

OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Adopted: 11 September 2018

Amended: 11 December 2018

I. THE COMPLETE STREETS INTENT

Oshtemo Township, through this Complete Streets Policy and the adopted Master Plan, recognizes that planning the Township transportation system involves more than just moving vehicles efficiently and safely. A transportation system needs to meet the needs of all types of users – motorists, pedestrians (including those with disabilities), bicyclists, transit vehicles and users, freight haulers, emergency responders, and citizens of all ages and abilities. Additionally, the Vision Zero traffic safety project establishes a goal of eliminating traffic deaths and severe injuries by improving the design of the transportation system.

For many years, Oshtemo Township has planned and implemented a multi-modal transportation system to safely and efficiently move both motorists and non-motorists throughout the community. Furthermore, the design of the multi-modal system has also considered the context of the adjacent land uses. Comprehensive planning, design, and construction efforts that consider all users as part of a transportation system will continue as public and private developments and capital improvements are implemented.

II. BENEFITS OF A COMPLETE STREETS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Continuing to provide and invest in a Complete Streets system is a priority for residents, businesses and Township leaders, and includes many benefits, such as:

- Provides multi-modal transportation connections between homes, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations.
- Enhances safe walking and bicycling options for school-age children, consistent with the national Safe Routes to Schools program
- Encourages economic growth, positively impacting property values.
- Improves pedestrian and cyclist safety by reducing potential crashes between motorized and non- motorized users.
- Encourages walking and bicycling that improves health and fitness.
- Provides driving alternatives positively impacting the environment, conserves fuel, and saves money.

III. APPLICABILITY OF THE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Oshtemo Township will consider every transportation improvement and private development project as an opportunity to evaluate the level of Complete Streets elements within the general project area and connectivity to adjacent areas with the intent to improve safety and accessibility for all users. This Complete Streets Policy will be used with all planning, design, funding, and approval involving any street construction, reconstruction, resurface, major repair or alteration, or right-of-way acquisition project. This policy is also applicable to the installation, replacement, or reconstruction of underground utilities

located within a public street right-of-way; however, water and sanitary sewer funds cannot be used as a Complete Streets funding source.

A determination as to whether or not a specific street is a Complete Street, or how many design elements are appropriate will be determined on a case-by-case basis by Township Board.

IV. DESIGNING A MULTI-MODAL SYSTEM TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL USERS

Oshtemo Township will seek to enhance the safety, access, convenience, and comfort for all users of all ages and abilities through the planning, design, operation, enforcement, and maintenance of the transportation network. The goal is to continue to expand an interconnected network of facilities accommodating each mode of travel consistent with the goals identified in the adopted Master Plan and other related planning documents. Furthermore, this policy recognizes that all streets are not the same: Streets vary by type and intensity of adjacent land uses, number of travel lanes, posted speed limits, traffic volumes, available right-of-way, and other characteristics such as topography, soil types, and proximity of trees. As a result, the necessity for certain non-motorized transportation facilities will need to be carefully evaluated such that the cost of the non-motorized facility is balanced with the demand and availability of right-of-way.

Transportation improvements will include facilities and other amenities that are recognized as contributing to Complete Streets, which may include, but not necessarily limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Sidewalks (new construction, gap construction, repair or replacement, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements).
2. Pedestrian refuge islands or crosswalk improvements.
3. Traffic calming measures, where appropriate.
4. Street and/or sidewalk lighting.
5. Multi-use trails.
6. Accessibility improvements consistent with the ADA.
7. Improved pedestrian access and amenities (e.g. bus shelters) to transit stops and/or installation of bus turnouts.
8. Bicycle accommodations including designated bike lanes, widened travel lanes, and bike storage facilities.
9. Connecting sidewalks along a public street to internal private development sidewalks.
10. Interconnected and/or shared off-street parking lots and other access management techniques to reduce driveways and subsequent points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists.

V. CONTEXT SENSITIVE STREET DESIGN

Historically, streets were designed to meet expected traffic volumes at a selected speed. Streets or intersections were widened to meet vehicular needs provided right-of-way was available. That traditional approach has been changed in response to best practices in street design, which recognize that many factors along a particular street influence the speed of traffic, crashes, and how a street can be in harmony, or in conflict, with its surroundings.

Street width, presence of on-street parking and sidewalks, block length, building setbacks, design speed, pavement markings and signs, street trees, and even boulevard landscaping, and street furniture all contribute to how the street functions. Driver perceptions can affect vehicle speed and care used in driving. These elements can also affect how people view a corridor and their impression of Oshtemo in general. A street designed in tandem with its surroundings can foster an inviting place to live, work and

visit.

Oshtemo Township will continue to rely on a wide range of concepts to help ensure the transportation system operates safely and efficiently, but also in context with the immediate area and overall character of the Township.

VI. IMPROVE NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

Improving the connectivity between the current network of sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use trails, paths, public transit routes, and roadways is important to ensure the continued success of complete streets concepts in Oshtemo Township. A well-connected network will encourage citizens to fully utilize all available forms of transportation that will provide safe access for all users, promote healthy living, increase the capacity and efficiency of the roadway network, and reduce negative environmental impacts. It is also important that a well-connected network include safe and convenient transitions from one mode of transportation to another, from one jurisdiction to another and from one type of infrastructure improvement to another. This can be accomplished by including ADA-compliant improvements, appropriate signage/pavement markings, refuge islands, sidewalk connections to bus stops, among others.

VII. NON-MOTORIZED COMPLETE STREET ELEMENTS

The Non-Motorized Facilities section of the Oshtemo Township Master Plan provides specific recommendations concerning the provision of the following non-motorized Complete Street elements:

1. Using the Future Land Use Map from the Master Plan, in areas identified as Rural Residential and Neighborhood Commercial, a widened-shoulder bikeway on major thoroughfares will be built to accommodate bicycle travel.
2. Sidewalks (that are ADA-compliant) will be built on local and major streets as follows:
 - a. Due to high traffic volume spanning the Rural Residential and more developed portions of the Township, non-motorized facilities will be built along portions of M-43 and Stadium Drive consistent with the Oshtemo Township Non-Motorized Facilities Plan.
 - b. Using the Future Land Use Map from the Master Plan, all areas not identified as Rural Residential or Neighborhood Commercial, 6-foot sidewalks or 10-foot shared-use paths are planned on all major thoroughfares, defined as Average Daily Traffic greater than 1,000 vehicles per day.
 - c. Five-foot sidewalks are provided on both sides of all streets within new residential neighborhoods.
 - d. Non-motorized facilities within existing residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas are inconsistent throughout the community. In such areas, the following criteria should be considered for the installation of sidewalks or shared-use paths:
 - i. Existing residential neighborhoods without sidewalks, and for which sidewalks are not planned under the Township Master Plan, may petition for sidewalks to be built within the neighborhood under any Michigan Public Act which would allow for the installation of public sidewalks. The residents of the neighborhood will be responsible for initiating the petition and, if successful, present the petition to the Township Board for approval. Upon Township Board approval, the streets of the neighborhood will be added to the list of streets to receive sidewalks and the sidewalks will be built at Township expense according to the

Appendix A prioritization policy. If the residents want the sidewalks sooner then the residents can petition to establish a special assessment district to pay for the sidewalk;

- ii. The Township, on the motion of the Board, may, at its expense, proceed with sidewalk improvements to fill gaps in the existing sidewalk system as redevelopment and infill development occurs;
 - iii. The Board may, concurrent with capital improvement projects, construct the sidewalks, other non-motorized facilities, and other appropriate safety improvements along primary pedestrian routes to schools, parks, or other activity destinations upon motion of the Board at the Township's expense. The Township will host public meetings to obtain resident input before committing to the Complete Street elements with the capital improvement projects.
 - iv. Within commercial and industrial areas, non-motorized facilities deemed necessary may be installed upon the motion of the Board in accordance with Michigan law with or without the establishment of a special assessment district.
3. For completeness, off-road shared-use paths will be built per the Non-Motorized Facilities Plan.

VIII. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy may be appropriate when one or more of the following conditions exists:

1. An affected roadway prohibits, by law, specified users (such as an interstate freeways or pedestrian malls), in which case a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere.
2. An alternative route, such as a multi-use trail in the immediate vicinity provides an option for non-motorized transportation.
3. A wide shared-shoulder bikeway designed to accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian use is available in the street right-of-way.
4. There is insufficient right-of-way to accommodate a Complete Street element at that time. The Township should attempt to acquire the right-of-way to accommodate the Complete Street element.
5. The activities, such as spot repair or crack seal, are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition, which meet MDOT's ADA upgrade exceptions.
6. Capital preventive maintenance projects where the roadwork is not substantial enough to recognize costs savings by including the non-motorized element. Examples of preventive maintenance projects include thin overlays (less than 1.5-inch), micro-seals, chip seals, or slurry seals.
7. The type of project does not have a substantial impact on the roadway, such as signal upgrades, addition of turning lanes and utility installations signal interconnect projects, which do not remove existing non-motorized or transit facilities.
8. Safety projects which are funded only for specific safety features identified by crash patterns, due to the funding parameters of the program.
9. The adopted Future Use Plan, or other present and/or anticipated market conditions that can be documented, indicate an absence of existing or future need (e.g. sparse population), for a Complete Street element or elements.
10. An element of this policy will have an adverse impact on existing environmental resources such

as wetlands, floodplains, creeks, or historic structures, or the presence of an environmental resource will add significant cost to an element of this policy.

Exceptions to this policy involving private (re)development projects requiring plan review approval or recommendation to Township Board by the Planning Commission shall only be granted or recommended when the Planning Commission, after recommendation from the Township Planning Staff, determines one or more of the above applicable provisions exist, is consistent with applicable sections of the Zoning Code concerning Planning Commission review/approval authority and is consistent with the goals, objectives and recommendations of the Master Plan.

IX. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Oshtemo Township will cooperate with adjacent communities, the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County, the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study, Metro Transit, and Kalamazoo County to ensure the principles and practices of complete streets concepts are consistent in appropriate planning documents and implanted along the mutually shared corporate boundaries. Oshtemo Township, together with its adjacent neighbors, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study and Kalamazoo County, will cooperate to make sure the transportation network as it transitions from one community to the next is seamless in accordance with local and regional road, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian plans and design criteria.

X. DESIGN GUIDELINES

Oshtemo Township will consider design guidelines promulgated in the documents listed below or as may be required by the funding source. Sources for design guidelines include, but are not limited to:

1. American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 6th Edition, or latest edition.
2. American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: Guide for the Planning, Design, Operation of Pedestrian Facilities – July 2004 edition or latest edition.
3. American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: Development of Bicycle Facilities – Fourth Edition or latest edition.
4. Institute of Transportation Engineers: Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach – 2010 edition or latest edition.
5. National Association of City Transportation Officials: Urban Street Design Guide
6. Federal Highway Administration: Complete Streets Design Guide

In conjunction with the references noted above, the Township will also consider the impact on a street and any proposed improvements will have on surrounding land uses pursuant to Section V.

XI. IMPLEMENTATION

Oshtemo Township will take the following actions to implement this Complete Streets policy:

1. The Township will pay for construction, repairs, and reconstruction of all sidewalks and shared use paths in the road right-of-way that are not part of a new development (residential) from general revenue funds.
2. For commercial and industrial areas, the Township will pay for the construction, repairs, and reconstruction of all sidewalks and shared-use paths via general revenue funds or special

assessment districts.

3. Repairs to sidewalks are required when there is a vertical discontinuity defect of 2 inches or more, or a dangerous condition in the sidewalk itself of a particular character other than solely a vertical discontinuity.
4. The Public Works Department, with assistance from the Planning Department, will lead the implementation of this policy and coordinate with other departments and outside organizations.
5. The Township will maintain a comprehensive inventory of the pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure within the Township's GIS mapping system. This information can be used by various departments to identify and prioritize projects in accordance with this policy, Master Plan, and other related planning documents.
6. Through the private development project plan review process, installation of Complete Street elements will be incorporated during the construction phase of the private development project when appropriate.
7. Each year, the Township will evaluate applicable transportation-related projects for safety improvements in accordance with this Complete Streets Policy. As part of the Capital Improvement Plan each year, the Public Works Department will evaluate each project for incorporating Complete Streets elements, and provide a recommendation to the Capital Improvement Committee for endorsement and Township Board for approval.
8. Each year, the Oshtemo Maintenance Department will perform an assessment of all sidewalk and shared-use path assets to determine physical condition and areas requiring maintenance or reconstruction. The Maintenance Department will be responsible for addressing identified minor safety issues (i.e., large cracks and elevation changes of 2" or more). The Public Works Department will be responsible for inspecting new sidewalk construction and reconstruction of existing sidewalks.
9. When appropriate, the Township will review existing plans and policies related to transportation planning/improvements to ensure consistency with this Complete Streets policy.
10. The Township will develop educational materials intended to inform elected officials, staff, and interested citizens regarding the content of Complete Streets principles and best practices for implementing this policy.
11. The Township will coordinate transportation improvement projects involving complete street elements with outside agencies to promote the most responsible and efficient use of financial resources for activities within the public right-of-way.
12. The Township will continue to seek public and private sources of funding to implement the elements of this Complete Streets policy. The Township will also continue to coordinate transportation-related projects, including complete streets infrastructure planning and funding, through the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study through implementation of the Metropolitan Transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program.
13. The Township will create a prioritization scoring system to determine which roads have the greatest need for sidewalks when funding is available. When created, the prioritization scoring system will be attached to this Complete Streets policy as Appendix A.
14. The Township will create and maintain an ADA transition plan to identify areas in the existing sidewalk network and access routes to government buildings that are not ADA-compliant, and create a plan to correct the deficiencies.
15. With assistance of the Capital Improvements Committee, the Township Board shall annually determine which roads will be restored/reconstructed or which will receive Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) or gravel overlay. Selection of projects and treatments shall be subject to available Township funds, budgeting, and scheduling. The assessment policy is outlined in Appendix B.

Appendix A: Prioritization Scoring System

Appendix B: Road ~~and Sidewalk~~ Assessment Policy

Appendix A

Prioritization Scoring System

Oshtemo Township requires a process for determining the priority for building sidewalks and shared-use paths within the road right-of-way. The Public Works Department reviewed similar scoring systems from cities and townships across the Midwest and selected the factors that were applicable to Oshtemo Township. The table below and the associated spreadsheet with the tabulated scores are intended to be a tool to help determine the non-motorized facility construction priorities.

The scoring system is as follows:

Factor	Score Parameters
Traffic Volume	Actual traffic count from the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study ÷ 1000
Route to school or park (increases probability of children using the road)	10 = yes 0 = no
Road improvement project planned (potential cost savings)	5 = yes 0 = no
Zoning (proxy for population density)	10 = Commercial 8 = R-4/R-5 6 = R-3 5 = Industrial 4 = R-2 2 = R-1 0 = RR, Ag)
Environmental Justice Area (proxy for elderly, disabled, and low-income residents who are least likely to own a car)	3 = yes 0 = no

Notes:

- Traffic volume in Oshtemo Township is recorded by various entities and reported to the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) which is the responsible for compiling and reporting the information. Traffic volume is highly correlated to pedestrian/bicyclists and vehicular accidents. Traffic Volume ÷ 1000 creates a usable value for scoring and provides a differentiating factor that prevents multiple road segments from having the same score.
- Zoning is used as a proxy for population density because a higher number of pedestrians/bicyclists increases the probability of an accident occurring with a vehicle.

- R-5 zoning is only used for mobile home communities. For R-5 zoned areas, the sidewalks will only be built on the major road adjacent to the mobile home community. The internal roads within the mobile home community, including the entrance road, are private roads, and the Township is not responsible for building sidewalks on private roads.
- Environmental justice is a term used by the federal government to determine areas of minority and/or low-income populations to ensure these populations receive the same benefits as other areas, ensure full and fair participation by all affected communities, and to minimize and mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects in these communities. The environmental justice areas in Oshtemo Township are: (1) everywhere between US-131 and Drake Road, and (2) the area bounded by US-131, KL Ave, 8th Street, and West Main Street.
- There are several road segments that have design hurdles that must be resolved with MDOT or RCKC before constructing the non-motorized facility, specifically:
 - West Main Street between 8th Street and 6th Street (north side) – this segment requires a pedestrian crossing on West Main Street to link 7th Street to the Oshtemo Library, Township Hall, and Township Park.
 - 9th Street between N Ave and Stadium Drive (east side) – this segment requires a pedestrian crossing at Atlantic Ave, Flesher Field entrance, or Tall Oaks Drive. This crossing should also support the future off-road Fruitbelt Path.
 - H Ave between Drake Road and 10th Street – MDOT needs to widen the bridge over US-131 to accommodate the non-motorized facility.
 - West Michigan Ave between 11th Street and Drake Road – MDOT needs to widen the bridge over US-131 to accommodate the non-motorized facility.
- The Sidewalk Prioritization Table spreadsheet (attached) should be updated annually to account for planned road work changes from RCKC and MDOT, and traffic count updates from KATS. Less frequently, the table should be updated to account for zoning and environmental justice area changes.

