



COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

December 14, 2017

VISION

The transportation network in the Village of Yellow Springs will become measurably better connected, safer and more accessible for all users of the public right-of-way, regardless of their mode of transportation, age or abilities, as transportation projects throughout the Village are designed and constructed using Complete Streets principles. This effort to make our transportation system more complete will take advantage of opportunities presented by necessary reconstruction and expansion of the system whenever practicable.

PRINCIPLES

This policy defines Complete Streets by this outcome: “All current and projected users of the public right-of-way should be able to safely and conveniently reach their destinations along and across a street, road or trail, regardless of their physical ability or chosen mode of transportation, in order for that street or road to be considered *complete*.” *All users* include pedestrians, cyclists, transit and school bus riders, individuals with disabilities, motorists, freight haulers, service personnel and emergency responders as well as a wide range of ages from young children to seniors. Specific attention should be paid to vulnerable populations in contexts where they may need to travel. Studies show, for example, that a large majority of cyclists feel safe only if travelling on a “protected” bike lane or trail separated from traffic. This is especially true for younger riders and families. While some streets and roads may require changes to the right-of-way to better accommodate non-motorized users, many low volume streets and roads will require minor changes, such as signage or restriping, or no changes at all, especially if speed limits are low and enforced (see “Context Sensitive”). The purpose of this policy is to encourage improvements to the transportation network so that more transportation corridors in the Village of Yellow Springs meet this definition, and to encourage future designs that accommodate all users, thereby creating an increasingly safe, connected and accessible transportation network for all modes and users.

EDUCATION & ENFORCEMENT

This policy focuses primarily on how streets are designed and built. However, it is also important that the issues of education and enforcement are addressed with regard to Complete Streets. Complete Streets can make the transportation network safer for all users if each knows the rules of the road and obeys those rules. As more cyclists, pedestrians and individuals traveling with mobility devices share the right-of-way with automobiles, all parties need opportunities to learn the proper use of treatments such as unsignalized crossings, bike lanes, shared lane markings (e.g. ‘sharrows’) and sidepaths as well as how to interact safely. Project sponsors should consider whether a specific project requires special efforts in education or enforcement.

Consistent enforcement of traffic laws for all users is critical to ensure that posted speeds are obeyed, proper signals are used when turning, and traffic lights and signs are respected. A concerted effort should be made by local government and community members to proactively address enforcement protocols and communicate them clearly both in policy and in practice. Bicycles are legal vehicles on all Ohio roads and streets, with the exception of limited-access highways, and are



subject to vehicular traffic rights and responsibilities. Pedestrians, individuals with disabilities and transit riders also must take responsibility for walking or rolling along and across roadways in a safe and legal manner, using sidewalks or shoulders when available. If no such facility is available, pedestrians or individuals with disabilities should walk or roll on the left, facing traffic, as near to the outside edge of the roadway as is safe and practical.

With regard to individuals using mobility devices, drivers and cyclists should be aware that there are times when using the street is necessary. When sharing the roads or sidewalks, be mindful of varying speeds that users travel as well as obstructions (e.g. parking vehicles on sidewalks) that can make it difficult for differently-abled individuals to get to their destinations.

BENEFITS

By providing, where appropriate, features such as connected and accessible sidewalks, dedicated bicycle facilities, well-marked crosswalks and accessible transit stops, Complete Streets encourage walking, transit & mobility device use and biking, all of which have important health, economic and environmental benefits. By facilitating a greater share of trips via these active transportation modes, Complete Streets help reduce the demand for fossil fuels, ease automobile congestion, reduce wear on roadways, improve air quality and make streets more attractive for businesses and customers, increasing economic activity at the neighborhood level. Well-designed complete streets benefit community health through increased physical activity and improve safety by reducing crashes among all modes. Complete streets are a logical extension of the Americans with Disabilities Act and improve access for people with disabilities and older citizens, allowing them to participate more fully in community life (see “Context Sensitive”).

CONNECTIVITY

The purpose of a transportation network is to connect users of the network to their desired destinations and make it possible for all individuals to be mobile, engaged members of the community. A well-connected network provides safe and convenient transitions from one mode of transportation to another, from one jurisdiction to another, and from one type of infrastructure to another. This can be accomplished by connecting sidewalks to bus stops, providing park and ride locations, providing bike-on-bus opportunities, making convenient connections from separated bike trails to the street grid by planning & building new bike trails that enhance connectivity and by making sure that all these connections are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Every effort should be made to provide a continuous, uninterrupted network accessible to all users and modes. A well-connected network considers connectivity throughout the lifespan of a transportation project, and takes into account the needs of both current and projected users.

CONTEXT SENSITIVE

There is no one design standard that achieves the Complete Streets outcome. Designs for particular projects will be context-sensitive, considering adjacent land uses and local needs, and incorporate the most up-to-date, widely-accepted design standards for the particular setting, traffic volume and speed as well as current and projected demand. Each project must be considered both separately and as part of a connected network to determine the level and type of treatment necessary for the street to be *complete*. The need for complete streets treatments is greatest along corridors that connect populous residential settings with popular and important destinations including, but not



limited to, the following: medical, shopping, employment, educational and recreational destinations. In settings where there are multiple destinations that currently attract pedestrians, cyclists, individuals with disabilities and transit riders, any or all of the following should be considered: reduced speeds, narrowed travel lanes, “protected” bike lanes, adequate shoulders, shared lane markers, sidepaths, trails, accessible sidewalks, marked crosswalks, median refuges, accessible pedestrian controls and accessible and comfortable transit stops.

It is also important that these features are included if there is a strong likelihood of future demand. Certain factors, such as the existence of a fixed transit route or proximity to a school, clearly demonstrate the need for safe non-automobile travel. Well-worn footpaths in grassy/muddy areas along a road are also de facto evidence of the need for facilities for pedestrians and individuals with disabilities, including sidewalks and crosswalks. Since part of every transit trip is made on foot or by using a mobility device, all transit stops should be accessible to pedestrians and individuals with disabilities.

Because schools are natural concentrations of non-drivers, and school bus service is usually limited by a minimum distance from the school and is usually not provided for before school or after school activities, walkers, individuals with disabilities and cyclists must be routinely accommodated within a minimum distance of two miles from a school facility. The Village of Yellow Springs encourages collaboration with its educational institutions to proactively consider Complete Streets principles when selecting school sites. If new schools are located in areas that are accessible to walkers, individuals using mobility devices and bicyclists, school systems can better manage transportation costs and avoid new congestion problems. Students can also enjoy the health benefits of walking, rolling or biking. The same can be true when shopping, medical, postal, governmental and other public facilities are built in locations that are accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, seniors and individuals with disabilities.

The most effective time to address these issues is early in the site selection and facility design process, therefore Complete Streets discussions should begin immediately when new facilities are being conceptualized. It is important to note that many low-speed, low-volume residential streets can be considered *complete* with no additional treatment because pedestrians, people of all abilities, cars and cyclists can already interact safely. Likewise, many low-volume roads with limited current or projected demand from cyclists, transit riders, pedestrians and people with disabilities may require no additional treatment to be considered *complete*. In general, specific treatments are less necessary where average daily traffic volumes are less than 1,000 vehicles a day and legal speeds are 25 mph or less. Where traffic is light but speeds are higher, motorists must have adequate sight distance and the opportunity to change lanes to pass a bicycle, mobility device or pedestrian for a road to be *complete* without additional design elements.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all transportation or public works projects in the Village of Yellow Springs. Some projects may require no additional Complete Streets treatments if it is determined during the application review phase that no current or projected need justifies such treatment. With a primary objective to enhance transportation choices, creative approaches should be considered to address a wide variety of end users and possible street treatments and amenities that will serve them. Private



developers are expected to apply Complete Streets principles to their projects, and the Village of Yellow Springs will also work with neighboring communities to utilize these principles to ensure connectivity across jurisdictions and regions. New development plan design must include trail corridor dedication to enhance connectivity between the development and the existing/future trail system. On street enhancement may not be needed where ODOT-standard trails are installed.

This policy applies to all phases of project development, from initial planning through construction. The probable use through the life of the project must be considered. How a project will address Complete Streets criteria will be documented in the project plan to be approved by the Village of Yellow Springs. If it is determined that additional Complete Streets treatments are not warranted, e.g. because certain users are prohibited or a street or road is already adequately designed to accommodate all users or includes a trail plan, and thus, is *complete* without further enhancements, this should also be documented and approved by the Village of Yellow Springs. It should also be kept in mind that resurfacing projects often offer a low-cost opportunity to adjust lane widths, add bike lanes or improve crosswalks simply by changing the pavement markings to make streets more *complete*. When new traffic control detection devices are installed, they must be capable of detecting bicycles and mobility devices. All new pedestrian crossing devices must also meet the most current accessibility standards for controls, signals and placement.

In line with the “context sensitive” approach to Complete Streets, there will be instances when these strategies standards cannot be met due to issues such as roadway topographic constraints, easements or other factors. When these issues arise, these exceptions to the Complete Streets approach should be thoroughly analyzed and clearly articulated. In these instances, alternate routes that are in the same traffic corridor and that provide access and connections for pedestrians, cyclists and individuals with disabilities should be considered and improved as necessary (e.g. signage, bike boulevard treatments, shared-use spurs, shared-lane markings). Cyclists, pedestrians, transit riders and individuals with disabilities must be able to cross high-volume roads safely so that these roads do not become barriers to non-motorized use. To accommodate crossing of wide roads, for example, signal timing may need to be adjusted to accommodate users who walk more slowly, countdown timers and/or mid-point safety islands may need to be installed, and highly visible signage and crosswalk markings may need to be added. Accommodations for all individuals crossing these roads should also to be considered.

IMPLEMENTATION

Project proposals and plans will address how the project will make the transportation network more *complete*. Any transportation project proposal or plan that does not address Complete Streets principles, either by including appropriate design elements or by clearly articulating why they cannot be employed, will be considered incomplete. The intention of this policy is to support efforts to make the transportation network in the Village of Yellow Springs more *complete* by applying Complete Streets principles as appropriate. Facilities will be designed to the best currently available standards and guidelines. See the “Policy Guidance and Resources” section below, and the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission is an important resource for supporting Complete Streets principles in transportation network design.



A key outcome of the Yellow Springs Complete Streets Policy is to change the status quo of the design and construction of Village streets and other capital projects. The Yellow Springs Comprehensive Land Use Plan, local zoning regulations and the Village Planning Commission should reflect these principles in their policies, procedures and processes, which will be reviewed and updated, as appropriate, to ensure the successful implementation of this policy.

This policy does not dictate specific designs, but rather promotes the outcome that all current and projected users must be able to safely and conveniently reach their destinations along and across a street or road, regardless of their physical ability or chosen mode of transportation. To this end, facilities will be designed using the best available standards and guidelines. See the “Policy Guidance and Resources” section below for references to several best practices. Coordination with the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Ohio Department of Transportation during all stages of project planning and development is also recommended to support Complete Streets principles in transportation network design.

POLICY GUIDANCE & RESOURCES

- AASHTO Design Publications (https://bookstore.transportation.org/category_item.aspx?id=DS)
- American Planning Association Publication: “Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices” (www.planning.org)
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Street Design Guides (<https://nacto.org/publications/design-guides>)
- Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: (<http://www.ite.org/css/>)
- Multimodal Level of Service for Urban Streets (http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/Multimodal_Level_of_Service_Analysis_for_Urban_Str_160228.aspx)
- National Complete Streets Coalition (<http://www.completestreets.org>)
- ODOT Multi-modal Design Guidance (<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/DIVISIONS/TRANSSYSDEV/MULTIMODALPLANNING/BICYCLE/Pages/PlanningandDesignResources.aspx>)
- TRB 2010 Highway Capacity Manual
- US DOT Policy Statement: “Design Guidance Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach” (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/design.htm>)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation (<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/docs/bicycle-rural-guide.pdf>)

Accessibility

- FHA Office of Civil Rights <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/civilrights/programs/ada.htm>
- Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines <http://www.access-board.gov/provac/>
- Accessible Pathways to Bus Stops and Transit Facilities: A Process Guide https://secure2.convio.net/es/site/Ecommerce?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=6341&store_id=9663
- Toolkit for the Assessment of Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety [PDF] https://secure2.convio.net/es/site/Ecommerce?VIEW_PRODUCT=true&product_id=4981&store_id=9663



Pedestrian and Bike Information

- Ohio Department of Transportation Bike and Pedestrian Plan (<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/MultiModalPlanning/bicycle/Pages/Default.aspx>)
- The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) (<http://www.walkinginfo.org>)
- Planning for Active Transportation in the Miami Valley (<http://www.mvrpc.org/tr/bikePed.php>)
- High Quality Bike Facilities Increase Ridership and Make Biking Safer (<https://nacto.org>)
- Critical Environmental Factors for Transportation Cycling in Children (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov – Article PMC4175075)

Safe Routes to School

- National Center for Safe Routes to School (<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>) Performance Standards

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Measuring the impacts of the Village of Yellow Springs Complete Streets Policy will be critical to ensuring successful outcomes. An annual report to the community on these impacts shall be provided to Village Council using the following quantitative performance measures:

- Linear feet of new and repaired ADA complaint sidewalks.
- Linear feet of new and repaired curb ramps installed.
- Total number and type of crosswalk and intersection improvements.
- Total number of new transit stops and routes.
- Rates of ridership on transit routes.
- Total number of crashes, injuries and fatalities by mode, as available.
- Rates of children walking, biking or rolling to school.
- Total number of off-street bicycle routes.
- Total number of new on-street bicycle routes, defined by streets and roads with clearly marked or signed bicycle accommodations.

Qualitative measures will also be valuable in tracking the impacts of the Village of Yellow Springs Complete Streets Policy. The following qualitative performance measures will be conducted on a periodic basis, though not necessarily reported on annually:

- Surveys of bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, individuals with disabilities and transit users concerning their ability to reach desired destinations safely and conveniently.
- Surveys of project sponsors concerning the value and fairness of this policy.
- Surveys to determine the number of safe and accessible routes for users of varied ages and abilities.