

CHILLICOTHE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Complete Streets is an approach to street design that is tailored to a community and its needs, meaning Chillicothe's Complete Street Policy will be custom to Chillicothe and its residents. The major component of this policy is creating safe roadways for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit riders regardless of age and physical ability. Characteristics of complete streets include, spacious sidewalks, bike lanes, frequent and visible crosswalks, ADA compliant ramps, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower traffic lanes, roundabouts, lighting, etc. Introducing Complete Streets elements will create a safe, built environment for all users.

1. Vision

- 1.1. The City of Chillicothe is committed to creating a healthy, equitable, accessible, and connected built environment. The Chillicothe Complete Streets Policy will support a safe and accessible environment for walking, biking, rolling, using transit, and driving for all people regardless of sex, ability, gender, age, ethnicity, or income. The city will work to create a complete, connected, and integrated network, based off best practices, that promotes a healthy lifestyle for all people. The City of Chillicothe will consider Complete Streets in transportation planning and decision-making processes. The Chillicothe Complete Streets Policy intends to provide benefits for the community including improvements to physical and mental health, economic growth, connectedness, and a more equitable community.

2. Diverse Users

- 2.1. While the Chillicothe Complete Streets Policy will work to accommodate all users in creating a safe, accessible, connected network, the city recognizes equity as a motivation. To promote equity, the city will prioritize mobility and accessibility for vulnerable users, including people with disabilities, youth, and older adults, as well as neighborhoods (as defined by census tracts) with higher rates of health disparities and/or socio-economic vulnerabilities (as identified by the Ohio Department of Health's Health Improvement Zones maps.).

3. Complete Streets Principles

Complete Streets principles outlined by the National Complete Streets Coalition include typical elements that make up complete streets including sidewalks, bicycle lanes (or wide, paved shoulders), shared-use paths, designated bus lanes, safe and accessible transit stops, and frequent and safe crossings for pedestrians, including median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, and curb extensions.

4. Commitment in all Projects and Phases

- 4.1. The City of Chillicothe will implement Complete Streets principles in all phases of all projects including planning, construction, reconstruction and retrofit projects, maintenance projects, ongoing operations, resurfacing, and repaving. Transportation projects – such as the ones stated above, within city, state, federal, or privately developed right-of-way – must follow and implement the Complete Streets principles in all phases of all projects.
- 4.2. During any construction work, safe and efficient accommodations shall be provided for any affected mode of transportation, when possible.

- 4.3. The Planning Department will review and update internal processes and procedures to integrate Complete Streets considerations into department processes to ensure that Complete Streets considerations are being applied to all transportation projects.
- 4.4. The City shall coordinate with local businesses and local school districts to improve multimodal connections to key destinations and amenities.

5. Clear, Accountable Exceptions

- 5.1. Exceptions must be provided in writing to the City Engineer, or their designee. Upon receipt, the exemption request will be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Appeals who will provide recommendation for approval or denial.
- 5.2. Exceptions will be documented by the City Engineer, or their designee, and made available to the general public by request.
- 5.3. Exemptions that are acknowledged include:
 - Accommodation is not necessary on corridors where specific users are prohibited, such as interstate freeways or pedestrian malls. Exclusion of certain users on particular corridors should not exempt projects from accommodating other permitted users.
 - Cost of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use.
 - A documented absence of current and future need.
 - Emergency repairs such as a water main leak that requires immediate, rapid response; however, temporary accommodations for all modes should still be made. Depending on severity of the repairs, opportunities to improve multimodal access should still be considered where possible.
 - Engineering judgment determines that Complete Streets facilities are not feasible due to terrain, ownership/jurisdiction, and/or existing structures that cannot be accommodated through design.

6. Jurisdiction

- 6.1. The city shall work cooperatively with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Ross County to plan and implement Complete Streets improvements and major maintenance on any US or OH maintained roadway including but not limited to OH-772, US-50, US-23, and/or other major transportation projects.
- 6.2. The city shall coordinate with public health agencies including the Ross County Health District, local schools including the Chillicothe City Schools and any private or parochial schools, regional planning commissions such as Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission, and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency to maximize technical assistance and funding related to transportation.
- 6.3. The City shall coordinate with AEP, or other powers companies that provide services to the City to improve and increase street lighting.
- 6.4. The city shall coordinate with relevant affordable and/or senior housing agencies and developers to ensure transit services are accessible.
- 6.5. Private developments must comply with this policy as it relates to the public right-of-way. Private development projects proposing privately owned rights-of-ways shall be reviewed for consistency with this Complete Streets policy as part of the approval process.

7. Design

- 7.1. Developers shall follow a multitude of design guideline best practices to ensure that all transportation projects are enhancing the community's built environment positively.

- 7.2. Best practices shall be reviewed and updated every 3 years to guarantee that the list of best practices remains relevant.
- 7.3. The city will consider and follow best practices design guidance, standards, and recommendations from the documents and organizations listed below:
 - ODOT's Multimodal Design Guide (MDG)
 - National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide
 - American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO)
 - Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
 - Smart Growth America
 - City of Chillicothe Comprehensive Plan Character Type Map

8. Land Use and Context Sensitivity

- 8.1. To support cohesion between transportation and land use, the Planning Director, or their designee, will review the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the Complete Streets policy is supported.
- 8.2. Community engagement shall be performed to ensure that the public is notified and able to provide feedback for all major corridor projects and other projects as determined by the Planning Director, or their designee.
- 8.3. The Planning Director will serve as an advisory role on the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals and can utilize a technical advisory group consisting of key stakeholders (regional planning, public health representation, community representation, etc.)
- 8.4. This policy will be implemented in a context-sensitive manner. If there are unintended negative consequences, such as involuntary displacement or hindering certain types of development, this policy will be assessed for improvements.

9. Performance Measures

- 9.1. Performance measures will be evaluated using data from numerous sources to better understand the performance of the Complete Streets policy. The city will collect data with assistance from Ross County Health District, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), Chillicothe Parks Department, and Chillicothe School District. Both short- and long-term performance measures will be collected to evaluate different metrics of transportation projects throughout the years.
- 9.2. Ross County Health District, in collaboration with the City of Chillicothe, will report all short-term measures in the annual report, which the city will share with the public.
- 9.3. Short-term performance measures include:
 - Miles of sidewalk added
 - Miles of shared use path added
 - Miles of bikeways added
 - Number of crossings added
 - Number of crossing improvements
 - Number of serious injury and fatal bicycle crashes and serious injury and fatal pedestrian crashes
 - Number of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit amenities added (i.e., bike racks, benches, water fountains, trash cans, shelters, etc.)
 - Mobility tracking (i.e., tracking how many miles connect people to needs)
- 9.4. Long-term performance measures include:
 - Active Transportation Plan projects implemented (long-term metrics to be tracked in AT plan)

- Safe Routes to School projects implemented
- Reduction in serious injury, fatal, bicyclist, and pedestrian crashes
- Number of programming activities (i.e., educational and social media posts from Ross County Health and/or Adena Health)
- Improve health assessment metrics (i.e., decrease in the percentage of survey respondents who exercise for less than 30 minutes)
- Improve county health rankings (Ohio Department of Health annual reporting)
- Increase in the percentage of city streets impacted by the Complete Streets Policy
- Increase in the percentage of transit stops with shelters
- Increase in the percentage of transit stops accessible via sidewalks and curb ramps
- Increase in (commuting) mode shift from driving to active transportation (American Community Survey)

10. Project Selection Criteria

- 10.1. The City shall incorporate the following project selection criteria into decision-making processes and when considering the various elements of street design:
- **Safety** – Projects that create a safer environment should be prioritized, i.e., projects that decrease fatal and serious injury crash risk and improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities that are accessible and equitable. Projects that incorporate evidence-based or best practices that reduce the risk of injury or death will be considered a priority.
 - **Cost** – Projects that are cost efficient and cost effective should be considered during project selection.
 - **Economic development** – Projects that promote economic growth (i.e., projects near downtown, near commercial or business districts) should be prioritized as it allows people to navigate a network when desired, ultimately promoting economic growth.
 - **Impact on diverse users and public health** – Projects that directly impact vulnerable users and improve public health for those who need it most should be prioritized.
 - **Impact on those with disabilities**– Projects that will positively / directly impact those with disabilities users should be prioritized and considered as a project selection criterion.
 - **Impact on schools, and coordination with local schools and Chillicothe City Schools** – Projects that are near a Chillicothe City School, a local school, or a preschool (or identified in a School Travel Plan) that will allow students to travel by walking or biking should be prioritized and considered as a project selection criterion.
 - **Connection to existing or planning projects identified by the Ross County Active Transportation Plan** – Completing gaps in the network should be included in the decision-making process, as filling gaps in the network allows for the network to become more complete, ultimately fulfilling the Complete Streets vision should be prioritized and considered as a project selection criterion.
 - **Feasibility and funding availability** – Available funding sources and whether the project is feasible should be a prioritized decision-making criterion during project selection.
 - **Equity**- Projects that will close gaps and address barriers in social determinants, health equity, and other socio-economic factors should be prioritized and considered as a Project selection criterion.

11. Implementation Steps

- 11.1. The City of Chillicothe and Ross County Health District will oversee the implementation of this Complete Streets Policy along with the coordination of existing committees such as the active transportation partners, BOZA, and planning commissions.
- 11.2. Annual reports will be developed by the Ross County Health District to provide the public updates on accomplishments, any approved exceptions, and short-term/long term performance measurements to ensure accountability.
- 11.3. Within twelve months of adopting this Complete Streets policy, the Planning Department shall make recommendations for updates to the City Zoning Code and development standards to better align with the policy.
- 11.4. Ross County Health Department, the City of Chillicothe, and Adena Health will provide education and engagement for the City of Chillicothe Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, internal teams, and developers.
- 11.5. The city will ensure the public is engaged during any major corridor projects and other projects as determined by the Planning Director, or their designee.