

Active Transportation Guidance

Ohio Department of Transportation
Division of Planning
9/24/2018

Purpose:

This guidance applies to all transportation facilities owned or maintained by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). For projects on local roadways, localities should work with their corresponding local government, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) to address how Active Transportation will be included on non-ODOT facilities.

When developing a transportation improvement project impacting the State and U.S. Bicycle Route Network, <https://goo.gl/ovpbhX> ODOT will routinely evaluate the inclusion of facilities that facilitate safe and convenient access and mobility for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, children, older adults and persons with disabilities. These facilities include, but are not limited to sidewalks, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, signage, bus pull outs, curb cuts, and ramps.

Special attention will similarly be given to ensure consistency on projects that impact major Active Transportation generators and connections.

Exceptions must be documented and approved by a committee consisting of the Deputy Directors of Construction Management, Engineering and Planning and meet one of the following conditions:

- Where active transportation users are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, only shared-use paths separated from the roadway will be considered;
- The cost of establishing the Active Transportation facility would be excessively disproportionate to the need or anticipated use as determined by evaluation of the project (see section B below). In cases where the facility cost exceeds this threshold and the facility is part of a local plan (see Section B.4), the locality may provide the additional funding in order to advance the project.

Placement:

In determining the placement of Active Transportation facilities, the following five criteria should be evaluated along with other decisions made during the Project Development Process (PDP). Each transportation project treatment will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

1. Safety
2. Network Connectivity
3. Anticipated Demand
4. Local Desire
5. Feasibility

Safety: The safety and suitability of the roadway for multimodal travel under present conditions and after implementation of the transportation improvement will be evaluated through the ODOT Highway Safety Office. Feasibility criteria may include:

1. Average Daily Traffic (ADT);
2. Geometric design;
3. Lane width and shoulder width;

4. Posted speed; and,
5. Crash data

Network and Community connectivity: In determining placement of Active Transportation facilities, an assessment of how connectivity will be provided or enhanced to destinations outside of the immediate region, and between jurisdictions, neighborhoods, commercial, institutional (schools, health care facilities, libraries, cultural facilities) and recreational destinations will be conducted. Factors to be reviewed include:

1. Connections to facilities offering regional or longer distance travel (such as State or U.S. bicycle routes; bus or rail terminals);
2. Gaps in existing facilities – especially along the roadway;
3. Opportunity to provide access to existing facilities (e.g. public transit service, connecting bicycle networks, etc.).
4. Connecting (or re-connecting) communities divided by a state highway from medical, employment, education, economic, or community centers or services.

Anticipated Demand: In determining options for facilities the existing and anticipated use of facilities must be determined, including:

1. Existing and expected usage following improvement of safety and connectivity as applicable.
2. Key transportation generators sited on or directly in the vicinity of ODOT-maintained roads, such as public and private schools; libraries, community centers, recreation facilities and other public buildings; colleges and universities; large employers; dense housing; and multi-modal facilities such as train stations or bus stations.

Local Plans or Concurrence: In determining options for facilities, local plans for or concurrence with such facilities by the local community must be expressed through one of the following:

1. Documentation in a planning study or public involvement report of local plans for a facility to be constructed with the transportation improvement; or
2. Identification of the proposed facility in a formally adopted transportation plan such as a School Travel Plan or a long-range plan, including a Community Comprehensive Plan, a MPO or RTPPO Long-range Transportation Plan, or Access Ohio, the statewide transportation plan.
3. Concurrence of the locality for a connection to a state or U.S. bicycle route.

Feasibility: In determining options for Active Transportation facilities the following will be considered:

1. Right-of-way width or the feasibility to acquire additional right-of-way width;
2. Alternative locations for Active Transportation facilities that provide a comparable path of travel and higher quality facility;
3. Additional planned transportation improvement projects within the study area; and,
4. Demonstrable environmental impacts.

Design:

Construction of Active Transportation facilities must meet current design standards and be compliant with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and other relevant environmental and federal regulations.

Local Projects:

All locally initiated requests for Active Transportation facilities where no transportation improvement is planned will be referred to the ODOT Transportation Alternatives Program administered by the Office of Local Programs.

Authority:

Federal Regulations: Federal regulations require state DOTs and MPOs to consider and include Active Transportation in their engineering and planning activities.

Title 23 U.S.C 217 Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways

(e) Bridges. In any case where a highway bridge deck being replaced or rehabilitated with Federal financial participation is located on a highway on which bicycles are permitted to operate at each end of such bridge, and the Secretary determines that the safe accommodation of bicycles can be provided at reasonable cost as part of such replacement or rehabilitation, then such bridge shall be so replaced or rehabilitated as to provide such safe accommodations.

(g) Planning and Design.

- (1) In general - Bicyclists and pedestrians shall be given due consideration in the comprehensive transportation plans developed by each metropolitan planning organization and State in accordance with sections 134 and 135, respectively. Bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways shall be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities, except where Active Transportation users are not permitted.
- (2) Safety considerations - Transportation plans and projects shall provide due consideration for safety and contiguous routes for bicyclists and pedestrians. Safety considerations shall include the installation, where appropriate, and maintenance of audible traffic signals and audible signs at street crossings.

Title 23 U.S.C. 109 Standards

(m) Protection of non-motorized transportation traffic. The Secretary shall not approve any project or take any regulatory action under this title that will result in the severance of an existing major route or have significant adverse impact on the safety for non-motorized transportation traffic and light motorcycles, unless such project or regulatory action provides for a reasonable alternate route or such a route exists.

References

- A. **ODOT's Project Development Process (PDP):** A project management and decision-making process used to guide all transportation projects from conception and planning through design and construction.
- B. **Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or "FAST - Act":** Title 23 / Chapter 2 / § 217.
- C. **Statewide Transportation Planning:** Title 23 /Chapter 1/ Section 135 and CFR Part 450 Subpart B.
- D. **American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance:** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- E. **National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA):** Sections 101 and 102.
- F. **FHWA Design Guidance for Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel.**
- G. **FHWA-RD-92-073: Selecting Roadway Design Treatments to Accommodate Bicycles.**
- H. **FHWA Guidance: Bicycle and Pedestrian Provisions of Federal Transportation Legislation.**
- I. **Incorporating On-Road Bicycle Networks into Resurfacing Projects, FHWA 2016.**
- J. **Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility & Reducing Conflicts, FHWA 2016.**
- K. **NACTO: Urban Bikeway Design Guide, 2010.**
- L. **FHWA August 20, 2013 Memo:** Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Flexibility Guidance.
- M. **Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities Design Standards:**
 - The 2012 AASHTO "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities."
 - The AASHTO "Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities."
 - ODOT Location and Design Manual – Vol. 1, Section 605, Vol. 2, Section 1004, Section 1006, Vol. 3, Sections 1300 and 1400.
 - ODOT Traffic Engineering Manual – Part 9 Bicycle Facilities.
 - ODOT Bridge Design Manual – Section 209.9 Bicycle Bridges.
 - Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices – Part 9 Traffic for Bicycle Facilities.
 - ODOT Utilities Manual - Sections 8100 and 8200.
- N. **L&D Manual:** Sections 306 (Pedestrians), 308 (Bicycles) and 702 (Shared Use Path).
- O. **NACTO Urban Street Design Guide.**