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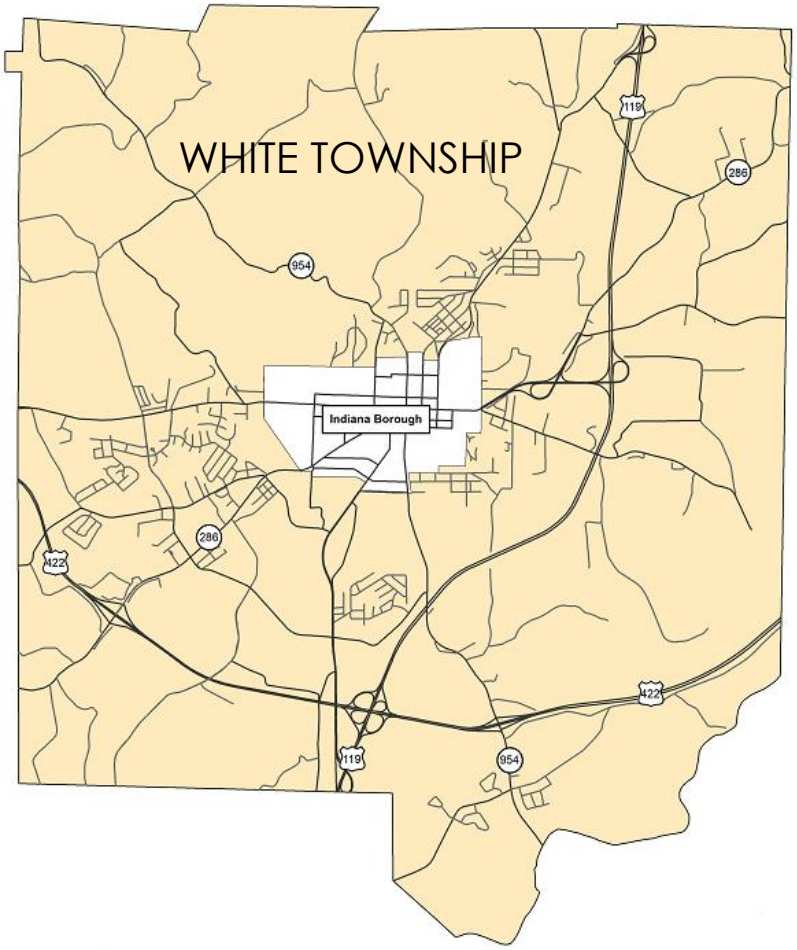
WHITE TOWNSHIP COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

JULY 2022



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INTRODUCTION

White Township has grown to become a complete, full-service community with residential neighborhoods of all types, places to work, and a variety of commerce. With Indiana Borough and Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), the Township is part of a greater interconnected community of people of all ages, backgrounds, and incomes.

A complete, full-service community should have a complete, full-service transportation system. Transportation starts with the street network. Streets and roads are routes of travel for cars and trucks AND for pedestrians, bicyclers, and public transit. Yet 20th Century streets and roads which abound in White Township were designed primarily for cars and trucks.

Streets and roads are routes of travel for cars and trucks AND for pedestrians, bicyclers, and public transit.

White Township's recently updated comprehensive plan – *White Township 2020 Priorities* – calls for the Township to enhance:

- Walkability of main business corridors
- Availability of bike routes
- Use of public transportation

To implement the comprehensive plan objectives and to improve the Township as a full-service community, White Township hereby adopts a *Complete Streets Policy*.

VISION

White Township is committed to developing and maintaining safe and complete streets in the Township. The goal is to create a series of connected multimodal networks, developed based on specific neighborhood characteristics, and incorporating Indiana Borough and IUP campus networks.

WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?

- Complete streets are designed to accommodate and be safe for all modes of transportation – motorized vehicles, pedestrians including persons with disabilities, bicyclers, transit vehicles and riders, motorcyclists, freight carriers, and emergency service providers.
- Complete streets are designed for safe use by people of all ages and abilities.

Complete streets accommodate all modes of transportation and are safe for people of all ages and abilities.

WHY CREATE COMPLETE STREETS?

- To improve and expand means of access to homes, businesses, schools, and other destinations. This will enhance the Township's ability to serve existing development and attract new residents, businesses, and visitors.
- To improve livability and quality of life. Lifestyle preferences are changing. There is growing desire to live in a walkable, bikeable community.
- To improve public health. Being more active by walking and biking has clear health benefits. The recent pandemic resulted in greater interest in outdoor activity including walking and biking.
- To improve public safety. Complete streets can include safety measures for walkers, bicyclers, and persons with disabilities, and traffic calming measures that reduce accidents.

HOW WILL THE *COMPLETE STREETS POLICY* WORK?

- The Township will consider this policy in planning and undertaking improvement projects on Township-owned roads and streets, and in planning and proposing new streets, trails, and bike routes.
- The Township will incorporate elements of this policy into the subdivision and land development ordinance for consideration in approving proposed private developments.
- The Township will promote this policy in projects proposed by PennDOT, Indiana County, the Indiana County Transit Authority, and other public and private organizations.

WHAT THE *COMPLETE STREETS POLICY* MEANS…
…AND DOES NOT MEAN

By this *Complete Streets Policy*, White Township will routinely consider the current and future needs of all modes of transportation and all users in decisions about the planning, design, building, operation, and maintenance of streets, roads, and other transportation facilities in the Township.

The *Complete Streets Policy* does not mean a pedestrian and bicycle route will be installed on every street and road in the Township. It does mean the Township will consider opportunities for complete streets improvements in locations and on streets or roads where appropriate and affordable by the guidelines herein.

The *Complete Streets Policy* does not mean the Township will immediately change Township streets and roads. It does mean the Township is committed over the long term to the goal of creating connected multimodal networks in the Township.

GUIDELINES

SERVE ALL CITIZENS

✓ White Township will promote safe, accessible, and integrated transportation options that consider equitably the needs of all citizens living in every neighborhood on every street. The Township will apply the 8/80 principle that if a street and road is accessible and safe for an 8 year old and an 80 year old, it is accessible and safe for all people.

PROMOTE BEST DESIGN PRACTICES

✓ The undertaking of complete streets improvements will consider best design practices in multimodal facilities and safety features, and in incorporating stormwater management and other environmental mitigation measures. The Appendix contains a list of sources the Township will use in promoting best design practices.

IMPLEMENT TOWNSHIP PLANS

✓ The Township will promote design and undertaking of complete streets projects that help achieve objectives in White Township 2020 Priorities, the Township's comprehensive plan. The Township will give priority to implementing specific projects recommended in the plan. The Township will also promote consistency with its Official Map Ordinance, the Indiana Community University District Master Plan done in cooperation with Indiana Borough and IUP, and the Township's Sustainable Pennsylvania Community certification.

BE PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE

✓ The Township will regularly monitor land use and development trends, traffic conditions, and the needs of citizens and neighborhoods, and proactively promote undertaking of complete streets improvements before problems arise.

IMPROVE SAFETY WHEREVER POSSIBLE

✓ For street and road projects, development projects, and other community improvements, every opportunity will be considered to improve the safety of citizens in travel by whatever mode in the Township.

IMPLEMENT WHERE APPROPRIATE

✓ The Township will weigh opportunities for complete streets improvements vs. the land use, physical, and cultural character of an area, the volume and nature of road traffic, the potential benefit to citizens and businesses, and the cost of improvements, and implement complete streets improvements where appropriate and where strategic for the greatest positive impact.

BE FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE

✓ The Township will consider its fiscal capacity in decisions to undertake complete streets improvements. The Township will promote practical and affordable design solutions and forgo "overdesign" of improvements. The Township will seek outside funding and participation by public and private partners in undertaking complete streets improvements.

GIVE PRIORITY TO EXISTING FACILITIES

✓ First priority will be given to implement complete streets improvements by modifying existing street, road, sidewalk, trail, bike route, transit, and other transportation facilities before constructing new facilities.

PROMOTE COLLABORATION

✓ Township officials, staff, boards, and commissions will collaborate internally in making decisions to promote, plan, design, and undertake complete streets improvements. The Township will collaborate with outside partners including private developers, PennDOT, Indiana County, Indiana County Transit Authority, the Southwest Pennsylvania Commission, and other public and private organizations in implementing complete streets measures.

IMPLEMENTATION

White Township will subject transportation related projects in the Township to a *Complete Streets Policy* review. Projects include:

- Capital improvement projects involving the construction, reconstruction, or retrofitting of transportation assets – roadways, bridges, sidewalks, trails, rights-of-way, and transit facilities.
- Operation and maintenance projects including resurfacing, restriping, rehabilitation, signage, and signalization.
- Land development and building construction and renovation projects that will access and impact the transportation network.
- Laws and regulations affecting public use of transportation facilities.

TOWNSHIP PROJECTS

Projects involving Township-owned facilities, Township actions, or Township funds or funds awarded to the Township.

- Township staff and consultants will consider the *Complete Streets Policy* in planning, designing, engineering, and undertaking the projects.
- The Township Planning Commission will be consulted for recommendations to implement the policy.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Projects needing approval under the Township's subdivision and land development ordinance.

- The Township will incorporate appropriate complete streets standards into the subdivision and land development ordinance.
- Upon amendment into the ordinance, the Township Planning Commission, in its delegated role to review applications for subdivisions and land developments, will consider an application's conformance to complete street standards in rendering its decision to approve or deny the application.
- Until amendment into the ordinance, the Township Planning Commission and staff will encourage and provide guidance to applicants to incorporate complete streets elements into their projects.

Other projects proposed by private-sector or nonprofit organizations

- Township staff and officials, with input sought and obtained from the Township Planning Commission when timely, will advocate and provide guidance for incorporating complete streets elements into the projects.

Projects subject to *Complete Streets Policy* review:

Transportation facilities capital improvements

Transportation facilities operations & maintenance

Land development projects

Laws & regulations affecting transportation

PUBLIC AGENCY PROJECTS

Projects in the Township proposed by PennDOT, Indiana County, the Indiana County Transit Authority, or other non-Township government agencies, and projects outside but impacting the Township proposed by said public agencies or neighboring municipalities

- Township staff and officials, with input sought and obtained from the Township Planning Commission when timely, will advocate and provide guidance for incorporating complete streets elements into the projects.

In implementing the *Complete Streets Policy*, the Township will be open to and seek input from persons and organizations with expertise in complete streets and active transportation.

EXCEPTIONS

There may be instances in which the Township's *Complete Streets Policy* review determines it is not appropriate for a project to include complete streets improvements. The Township review may find that it is not beneficial, practical, or affordable in accord with the guidelines of this policy. Additional criteria including but not limited to those listed below may be applied to determine if complete streets improvements are not appropriate:

- The existing and future (25 year horizon) projected motor traffic volumes on a particular roadway or facility are so low that certain modes do not need to be specifically addressed and/or are already addressed by the current design.
- The existing and future (25 year horizon) projected bicycle and pedestrian volumes as well as transit needs are so low that one or more of these modes do not need to be specifically addressed.
- Improved transportation facilities that would encourage more bicycle and pedestrian use in a particular area are not practical nor wanted by the Township due to pre-existing or anticipated dangerous conditions.
- The cost of incorporating complete streets elements is excessively disproportionate to the current or future need or the benefit to be realized.
- There is an existing or proposed parallel facility with sufficient accommodations to satisfy the intent of this policy, or it is more feasible and/or less costly to locate the proposed accommodations on an alternate route. Compared to the original route, the alternative shall not increase travel distance for pedestrians or bicyclists by more than one-quarter mile.
- The accommodations under consideration conflict with the requirements or regulations of any federal or state agency.

PERFORMANCE TRACKING

The White Township Planning Commission, with technical support from Township staff, will track performance in implementing the *Complete Streets Policy*. The Planning Commission will also periodically assess the benefits to the Township and its citizens, or lack thereof, resulting from the policy, and make recommendations for appropriate changes to the policy. Performance tracking information will be made publicly available.

Performance measures may include and are not limited to:

- Linear feet of new or improved sidewalks.
- Number of new or improved marked crosswalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, pedestrian signal heads, flashing signals, signs, and other relevant pedestrian safety improvements.
- Number of new or improved bus shelters, concrete pads, benches, and other relevant bus stop amenities.
- Miles of new or improved bicycle lanes, shoulders, sharrows, and other relevant bicycle facilities.
- Miles of new or improved multi-use trails.
- Number of reported bicycle- and pedestrian-related crashes on Township roads.
- Number of projects and plans that incorporate complete streets elements and further the objectives and guidelines of this policy.
- Location of above complete streets improvements in relation to the various neighborhoods in the Township.

APPENDIX

In promoting, planning, and designing complete streets improvements, White Township will consider the following guidelines and standards:

American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Designof Highways and Streets (Green Book)

AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities

AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities

Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) https://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/743/nprm.pdf

Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) https://www.access- board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-theada-standards/ada-standards

NJDOT & PennDOT Smart Transportation Guidebook https://www.dvrpc.org/reports/08030A.pdf

American Planning Association Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices https://www.planning.org/publications/report/9026883/

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Traffic Calming Measures and DesigningWalkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach https://www.ite.org/pub/?id=E1CFF43C-2354-D714-51D9-D82B39D4DBADhttps://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/

Small Town and Rural Multi-Modal Networks (FHWA) https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/small_towns/fhwahep17 024_lg.pdf

XIV NACTO Urban Street Design Guide https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/

NACTO Transit Street Design Guide https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/

U.S. Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines (FSTAG) https://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/pdfpubs/pdf15232812/pdf15232812dpi300.pdf

U.S. Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG)https://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/pdfpubs/pdf15232811/pdf15232811dpi300.pdf

PUB 13M Design Manual Part 2 - Highway Design

Smart Growth America, The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2018

U.S. Department of Transportation, Safe Street and Roads for All Grant Program