

Infrastructure & Transportation

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INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

Dave Biggers for Louisville Mayor 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Louisville's infrastructure is crumbling and our transportation system forces car dependency while neglecting the needs of people who walk, bike, or take transit. Roads are riddled with potholes. Sidewalks are missing or inaccessible. TARC bus service is inadequate and unreliable. Meanwhile, we've spent billions on highways that carved through Black neighborhoods while starving investment in public transit and pedestrian infrastructure.

Dave Biggers believes **infrastructure should connect communities, not divide them—and everyone deserves safe, reliable transportation regardless of whether they own a car**. While many infrastructure decisions are made at state and federal levels, Louisville Metro controls significant infrastructure investments and can transform our transportation system to serve all residents.

The Challenge

Louisville's infrastructure and transportation crisis shows up in stark numbers:

1. **Crumbling Infrastructure:** \$2.5 billion in deferred maintenance. 500+ miles of roads in poor condition. 40% of bridges structurally deficient. Water main breaks weekly.

2. **Car Dependency:** 83% of Louisville residents drive alone to work (national average: 76%). Only 2.5% use transit. Infrastructure designed for cars, not people.
3. **Transit Inadequacy:** TARC ridership down 60% since 2000. Buses every 30-60 minutes (vs. 10-15 minutes in functional systems). No weekend service on many routes. No rapid transit.
4. **Pedestrian & Cyclist Safety:** Louisville has 3x national average pedestrian fatality rate. 100+ pedestrian deaths over past 5 years. Almost no protected bike infrastructure.
5. **Infrastructure Inequality:** West Louisville streets get paved every 30-40 years; East End every 15-20 years. Sidewalk completion: 95% in East End, 40% in West Louisville.

Dave's Vision

Dave will transform Louisville's infrastructure and transportation through equitable investment and multimodal planning:

Fix It First (\$50M annually): Prioritize maintenance over new construction. Repair roads, bridges, sidewalks with equity lens (invest most in long-neglected neighborhoods).

Complete Streets (\$15M annually): Redesign streets to serve all users—pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers. Prioritize safety over speed.

Transit Transformation (\$20M annually): Increase TARC frequency, extend hours, create rapid transit corridors, expand service to underserved areas.

Vision Zero (\$8M annually): Eliminate traffic deaths through street redesign, speed reduction, enforcement, education.

Green Infrastructure (\$10M annually - overlaps with): Integrate stormwater management, tree planting, climate resilience into all infrastructure projects.

Budget Impact

This policy requires **\$103 million in new annual spending** (includes some overlap with)—funded through reallocation of highway funds to local streets, federal infrastructure grants, bonding for capital projects, and MSD cost-sharing for green infrastructure.

All proposals fit within Louisville Metro's \$1.2 billion annual general fund budget plus dedicated capital funds and federal/state partnerships.

Why This Matters

Infrastructure is economic development. Businesses locate where workers can get to jobs. Crumbling roads cost drivers \$500+ annually in repairs. Transit enables workforce participation for people who can't afford cars.

Transportation is equity. Low-income residents, elderly, people with disabilities, and children depend on walking, transit, biking. Car-centric infrastructure excludes them.

Safety is a right. 100+ pedestrian deaths in 5 years is a public health crisis. Vision Zero cities (NYC, Seattle, SF) have reduced traffic deaths 40-60% through infrastructure changes.

Climate demands transformation. Transportation is 30% of Louisville's emissions. We cannot meet climate goals while locking in car dependency.

Dave's infrastructure and transportation agenda will repair what's broken, invest equitably, serve all users, and build the connected, sustainable Louisville we need.

CURRENT SITUATION: CRUMBLING, CAR-CENTRIC, INEQUITABLE

By the Numbers

Infrastructure Condition:

- **Deferred Maintenance Backlog:** \$2.5 billion (roads, bridges, sewers, facilities)
- **Roads in Poor Condition:** 500+ miles (25% of street network)
- **Bridges Structurally Deficient:** 40% (national average: 7%)
- **Water Main Breaks:** 400+ annually (infrastructure from 1920s-40s)
- **Annual Infrastructure Investment:** \$120M (need \$200M+ to maintain)

Transportation Mode Share:

- **Drive Alone:** 83% (national average: 76%)
- **Carpool:** 9%
- **Public Transit:** 2.5%
- **Walk:** 2%
- **Bike:** 0.5%
- **Work from Home:** 3%

TARC (Public Transit):

- **Ridership:** 7.05 million annual trips (2024) (down from 20 million in 2000)
- **Routes:** approximately 30 routes (after 2024-25 cuts) serving 750,000 people

- **Frequency:** Average 30-60 minute headways (vs. 10-15 in functional systems)
- **Weekend Service:** Limited or nonexistent on many routes
- **On-Time Performance:** 72% (vs. 85%+ in well-run systems)
- **Annual Funding:** \$90M (\$55M local, \$35M federal)

Safety:

- **Traffic Deaths:** 100-120 annually (60% increase since 2010)
- **Pedestrian Deaths:** 20-30 annually (3x national average per capita)
- **Cyclist Deaths:** 2-5 annually
- **High-Injury Network:** 5% of streets account for 50% of severe injuries/deaths

Infrastructure Inequality:

- **Pavement Quality (West Louisville):** Average PCI 45 (poor condition)
- **Pavement Quality (East End):** Average PCI 75 (good condition)
- **Sidewalk Completion (West Louisville):** 40%
- **Sidewalk Completion (East End):** 95%
- **Tree Canopy (affects infrastructure):** West Louisville 20%, East End 60%

Major Problems

Problem 1: \$2.5 Billion Deferred Maintenance—Infrastructure Crumbling

Louisville has systematically underfunded infrastructure maintenance for decades, creating a \$2.5 billion backlog:

Roads:

- 500+ miles in poor condition (potholes, crumbling pavement, failed drainage)
- Proper maintenance cycle: Resurface every 15-20 years
- Actual cycle: 25-40 years (roads deteriorate beyond repair before resurfacing)
- Once pavement fails, repair costs 4x more than timely maintenance

Bridges:

- 40% structurally deficient (vs. 7% national average)
- Many built 1950s-70s, reaching end of design life
- Annual bridge investment: \$15M (need \$40M to address backlog)
- Weight restrictions on 50+ bridges (limits economic activity)

Water/Sewer Infrastructure:

- 400+ water main breaks annually
- Combined sewer system from 1920s-40s
- 7 billion gallons untreated sewage overflow annually (EPA consent decree)
- \$4.5 billion needed for sewer separation (MSD responsible, but impacts Metro infrastructure)

Facilities:

- Louisville Metro buildings, parks, community centers aging

- Deferred maintenance: HVAC, roofs, ADA accessibility
- Many facilities 40-60+ years old without major updates

Why deferred maintenance happens:

1. **New construction politically popular:** Ribbon-cutting for new projects; maintenance is invisible
2. **Short-term budget thinking:** Delay maintenance to balance budget this year; pay much more later
3. **State/federal incentives favor new construction:** Grants for highways, not maintenance
4. **Cumulative neglect:** Small delays compound into major backlog

Consequences:

- **Economic costs:** Drivers pay \$500+ annually in vehicle damage from potholes
- **Safety:** Poor road conditions cause crashes; deficient bridges risk collapse
- **Inequality:** Neglect concentrated in low-income neighborhoods
- **Climate vulnerability:** Failed drainage infrastructure exacerbates flooding

Problem 2: Car Dependency—Infrastructure Designed for Cars, Not People

Louisville's transportation system locks residents into car dependency through infrastructure choices:

Highway dominance:

- I-64, I-65, I-71, I-264, I-265 (Watterson, Snyder Expressways)
- Highways carved through Black neighborhoods (Urban Renewal 1950s-70s): Russell, Smoketown, Shawnee destroyed by interstate construction
- State prioritizes highway expansion over transit, bike, pedestrian infrastructure

Land use patterns:

- Sprawl: Louisville annexation created low-density development requiring cars
- Single-use zoning: Residential separated from commercial/employment
- Parking minimums: Require vast parking lots (subsidizes driving, makes walking/biking unpleasant)

Transit underinvestment:

- TARC budget \$90M annually (Indianapolis: \$150M, Nashville: \$120M for similar populations)
- No rapid transit (Bus Rapid Transit, light rail, commuter rail)
- Frequency inadequate: 30-60 minute waits make transit impractical for most trips
- Coverage gaps: Entire areas unserved or underserved

Pedestrian/bike infrastructure minimal:

- Sidewalk network incomplete (40% missing in West Louisville)
- Crosswalks sparse, poorly marked
- Bike lanes: 100 miles, mostly unprotected (paint, not physical separation)
- Dangerous street design: Wide lanes, high speeds, prioritize car throughput over safety

Who suffers:

- **Low-income residents:** Can't afford cars (\$9,000+ annual cost); inadequate transit limits job access
- **Elderly:** Driving ability declines; transit/walkability essential for independence
- **People with disabilities:** Many can't drive; need accessible transit and sidewalks
- **Children/teens:** Can't drive; need safe walking/biking to school, activities
- **Environmental:** Car dependency drives emissions, sprawl, climate change

Cost of car dependency:

- **Economic exclusion:** 10% of Louisville households have no vehicle; limited job access
- **Financial burden:** Low-income households spend 20-30% of income on transportation
- **Health:** Sedentary lifestyle contributes to obesity, diabetes, heart disease
- **Climate:** Transportation 30% of Louisville's greenhouse gas emissions

Problem 3: TARC Inadequate and Declining—Public Transit Failing

Louisville's public transit system is in crisis:

Ridership collapse:

- 2000: 20 million annual trips
- 2024: 7.05 million annual trips (2024) (60% decline)

Why ridership declined:

1. **Frequency cuts:** Reduced service frequency to save money; made transit less useful; fewer riders; more cuts (death spiral)
2. **Coverage cuts:** Eliminated routes in low-ridership areas (but left residents stranded)
3. **Competition from cars:** Gas prices low (relative to transit investment); rideshare (Uber/Lyft) provides convenience transit can't match with 30-60 minute waits
4. **Perception:** Unreliable, slow, uncomfortable; only for people with no other option

Current inadequacies:**Frequency:**

- Average headways: 30-60 minutes
- Functional transit: 10-15 minutes (short enough to “just show up” without checking schedule)
- Louisville’s 30-60 minute waits require careful planning; miss bus = 1 hour late

Coverage:

- Routes serve major corridors but miss many neighborhoods
- East End, suburban areas: Minimal service
- West Louisville, South End: Better coverage but still gaps
- Late-night: Almost nothing (limits service industry workers’ ability to get home from evening shifts)

Reliability:

- On-time performance: 72% (vs. 85%+ in well-run systems)
- Breakdowns common (aging fleet)
- No real-time tracking on many routes

Speed:

- Average speed: 12-15 mph (could walk almost as fast)
- No dedicated bus lanes (buses stuck in traffic)
- Frequent stops (every 2-3 blocks slows trips)

Comfort:

- Aging buses (average age 10+ years; should be 7-8)
- Poor accessibility (some buses lack working ramps)
- Shelters: Only 40% of stops have shelters (exposed to weather)

Result: Transit is last resort, not viable choice for most residents

Problem 4: Pedestrian & Cyclist Deaths—Streets Designed to Kill

Louisville has a pedestrian safety crisis:

Pedestrian fatality rate: 3x national average**2019-2024: 100+ pedestrian deaths****Why pedestrians die:**

1. **Street design prioritizes speed over safety:**
2. Wide lanes (12-14 feet) encourage speeding
3. Long crossing distances (4-6 lanes common)
4. Poor visibility (curves, hills, lack of street lighting)
5. No refuge islands (pedestrians must cross entire width without rest)

6. Lack of crosswalks:

7. Major roads: Crosswalks 1/2 mile apart (pedestrians cross mid-block dangerously)
8. Unmarked crosswalks: Drivers don't yield
9. Poor signal timing: Insufficient time for elderly, disabled to cross

10. High speeds:

11. Speed limits: 35-45 mph on arterials (crash at 40 mph = 85% fatality risk; crash at 25 mph = 10% fatality risk)
12. Design speed often exceeds posted limit (wide lanes, gentle curves encourage speeding)
13. Minimal enforcement

14. Driver behavior:

15. Distraction (phones)
16. Impairment (alcohol, drugs)
17. Failure to yield

Where deaths happen:

- **High-injury network:** 5% of streets (major arterials) account for 50% of severe injuries and deaths
- Corridors: Dixie Highway, Preston Highway, Bardstown Road, Broadway
- Concentrated in low-income areas (West Louisville, South End) with worst infrastructure

Cyclist deaths:

- 2-5 annually
- Lack of protected bike infrastructure
- Conflicts with cars at high speeds

Louisville lacks Vision Zero commitment:

Vision Zero: Swedish traffic safety philosophy adopted by 40+ U.S. cities; goal is ZERO traffic deaths

Principles:

- Deaths/severe injuries are unacceptable and preventable

- Human error is inevitable; infrastructure should protect people
- Speed is key factor; lower speeds save lives

Vision Zero cities' results:

- New York: 40% reduction in traffic deaths (2014-2024)
- Seattle: 35% reduction
- San Francisco: 50% reduction

Louisville has taken no comprehensive action**Problem 5: Infrastructure Inequality—Neglect Concentrated in Black Neighborhoods**

Louisville's infrastructure inequality is stark and measurable:

Pavement quality:

- West Louisville average PCI (Pavement Condition Index): 45 (poor)
- East End average PCI: 75 (good)
- West Louisville streets resurfaced every 30-40 years; East End every 15-20 years

Why inequality persists:

1. **Historical racism:** Redlining, urban renewal, highway construction targeted Black neighborhoods
2. **Political power:** Affluent white neighborhoods organize, demand; city responds
3. **Squeaky wheel gets grease:** East End residents complain about potholes; repairs happen quickly
4. **Funding formulas:** Some infrastructure funding tied to property values (higher values = more revenue = better infrastructure)
5. **Cumulative neglect:** Decades of underinvestment compound

Sidewalks:

- West Louisville: 40% of streets lack sidewalks
- East End: 95% sidewalk completion
- ADA accessibility: West Louisville sidewalks often lack curb cuts, have trip hazards

Street lighting:

- West Louisville: Sparse, outdated, many outages
- East End: Well-lit, modern LED streetlights

Drainage:

- West Louisville: Flooding common (inadequate storm sewers, catch basins)
- East End: Better drainage infrastructure

Consequences:

- **Safety:** Poor infrastructure in West Louisville contributes to higher crash rates
- **Economic:** Infrastructure quality affects property values, business attraction
- **Equity:** Residents in neglected neighborhoods pay same taxes but receive inferior services
- **Health:** Lack of sidewalks discourages walking (obesity, diabetes); flooding creates mold, health hazards

Why Current System Persists

Six factors maintain the status quo:

1. **State control:** Kentucky controls highways, major roads; Louisville has limited authority
2. **Federal highway funding:** Incentivizes road expansion over maintenance/transit
3. **Political culture:** “Cars = freedom”; transit/bike/walk seen as socialist or anti-American
4. **Fragmented governance:** Transit (TARC), sewers (MSD), roads (Metro Public Works), highways (state) lack coordination
5. **Short-term budgeting:** Deferred maintenance saves money this year; costs explode later
6. **Inequality normalized:** Affluent residents ignore infrastructure inequality affecting others

Bottom Line: Without major intervention, infrastructure will continue crumbling, car dependency will deepen, transit will decline, pedestrian deaths will continue, and inequality will worsen.

Dave Biggers will change course.

DAVE’S VISION: INFRASTRUCTURE THAT CONNECTS & SERVES ALL

Dave Biggers believes **infrastructure should connect communities, not divide them**—and **everyone deserves safe, reliable transportation regardless of wealth or car ownership**.

Core Principles

1. **Fix It First:** Maintain what we have before building new. Repair beats replacement.

2. **Equity:** Invest most in long-neglected neighborhoods. Repair historical harms.
3. **Multimodal:** Serve pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers—not just cars.
4. **Safety:** Vision Zero—accept zero traffic deaths. Design for safety, not speed.
5. **Sustainability:** Integrate climate resilience, green infrastructure, emissions reduction into all projects.

Goals (4-Year Term)

By 2029, Dave will achieve:

- ☐ **500 miles of roads repaired:** Focus on worst-condition streets in West Louisville, South End
 - ☐ **50 bridges rehabilitated:** Address most critical structural deficiencies
 - ☐ **100 miles of new sidewalks:** Complete gaps, prioritize West Louisville
 - ☐ **TARC ridership doubled:** From 8 million to 16 million annual trips through frequency, coverage, quality improvements
 - ☐ **Zero traffic deaths:** Vision Zero program reduces fatalities 50% (from 100-120 to 50-60) with goal of elimination
 - ☐ **50 miles of protected bike lanes:** Safe cycling network connecting neighborhoods
 - ☐ **Rapid transit corridor:** Bus Rapid Transit on major corridor (Broadway or Bardstown Road)
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DETAILED PROPOSALS

Proposal 1: Fix It First—Equitable Infrastructure Maintenance (\$50M Annually)

What It Is

Prioritize maintenance of existing infrastructure over new construction, with equity lens ensuring long-neglected neighborhoods receive investment first.

Three Components:**Component 1: Roads & Pavement (\$30M annually)****Equity-based prioritization:**

Not first-come-first-served; not political favors; **data-driven equity:**

1. **Pavement Condition Index (PCI):** Measure all streets; prioritize worst condition
2. **Equity overlay:** Within similar PCI, prioritize neighborhoods with longest time since last resurfacing
3. **Result:** West Louisville streets (PCI 45, 30-40 years since resurfacing) receive priority over East End streets (PCI 65, 15 years since resurfacing)

Annual output:

- 500 miles of streets resurfaced over 4 years (125 miles annually)
- Pothole repairs year-round (48-hour response time in winter)
- Focus: West Louisville, South End, underserved neighborhoods receive 60% of investment

Maintenance strategies:

- **Preventive maintenance:** Seal coating, crack sealing (extends pavement life 5-10 years at 10% the cost of full resurfacing)
- **Full-depth reclamation:** Recycle existing pavement in place (cheaper, more sustainable than removal/replacement)
- **Drainage improvements:** Fix underlying drainage issues causing pavement failure

Component 2: Bridges (\$15M annually)**Prioritization:**

1. Structural deficiency (safety first)
2. Traffic volume (serve most people)
3. Equity (bridges serving low-income neighborhoods prioritized within similar deficiency)

Annual output:

- 12-15 bridges rehabilitated annually (50 over 4 years)
- Focus on structurally deficient bridges limiting emergency response, economic activity

Component 3: Sidewalks & Pedestrian Infrastructure (\$5M annually)**Sidewalk completion:**

- 100 miles of new sidewalks over 4 years (25 miles annually)
- Priority: West Louisville (40% completion → 60%), schools (safe routes to school), transit stops (every stop gets sidewalk)

ADA accessibility:

- Curb ramps at all intersections
- Repair trip hazards (heaved pavement, tree root conflicts)
- Tactile warnings at crossings (for visually impaired)

Crosswalks:

- High-visibility markings (ladder or zebra striping)
- Rapid-flashing beacons at high-traffic crossings
- Refuge islands on wide streets

Why It Matters**Maintenance is cheaper than replacement:**

- Preventive maintenance: \$3-5 per square yard
- Full reconstruction: \$40-60 per square yard
- **Every dollar in maintenance saves \$10 in future reconstruction**

Equity addresses historical injustice:

- West Louisville has been neglected for decades
- Equity-based investment repairs harms
- All residents deserve quality infrastructure

Economic benefits:

- Good roads save drivers \$500 annually in vehicle repairs
- Smooth pavement improves freight efficiency
- Quality infrastructure attracts businesses, residents

Safety:

- Smooth pavement reduces crashes
- Sidewalks prevent pedestrian deaths
- Bridge maintenance prevents collapses

Budget

Annual Cost: \$50 million

Breakdown:

- Roads/pavement: \$30M (125 miles annually)
- Bridges: \$15M (12-15 bridges annually)
- Sidewalks/pedestrian: \$5M (25 miles sidewalks, 100 crosswalks)

Funding Sources:

- Metro general fund: \$20M (reallocation from new construction)
- Federal Infrastructure Act: \$15M (maintenance now eligible under new federal law)
- State highway funds (local match): \$10M
- Bonding (capital projects): \$5M

Cost-Benefit:

- Every \$1 in maintenance saves \$10 in future reconstruction
- \$50M annually prevents \$500M in future costs

Implementation Timeline**Year 1 (2026):**

- January-March: Conduct comprehensive pavement condition survey
- April-June: Develop equity-based prioritization model
- July-December: Repair 100 miles of roads (focus West Louisville); rehabilitate 10 bridges; install 20 miles sidewalks

Year 2 (2027):

- 125 miles roads repaired (225 cumulative)
- 12 bridges (22 cumulative)
- 25 miles sidewalks (45 cumulative)

Year 3 (2028):

- 125 miles roads (350 cumulative)
- 15 bridges (37 cumulative)
- 25 miles sidewalks (70 cumulative)
- West Louisville pavement quality measurably improved

Year 4 (2029):

- 125 miles roads (475 cumulative)
- 13 bridges (50 cumulative)
- 30 miles sidewalks (100 cumulative)
- Infrastructure inequality significantly reduced

Proposal 2: Complete Streets for All Users (\$15M Annually)**What It Is**

Redesign streets to serve all users—pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers—not just cars. Every street project incorporates safety, accessibility, multimodal features.

Complete Streets Policy:**Whenever Louisville repaves a street, reconstructs, or makes major changes:**

- Evaluate needs of all users (not just cars)
- Include pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting)
- Include bicycle facilities (bike lanes, preferably protected)
- Include transit features (bus stops with shelters, pull-outs if needed)
- Design for safety (narrower lanes, curb extensions, speed reduction)
- Green infrastructure (bioswales, street trees)

Design elements:

1. **Narrower travel lanes:** 10-11 feet (from 12-14 feet)
2. Slows traffic (saves lives)
3. Creates space for bike lanes, wider sidewalks
4. **Protected bike lanes:** Physical separation (curbs, bollards, planters)
5. Increases cycling 200-400%
6. Reduces cyclist deaths 90%
7. **Curb extensions (bulb-outs):**
8. Shorten crossing distance
9. Increase visibility
10. Slow turning vehicles
11. **Traffic calming:**
12. Speed humps, raised crosswalks
13. Chicanes (s-curves) on residential streets
14. Roundabouts (safer than signals)
15. **Street trees & green infrastructure:**
16. Shade (reduces heat)
17. Stormwater management
18. Traffic calming (trees create “enclosure,” slowing drivers)

Priority corridors (Complete Streets reconstruction):

1. **Broadway (downtown to Iroquois Park):** Major corridor serving West Louisville
2. **Bardstown Road (Highlands):** Commercial corridor, high pedestrian/bike potential
3. **Preston Highway (South End):** High crash corridor, needs safety improvements
4. **Dixie Highway:** Deadliest road in Louisville, complete redesign

Why It Matters

Safety:

- Complete Streets reduce crashes 20-40%
- Pedestrian deaths reduced 50-75%
- Narrower lanes = slower speeds = survivable crashes

Equity:

- Low-income residents, elderly, children depend on walking/biking
- Complete Streets provide options beyond car ownership

Economic:

- Walkable streets increase retail sales 20-30%
- Bikeability attracts young professionals
- Healthier residents (walking/biking reduces obesity, heart disease)

Climate:

- Enabling walking/biking/transit reduces emissions
- Green infrastructure manages stormwater, reduces heat

Budget

Annual Cost: \$15 million

Breakdown:

- Major corridor reconstruction (2 corridors annually): \$10M
- Neighborhood traffic calming (25 interventions): \$3M
- Green infrastructure integration: \$2M

Funding Sources:

- Federal Infrastructure Act (Complete Streets eligible): \$8M
- Metro capital fund: \$5M
- Green infrastructure partnerships (MSD cost-share): \$2M

Cost-Benefit:

- Crashes reduced = \$50M annual savings (medical, property damage, lost productivity)
- Retail sales increase = \$20M annual economic activity
- Return: \$4-5 per \$1 invested

Implementation Timeline

Year 1 (2026):

- Adopt Complete Streets ordinance
- Redesign Broadway (downtown to Iroquois Park): 5 miles
- 10 neighborhood traffic calming projects

Year 2 (2027):

- Bardstown Road Complete Streets: 3 miles
- Preston Highway safety improvements: 2 miles
- 25 neighborhood traffic calming projects

Year 3 (2028):

- Dixie Highway redesign (Phase 1): 3 miles
- Complete Streets Standard applied to all Metro projects
- 25 traffic calming projects

Year 4 (2029):

- Dixie Highway redesign (Phase 2): 3 miles
- 15 miles Complete Streets corridors total
- Pedestrian fatalities reduced 30-40%

Proposal 3: Transit Transformation—Frequent, Reliable, Useful (\$20M Annually)

What It Is

Transform TARC from a last-resort option to a viable choice through increased frequency, extended hours, rapid transit, and expanded coverage.

Five Strategies:**Strategy 1: Frequency Revolution (\$8M annually)**

Current: 30-60 minute headways (unbearable waits)

New: 15-minute network (frequent enough to “just show up”)

Implementation:

- Identify top 10 routes by ridership
- Double frequency on these routes (from 30 minutes to 15 minutes)
- Covers 60% of current ridership with 40% of routes

Impact:

- Ridership increases 30-50% on frequent routes (research shows frequency is #1 driver of ridership)
- Useful for more trip purposes (not just work commutes)

Strategy 2: Extended Service Hours (\$4M annually)

Current: Limited evening/weekend service (many routes end 7-8pm; minimal Sunday service)

New:

- All major routes: 6am-midnight daily (including weekends)
- Service industry workers can get home from evening shifts
- Weekend mobility for people without cars

Strategy 3: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor (\$5M annually)

What is BRT:

- Dedicated bus lanes (buses don't sit in traffic)
- Signal priority (lights turn green for buses)
- Level boarding (faster stops, accessible)
- Frequent service (5-10 minutes)
- Enhanced stations (like light rail stations)

Louisville BRT corridor (Phase 1):

- Broadway (downtown to West Louisville, Shawnee)
- 8 miles
- 15 stations
- 5-10 minute frequency
- Travel time: 25 minutes (vs. 45 minutes current local bus)

Why Broadway:

- Serves West Louisville (highest transit dependency)
- Connects to major employment downtown
- Wide right-of-way (space for dedicated lanes)

Strategy 4: Coverage Expansion (\$2M annually)

Underserved areas:

- East End (Middletown, Douglass Hills, Jeffersontown)
- Outer South End (Fern Creek, Okolona)
- 24-hour routes to airport, hospitals (essential workers)

New routes:

- 5 routes serving currently unserved areas
- Microtransit (small vans, on-demand) in low-density areas

Strategy 5: Service Quality (\$1M annually)

Improvements:

- Real-time tracking on all routes (apps show exactly when bus arrives)
- Bus shelters at all major stops (400 new shelters)
- Fleet modernization (electric buses, comfortable seating, A/C, USB charging)
- Customer service (phones answered, complaints resolved)
- Safety (security on buses, well-lit stops)

Why It Matters

Functional transit enables economic participation:

- 10% of Louisville households have no vehicle
- Inadequate transit = job access barriers = poverty

Environmental:

- Transit emits 45% less CO2 per passenger mile than cars
- BRT reduces car trips 20-30% on corridor

Economic development:

- BRT increases property values 10-20% near stations
- Attracts businesses, residents who value transit access

Equity:

- Low-income residents, elderly, people with disabilities depend on transit
- Quality transit is civil right

Evidence:

- **Indianapolis BRT (Red Line):** Ridership 50% above projections; development booming near stations
- **Nashville BRT:** Frequency + BRT increased ridership 30%
- **Frequent network model (Seattle, Houston):** Ridership increased 20-40%

Budget

Annual Cost: \$20 million

Breakdown:

- Frequency revolution: \$8M (operating costs for doubled frequency)
- Extended hours: \$4M
- BRT operations: \$5M (federal capital grant covers infrastructure; local match + operations)
- Coverage expansion: \$2M
- Service quality: \$1M

Funding Sources:

- Federal transit grants: \$10M (operating + capital)
- Louisville Metro: \$8M (increase in TARC funding)
- Fare revenue increase: \$2M (ridership growth increases fares collected)

Cost-Benefit:

- Every \$1 invested in transit returns \$4 in economic benefits
- Ridership doubles (from 8M to 16M trips annually)
- Car trips reduced 5% = \$30M in reduced congestion, emissions, crashes

Implementation Timeline

Year 1 (2026):

- Frequency revolution: 5 routes to 15-minute headways
- BRT planning, design, environmental review (Broadway)

Year 2 (2027):

- Frequency: 10 routes to 15 minutes
- Extended hours on all major routes
- BRT construction begins (Broadway)

Year 3 (2028):

- BRT opens (Broadway)
- Coverage expansion: 3 new routes
- Ridership: 12 million trips (50% increase from baseline)

Year 4 (2029):

- Full implementation
- Ridership: 16 million trips (100% increase)
- BRT Phase 2 planning (Bardstown Road)

Proposal 4: Vision Zero—Eliminate Traffic Deaths (\$8M Annually)

What It Is

Comprehensive program to eliminate traffic deaths through street redesign, speed reduction, enforcement, and education—based on Vision Zero philosophy pioneered in Sweden and adopted by 40+ U.S. cities.

Vision Zero Principles:

1. **Deaths are unacceptable and preventable**
2. **Human error is inevitable; systems should protect people**
3. **Speed kills; lower speeds save lives**
4. **Data-driven: Focus on high-injury network**

Five Pillars:

Pillar 1: High-Injury Network Redesign (\$4M annually)

Identify: 5% of streets account for 50% of deaths/severe injuries

Louisville's high-injury network:

- Dixie Highway
- Preston Highway

- Bardstown Road
- Broadway
- Poplar Level Road

Redesign:

- Narrow lanes (slow speeds)
- Protected crosswalks (refuge islands, rapid-flashing beacons)
- Protected bike lanes (separate cyclists from cars)
- Reduce lanes ("road diet": 4 lanes → 3 lanes + bike lanes = slower, safer)
- Street lighting (visibility)

Output: 50 miles of high-injury network redesigned over 4 years (12-15 miles annually)

Pillar 2: Speed Limit Reduction (\$500K annually)

Current: 35-45 mph on arterials (crash at 40 mph = 85% pedestrian fatality; crash at 25 mph = 10% fatality)

New:

- Default speed limit: 25 mph on all streets (unless posted higher)
- Arterials: 30 mph (down from 35-45 mph)
- School zones: 20 mph (enforced)

Implementation:

- Change ordinance (default speed limit)
- New signage
- Design streets for target speed (narrow lanes, traffic calming)

Pillar 3: Enhanced Traffic Enforcement (\$2M annually)**High-visibility police enforcement:**

- Focus on high-injury network streets
- Targeted enforcement at dangerous intersections
- Partnership with LMPD Traffic Unit

Traffic calming infrastructure:

- Speed humps and raised crosswalks
- Narrowed lanes and curb extensions
- Improved signage and markings

Pillar 4: Safe Systems Approach (\$1M annually)

Assume crashes will happen; design to minimize harm:

- **Protected intersections:** Separate bike lanes from turning traffic
- **Leading pedestrian intervals:** Give pedestrians head start before cars get green

light

- **Daylighting:** No parking within 20 feet of crosswalks (improves visibility)
- **Refuge islands:** Allow pedestrians to cross half the street, wait, then complete crossing
- **Roundabouts:** Replace high-crash intersections with roundabouts (slower, safer)

Pillar 5: Education & Enforcement (\$500K annually)

Education:

- Public awareness campaigns (slow down, yield to pedestrians)
- School programs (safe walking, biking, driving)

Enforcement:

- High-visibility enforcement (police focus on high-injury network)
- Target dangerous behaviors (speeding, failure to yield, DUI, distraction)

Why It Matters

Traffic deaths are preventable:

- 100-120 Louisville deaths annually (2019-2024: 600+ deaths)
- Vision Zero cities reduced deaths 40-60%
- Engineering > enforcement > education (design saves lives; can't enforce our way to safety)

Speed is the key:

- Crash at 20 mph: 95% survival
- Crash at 30 mph: 55% survival
- Crash at 40 mph: 15% survival

Equity:

- Low-income neighborhoods have highest death rates (worst infrastructure)
- Vision Zero prioritizes these areas

Economic:

- Traffic crashes cost Louisville \$500M+ annually
- Preventing deaths/injuries saves money

Budget

Annual Cost: \$8 million

Breakdown:

- High-injury network redesign: \$4M
- Speed limit reduction (signage, traffic calming): \$500K
- : \$2M (capital + operations; revenue-positive)
- Safe systems approach: \$1M

- Education & enforcement: \$500K

Funding Sources:

- Federal highway safety grants: \$3M
- Metro capital fund: \$3M

Cost-Benefit:

- Traffic crashes cost \$500M annually (medical, property, lost productivity)
- Vision Zero reduces crashes 40% = \$200M annual savings
- Return: \$25 per \$1 invested

Implementation Timeline**Year 1 (2026):**

- Adopt Vision Zero policy
- Identify high-injury network (data analysis)
- Reduce speed limits (ordinance, signage)
- Redesign 10 miles of high-injury network

Year 2 (2027):

- operational
- Redesign 12 miles (22 cumulative)
- Traffic deaths reduced 15% (from 110 to 94)

Year 3 (2028):

- Redesign 15 miles (37 cumulative)
- Traffic deaths reduced 30% (from 110 to 77)

Year 4 (2029):

- Redesign 13 miles (50 cumulative high-injury network)
- Traffic deaths reduced 50% (from 110 to 55)
- Goal: Zero deaths (continuing progress toward elimination)

Proposal 5: Green Infrastructure Integration (\$10M Annually - Overlap with)**What It Is**

Integrate green infrastructure—bioswales, permeable pavement, street trees, rain gardens—into all street projects, addressing stormwater management, urban heat, climate resilience while building transportation infrastructure.

Note: This proposal overlaps with (Environmental Justice & Climate Action). \$10M is counted in both policies; not duplicated in total budget.

Four Strategies:

Strategy 1: Bioswales & Rain Gardens Along Streets

What they are:

- Vegetated channels capturing and filtering stormwater runoff
- Replace traditional curb/gutter with planted swales

Benefits:

- Reduce sewer overflows (absorb rainfall before entering sewers)
- Filter pollutants (improve water quality)
- Reduce urban heat (vegetation cools)
- Traffic calming (green edge narrows perceived street width, slowing drivers)

Implementation:

- Incorporate into all Complete Streets projects
- Retrofit existing streets in flooding-prone areas

Strategy 2: Permeable Pavement

Applications:

- Parking lanes (absorb runoff)
- Alleys (reduce flooding)
- Sidewalks (allow tree roots to breathe, trees to thrive)

Benefits:

- Reduce runoff 50-80%
- Recharge groundwater
- Support street trees

Strategy 3: Street Trees

Every street project plants street trees:

- Shade (reduces heat 10-20°F, saves cooling costs)
- Stormwater management (mature tree intercepts 2,000+ gallons annually)
- Air quality (filters pollution)
- Traffic calming (trees create “enclosure,” slowing drivers)
- Property values (10-15% increase on tree-lined streets)

Target: 10,000 street trees over 4 years (overlaps with ‘s 50,000 tree goal)

Strategy 4: Green Alley Program

Alleys: Louisville has 500+ miles of alleys (mostly impervious asphalt)

Green alleys:

- Permeable pavement
- Rain gardens at intersections

- Reduce flooding, heat

Output: Convert 50 miles of alleys to green alleys over 4 years

Why It Matters

Stormwater management:

- Green infrastructure absorbs rainfall, reducing sewer overflows (7 billion gallons annually)
- Saves \$2 billion vs. gray infrastructure (pipe expansion)

Climate resilience:

- Reduces urban heat island (trees, vegetation cool streets)
- Manages increased rainfall from climate change

Co-benefits:

- Beautiful streets (green is more attractive than concrete)
- Traffic calming
- Property values
- Health (shade, air quality)

Cost-effectiveness:

- Green infrastructure 30-50% cheaper than gray infrastructure for stormwater management
- Provides multiple benefits (gray infrastructure only manages water)

Budget

Annual Cost: \$10 million (counted in both and ; not double-counted in total budget)

Breakdown:

- Bioswales/rain gardens (100 projects annually): \$5M
- Permeable pavement (parking lanes, alleys): \$2M
- Street trees (2,500 annually): \$2M
- Green alley program (12 miles annually): \$1M

Funding Sources:

- MSD (Metropolitan Sewer District) partnership: \$5M (green infrastructure reduces sewer overflows; MSD shares cost)
- Federal Infrastructure Act (green infrastructure eligible): \$3M
- Metro capital fund: \$2M

Cost-Benefit:

- Green infrastructure saves \$2B vs. gray infrastructure
- Co-benefits (heat reduction, property values, air quality) worth \$50M+ annually
- Return: \$5 per \$1 invested

Implementation Timeline

Year 1 (2026):

- 25 bioswale projects
- 2,500 street trees
- 10 miles green alleys

Year 2 (2027):

- 100 bioswale/rain garden projects
- 2,500 street trees (5,000 cumulative)
- 12 miles green alleys (22 cumulative)

Year 3 (2028):

- 100 projects
- 2,500 trees (7,500 cumulative)
- 13 miles green alleys (35 cumulative)

Year 4 (2029):

- 100 projects
 - 2,500 trees (10,000 cumulative street trees)
 - 15 miles green alleys (50 cumulative)
 - Sewer overflows reduced 20% from baseline
-

BUDGET SUMMARY

Total Annual Cost

Program	Annual Cost	Notes
Fix It First (Equitable Maintenance)	\$50M	Roads, bridges, sidewalks prioritizing neglected neighborhoods
Complete Streets	\$15M	Redesign for all users, safety, green infrastructure
Transit Transformation	\$20M	Frequency, BRT, extended hours, coverage
Vision Zero	\$8M	Eliminate traffic deaths through engineering, enforcement
Green Infrastructure	\$10M	Overlaps with ; not counted in total
TOTAL (unique spending)	\$93M	<i>\$103M if green infrastructure counted separately</i>

Funding Sources

Source	Amount	Notes
Metro General Fund / Capital	\$35M	Reallocation from new construction to maintenance
Federal Infrastructure Act	\$29M	Roads, transit, Complete Streets, green infrastructure
State Highway Funds (local match)	\$10M	Bridge, road maintenance
MSD Partnership (Green Infrastructure)	\$5M	Cost-share for stormwater management
Bonding (Capital Projects)	\$5M	Long-term infrastructure investments
TARC Fare Revenue Increase	\$2M	Ridership growth increases fare revenue
Federal Transit Grants	\$10M	Transit operations and capital
TOTAL	\$98M	<i>Note: \$5M gap closed through phased implementation</i>

Note: Green infrastructure (\$10M) is counted in (Environmental Justice & Climate Action) budget. Including it here would double-count that spending.

Effective total unique to this policy: \$93M annually

Outputs (4-Year Term)

□ Infrastructure Maintenance:

- 500 miles of roads repaired (focus on West Louisville, underserved areas)
- 50 bridges rehabilitated
- 100 miles of new sidewalks (West Louisville 40% → 60% completion)
- Infrastructure inequality measurably reduced

□ Complete Streets:

- 15 miles of major corridors redesigned for all users
- 100 neighborhood traffic calming interventions
- Streets serve pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, not just cars

□ Transit Transformation:

- TARC ridership doubled (8M → 16M annual trips)
- 10 routes with 15-minute frequency
- 8-mile Bus Rapid Transit corridor operational (Broadway)
- Service extended to evenings, weekends
- 5 new routes serving underserved areas

□ Vision Zero:

- Traffic deaths reduced 50% (110 → 55 annually)
- 50 miles of high-injury network redesigned

- Speed limits reduced to 25-30 mph

□ **Green Infrastructure (counted in):**

- 400 bioswale/rain garden projects
 - 10,000 street trees
 - 50 miles of green alleys
 - Sewer overflows reduced 20%
-

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE (4-YEAR TERM)

Year 1 (2026): Foundation

Q1:

- Conduct comprehensive pavement condition survey
- Develop equity-based prioritization model for infrastructure investment
- Adopt Complete Streets ordinance
- Adopt Vision Zero policy

Q2:

- Begin road repairs (100 miles, focus West Louisville)
- Broadway Complete Streets design
- Increase TARC frequency on 5 routes

Q3:

- Rehabilitate 10 bridges
- Install 20 miles of new sidewalks
- 10 neighborhood traffic calming projects
- BRT planning (Broadway corridor)

Q4:

- Complete 100 miles road repairs Year 1
- 25 bioswale projects
- Plant 2,500 street trees
- Transit ridership: 9M trips (12% increase)

Year 2 (2027): Expansion

Q1-Q4:

- Roads: 125 miles repaired (225 cumulative)
- Bridges: 12 rehabilitated (22 cumulative)
- Sidewalks: 25 miles (45 cumulative)
- Bardstown Road Complete Streets reconstruction (3 miles)

- TARC frequency: 10 routes at 15 minutes
- Extended evening/weekend service begins
- BRT construction begins (Broadway)
- Vision Zero: Deaths reduced 15% (110 → 94)
- Green infrastructure: 100 bioswale projects, 2,500 trees
- Transit ridership: 11M trips (38% increase from baseline)

Year 3 (2028): Maturity

Q1-Q4:

- Roads: 125 miles (350 cumulative); West Louisville pavement quality visibly improved
- Bridges: 15 (37 cumulative)
- Sidewalks: 25 miles (70 cumulative); West Louisville approaching 60% completion
- Preston Highway safety improvements (2 miles)
- **BRT opens (Broadway):** 8 miles, 15 stations, 5-10 minute frequency
- Transit coverage expansion: 3 new routes
- Vision Zero: Deaths reduced 30% (110 → 77)
- High-injury network: 37 miles redesigned
- Transit ridership: 14M trips (75% increase from baseline)

Year 4 (2029): Sustainability

Q1-Q4:

- Roads: 125 miles (475 cumulative—nearly 500-mile goal)
- Bridges: 13 (50 cumulative—goal met)
- Sidewalks: 30 miles (100 cumulative—goal met)
- Dixie Highway redesign Phase 2 (3 miles; 15 miles Complete Streets total)
- **Transit ridership: 16M trips (100% increase—goal met)**
- Vision Zero: **Deaths reduced 50% (110 → 55)**
- High-injury network: 50 miles redesigned
- Infrastructure inequality significantly reduced
- Louisville recognized nationally for equitable infrastructure, multimodal transportation, Vision Zero success

SUCCESS METRICS & ACCOUNTABILITY

Infrastructure Maintenance

- ☐ **Roads Repaired:** 500 miles over 4 years (125 miles annually)
- ☐ **Pavement Quality Equity:** West Louisville PCI improves from 45 to 60 (33% improvement)
- ☐ **Bridge Safety:** 50 structurally deficient bridges rehabilitated
- ☐ **Sidewalk Completion:** West Louisville increases from 40% to 60% (20-point improvement)

- **Maintenance Backlog:** Reduced from \$2.5B to \$2.0B (preventing growth is success)

Complete Streets

- **Miles Redesigned:** 15 miles of major corridors serving all users
- **Traffic Calming:** 100 neighborhood interventions reducing speeds, improving safety
- **Crashes Reduced:** 20-30% reduction on Complete Streets corridors
- **Economic Activity:** Retail sales increase 20% on Complete Streets corridors
- **Mode Shift:** Walking/biking increases 30-50% on Complete Streets

Transit Transformation

- **Ridership:** Doubled from 8M to 16M annual trips
- **Frequency:** 10 routes with 15-minute headways (60% of riders served)
- **Service Hours:** All major routes 6am-midnight, 7 days/week
- **BRT:** 8-mile corridor operational, 5-10 minute frequency
- **Customer Satisfaction:** 80%+ of riders satisfied (vs. current 60%)

Vision Zero

- **Traffic Deaths:** Reduced 50% from 110 to 55 annually (goal: zero)
- **Pedestrian Deaths:** Reduced 60% from 25 to 10 annually
- **High-Injury Network:** 50 miles redesigned (100% of identified network)
- **Speeding:** Reduced 50-70% through traffic calming and enforcement
- **Safe Routes to School:** 100% of elementary schools have safe pedestrian access

Equity

- **Infrastructure Investment:** 60% of Fix It First spending in West Louisville, South End
- **Pavement Quality Gap:** Reduced from 30-point gap to 15-point gap (50% improvement)
- **Sidewalk Gap:** West Louisville completion increases 20 points (40% → 60%)
- **Transit Service:** Underserved areas (East End, outer South End) gain 5 new routes
- **Traffic Safety:** Fatality rates equalized (West Louisville currently 2x East End)

RELATED GLOSSARY TERMS

This policy connects to 25+ Infrastructure & Transportation glossary terms on rundaverun.org:

Infrastructure: Infrastructure, Deferred Maintenance, Capital Improvement Program (CIP), Public Works, Pavement Condition Index, Asset Management

Transportation: Transportation, Multimodal Transportation, Mode Share, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), Traffic Congestion

Transit: TARC (Transit Authority of River City), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Headway, Transit-Oriented Development, Park and Ride

Streets & Safety: Complete Streets, Vision Zero, Road Diet, Traffic Calming, High-Injury Network, Protected Bike Lane, Pedestrian Safety, Crosswalk

Equity: Transportation Equity, Infrastructure Inequality, Environmental Justice (transportation impacts)

Green Infrastructure: Bioswale, Permeable Pavement, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater Management

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why prioritize maintenance over new roads? Don't we need new infrastructure to accommodate growth?

Maintaining what we have is both cheaper and smarter than building new:

Math:

- Preventive maintenance: \$3-5 per square yard
- Full reconstruction (deferred maintenance): \$40-60 per square yard
- New construction: \$100+ per square yard
- **Every \$1 in maintenance saves \$10 in future reconstruction**

We're not growing that fast:

- Louisville population: relatively stable (1.3M metro area)
- Not experiencing explosive growth requiring massive new infrastructure
- Sprawl creates more infrastructure to maintain (expensive)

New roads induce demand:

- Build new highway → reduces congestion temporarily → attracts more driving → congestion returns
- This is called "induced demand"—proven in every U.S. city
- Can't build our way out of congestion

Better investments:

- Maintain existing infrastructure (cheaper, serves current residents)
- Improve transit, walking, biking (gives people options beyond driving)
- Infill development (use existing infrastructure efficiently)

We've already over-built:

- Louisville has more lane-miles of road per capita than peer cities
- Problem isn't lack of roads; problem is maintenance

2. Won't Complete Streets and narrower lanes cause traffic congestion?

No—evidence shows Complete Streets don't increase congestion and often improve traffic flow:

Why narrower lanes don't cause congestion:

1. **Congestion is caused by volume, not lane width:**
2. 12-foot lane and 10-foot lane have same capacity (vehicles per hour)
3. Lane width affects speed (wider = faster), not throughput
4. **Road diets actually reduce congestion:**
5. Example: 4 lanes → 3 lanes + center turn lane + bike lanes
6. Eliminates weaving, lane changes (smoother flow)
7. Dedicated turn lane prevents backed-up traffic
8. Net result: Same or better traffic flow
9. **Complete Streets reduce crashes:**
10. Crashes cause congestion (lane blockages, rubbernecking)
11. Safer streets = fewer crashes = less congestion

Evidence:

- **Seattle:** 150 road diets over 20 years; traffic maintained or improved on 90%+
- **New York City:** Narrowed lanes, added bike infrastructure; traffic speed increased (smoother flow)
- **Portland:** Decades of Complete Streets; congestion comparable to peer cities without Complete Streets

Plus: Louisville doesn't have significant congestion:

- Average commute: 24 minutes (national average: 27 minutes)
- Congestion is not Louisville's problem (unlike LA, NYC, DC)
- Some peak-hour slowdowns on major corridors, but functional overall

Complete Streets provide options:

- If driving is slightly slower, people can walk/bike/transit
- Multimodal options reduce car trips (net reduction in congestion)

3. How can Louisville afford \$93 million annually for infrastructure when the budget is already tight?**Two points:****Point 1: We're already spending close to this on infrastructure—just inefficiently:**

Current infrastructure spending:

- Roads/bridges: \$80M annually (Mix of Metro, state, federal)
- TARC: \$90M annually (Mix of local, federal)
- Sidewalks/pedestrian: \$5M annually
- **Current total: ~\$175M annually**

Dave's proposal: \$93M Metro investment (plus federal/state partnerships bringing total to ~\$200M+)

Difference: Redirecting current spending to prioritize maintenance over new construction, equity over politics, multimodal over car-only.

Point 2: Deferring maintenance costs more:

- Every year we delay maintenance, costs grow 4-10x
- Current approach: Save \$50M this year by deferring maintenance → pay \$500M in a decade for reconstruction
- Dave's approach: Spend \$50M annually on maintenance → save \$500M long-term

Deferred maintenance is false economy—pay now or pay 10x later.

Revenue sources:

- Federal Infrastructure Act: \$29M (Louisville's share of \$1.2 trillion federal law)
- Bonding: \$5M (borrow for long-term capital, pay back over 20-30 years)
- Reallocated spending: \$35M (redirect from ineffective programs, new construction)
- User fees/partnerships: \$7M (MSD, TARC fares, parking fees)
- State partnership: \$10M (state highways, bridges)

Plus: Infrastructure generates economic returns:

- Good roads attract businesses, increase property values (tax revenue)
- Transit enables workforce participation (income tax revenue)
- Safety reduces crash costs (\$200M annual savings)

4. Why invest in transit when hardly anyone uses it? Isn't that throwing money away?

Hardly anyone uses it BECAUSE it's inadequate—invest in quality, and people will ride:

Current ridership is LOW because service is BAD:

- 30-60 minute waits (unbearable)
- Doesn't go where people need (coverage gaps)
- Doesn't run when people need (limited evening/weekend)
- Unreliable (late, breakdowns)
- **Result:** Only people with no other option use transit

Improve service → ridership grows:

Evidence:

- **Houston:** Redesigned network (higher frequency, better coverage); ridership increased 15% despite eliminating 25% of routes
- **Seattle:** Invested in light rail, frequent bus network; ridership increased 40% over decade
- **Indianapolis BRT:** Opened Red Line with 10-minute frequency; ridership 50% above projections

Louisville opportunity:

- 10% of households have no vehicle (130,000 people) → current riders
- 30% of households have 1 vehicle (multiple adults sharing) → potential riders if transit were useful
- 20% of workers have jobs downtown/major corridors → BRT could serve them

Potential ridership: 300,000+ people if service were frequent, reliable, useful.

Plus: Transit benefits non-riders:

- **Reduces traffic congestion:** Every bus removes 30-40 cars from road
- **Economic development:** BRT increases property values, attracts businesses
- **Equity:** Provides mobility for elderly, people with disabilities, low-income residents
- **Climate:** Reduces emissions 45% per passenger mile vs. cars
- **Economic access:** Enables workforce participation (people without cars can get to jobs)

Transit investment isn't for current 8M riders—it's to serve the 300,000+ people who would ride if service were good.

6. How will equity-based infrastructure prioritization actually work? Won't politicians still favor wealthy neighborhoods?

Data-driven, transparent prioritization prevents political favoritism:

Equity-based model:

1. Objective condition data:

2. Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for every street (measured with sensors)
3. Bridge inspection reports (engineering data)
4. Sidewalk condition inventory

5. Equity overlay:

6. Time since last investment (GIS data shows paving history)
7. Neighborhood demographics (income, race)
8. Need indicators (pedestrian crashes, transit dependency)

9. Formula-based prioritization:

10. Worst condition + longest time since investment + equity factors = priority
11. No discretion for politicians to override

12. Public transparency:

13. Publish prioritization model online
14. Show every street's score
15. Citizens can verify fairness

Example:

Street A (East End):

- PCI: 65 (fair condition)
- Last resurfaced: 15 years ago
- Neighborhood: Median income \$80,000
- Score: 50

Street B (West Louisville):

- PCI: 45 (poor condition)

- Last resurfaced: 35 years ago
- Neighborhood: Median income \$30,000
- Score: 95

Street B gets priority (data-driven, objective)

Enforcement:

- Metro Council oversight (quarterly reports on infrastructure investments)
- Community input (residents can challenge prioritization with data)
- Performance metrics (track equity gap over time; hold administration accountable)

Politicians can advocate, but can't override formula without public justification.

Precedent:

- **Oakland:** Equity-based paving formula; pavement quality gap reduced 40% over 10 years
- **Los Angeles:** Equity metrics for infrastructure; measurable improvements in underserved areas

7. Won't BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) just be a regular bus with fancy branding? Why not build light rail instead?

BRT is NOT just a regular bus—it's high-quality rapid transit. And it's much cheaper than light rail:

BRT features (different from regular bus):

1. **Dedicated lanes:** Buses don't sit in traffic (like light rail in its own right-of-way)
2. **Signal priority:** Lights turn green for buses (smooth, fast travel)
3. **Level boarding:** Raised platforms, low-floor buses (fast loading, accessible)
4. **Off-board fare payment:** Pay at station before boarding (like light rail)
5. **Frequent service:** 5-10 minutes (comparable to light rail)
6. **Enhanced stations:** Shelters, real-time info, lighting (like light rail stations)
7. **Branding:** Distinct vehicles, route identity (not just "bus")

Speed:

- Regular bus: 12-15 mph average
- BRT: 20-25 mph average (40-60% faster)
- Light rail: 25-30 mph average

Cost:

- Regular bus: \$5M per mile (infrastructure)
- BRT: \$10-20M per mile
- Light rail: \$100-200M per mile
- **BRT is 5-20x cheaper than light rail for comparable service**

Why not light rail:

Louisville doesn't have density/ridership to justify \$100-200M per mile investment:

- Light rail needs 20,000+ daily riders per mile to be cost-effective
- Louisville corridors: 5,000-10,000 potential daily riders
- BRT is right-sized for Louisville

Plus: BRT is flexible:

- Can extend routes beyond dedicated lanes (buses merge into mixed traffic)
- Can change routes if needs change (light rail is permanent)
- Faster to build (2-3 years vs. 10+ years for light rail)

Evidence:

- **Indianapolis Red Line BRT:** \$100M for 13 miles (\$7.7M per mile); ridership 50% above projections; comparable speed to light rail
- **Cleveland HealthLine BRT:** Sparked \$6B in development along corridor
- **Bogotá TransMilenio:** Serves 2 million daily riders; BRT backbone of transit system

Louisville BRT is right investment:

- Delivers light-rail-quality service at 1/10 the cost
- Can expand network (multiple BRT lines for cost of 1 light rail line)
- Proven effective in similar cities

8. How does green infrastructure integration into street projects actually work? Doesn't that complicate construction?

Green infrastructure is integrated during street reconstruction—not added complexity, just different design:

Traditional street reconstruction:

1. Remove old pavement
2. Grade and compact subbase
3. Install new pavement
4. Add curb and gutter
5. Install storm drains, catch basins
6. Done

Green infrastructure street reconstruction:

1. Remove old pavement

2. Grade and compact subbase
3. **Design curb to create planting areas (bioswales) instead of straight gutter**
4. Install new pavement (may use permeable pavement in parking lane)
5. **Plant bioswales with native plants, add soil medium**
6. Install storm drains (fewer needed; bioswales absorb much of runoff)
7. **Plant street trees in tree wells with adequate soil volume**
8. Done

Added complexity: Minimal

- Coordination with landscape architect (design planting areas)
- Different materials (plants, soil media instead of just concrete)
- Ongoing maintenance (plants need care) but less infrastructure to maintain (fewer storm drains)

Time:

- Traditional reconstruction: 6-12 months per mile
- Green infrastructure reconstruction: 6-12 months per mile (same)

Cost:

- Traditional: \$1-2M per mile (varies by street width, condition)
- Green infrastructure: \$1.3-2.3M per mile (15-20% more expensive)
- **But saves \$2B in gray infrastructure for sewer system**

Maintenance:

- Bioswales: Weeding, mulching (2-3 times per year)
- Street trees: Watering (first 3 years), pruning (every 3-5 years)
- **Cost:** \$50,000 annually per mile (vs. \$30,000 for traditional)
- **Benefit:** Stormwater management, heat reduction, air quality, beauty

Contractors can handle it:

- Established green infrastructure best practices (manuals, specs)
- Many U.S. cities have done this (Portland, Philadelphia, Seattle)
- Louisville contractors can learn (training, partnering with experienced firms on first projects)

Bottom line: Green infrastructure integration is standard practice in many cities—Louisville can do it too.

9. What about rural/suburban parts of Jefferson County? Will they get neglected in favor of urban infrastructure?

Equity-based infrastructure investment serves entire county—rural, suburban, urban:

Fix It First applies everywhere:

- Worst-condition roads get priority (whether in Shawnee or Fern Creek)

- Bridges throughout county assessed, worst rehabilitated first
- Formula is county-wide, not urban-only

Rural/suburban infrastructure needs:**Different than urban, not neglected:****1. Roads:**

2. Rural roads need maintenance (potholes, drainage, resurfacing)
3. Lower traffic volume but still essential (farmers, residents)
4. Equity formula prioritizes worst condition (rural roads with 30+ years since paving get priority)

5. Bridges:

6. Many structurally deficient bridges in rural areas
7. Critical for connectivity (only way across creek/river)
8. Bridge program targets these

9. Transit:

10. Rural areas don't need frequent bus service (low density)
11. But may benefit from microtransit (on-demand vans)
12. Park-and-ride lots (drive to transit station, take bus downtown)

13. Safety:

14. Rural roads have high crash rates (curves, narrow lanes, no shoulders)
15. Vision Zero includes rural road safety (guardrails, rumble strips, curve warning signs)

16. Drainage:

17. Rural flooding common (ditches overwhelmed)
18. Green infrastructure (bioswales, culvert upgrades) appropriate

Balance:

- Urban core: Higher density → more transit, bike lanes, pedestrian infrastructure

- Suburbs: Moderate density → some transit, road maintenance, connectivity
- Rural: Lower density → road maintenance, safety improvements, drainage

Everyone gets what they need:

- Not “one size fits all”
- Context-sensitive solutions
- Equity means fair investment proportional to need, not equal spending everywhere

10. What happens to infrastructure investments if future administrations don’t prioritize maintenance?

Dave will institutionalize infrastructure best practices to outlast his administration:

Structural changes:**1. Asset Management System:**

2. Database tracking condition of every road, bridge, sidewalk
3. Maintenance schedules based on data (not politics)
4. Transparent, public (citizens can hold future administrations accountable)

5. Dedicated funding:

6. Establish infrastructure maintenance fund (separate from general fund)
7. Funded by reliable revenue sources (gas tax, vehicle registration fees)
8. Can’t be raided for other priorities

9. Performance metrics:

10. Annual reporting: Pavement quality, bridge conditions, sidewalk completion
11. Public dashboard (like Budget Transparency Dashboard)
12. Future administrations judged on infrastructure performance

13. Metro Council oversight:

14. Ordinance requiring minimum infrastructure investment (% of budget)
15. Council approves infrastructure priorities annually
16. Not unilateral mayoral discretion

17. Equity accountability:

- 18. Annual equity audit (infrastructure investment by neighborhood)
- 19. If gaps widen, public pressure and Council intervention

Political sustainability:

- **Visible improvements:** Residents notice better roads, safer streets; demand continuation
- **Constituency:** Every neighborhood benefits; broad political support
- **Cost savings:** Maintenance cheaper than reconstruction; future mayors have fiscal incentive to continue
- **National recognition:** Louisville gains reputation for infrastructure excellence; political cost of backsliding

Once asset management system, dedicated funding, and transparency are in place, difficult to undo without public outcry.

CONCLUSION: INFRASTRUCTURE THAT CONNECTS, SERVES, AND BUILDS EQUITY

For too long, Louisville has deferred maintenance while our infrastructure crumbled, prioritized highways over transit, designed streets for speed instead of safety, and concentrated neglect in Black neighborhoods. This approach has failed: our roads are riddled with potholes, our bridges are structurally deficient, our transit system is barely functional, and pedestrians die on our streets at 3x the national rate.

Dave Biggers believes **infrastructure should connect communities, not divide them—and everyone deserves safe, reliable transportation regardless of whether they own a car.**

Fix It First will repair 500 miles of roads and 50 bridges—with equity lens ensuring West Louisville and long-neglected neighborhoods receive priority.

Complete Streets will redesign 15 miles of major corridors to serve all users—pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers—with safety and green infrastructure integrated.

Transit Transformation will double TARC ridership through frequent service, Bus Rapid Transit, extended hours, and expanded coverage—making transit a viable choice, not just a last resort.

Vision Zero will eliminate traffic deaths through street redesign, speed reduction, and data-driven safety improvements—because 100+ deaths annually is unacceptable.

Green Infrastructure will integrate stormwater management, trees, and climate resilience into all projects—addressing multiple challenges simultaneously.

Infrastructure is economic development. Transportation is equity. Safety is a right. Louisville deserves infrastructure that works for everyone.

Dave will build the connected, equitable, sustainable Louisville we need.

Related Policy Documents:

- Public Safety & Community Policing
- Criminal Justice Reform
- Health & Human Services
- Budget & Financial Management
- Affordable Housing & Anti-Displacement
- Education & Youth Development
- Environmental Justice & Climate Action
- Economic Development & Jobs (Employee Bill of Rights)

Learn more at rundaverun.org/policy

Dave Biggers for Louisville Mayor 2026

“Democracy that works for everyone.”

RELATED POLICIES

This policy works in coordination with these related initiatives:

- **[Environmental Justice & Climate Action](#)**: Sustainable transportation and green infrastructure advance climate action and environmental justice simultaneously.
- **[Neighborhood Development](#)**: Infrastructure equity fund addresses decades of systematic underinvestment in West Louisville neighborhoods.
- **[Disability Rights & Accessibility](#)**: Universal design and full ADA compliance make infrastructure accessible to all Louisville residents.
- **[Senior Services](#)**: Age-friendly infrastructure and accessible transportation enable

seniors to remain independent in their communities.

- **Economic Development & Jobs:** Infrastructure investment enables economic development and ensures workforce access to employment opportunities.

Explore all 16 comprehensive policies at [Dave's Complete Policy Platform](#).

What Louisville Residents Say

What This Means for YOUR Neighborhood

Every Louisville neighborhood is unique. Enter your ZIP code to see how this policy directly impacts your community:

Find Your Mini Substation

Enter your ZIP code to see when your neighborhood will receive a community police substation.

Find My Substation

63 ZIP code areas across Louisville will receive mini substations over 4 years.

Part of Dave Biggers' comprehensive public safety plan.

See the Budget Impact

Explore how this policy fits into Dave's comprehensive \$1.2 billion budget plan:

How Does Dave's Budget Affect You?

See your personalized impact - zero tax increase, real benefits

☐ Household Income \$50,000

☐☐☐☐ Children in JCPS

☐ Your ZIP Code

Your Personal Impact

How we calculate: Benefits based on average family savings from wellness center access (\$800/year), youth program value (after-school + summer jobs), and your specific mini substation timeline. All benefits come from the same \$1.2B budget - zero tax increase.

Share your results with friends and family:

☐ Share My Results

Compare This Policy

See how Dave's approach differs from current administration policies:

Policy Comparison: Real Change vs. Status Quo

See the clear differences between Dave Biggers' transformative vision for Louisville and the current mayor's approach. The choice is yours.

☐ Share This Comparison ☐ Print Comparison

☐ Public Safety ☐ Wellness ☐ Youth ☐ Economy ☐ Housing ☐ Transparency

☐

Public Safety & Policing

Current Mayor

Traditional policing model

Approach

- Centralized police response
- Reactive approach to crime
- Limited community engagement
- Focus on patrol units

Timeline Ongoing

Budget Status quo funding

Impact Response times: 15-20 minutes average

Dave Biggers

Community-based mini substations

Approach

- 63 mini substations across Louisville (4-year deployment)
- Officers living and working in communities they serve
- Preventative community policing model
- Year 1: 12 substations in highest-need areas

Timeline Year 1-4 phased rollout

Budget Revenue-neutral through property tax restructuring

Impact Response times: 3-5 minutes (neighborhood-based)

□

Mental Health & Wellness

Current Mayor

Limited wellness infrastructure

Approach

- Reliance on existing healthcare facilities
- No dedicated community wellness centers
- Fragmented mental health services
- Emergency-room dependent model

Timeline No expansion planned
Budget Minimal dedicated funding
Impact Long wait times, limited access in underserved areas

Dave Biggers

Regional wellness centers network

Approach

- 18 wellness centers across 6 regions
- Mental health counseling, addiction support
- Youth programs, family services
- 3 centers per region for accessibility

Timeline Year 1-4 phased rollout
Budget Integrated with public safety restructuring
Impact Accessible care within every neighborhood, preventative focus
□

Youth Development

Current Mayor

Standard recreation programs

Approach

- Traditional rec centers
- Limited after-school programming
- Seasonal sports leagues
- Minimal job training for youth

Timeline Status quo
Budget Existing recreation budget
Impact Serves fraction of Louisville youth

Dave Biggers

Comprehensive youth investment

Approach

- After-school programs at all substations
- Job training and mentorship

- Arts, sports, and STEM programs
- Youth advisory councils
- Summer employment pathways

Timeline Immediate implementation with substation rollout

Budget \$1,200 value per child annually

Impact Accessible programs in every neighborhood

□

Economic Development

Current Mayor

Corporate incentives focus

Approach

- Tax breaks for large corporations
- Downtown-centric development
- Limited support for small business
- Gentrification without displacement protection

Timeline Ongoing

Budget Millions in corporate subsidies

Impact Benefits concentrated in select areas

Dave Biggers

Community wealth building

Approach

- Small business incubators at substations
- Local hiring requirements for city contracts
- Neighborhood-based economic zones
- Affordable housing protection
- Living wage standards

Timeline Immediate policy changes, 4-year infrastructure build

Budget Redirected from corporate subsidies

Impact Jobs and wealth stay in neighborhoods

□

Housing & Affordability

Current Mayor

Market-driven housing

Approach

- Minimal affordable housing requirements
- Limited tenant protections
- Rising rents in many neighborhoods
- Displacement from development

Timeline No comprehensive plan

Budget Minimal housing trust fund

Impact Affordability crisis worsening

Dave Biggers

Housing as a human right

Approach

- Expanded affordable housing trust fund
- Strong tenant protections
- Community land trusts
- Rent stabilization measures
- Anti-displacement policies for existing residents

Timeline Immediate policy changes

Budget Increased trust fund through property tax reform

Impact Protects residents, prevents displacement

□

Government Transparency

Current Mayor

Standard reporting

Approach

- Annual budget reports
- Limited real-time data
- Reactive public engagement

- Closed-door development deals

Timeline Status quo

Budget Minimal transparency infrastructure

Impact Limited public accountability

Dave Biggers

Radical transparency

Approach

- Real-time budget dashboard
- Public data portal for all city metrics
- Community advisory boards with veto power
- Open contracting process
- Regular town halls in all neighborhoods

Timeline Immediate implementation

Budget Low-cost digital infrastructure

Impact Citizens empowered with information and decision-making power

The Choice is Clear

Louisville deserves transformative change, not more of the same. Join us in building a city that works for everyone.

[Join the Campaign Read Full Policy Platform](#)

□ What Louisville Residents Say

□ Community Endorsements

Share This Policy

Help spread the word about Dave's vision for Louisville:

[dbpm_share_buttons]

Related Policies You Might Like

[policy_recommendations limit="3"]

Make Your Voice Heard

Register to Vote

Register to Vote

Make your voice heard! Register to vote and participate in our democracy.



[Register to Vote](#) ✓ [Check Registration](#)

Important Deadlines

- **Registration Deadline:** Typically 30 days before election day
- **Early Voting:** Check your state's early voting schedule
- **Absentee Ballot:** Request absentee ballots early
- **Election Day:** Polls typically open 6 AM - 6 PM

Note: Deadlines vary by state. Check your local election office for specific dates.

Find Your Polling Place

Find Your Polling Location

Enter your address to find your polling place and get directions.

Your Address City State ZIP Code [Find My Polling Place](#)

You can also call **1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683)** for assistance finding your polling location.

Stay Updated on This Policy

Get notified when this policy is updated or when Dave speaks about this issue in YOUR neighborhood.

* indicates a required field

Email Signup Information

Fax Number (Leave blank) Name * Email * We'll send you updates about the campaignZip Code 5-digit zip code (optional)

☐ I'm interested in volunteering! We'll send you information about volunteer opportunities

[Sign Up](#)

Have Ideas to Improve This Policy?

This is YOUR city. If you have suggestions for how we can make this policy better for Louisville, please share them. Every idea is reviewed.

Suggest an Improvement for Louisville

Have an idea for improving Louisville? Share your policy suggestion below. Your voice matters in shaping our city's future.

Policy Title *

Description *

0/2000 characters

Category

Your Name *

Your Email *

ZIP Code (Optional)

☐ I agree that my suggestion may be reviewed and potentially incorporated into campaign policy. My email will only be used to notify me about the status of my suggestion.

[Submit Suggestion](#)

NOT ME, WE.

Together, we make Louisville better for everyone.