

Complete Streets Policy [DRAFT]

Upper Providence Township, Montgomery County, PA

Vision

“Promote a transportation network that safely serves the needs of all residents and visitors regardless of age, ability, or mode of travel while supporting the Township’s vision of enhancing the character of the community.”

Goals

- **Messaging** – Coordinate clear messaging on the importance of a balanced transportation network from all township staff, officials, and representatives.
- **Fund Allocation** – Equitably allocate funding whenever possible to improve transportation opportunities for all individuals.
- **Training** – Identify required and ongoing staff and “decision maker” training on the latest Complete Streets concepts.
- **Public Participation** – Enable a community conversation early and often in the planning process.
- **Partnerships** – Build partnerships with implementation partners to advance the transportation goals of the township.
- **Coordinated Effort** – Develop transportation network planning and implementation plans in synergy with the guidance and policies of the County and DOT.

Implementation

Upper Providence Township shall develop an integrated and connected multimodal transportation system of Complete Streets that serves all neighborhoods and populations. Towards this end:

1. All transportation projects shall put forth the effort and planning to result in Complete Streets that allow safe, environmentally healthy, economically sound, equitable, accessible, and convenient travel along, and across, streets and roadway networks. Projects shall be evaluated for users of all ages and abilities and for all modes of transportation, including motorists, bicyclists, public transportation vehicles, and their passengers and pedestrians and strive to meet the following goals:
 - a. Environment: Improve air quality and mitigate traffic congestion.
 - b. Safety: Eliminate all road fatalities, significantly reduce crash severity and injury, and improve personal safety through increasing the number of people walking and bicycling.
 - c. Economy: Stimulate economic prosperity.
 - d. Health: Increase physical activity and social connectivity with the goal of lowering the risk of obesity, reducing chronic disease, and promoting wellness.
 - e. Equity: Implement policies and distribute funding and other resources as equitably and responsibly as possible in all neighborhoods, and to improve non-motor vehicle transportation systems.

2. This Complete Streets Policy shall apply to all public and/or private transportation projects. For transportation projects using funds awarded by federal, state, regional, county, municipal, or any other public agency where the Township does not have regulatory involvement, the Township will advocate for Complete Streets elements. This shall include new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, repaving, rehabilitation, private development projects, and maintenance of highways, roads, and streets.
3. The Board of Supervisors, staff, and consultants shall routinely work in coordination with each other, adjacent jurisdictions, PennDOT, Montgomery County, and any relevant advisory organizations, to promote Complete Streets in Upper Providence Township and to ensure consistency with the Upper Providence Township Comprehensive Plan and Active Transportation Plan.
4. Within two (2) years of the effective date of this Policy, the Board of Supervisors, or their designee, shall inventory and audit all applicable procedures, policies, plans, ordinances, documents, training programs, performance measures and other guidance documents to be consistent with this policy. The purpose of this audit is to identify areas where tenets of this policy will need to be incorporated. This includes, but is not limited to, funding, planning, designing, operating, and maintaining transportation infrastructure. The Board of Supervisors will use this audit to incorporate this policy into updates to its procedures, plans, policies, etc. as they are scheduled.
5. Transportation projects shall include, where identified as appropriate by the Township Traffic Engineer, pedestrian and bicycle design elements and transit amenities, including but not limited to: curb extensions, sidewalks, radar feedback signs, pedestrian countdown signals, pedestrian refuge islands, road diets, lane width reductions, chicanes, roundabouts, bike lanes, protected bike lanes, bike parking, lighting, wayfinding, seating, trash receptacles, transit amenities, etc.
6. The Board of Supervisors, or their designee, shall utilize the most current editions of guides, manuals, and best practices on street design, historic preservation, construction, operations, and maintenance that apply to bicycle, pedestrian, transit, stormwater and highway facilities. All manuals, standards, and guidelines that the Township references shall be made publicly available.
7. The Township Manager, or their designee, shall lead the implementation of this Policy and formally coordinate with the Township Planning Director, Township Engineer, Township Transportation (Traffic) Engineer, the Township Public Works Director, and other members of the Upper Providence Township Traffic Task Force, with advice and input from the Planning Commission, to set measurable goals to ensure the successful implementation of the Complete Streets Policy.

Public Participation

1. The Township Planning Director, or their designee, shall ensure proper implementation of and compliance with the Complete Streets Policy, and will provide ongoing feedback to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors related to the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy.
2. Beginning with the planning stage, Upper Providence Township shall identify an existing process that allows for public feedback for consideration in the decision-making process concerning the planning, design, and use of streets and roadways covered by the Complete Streets Policy for a specific project.

Exceptions

1. The Township shall approach all transportation improvements and every phase of a transportation project as an opportunity to create safer and more accessible streets for all modes and users. Phases include, but are not limited to, planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, subdivision and land development, maintenance, new construction, reconstruction, and repair. Complete Streets accommodations on Township projects and on external projects, may not always be practical due to factors beyond the Township's control. Exceptions to implementing complete streets elements may be considered under certain circumstances; however, any exception to the policy must be reviewed and approved by the Township Board of Supervisors, or their designee, at the recommendation of the Township Manager, Public Works Director, the Township Planning Director, the Township Engineer, and Township Transportation (Traffic) Engineer; if it determined in writing that:
 - a. The use of the transportation facility by the particular user group is prohibited by law;
 - b. Regulatory compliance requirements preclude accommodations;
 - c. There is a demonstrated absence of both a current and future need to accommodate the category of user (absence of future need may be shown via demographic, school, employment, and public transportation route data that demonstrate, for example, a low likelihood of bicycle, pedestrian, or transit activity in an area over the next 20 years); and
 - d. Routine maintenance of the transportation network that does not change the roadway geometry or operations, such as mowing, sweeping, and spot repair.
 - e. An equivalent project along the same corridor that is already programmed to provide facilities exempted from the project at hand.
 - f. The adverse impacts of implementing this Complete Streets Policy significantly outweigh the benefits. This may include items that require acquisitions and costs to the project that adversely affect the benefits being sought.
2. Exceptions for complete streets accommodations for subdivision and land development applications shall follow the Township's existing waiver process, but shall consider the aforementioned items, before any waiver is considered and approved by the Township Board of Supervisors.
3. The Township shall make every effort to utilize the most recently adopted industry design standards, design guidance, and design recommendations acceptable to the State, County and Federal Governments in order to guide multimodal design and in order to maximize design flexibility and in order to balance all modes and users for all roadway and transportation projects.
4. An exception shall be granted only if:
 - a. Request for an exception is submitted **in writing**, with supporting documentation, including agreeable and sufficient justification, and made publicly available with a minimum of 30 days allowed for public input; and

- b. The exception is approved **in writing** by the Board of Supervisors at the recommendation of the Township Planning Commission, and the written approval is made publicly available.

Annual Reporting

1. Each year, the Township Planning Commission, with input from the Director of Planning, or their designee for Complete Streets, and the Public Works Department, shall develop a report that evaluates the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy and identifies benchmarks to ensure successful implementation in the coming year. Each annual report shall list ongoing and completed transportation projects during that fiscal year. If any exceptions are applied to transportation projects pursuant to Exceptions to Complete Streets Requirements herein, such projects and the relevant exceptions should be identified in the annual report. All benchmarks and reports shall be made publicly available online.
2. The Township Planning Commission shall monitor and make a recommendation for the Township Manager to assign appropriate responsibility to collect and monitor data, under Upper Providence Township jurisdiction, to determine compliance with the benchmarks identified in the annual report. Such benchmarks may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Mileage of new and existing bicycle infrastructure, (e.g., on street bicycle lanes, bike parking, off street paths, and boulevards accommodating bicycle infrastructure).
 - b. Linear feet (or mileage) of new and existing pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, trails, transit amenities).
 - c. Number of new and existing ADA-compliant infrastructure (e.g., curb ramps, pedestrian buttons).
 - d. Number of new street trees.
 - e. Number of pedestrian and bicycle lighting improvements.
 - f. Bicycle and pedestrian counts on regionally significant trails (i.e. Schuylkill River Trail and Perkiomen Trail).
 - g. The number and percentage of designated transit stops accessible via sidewalks and curb ramps.
 - h. The number, locations, and causes of collisions, injuries, and fatalities by each mode of transportation.
 - i. The percentage of children walking or bicycling to school.
3. All benchmarks shall be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, neighborhood, and vehicle ownership when feasible.

Adoption of Complete Streets Checklists

1. The Township Board of Supervisors shall develop and adopt one or more Complete Streets Checklists to be used during the project selection, planning, designing, construction, funding and maintenance of all transportation projects.

2. Each item in the checklist must include an area to provide a brief description for how the item is addressed, not addressed, or not applicable to the Complete Streets Policy.
3. The checklist shall explain the process for granting exemptions and indicate who is responsible for approving, or recommending approval, for any exemptions before they are granted.
4. The Township Manager, or their designee when clearly defined, shall be responsible for completing the checklists and/or reviewing the Complete Streets checklists.
5. A Complete Streets checklist may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Existing pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicle, and truck/freight accommodations (facilities) and operations.
 - b. Traffic volumes.
 - c. Existing safety and/or access issues, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
 - d. Land use within the study area, including trip generators.
 - e. Existing and proposed streetscape elements including furniture, trees or other environmental and stormwater enhancements.
 - f. Review of existing plans.
 - g. Proposed pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicle, and truck/freight accommodations (facilities) and desired future operations.
 - h. ADA compliance of the proposed design.
 - i. Compatibility with the surrounding land use and density.
 - j. Consistency with applicable design standards and guidelines.
 - k. Opportunities to improve public health through physical activity and mobility options.
 - l. Opportunities to manage stormwater through green infrastructure.
6. All Complete Streets checklists shall be made publicly accessible online and be considered during the Township Planning Commission's decision-making processes.