

INTRODUCTION

Complete streets are roadways designed to accommodate all modes of travel.

For the past 50 years, street design has concentrated on cars at the expense of sidewalks, street crossings and dedicated bike lanes.

In many places they have fallen into disrepair or been excluded entirely, creating an environment in which bicycling and walking have become exceedingly difficult or dangerous.

A transportation system focused on motorized travel limits choice, access and mobility. An auto-dependent transportation system ignores the needs of populations that do not have access to vehicles.

Information from the 2019 American Community Survey indicates that 6.9 percent of households in the Tri-County region did not have access to a vehicle. Additionally, those under 16 years old, the elderly, the disabled and those who prefer not to commute by car are equally affected by an auto-dependent system.

Finally, people taking auto or transit trips need to use sidewalks to get from their bus stop or parking lot to the final terminus of their trip.

Another consideration for providing adequate bike/pedestrian facilities in street design is to improve system safety. Bicyclists and pedestrians account for

a larger percentage of roadway fatalities than they do mode share. "Desire paths" (unofficial paths signified by continuous use) often run along busy arterials and require road crossings without adequate provisions.

Complete Streets policies can take many forms. The National Complete Streets Coalition has found that most Complete Streets Policies are adopted at the municipal level and consist of a framework for decision makers, passed by resolution, to incorporate considerations for all users of the transportation network when making land use, development or public infrastructure decisions.

The Model Complete Streets Resolution, developed by TCRPC staff and included under Resources, reflects local concerns and issues. However, the Complete Street philosophy has been used to guide bike/pedestrian facility plans, ordinance and other regulation as well as technical design manuals.

Municipalities can also promote Complete Street elements by collaborating with the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The HATS MPO used Federal and State funds for transportation projects of regional significance. U.S. Department of Transportation and PA Department of Transportation policy is to accommodate all transportation modes in projects where feasible. Municipalities should coordinate with MPO staff at TCRPC to ensure that this occurs during project development for their area.





- [Montgomery County, MD Draft Complete Street Design Guide \(2021\)](#)
- [American Planning Association Complete Streets Best Practices](#)
- [Safe Routes Partnership Complete Streets](#)
- [Smart Growth America's National Complete Streets Coalition](#)
- [US Department Of Transportation Complete Streets](#)

RELATED FACT SHEETS ON PLANNINGTOOLKIT.ORG

- Connectivity
- Main Street Programs
- Traffic Calming
- Walkability

BENEFITS

- Promotes pedestrian and bicyclist safety;
- Provides equitable transportation choice, especially for those without auto access;
- Complete Street Elements can be incorporated into communities at a relatively low cost.

DRAWBACKS

- Implementation of complete streets may be difficult on state and federal roads due to ownership;
- Maintenance and liability issues for projects along state or federal roads;
- Potential for less flexibility in project design.

RESOURCES

Example Complete Streets Policies in PA

- [Camp Hill \(2016\)](#)
- [Elizabethtown \(2015\)](#)
- [Franklin \(2010\)](#)
- [Johnstown \(2020\)](#)
- [Montgomery County \(2019\)](#)

Supporting Documents

- [TCRPC Model Complete Streets Policy](#)
- [PennDOT Pedestrian Planning & Design Resources](#)
- [Philadelphia Complete Street Design Guide \(2017\)](#)

TIPS TO CONSIDER

- SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS DURING THE FORMULATION PROCESS. THIS SHOULD INCLUDE BIKE/PEDESTRIAN/TRAIL GROUPS, ADVOCATES FOR THE ELDERLY, SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICIALS, ETC.
- IDENTIFY PRACTICAL POINTS OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE POLICY. FOR EXAMPLE: DOES THE S&LDO NEED TO BE REVISITED? HOW WILL THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN NEED TO BE ADJUSTED?
- COORDINATE WITH YOUR MPO OR RPO TO ENSURE THAT NON-MUNICIPAL PROJECTS IN THE AREA FOLLOW COMPLETE STREETS GOALS.



CREATED BY

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

112 Market St., 2nd Fl., Harrisburg, PA 17101

(717) 234-2639

planning@tcrpc-pa.org