using that information as a starting point for comparison in future years.

“Be sure to visit KentonConnects.org to complete the survey,” concluded Gordon. “Make sure you enter your email address too to receive additional information and meeting notices about the plan. We want to make sure it reflects your thoughts. It's *your* future.”

Contact Chris Schneider at 859/331-8980 or cschneider@pdskc.org for more information about the planning process and ways you can play a role in *Kenton Connects*.

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2332 Royal Drive
Fort Mitchell, KY 41017 859/331-8980

