

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

MARCH 2012

EVANSVILLE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION COMPLETE STREETS NO. 12-01

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY AS PRESENTED TO THE POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE EVANSVILLE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ON MARCH 1, 2012

WHEREAS, the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization is the organization designated by the Governor as the Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible, together with the State, for carrying out the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 134 (Federal-Aid Highway planning requirements), and capable of meeting the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 1603(a) (Federal Transit planning requirements) in the Evansville Urbanized Area; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization to establish a Complete Streets Policy so that roads may be designed and built to accommodate all users including motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit and school bus riders, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders, regardless of age and ability; and

WHEREAS, the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization has included the development of a multi-modal transportation network in the Vision Statement of the Long Range Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Improvement Program identifies implementation of capital improvements within the planning areas of Vanderburgh, Warrick and Henderson Counties; and

WHEREAS, the technical expertise provided by the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical Committee and active public participation process as outlined in the Public Participation Plan can ensure that investment in transportation infrastructure address the needs of all roadway users.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby approves the Complete Streets Policy herein attached.

ADOPTED by the Policy Committee of the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization on this 1st day of March, 2012.



Mr. Jack Corn, Jr., Chairperson
Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee

Complete Streets Policy

Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization

A. BACKGROUND

The Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) supports the creation of a multimodal, safe and efficient transportation system that ensures accessibility to all roadway users. The local jurisdictions in the MPO have constructed numerous projects that provide this accessibility. These projects include; Outer Lincoln Avenue with shoulders for biking in Warrick County, expanded trail systems in Henderson, Newburgh, and Evansville, a Road Diet on Lincoln Avenue in Evansville, and the reconstruction of Oak Hill Road as a complete street in Evansville.

This Complete Streets Policy builds upon these efforts and promotes a multimodal transportation system that is integrated with sustainable land use developments. Its main objective is to design and build roads that safely and comfortably accommodate all users of roadways, including motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit and school bus riders, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders. It includes people of all ages and abilities.

Building complete streets provides many benefits to residents, business owners, developers, and the community as a whole. First and foremost, embracing the complete streets concept will create balanced transportation systems by providing accessible, safe, and efficient connections between destinations. It will encourage economic growth and stability while increasing property values. It will ensure job growth, reduce crashes through safety improvements, improve public health and fitness, reduce harmful emissions, and reduce the overall demand on our roadways by allowing people to replace motor vehicle trips with active transportation options. Secondly, integrating sidewalks, bike facilities, transit amenities, or safe crossings into the initial design of a project spares the expense and complications of retrofits later.

B. DEFINITION

Complete streets are roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all users, including, but not limited to motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit and school bus riders, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders. "All users" includes people of all ages and abilities.

C. VISION AND PURPOSE

The desired outcome of the Complete Streets Policy is to create an equitable, balanced, and effective transportation system where every roadway user can travel safely and comfortably and where sustainable transportation options are available to everyone.

The goals of this Complete Streets policy are:

- To create a comprehensive, integrated, and connected transportation network that supports compact, sustainable development and provides livable communities.
- To ensure safety, ease of use, and ease of transfer between modes for all users of the transportation system.
- To provide flexibility for different types of streets, areas, and users.

D. POLICY

- The Evansville MPO will promote the complete streets concept throughout the region and, therefore, recommends that all local jurisdictions adopt a comprehensive complete streets policy.
- The Evansville MPO requires that all local projects receiving MPO allocated federal funding adhere to this policy. Projects utilizing any other funding sources are also encouraged to adhere to this policy.

1. Applicability

This Complete Streets Policy applies to new construction and reconstruction (excluding resurfacing activities that do not alter the current/existing geometric designs of a roadway) of local roadways and other transportation facilities that will use Federal funds through the Evansville MPO for any phase of project implementation including planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, or construction engineering.

2. Requirements

- a. Designs shall consider accommodations for all users and be sensitive to the context of the project setting. It is important to note that complete streets may look different for every project and road type. For example, wide lanes or paved shoulders may be sufficient in a rural area, whereas sidewalks and/or bike lanes are needed in an urban setting. Also, when re-striping projects are considered, where the right-of-way will not change, options such as bike lanes, sharrows, and pedestrian crosswalks could still be implemented.
- b. Each project shall use the most appropriate design standards and procedures. However, the Local Public Agency (LPA) shall retain the design decision authority over its projects.
- c. Project sponsors shall fill out the appropriate project application and provide the completed form to the Evansville MPO. MPO application forms will be revised to include complete streets information.
- d. LPAs should coordinate their projects with adjacent LPAs to ensure consistency of facilities.
- e. Logical termini should be chosen to include connections through "pinch points," such as overpasses, railroad crossings, and bridges. Logical termini should not be chosen so that the project ends before such a "pinch point" unless there is a compelling reason to do so.
- f. Every project shall involve the local transit agency in the project development process to ensure that sufficient accommodation of transit vehicles and access to transit facilities is provided.
- g. Public transit facilities shall be designed with the goals of complete streets in mind by including bicycle and pedestrian connections. Additional facilities such as benches and bike parking should be considered where appropriate.
- h. Every project shall ensure that the provision of accommodations for one mode does not prevent safe use by another mode (e.g., a bus shelter should not block the clear walking zone on the sidewalk).

3. Recommendations

- a. Local Public Agencies are encouraged to view all transportation improvements as opportunities to create safer, more accessible streets for all users.
- b. If the project serves a destination point, such as a school, recreational facility, shopping center, hospital, or office complex, the project shall provide the opportunity for the destination to have access to the project's pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- c. Street furniture, such as bike racks or benches, should be considered as part of all projects as long as they do not impede any user.
- d. When designing a facility that includes or crosses an existing or future transit route, ensure that the appropriate pedestrian and wheelchair access is provided to and from the transit stops.
- e. Traffic-calming elements including, but not limited to, landscaping, street trees, and narrowing of lanes, should be considered where safe and appropriate.
- f. Project sponsors should consider including street trees and landscape components, with careful analysis of tree, site, and design considerations.
- g. Each project design should be coordinated with appropriate access management strategies. Access management strategies should consider the placement of sidewalks and ramps to eliminate sight distance issues.
- h. Each local community should regularly update its project design standards and procedures and train its staff to adhere to them.
- i. Local governments are encouraged to adopt Complete Streets Policies consistent with this regional policy and federal and state design standards. State governments should work with the local Metropolitan Planning Organizations to ensure consistency in policies at the state, regional and local level.

E. PROCESS

1. Call for Projects

In response to an MPO issued Call for Projects that seek to use federal funding and to be programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program, the LPA shall submit a Project Application with the following information to the Evansville MPO:

- a. a detailed project description (e.g. project scope, reconstruction/new construction, vehicular elements, non-vehicular elements);
- b. the intent for the project to be Complete Streets Compliant or to seek a Complete Streets Exemption;
- c. project phases and key milestones;
- d. anticipated costs for design, rights-of-way acquisition, construction, and construction inspection;
- e. amount of federal funding requested by phase (e.g. preliminary engineering, rights of way, construction, construction inspection);
- f. anticipated project schedule, from design initiation to construction letting;
- g. the Employee in Responsible Charge (ERC) .

If certain information required above is not yet known at the time of the Project Description submittal, the LPA shall provide general details on the required submittal information, but shall state, "specific information has not yet been determined".

2. Project Review and Approval

Evansville MPO staff will perform an initial screening of new requests and will be available to the applicant to discuss concerns and provide compliance guidance. Because of the flexibility of the policy and the variety of approaches that a sponsor may take to complete a street, MPO staff, as stewards of the Complete Streets Policy, will work with the project sponsor throughout the project development to find an acceptable solution for both parties. A Complete Streets Guidance Document will be developed to provide additional assistance. Project descriptions, including a Complete Streets compliance assessment, will be reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee prior to being submitted to the Policy Committee for their consideration to adopt into the TIP. The Policy Committee shall certify by resolution that relevant projects identified in the TIP are Complete Streets compliant unless a project receives an exemption under certain circumstances.

3. LPA Quarterly Project Tracking

Once a project is programmed into the adopted TIP, the Local Public Agency shall fulfill the scope of work as detailed in the approved Project Description. Quarterly project tracking will maintain current information of issues identified, significant accomplishments since the initial Project Description submittal or last quarterly report, new details on project implementation, and the preferred design solutions as they pertain to fulfilling the project parameters detailed by the Project Description.

4. Project Description Change

The LPA shall report to the Evansville MPO immediately if a significant change to the roadway project is warranted, especially any change that affects the project's accommodations for one of the users of the corridor. The Policy Committee will review the requested change(s) to the project and determine if the change(s) affects the intent (as detailed by the most recently approved Project Description) to be Complete Streets compliant, Complete Streets exempt, or Complete Streets noncompliant. If the changes significantly affect the intent the Policy Committee shall certify a revised Project Description and determine the roadway project's standing to be Complete Streets compliant or Complete Streets exempt. If a capital roadway project is determined to be Complete Streets noncompliant the Policy Committee shall consider removing the project from the Transportation Improvement Program until such time that the project can be brought back into compliance with the Complete Streets Policy. If the changes do not significantly affect the intent then no action by the Policy Committee is required.

5. Exemptions

Project sponsors may request an exemption, or re-review, of their projects by the Policy Committee if they cannot reach an agreement with MPO staff. Instead of an exemption, the Policy Committee may also suggest an alternative accommodation. The Policy Committee may allow such an exemption under certain circumstances, including the following:

- a. Ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g. mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair, and regular/seasonal maintenance);

- b. The project involves a roadway that bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using. In such case, efforts should be made to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere;
- c. There are extreme right-of-way topographic or natural resource constraints;
- d. The Long Range Transportation Plan's Average Daily Traffic projection is less than 1000 vehicles per day;
- e. When other available means or factors indicate an absence of need presently and in the Long Range Plan;
- f. A reasonable and equivalent alternative already exists for certain users or is programmed in the TIP as a separate project;
- g. The project is not a roadway improvement project and/or the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization has no programming authority (e.g. State, Transit and other projects).

F. IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval and adoption of this Complete Streets Policy, it will become part of the Evansville MPO's planning process and project selection for MPO allocated funding. The principles of this policy will also guide the MPO staff in the preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan and other plans it prepares or to which it contributes.

A Complete Streets Guidance Document will be developed to assist project sponsors in developing Complete Streets projects. The Complete Streets Guidance Document will contain design standards and implementation guidance.

G. EVALUATION

The Evansville MPO shall, at a minimum, evaluate this policy and the documents associated with it in conjunction with the Transportation Plan update. This evaluation may include recommendations for amendments to the Complete Streets Policy and subsequently be considered for adoption by the Policy Committee utilizing its current procedures.

H. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In order to measure the performance of complete streets planning, a broad look at how the system is serving all users is crucial. The intent of the Complete Streets Policy is to create a safe and effective transportation system that accommodates all users and modes of transportation. Performance measures include:

- Total miles of on-street bicycle routes defined by streets with clearly marked or signed bicycle accommodation
- Linear feet of new pedestrian accommodation
- Number of new curb ramps installed along streets