

**Wilkins Township
Complete Streets Policy**

**TOWNSHIP OF WILKINS
ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
Resolution No.: 10-2019**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WILKINS,
ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING A
COMPLETE STREETS POLICY.**

WHEREAS, the Township of Wilkins recognizes that its transportation network is intended to balance the needs and interests of all users of all ages and abilities; and

WHEREAS, the design and function of Township streets has often favored the motorist over other users, thereby excluding bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users and persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Allegheny County's Comprehensive Plan, "Allegheny Places," and Allegheny County's Comprehensive Commuter Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan, "Active Allegheny," both encourage adoption of Complete Streets Policies; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Wilkins' 2018 Comprehensive Plan update states the community's vision for connectivity as improving its "desirability and sustainability by providing residents with opportunities to walk or bike safely near their homes, to reach key arterial routes, and to access safe and convenient transit stops;" and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners recently adopted an Active Transportation Plan, which seeks to improve public health, reduce traffic congestion, enhance air quality and support local economic development by integrating physical activity into residents' daily lives through increased emphasis on walking, bicycling and public transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Active Transportation Plan recommends the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy, to incorporate multi-modal transportation into the planning, design and operation of all future Township road projects whether new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation or pavement maintenance; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Wilkins, Allegheny County Pennsylvania, commits to the attached Complete Streets Policy that will incorporate Complete Streets into the planning design and operation of all future municipal streets, sidewalks, trails, pedestrian and bicycle pathways and other transportation projects.

RESOLVED AND ADOPTED by the Wilkins Township Board of Commissioners at a duly assembled public meeting held this 9th day of September, 2019.

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ATTEST:

TOWNSHIP OF WILKINS

Rebecca Vargo
Township Manager/Secretary



Sylvia Martinelli
President, Board of Commissioners

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Statement of Purpose and Intent:

The Wilkins Township Complete Streets Policy requires all transportation projects designed for streets and trails systems to be safe and to provide practical access to users of all abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists, together with vulnerable populations, such as people with disabilities, seniors and children. This Complete Streets Policy is intended to promote better health, to make overall travel more efficient by increasing affordable transportation mode choices and easing the transition from one mode of transportation to another. It is the long-term intent of this Complete Streets Policy to contribute to the desirability of Wilkins Township as a place to live, work and do business and to contribute to improved air quality in the region by reducing the number of commuter trips taken by driving alone.

Background:

Complete Streets is a term that was coined by Smart Growth America in the early 2000's to describe a road network designed for everyone - including pedestrians, people with disabilities, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists and freight carriers. Since Smart Growth America's creation of the National Complete Streets Coalition in 2004, over 900 municipalities across the United States have adopted Complete Streets policies to reflect a change of thinking in the planning of their transportation systems. A Complete Streets network in Wilkins furthers the Township's land use, transportation, livability, economic sustainability, equity and innovation goals by increasing workforce mobility options, encouraging compact development patterns, spurring improved health and safety, encouraging local economic activity, enhancing neighborhood character, improving the environment, and incorporating emerging technology. As the most utilized portions of the public realm, Wilkins' streets should be designed to a high standard that serves multiple purposes.

This represents a shift in the way that the Township defines the role of its streets. A street should be seen as a public space that serves people and the environment in addition to moving freight and traffic. It is the intent of this policy to formalize the planning, design, operation and maintenance of Wilkins' street network so that it accommodates all anticipated users, including pedestrians, people with disabilities, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and freight carriers - especially vulnerable populations such as senior citizens and children, regardless of age, ability, socioeconomic status or mode of travel. This initiative directs the Township to consistently consider, plan, design, fund and construct projects that put pedestrians, people with disabilities, bicyclists and transit users on an equal standing with motor vehicles. Thus, this policy calls for designing safer infrastructure for all of Wilkins' road users. The Complete Streets Policy also aims to increase the number of people walking, biking and taking transit in the Township by creating safe, comfortable spaces to travel via these modes, which are important and essential pieces of our transportation infrastructure.

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Core Commitment:

1. When planning and designing road or trail improvement projects, the Board of Commissioners shall require the Engineer and Public Works Supervisor to consider all financially attainable additions or changes to existing streets/trails that provide accommodations to all modes of transportation. Activities may include large scale projects, such as the design/construction of residential roadways in a new development; incremental improvements over time, such as sidewalk additions throughout a corridor; or small projects, such as painting crosswalks or roadway edging in residential neighborhoods.
2. The Township shall foster partnerships with businesses, private developers, and other governmental agencies, including the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), the Allegheny County Port Authority, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), Allegheny County, the Municipalities of Monroeville and Penn Hills and the Boroughs of Churchill, Chalfont, East Pittsburgh, Turtle Creek and Forest Hills to develop facilities and accommodations that further Complete Streets and continue such infrastructure beyond the Township's borders.
3. Exceptions to the accommodation of all users. Any exception in applying this policy to a specific project must be approved by the Board of Commissioners, based upon the recommendation of the Public Works Superintendent, Township Manager and Township Engineer. Exceptions may be made when:
 - a. An affected roadway prohibits, by law, use by specified users, such as pedestrians on interstates or bicyclists in pedestrian malls; or
 - b. The cost of the accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use; or
 - c. There is a documented absence of current and future need, due to existing and projected population, employment opportunities and traffic volumes; or
 - d. Accommodation is not practically feasible because of severe topographic constraints or significant adverse impacts to the natural environment, historic or cultural resources, or neighboring land uses; or
 - e. Performing routine road maintenance, which does not change the roadway geometry or operations, such as mowing, sweeping, spot repair or when interim measures are implemented including temporary detour or haul routes.

Best Practices:

1. The Wilkins Township Planning Commission shall make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners for amendments to the Land Development and Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances to incorporate the Complete Streets Policy recommendations located in the Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan, the Township Active Transportation Plan and this policy.

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2. The standard to be achieved is the creation of a connected network of facilities that accommodates each mode of travel and is consistent with and reflective of the character of each local neighborhood in which it is located. The Commissioners shall continue to recognize that all streets are unique and that the needs of various users must be balanced in a flexible manner.

3. Wilkins Township shall follow best practices and current design standards, policies, principles and guidelines. Principles and strategies of street, bikeway and pedestrian designs, such as those offered in current editions of the resources listed in Appendix A, shall be implemented:

In recognition of various contexts, public input and the needs of many users, a flexible, innovative and balanced approach that follows other appropriate design standards may be considered, provided that a comparable level of safety for all users can be achieved. The Active Transportation Committee identified increased pedestrian lighting at bus stops and appropriate detour routes and signage for all transportation modes as two areas requiring such levels of innovation and flexibility. Further, the committee noted that “chip and seal” style road surfacing creates unsafe bicycling conditions for at least several months after application and should therefore be avoided if possible on any roads that accommodate cycling as a use.

Land Use and Context:

The Township views complete streets as integral to everyday transportation options. To this end, the Township shall require new or revised transportation plans and/or design guidance to specify how transportation projects will serve current and future land use, such as by defining streets based not just on transportation function but also on the surrounding land use. Solutions should be developed to fit within the context of each neighborhood, and those solutions should be flexible.

The Township Engineer, Public Works, Planning and/or other relevant departments will review current design standards, including subdivision regulations and zoning ordinances that apply to new roadway construction, to ensure that they reflect the best available design guidelines, and effectively implement complete streets.

Performance Measures:

Using performance measures to evaluate the progress of the Complete Streets Policy is a valuable and essential part of successfully implementing safer, more complete streets. The Township will publicly report on the annual increase or decrease for each performance measure compared to the previous year(s). These measures can include:

- Rate of crashes, injuries and fatalities by mode;
- Percentage of transit stops accessible via sidewalks and curb ramps;
- Number of approved and denied exceptions;

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- Linear feet of new or reconstructed sidewalk, curb ramps and/or bike lanes;
- Miles of new or repainted crosswalks
- Satisfaction levels as expressed on customer preference surveys

Project Selection Criteria:

The Township's Active Transportation Plan identifies a number of projects for consideration, including five pilot projects. These projects shall be ranked based upon the decision matrix included as Appendix B. Additionally, the Township is utilizing software that rates streets in the Township based upon the level of repairs needed. The software ranks streets from bad (1) to excellent (5). The Township shall use this software ranking, along with the decision matrix to determine what projects will be completed within each funding cycle.

Implementation:

The Township views Complete Streets as integral to everyday transportation decision-making practices and processes. To this end:

1. Principles of Complete Streets have been incorporated into the Township's Comprehensive Plan. The Board of Commissioners adopted an Active Transportation Plan. The Board will continue to incorporate Complete Streets principals into other manuals, checklists, decisions trees, rules, regulations and programs as appropriate.
2. The Planning Commission, Manager, Public Works Supervisor and Engineer will review design standards, including subdivision and land development regulations that apply to new roadway construction, to ensure that they reflect the best available design guidelines, and effectively implement Complete Streets.
3. When available, the Township shall encourage staff professional development and training on non-motorized transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars and workshops.
4. The Township Manager and Public Works Supervisor shall identify all current and potential future sources of funding for street improvements and recommend improvements to the project selection criteria to support Complete Streets projects.
5. The Township shall promote project coordination among departments, contiguous municipalities and County/State agencies with an interest in the activities that occur within the public right-of-way in order to better use fiscal resources.
6. An annual report will be made to the Township Commissioners by the Township Manager, or his/her designee, showing progress made in implementing this policy.
7. A Complete Streets Advisory Council has been created to serve as resource and a collaborative partner for the Township elected officials and municipal staff.

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- a. The Advisory Council is composed of voting members appointed by the Board of Commissioners who are interested in achieving Complete Streets and who want to explore opportunities for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and people with disabilities. Representatives shall be from the community at large, Allegheny County Economic Development, Allegheny County Health Department, Bike Pittsburgh, Woodland Hills School Board, Wilkins Board of Commissioners, Wilkins Township Planning Commission, Wilkins Township Recreation Advisory Committee, Wilkins Township Public Works and Administrative staff and Pa Department of Transportation.
- b. Terms shall be staggered two year terms.
- c. The duties of the Council shall include, but not be limited to implementing the Active Transportation Plan adopted by the Board of Commissioners in March of 2018 and continuing to examine the needs of bicyclists, transit users, motorists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. The Council shall meet quarterly and provide a yearly written report to the Township Board of Commissioners, evaluating the Township's progress and advising on implementation.

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APPENDIX 'A'

- a. Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Design Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach
- b. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets
- c. AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities
- d. AASHTO, Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities
- e. National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- f. NACTO, Designing for All Ages & Abilities: Contextual Guidance for High-Comfort Bicycle Facilities
- g. NACTO, Urban Street Design Guide
- h. Federal Transit Administration (FHWA), Manual on Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections to Transit
- i. FHWA, Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices
- j. FHWA, Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks
- k. FHWA, Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts
- l. FHWA, Accessible Shared Streets: Notable Practices and Considerations for Accommodating Pedestrians with Vision Disabilities
- m. FHWA, Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
- n. U.S. Access Board, American Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG),
- o. U.S. Department of Justice, American Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design
- p. The Pennsylvania Traffic Calming Handbook