

MORPC COMPLETE STREETS POLICY UPDATE

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MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

POLICY SECTIONS

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SECTION 1. COMPLETE STREETS DEFINED

Section 1. Complete Streets Defined

Complete Streets are roadways, highways, bridges, and other transportation facilities that are designed, implemented, operated, and maintained in an equitable and context-sensitive manner so that people of all ages, incomes, and abilities can use them safely. These streets consider the needs of all people, including, but not limited to, people walking, bicycling, using shared mobility devices and assistive devices, using transit and riding school buses, driving, and operating commercial and emergency vehicles.

SECTION 2. BACKGROUND AND VISION

Section 2. Background and Vision

This Complete Streets Policy aims to enhance the quality of life in Central Ohio through improvements to transportation safety, equity, mobility, accessibility, connectivity, sustainability, and resiliency as well as public health and economic vitality. This vision will be implemented through street design that is context sensitive and incorporates principles and practices that focus the function of a street around the **safe** movement of people, **balancing mobility for everyone with safe and appropriate travel speeds.** ~~balance mobility for everyone, and minimize negative impacts on the environment.~~

SECTION 3. PURPOSE

Section 3. Purpose

The Complete Streets policy outlines the requirements and recommendations for project development to ensure implementation of the vision set forth in *Section 2, Background and Vision*, as well as established regional goals and objectives.

The following principles guide this policy and serve as the basis for the recommendations and requirements established in *Section 5, Policy*.

Complete Streets:

1. Serve people of all ages and abilities using all modes of transportation, as well as the movement of goods, **without loss of life or serious injury**;
2. **Are key to creating a Safe System, and specifically incorporate the six principles of the Safe System Approach**;
3. Consider not only the presence of a transportation facility for vulnerable road users, but also the level of comfort and safety provided by that facility; ~~and~~
4. **Provide safe and comfortable accommodation for vulnerable road users both *along and across* the right-of-way where necessary and appropriate**; and
5. Require connected travel networks, best-practice design criteria, and context-sensitive approaches;

SECTION 4. APPLICABILITY AND REVIEW PROCESS

Complete Streets Review Process

The following steps are part of the general review process of MORPC-funded projects.

- 1. Step 1:** As described in ~~MORPC's attributable funding application process~~ the Policies for Managing MORPC-Attributable Funds, MORPC staff will host an applicant workshop following the announcement of the solicitation of applications. The workshop will include an overview of the Complete Streets Policy and provide an opportunity for project sponsors to discuss the policy requirements with MORPC staff.
- 2. Step 2:** MORPC staff perform an initial screening of new funding requests through the attributable funding application process, which will include review of the proposed project's compliance with the Complete Streets Policy. Staff will be available throughout the funding application process to provide technical assistance related to ~~compliance with~~ the Complete Streets Policy requirements. Compliance with this Policy is a ~~factor in~~ requirement for project eligibility and a factor in selection for funding. MORPC staff will provide relevant feedback to applicants regarding their project's compliance with the Policy, and any potential revisions needed for their final application.

SECTION 4. APPLICABILITY AND REVIEW PROCESS

Complete Streets Review Process (cont.)

- 3. Step 3:** Project sponsors applying for MORPC-attributable federal funding ~~will be~~ are asked to acknowledge that they have read the Complete Streets Policy, and they must describe how their project will ~~adhere to the Complete Streets Policy~~ address the policy requirements. This currently includes listing the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit components that will be included in the proposed project. ~~and explain how their project will safely and comfortably accommodate vulnerable road users. This should include a description of the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities that will be included in the project.~~ If the project does not provide any of these facilities, the project sponsor must explain ~~why~~ if and what alternatives were considered and why they cannot be provided. MORPC staff will provide a summary of this information to the Attributable Funds Committee (AFC), who will ultimately determine the final funding commitments.

SECTION 4. APPLICABILITY AND REVIEW PROCESS

Complete Streets Review Process (cont.)

- 4. Step 4:** After MORPC has committed funding to a project, MORPC staff will review the project throughout the project development process to provide assistance where needed and ensure that the requirements of the Complete Streets Policy are met. Due to the flexibility of the policy and the variety of approaches that may be taken to design a Complete Street ~~that a sponsor may take to complete a street~~, MORPC staff will work with the project sponsor throughout the project development process to find an acceptable design solution for both parties. Should a project design change significantly from the original scope (and funding application) to no longer be in compliance with the Complete Streets Policy, the project sponsor may be required to submit a new application to the Attributable Funds Committee. The AFC will determine if and when a new application is required.

SECTION 5. POLICY

Section 5. Policy

Requirements

1. Each project shall use the most appropriate design standards and procedures. For projects using MORPC-attributable federal funding, it will be necessary to meet or exceed standards and procedures acceptable to the Ohio and U.S. Departments of Transportation, **as well as comply with State and Federal laws and regulations.** ~~such as the Ohio Department of Transportation's Project Development Process and Location & Design Manual, as well as the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.~~ Additional **Related information** and resources can be found in *Section 7, Design*, regarding ~~best practice design criteria, design guidelines,~~ and **additional best practice design standards.** ~~procedures.~~

(moved from #7)

SECTION 5. POLICY

Requirements

5. Consideration shall be given to street design that encourages safer travel speeds. Speed management and traffic calming elements including, but not limited to, road diets, ~~street trees, and~~ narrowing of lane widths, curb bump-outs at intersections, etc. should be considered where safe and appropriate.
6. Locations for ~~safe-enhanced~~ street crossings ~~should~~ shall be ~~considered~~ identified throughout the length of a project. The design of those crossings should include ~~best practices~~ proven safety countermeasures that ensure high visibility and safety for ~~people-vulnerable~~ road users crossing the street ~~in those locations~~.

(moved from Recommendations)

SECTION 5. POLICY

Requirements

8. Every project shall identify future planned facilities or services and likely future demand for all modes ~~and~~ of transportation within the project limits. Where feasible, projects should make the necessary modifications to existing infrastructure to accommodate these future planned facilities and services, and the project design shall not preclude the provision of future improvements.

SECTION 7. DESIGN

Section 7. Design

Project sponsors ~~will be~~ are required to work with MORPC and Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff to determine the most appropriate design for a project and to ensure that the design does not conflict with ~~federally required standards~~ State or Federal laws and regulations. All project designs must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act as well as the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). National best practice design guidance, standards, and recommendations should be referenced in the design and implementation of Complete Streets but may require the use of design exceptions or requests for experimentation in some cases. ~~Current guidelines and resources supported by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) include, but are not limited to:~~

SECTION 7. DESIGN

Design Criteria

ODOT has developed manuals for use on transportation projects in the state of Ohio that comply with Federal laws and regulations and compile the relevant criteria established in various national manuals, guides, and related resources. These ODOT manuals are intended to minimize the need for referencing multiple documents, and tailor design criteria to the needs of communities and transportation facilities in Ohio.

The following ODOT manuals should be used for designing projects that receive MORPC-Attributable Funding:

- Location and Design Manual, Volume 1 – Roadway Design
- Multimodal Design Guide

SECTION 7. DESIGN

Design Criteria (*cont.*)

When receiving MORPC-Attributable Funding for a project that is on the National Highway System (NHS), a local agency must seek approval from ODOT to use a locally preferred roadway design guide that differs from the ODOT manuals. If the project is not on the NHS, a local agency does *not* have to obtain approval from ODOT to use a locally preferred roadway design guide, so long as it is adopted by the local agency and it is recognized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

SECTION 7. DESIGN

Design Guides

The following publications are recognized by FHWA as “alternate roadway design guides” and may be used in project design to develop Complete Streets:

- Global Designing Cities Initiative (GDCI) *Global Street Design Guide*, 2016 and the *Designing Streets for Kids* supplement, 2020
- Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach*, 2010 and the supplemental *Implementing Context Sensitive Design Handbook*, 2017
- NACTO *Urban Street Design Guide*, 2013

Pedestrian Facilities

- AASHTO *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities*, 2021

SECTION 7. DESIGN

Design Guides (cont.)

Bicycle Facilities

- AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, 2012
- NACTO *Urban Bikeway Design Guide*, 2014
- NACTO *Don't Give Up at the Intersection*, 2019
- NACTO *Designing for All Ages & Abilities*, 2014

Transit Facilities

- AASHTO *Guide for Geometric Design of Transit Facilities on Highways and Streets*, 2014
- NACTO *Transit Street Design Guide*, 2016

SECTION 7. DESIGN

Additional FHWA Resources

Other FHWA publications that support the development of complete streets are also available for reference. These include, but are not limited to:

- [Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts](#)
- [Bikeway Selection Guide](#)
- [Crosswalk Marking Selection Guide](#)
- [Global Benchmarking Report: Improving Pedestrian Safety on Urban Arterials](#)
- [Primer on Safe System Approach for Pedestrians and Bicyclists](#)
- [Separated Bike Lanes Planning and Design Guide](#)

SECTION 8. IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Section 8. Implementation and Evaluation

The Complete Streets Policy is part of MORPC's planning process and project selection for MORPC-attributable funding. The vision and goals of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), and other key regional plans informed the development of this policy and will also guide MORPC staff in review of project compliance with the policy.

MORPC shall, at a minimum, evaluate this policy every two years in alignment with the updates to the Policies for Managing MORPC-Attributable Funds. The review will be completed in advance of, **or in tandem with,** updates to the Policies for Managing MORPC-Attributable Funds so that any changes to the Complete Streets Policy may be incorporated into that update. This evaluation may include recommendations for amendments to the Complete Streets Policy and subsequently be considered for adoption by the Transportation Policy Committee.

In order to evaluate the progress resulting from the policy, as well as potential needs for updating the policy, MORPC staff will document information related to project compliance with the policy. This **may will** include regular reports **to the MORPC Community Advisory Committee, Transportation Advisory Committee, and Active Transportation Committee** on project progress through the Complete Streets Review Process, as well as summaries of the challenges encountered, and resolutions made throughout the review process.

APPENDIX. KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

Road User

The term “road user” means a motorist, passenger, public transportation operator or user, truck driver, bicyclist, motorcyclist, or pedestrian, including a person with disabilities. (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(8)).

NEXT STEPS

- Public Comment Period:
 - Monday, January 22, 2024 thru Friday, February 23, 2024
- MORPC Committees for Info:
 - January 29, January 31, & February 8, 2024
- Active Transportation Committee:
 - Wednesday, February 28, 2024
- *(Tentative AFC meeting)*
 - *Wednesday, March 6, 2024*
- *Additional Working Group meeting?*
- MORPC Committees for Approval:
 - April 29, May 1, & May 9, 2024



THANK YOU!

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