



## **Policy 2016-3 Complete Streets Policy**

### **1. POLICY OBJECTIVE:**

The Lake~Sumter MPO (MPO) will enhance safety, mobility, accessibility and convenience for transportation network users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, transit users, bicyclists, commercial and emergency vehicles, freight drivers and motorists by planning, designing, operating and maintaining a network of multi-modal streets. This objective is consistent with regional transportation goals and visions set forth in TRANSPORTATION 2040, the MPOs long range transportation plan.

### **2. BACKGROUND:**

The Lake~Sumter MPO (MPO) has long been a proponent of creating a multimodal, safe and efficient transportation system that ensures accessibility to all roadway users. Complete Streets are necessary to advance multiple long-term community goals defined by the Goals and Objectives of TRANSPORTATION 2040. Complete Streets will enhance our region's quality of life over the long-term by advancing mobility, economically sound compact and connected development patterns, public health and safety, livability, environmental protection and enhancement, sustainability, equity, affordability, economic activity, climate resiliency, and excellence in urban design and community character.

The MPO has worked with its partners to better understand how it can help make the region as attractive, livable, and prosperous as possible. The foundation of this process was our participation in the *How Shall We Grow* process, *Our Community, Our Future* community visioning, and *Sumter 2030*. The objective of these three outreach efforts was to create a vision for our region that addressed the anticipated growth over the next 20 to 30 years in a way that would enhance the region aesthetically and economically.

This Complete Streets policy builds upon these efforts as well as the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) adopted Complete Streets Policy. It promotes a multimodal transportation system that is designed and built to 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.

The benefits of Complete Streets can be both qualitative and quantitative, and can act both in the short and long-term:

- Safety – reduction of conflict and encouragement of more predictable interaction among motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities
- Environmental – less air and noise pollution
- Maintenance – less use of roads by automobiles if significant mode shifts occur
- Congestion – integration of transit and non-motorized modes can reduce local congestion if a mode shift occurs
- Health – increased physical activity and reduction in healthcare costs
- Accessibility – consideration must be given to the segment of the population cannot or does not drive; increased compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will provide better access for people of all ages and abilities
- External Costs – reductions correlated with less costly modal choices
- Economic Activity – A network of complete streets is safer and more appealing to residents and visitors, which is good for retail and commercial development.
- Quality of Life – A variety of transportation options allow everyone – particularly people with disabilities and older adults – to get out and stay connected to the community

### **3. 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.

### **4. GOALS:**

- 1) To create a comprehensive, integrated, and connected transportation network that supports compact, sustainable development and provides livable communities.
- 2) To ensure that the safety and convenience of all users of the transportation system are accommodated, including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, people with disabilities, the elderly, motorists, freight providers, emergency responders, and adjacent land users.
- 3) To ensure the use of the latest and best design standards, policies and guidelines.
- 4) To recognize the need for flexibility to accommodate different types of streets and users;
- 5) To ensure that the Complete Streets design solutions fit within the context(s) of the local and/or regional vision.

## **5. POLICY:**

The MPO will promote the Complete Streets concept throughout the region and, therefore, recommends that all member governments adopt comprehensive Complete Streets policies, consistent with this policy. The MPO will seek incorporation of Complete Streets concepts and policy into the development of all transportation projects within the region at all phases of development, including planning, design, construction, and performance monitoring.

## **6. APPLICABILITY:**

This Complete Streets Policy applies to all projects, including the new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair, maintenance, or planning of roadways, trails and other transportation facilities that will use state or federal funds allocated through the MPO.

## **7. REQUIREMENTS:**

- Project sponsors must complete and submit a Project Information Application.
- Each project shall use the most appropriate design standards and procedures. For projects using MPO attributable federal funding, it will be necessary to meet or exceed standards and procedures acceptable to the Florida and U.S. Departments of Transportation.
- Designs shall include accommodation of 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.
- A systems approach shall be used in developing roadway projects, especially to ensure coordination with nearby jurisdictions, projects, and plans irrespective of the project sponsor.
- If there is another project planned or in development near this project the two should be coordinated to ensure consistency in the facilities serving the corridor.
- 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.
- 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.

- The project sponsor shall provide the local transit agency the opportunity to participate throughout the entire process and require the involvement of the local transit agency in the design process to ensure that sufficient accommodation of transit vehicles and access to transit facilities is provided.
- Public transit facilities shall be designed with the goals of Complete Streets in mind, by including sidewalks, bicycle connections, or secure bicycle parking, among others.
- Every project shall provide the opportunity for utility/telecommunications infrastructure to be appropriately accommodated to allow for existing and future growth. Efficient use of right-of-way during construction and maintenance should be considered to improve access to utility systems, including future broadband networks. This policy is not intended to create new rights for utilities outside those provided by existing law and contract.
- 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).

## **8. JURISDICTION:**

The MPO will provide the leadership to implement this policy on all transportation projects and programs that require MPO approval. This policy is consistent with the FDOT Complete Streets Policy.

Transportation projects (new construction, reconstruction, maintenance) funded through the MPO are subject to this policy. Any projects or programs that require approval or signature of the MPO will be reviewed according to this policy.

The MPO is not directly responsible for maintenance and operations of roadways and transportation systems. However, the MPO encourages jurisdictions within the Lake~Sumter MPO Planning Area to consider maintenance and operations as an opportunity to provide safer more accessible transportation options for all users. For example, when maintaining traffic signal equipment, it may be possible to adjust sensitivity of detection equipment to respond to the presence of cyclists, thus creating safer crossings for these roadway users.

The MPO also encourages all local jurisdictions within the Lake~Sumter MPO Planning Area to adopt a Complete Streets policy. The MPO will help any member government craft a policy tailored to its community and also consistent with the Complete Streets policies of FDOT and the MPO.

The MPO recognizes the need for interdisciplinary and cross-jurisdictional coordination to effectively develop, operate, and maintain bicycle and pedestrian networks and transit facilities. The MPO will work with the member governments within the MPO Planning Area, the FDOT, transit providers, and other stakeholders to achieve this goal. The MPO will engage in early coordination to identify whether a project will impact any transit facilities or bicycle and pedestrian routes identified on local and regional plans.

## **9. APPEALS:**

When a member government is not in agreement with the MPO's decision regarding accommodations for transit users, bicyclists, pedestrians, or motorists in projects subject to the Transportation Improvement Program Selection Process, the jurisdiction may introduce a formal appeal by means of a resolution adopted by their local governing body. The resolution must be submitted to the MPO and proceed through the established transportation planning process. As such, the resolution will be subject to review and comment by the Technical Advisory Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, and the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The MPO Governing Board, after considering comments from the other three committees, will make the final decision on the appeal.

## **10. EXCEPTIONS:**

There are conditions where it may be inappropriate to provide bicycle, pedestrian, or transit facilities. These exceptions include:

1. Facilities such as highways where bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the same transportation corridor and to provide safe crossings for bicyclists and pedestrians.
2. The cost of providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use. "Excessively disproportionate" is exceeding twenty percent (20%) of the cost of the project.
3. Where there is a demonstrated absence of need or where it would not be prudent. For example, sidewalks, bikeways, and transit accommodations may not be provided in rural or undeveloped areas where future growth is not anticipated for the next twenty (20) years.
4. On projects that are pavement preservation/resurfacing only, the MPO will only consider bicycle, pedestrian, or transit improvements that do not require right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, or major construction. Relocating or enclosing roadside drainage is an example of major construction that would not be considered as part of a preservation project. However, retrofits such as narrowing lanes, restriping, and other minor changes that can provide improved access is encouraged on preservation projects.

Exceptions for not accommodating bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users in accordance with this policy will require approval of the MPO Governing Board. These exceptions will be submitted to the MPO and proceed through the established transportation planning process. As such, the exception will be subject to review and comment by the Technical Advisory Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee, and the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The MPO Governing Board will consider comments from three advisory committees and make the final decision. A jurisdiction may appeal this decision once using the process outlined in the Appeals section.

For exceptions on state and federal projects, coordination with and approval of FDOT will also be necessary.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- All users should be considered during the entire life cycle of a project, including planning, design, construction, operations, and maintenance.
- 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.
- 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.
- Traffic-calming elements including, but not limited to, landscaping, street trees, and narrowing of lanes, should be considered where safe and appropriate.
- Project sponsors should consider including street trees and landscape components, with careful analysis of tree, site, and design considerations.
- Special consideration should be given to future planned facilities or services.
- 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.
- Although this policy focuses on engineering projects, the project sponsor should provide education, encouragement, and enforcement strategies during or after the project. The education component should include government officials, developers, and the public. The MPO staff will compile and make available best practices, ideas, and other resources to help with these efforts.
- While this policy focuses on transportation, local governments should review their land use and zoning policies to provide for mixed land use developments and projects that provide direct non-vehicular connections within a given development.
- Each local community should regularly update its project design standards and procedures and train its staff to adhere to them.

- Local governments are encouraged to adopt their own Complete Streets policies, consistent with this regional policy and federal and state design standards.

**12. IMPLEMENTATION:**

Upon approval and adoption of this Complete Streets policy, it will become part of MPOs planning process and project selection for state and federal funding. The principles of this policy will also guide MPO staff in preparation of MPO planning documents and regional transportation planning efforts to which it contributes. TRANSPORTATION 2040 will be amended to incorporate this policy in accordance with the requirements of the plan at adoption. A list of Complete Streets projects meeting the requirements of this policy will also be included in the amendment of TRANSPORTATION 2040. Also, the List of Priority Projects will be amended as necessary in order to seek funding for projects as the result of the completion and recommendation of a Complete Streets project study.

**13. EVALUATION:**


The MPO, at a minimum, evaluate this policy and the documents associated with it on an annual basis. This evaluation may include recommendations for amendments to the Complete Streets Policy, including the development of exemption guidance, and subsequently be considered for adoption by the MPO Governing Board.

Policy Approved on: May 25, 2016

Lake~Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Leslie Campione, Chairman

Approved as to form and legality:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Melanie Marsh, MPO Attorney