

Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization

Complete Streets Policy

Purpose:

The Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (LMPO) will scope, plan, fund, and support the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of complete streets on all transportation projects and programs within the Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Area (LMPA) that are funded with federal Urban Systems dollars. This policy ensures that officials, planners, and engineers working on projects and programs funded through the LMPO consistently design the entire street right-of-way with consideration for all users, from pedestrians to motorists.

Reason:

The LMPO affirms that people traveling as pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists are legitimate users of the transportation system and deserve safe facilities to accommodate their travel. The LMPO asserts that complete streets also support other community goals such as enhanced mobility options, enhanced safety, mitigation of traffic congestion, job access, active living, environmental protection, and improved quality of life.

Definitions:

Complete Streets – refers to roadway design and operating practices intended to safely accommodate diverse users and activities including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, transit users, people with disabilities, plus adjacent businesses and residents. Complete Streets planning and design recognizes that roadways often serve diverse functions including through travel, recreational walking, socializing, vending, and nearby living, which must be considered and balanced in roadway design and management.

Pavement Preservation – maintains serviceable roadways through preventative and corrective maintenance and minor rehabilitation, before serious damage occurs. Preservation excludes new or reconstructed pavements.

Pedestrians – are people who travel by foot or who utilize mobility aids such as wheelchairs.

Goal:

The LMPO will create a **comprehensive, integrated, connected transportation network** that balances the access, mobility, health, and safety needs of **all transportation users of all ages and abilities, regardless of mode** including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, commercial vehicle drivers, and emergency responders in the LMPA.

The LMPO recognizes that all streets are different and that the needs of each mode will need to be balanced in a flexible manner while ensuring basic accommodation is provided for all permitted users. Although all modes may not receive the same type of accommodation on all roadways, the needs of all users will be balanced across the transportation network.

Jurisdiction:

The Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (LMPO) will provide the leadership to implement this policy on all transportation projects and programs that require LMPO approval. This policy is consistent with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development's Complete Streets Policy.

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

For new or reconstruction projects, maintenance for sidewalks and bicycle facilities outside the limits of the curb or shoulder will be the responsibility of the local jurisdiction. Maintenance agreements with the local jurisdiction will be required as a provision of the project.

The LMPO is not directly responsible for maintenance and operations of roadways and transportation systems. However, the LMPO encourages jurisdictions within the Metropolitan 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 LMPO also encourages all local jurisdictions within the LMPA to adopt a complete streets policy. The LMPO will help any participating jurisdiction craft a policy tailored to its community and also consistent with the Complete Streets policies of the Louisiana Department of Transportation (DOTD) Development and the LMPO.

The LMPO recognizes the need for interdisciplinary and cross-jurisdictional coordination to effectively develop, operate, and maintain bicycle and pedestrian networks and transit facilities. The LMPO will work with the jurisdictions within the LMPO Planning Area, the DOTD, Lafayette Transit System (LTS), and other stakeholders to achieve this goal. The LMPO will engage in early coordination to identify whether a project will impact any transit facilities or bicycle and pedestrian routes identified on local plans, including the LMPO's transit, bicycle, and pedestrian plans.

Appeals:

When a local jurisdiction is not in agreement with the LMPO'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 Citizens Advisory Committee, and the recommendation of the

Transportation Technical Committee. The Transportation Policy Committee, the governing board of the MPO, which, after considering comments from the other two committees, will make the final decision on the appeal.

Context Sensitive Solutions:

The project development and decision-making process for the entirety of all transportation projects shall provide accommodations for all users through use of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) that account for and enhance surrounding neighborhood character, both current and planned. On all new and reconstruction roadway or transit projects that serve areas with existing or foreseeable development in the next twenty (20) years (the LMPO planning horizon), the LMPO will plan and fund:

- Sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities. The appropriate facility type will be determined by the context of the roadway and relationship to the LMPO Pedestrian and /or Bikeway Plans.
- Bicycle accommodations that are appropriate to the context of the roadway. In urban and suburban areas, bicycle lanes are the preferred type of facility for arterial and collector roads. The provision of paved shoulder of sufficient width, a multi-use trail, or a marked shared lane (sharrow) may also be appropriate, depending on the context.
- Transit facilities such as bus shelters or other accommodations.
- Motorist facilities including travel lanes, traffic control devices, intelligent transportation systems, and intersection improvements such as turning lanes, overpasses, and roundabouts.

All projects shall consider impacts that improvements will have on safety for all users and make all reasonable attempts to mitigate negative impacts on non-motorized modes. Restricting non-motorized access is not an appropriate strategy, except in the case of limited access facilities where pedestrians and bicyclists are expressly prohibited by definition. The LMPO will ensure that projects are not barriers to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users by planning for appropriate safe crossings, corridor continuity, and ensuring transportation projects comply with current accessibility guidelines.

Design:

Facilities will be designed and constructed in accordance with current applicable laws and regulations, using best practices and guidance from the following, but not limited to: DOTD guidelines and manuals, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publications, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), the Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG), Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach: An ITE Recommended Practice, and the Urban Bikeway Design Guide and the Urban Street Design Guide by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO).

Exceptions:

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

1. Facilities, such as Interstate 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 only, the LMPO 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 LMPO Transportation Policy Committee. 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 Citizens Advisory Committee, the Transportation Technical Committee, and lastly, the Transportation Policy Committee, which, after considering comments from the other two committees, will make the final decision. A jurisdiction may appeal this decision once using the process outlined in the Appeals section.

For exceptions on Louisiana state projects concurrence from the Chief Engineer with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) must also be obtained. For exceptions on Federal-aid highway projects, concurrence from the Federal Highway Administration and the Chief Engineer with the DOTD must be obtained.

Implementation:

LMPO will:

- Create more varied functional classification plans and cross sections that include standards for more compact walkable and bikeable areas.
- Update other MPO plans and documents to reflect or refer to this Complete Streets Policy.
- Identify individuals responsible for the above changes.
- Identify individuals responsible for tracking data to be used for the evaluation of outcomes.

Evaluation:

Identify data currently collected that can be used to measure performance. Identify data not currently collected but that can be collected. Provide annual or biennial reports to the Transportation Policy Committee.

Possible Performance Measures:

- Pedestrian, bicyclist, motorist crash rates
- Volume counts for vehicles, bus passengers, bicyclists, pedestrians
- Linear feet or miles of new or reconstructed sidewalks
- Number of new or reconstructed ADA accessible curb ramps
- Number of new or repainted crosswalks
- Number of new pedestrian signals
- Linear feet or miles of on-street bicycle facilities
- Percentage completion of bicycle and pedestrian networks identified in the LMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian plans
- Number of transit stops with shelters
- Percentage of transit stops accessible via sidewalks and ADA accessible curb ramps
- User satisfaction surveys
- Increase in mode shares for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users
- Decrease in mode share for motorists
- Percentage of funds spent on bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities
- Level of service for transit, cyclists, and pedestrians
- Share of roads with design speeds in the safe range for pedestrians
- Percentage of work completed in local bicycle and pedestrian plans.