



CITY OF CLEVELAND  
Mayor Justin M. Bibb

# Complete & Green Streets Policy

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## Introduction

Complete and Green Streets is a framework to ensure streets are safe for people of all ages and abilities, balance the needs of different modes, and reduce environmental impact of roadway infrastructure projects. This Complete and Green Streets Policy (hereby referred to as ‘the Policy’) provides process-oriented guidance for operationalizing the City of Cleveland’s [2022 Complete and Green Streets Ordinance](#) (referred to as ‘the Ordinance’ in this document). It aims to be a concise description of the roles and responsibilities of city staff and members of the newly formed Transportation Infrastructure Advisory Committee in order to implement the Ordinance. Although much of the guidance is directed toward City departments that plan for, design, and construct City-sponsored transportation projects, the Policy also includes guidance for private developers and other project sponsors to incorporate Complete and Green Streets principles in all projects within the City of Cleveland.

As directed in the Ordinance, the City of Cleveland’s Director of the Mayor’s Office of Capital Projects and the Director of City Planning have created this Policy. The Policy will be made available for public review within 60 days of legislation passage (by August 5, 2022). The Policy should be considered a draft until the Transportation Infrastructure Advisory Committee (TIAC) is appointed and convened. Following an opportunity for TIAC members to make recommendations for adjustments, the Policy will be updated and reposted. The Policy may be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary, with the most current posted and publicly available document serving as the guiding document.

## History

Cleveland’s [first Complete and Green Streets ordinance](#) passed in 2011 and established a vision for multimodal and sustainable roadways in the City. Following the passage of the legislation, the City of Cleveland worked with Alta Planning + Design and stakeholders to develop the [2013 Complete and Green Streets Typologies Plan](#), which classified city streets based on their curb-to-curb width (from small to very large) and context (industrial, commercial, neighborhood, transit overlay, etc.) and recommended general design treatments based on the street type.

Based on guidance in the 2011 legislation, the Mayor’s Office of Capital Projects shifted its approach to planning for and documenting multimodal and sustainable elements in capital projects; providing context sensitive solutions that equally address safety, mobility, and the preservation of scenic, aesthetic, historic, environmental, and other community values; establishing cross-departmental project scoping conversations; creating Complete and Green Streets fact sheets for major roadway projects to communicate features to the public and other project stakeholders; adopting the international sustainable infrastructure rating system [Envision](#) to score projects; and issuing annual reports on roadway project outputs to document progress towards goals. The City also incorporated Complete and Green Streets strategies into routine residential resurfacing and maintenance projects, including the use of recycled asphalt and the deployment of the Tree Damaged Sidewalk Repair Program.

Throughout Cleveland since 2011, over 102 miles of bike lanes/sharrows, 3,986 pedestrian curb ramp upgrades, and 8,166 street trees have been added to the public right-of-way following the values and guidance of the 2011 Complete and Green Streets Ordinance. Through these efforts, the City of Cleveland advanced in Bicycling Magazine’s ranking of the Best Bike Cities, going from 41st to 29<sup>th</sup>; improved the City’s Air Quality Index by 18 points; and reduced the number average number of water advisory days per beach in Cuyahoga County by 9.

The National Complete Streets Coalition and Smart Growth America regularly review local Complete Streets policies and offer guidance to communities for passing and implementing strong legislation. The [Best Complete Streets Policies of 2012](#) assessed Cleveland's 2011 policy and recommended the following areas for improvement:

- Use more direct language to state intent and vision;
- Specifically reference users of all modes, ages, and abilities;
- Apply to all projects, including maintenance and operations;
- Recognize the importance of a connected, integrated transportation network;
- Articulate the need for collaboration across agencies and apply to private development;
- Acknowledge the need for context sensitivity;
- Establish performance measures; and
- Include implementation steps, including potentially establishing an advisory board or other oversight mechanism.

In 2019, Cleveland City Council began drafting an updated Complete and Green Streets ordinance with stronger language and updates to design guidance, advisory board oversight, and transparency. Advocates including Bike Cleveland and the American Heart Association, as well as volunteers from the City's developing Vision Zero initiative, provided input to ensure a cohesive approach across the City's transportation-related activities.

In June, 2022, through the leadership of Mayor Justin M. Bibb and City Councilmember Kerry McCormack, Cleveland City Council passed an updated Complete and Green Streets Ordinance, outlining a vision and a process for a transportation system that serves all road users and fosters equitable access, sustainability, and economic development across the city. This Policy is a result of the new ordinance.

## Guiding Principles

The principles guiding the implementation of Cleveland's Complete & Green Streets commitment include:

- Road safety: eliminating serious injury and fatal crashes from our roadways;
- Multimodality: ensuring that roadways accommodate users of all ages, abilities, and modes, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and vehicle operators;
- Public health: reducing the emissions of and exposure to transportation-related air pollution; enabling and encouraging physical activity through active transportation;
- Environmental sustainability: reducing waste, using sustainable materials, supporting mode choice, and managing stormwater sustainably;
- Community engagement: sharing information and facilitating input in a clear and transparent manner;
- Accountability: tracking and reporting on outcomes;
- Equity: providing consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including those in underserved communities; and
- Context sensitivity: considering the community's current and future land use and transportation needs.

## Complementary Initiatives

The Complete and Green Streets approach reinforces and advances several complementary initiatives with citywide impact. A partial list of the plans and initiatives that will be considered in the early stages of capital project planning to inform project elements, design priorities, and desired roadway function includes:

- Climate Action Plan
- Vision Zero Action Plan
- Cleveland Tree Plan
- 2007 Bikeway Master Plan
- GCRTA Strategic Plan
- ODOT Highway Safety Improvement Plan
- Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) Plans
- Safe Routes to School
- ODOT Walk.Bike.Ohio (WBO) Statewide Bike and Pedestrian Plan
- 15-Minute City Planning
- Trust for Public Land's 10-Minute Walk to Parks

Other plans and initiatives, including the to-be-developed citywide Active Transportation Plan, will also guide Complete and Green Streets implementation.

## Direction to Project Partners

Although most of this Policy describes a process for the City of Cleveland to follow for its own work in the public right-of-way, it also offers important guidance for private developers and documents City preferences for other public agencies, including Cuyahoga County and the Ohio Department of Transportation, who construct, rehabilitate, and maintain transportation assets in the city.

The City of Cleveland directs any entity performing work in the right-of-way to, whenever possible, adhere to the Complete and Green Streets values stated in the Ordinance and the guiding principles in this Policy, incorporate Complete and Green Streets-related recommendations in adopted plans and complementary initiatives, and:

- Approach everyday operations keeping in mind this Complete and Green Streets Policy;
- Approach every transportation project and program as an opportunity to improve the transportation network for all users; and
- Work in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions to achieve Complete and Green Streets.

## How It Works

In line with the guiding principles, Complete and Green Streets focuses on the design and implementation of roadway projects, and therefore is primarily organized around the development of City-sponsored transportation projects. Operationalizing Complete and Green Streets starts with early identification of upcoming roadway projects and how they may advance citywide Complete and Green Streets priorities (defined through adopted plans and complementary initiatives), allowing city staff the appropriate time to incorporate priority elements into project scopes and funding strategies.

## Project Review

Between 2018 and 2021, the City of Cleveland spent \$16 million to \$24 million annually on roadway projects in the public right-of-way. Of that, approximately \$12 million supports residential street resurfacing on low volume, local roadways that do not qualify for additional county, state, or federal funding. Since 2018, an average of \$5.7 million per year has been available to leverage state and federal funding for larger, more regionally significant streets. These state and federal funding opportunities are allocated competitively, so the City must carefully select and scope projects that score well based on the funding source's evaluation criteria.

An interdepartmental group of city staff will review all upcoming roadway projects, ideally three to five years prior to desired construction for larger projects, but within a shorter time frame for smaller ones, compare them to recommendations from adopted plans and complementary initiatives, and recommend a subset of projects based on their significance in the transportation network to go through a more intensive Complete and Green Streets review process with the newly formed Transportation Infrastructure Advisory Committee (TIAC). City staff identify desired capital projects through pavement condition, safety issues, and planning initiatives. City staff prioritize roadway projects based on the relative need and the project's competitiveness for funding.

City staff will present upcoming roadway projects with preliminary recommendations for project-specific Complete and Green Streets elements to the TIAC. The TIAC will provide additional input on desired elements to inform project scoping. Any TIAC input that the City determines cannot be included in a roadway project will be posted online as an exception with supporting documentation explaining the basis of the decision. To balance current roadway, sidewalk, and ADA maintenance needs with the desire to incorporate new Complete and Green Streets elements, TIAC review will focus on projects where the opportunity exists to leverage additional funding for Complete and Green Streets elements.

## Complete and Green Streets Staff Working Group

The staff group is tasked with regularly meeting to discuss and coordinate various initiatives around upcoming roadway projects. Departments to be represented on the Complete and Green Streets staff working group will include, but are not limited to:

- Capital Projects
- City Planning
- Traffic Engineering
- Streets
- Urban Forestry
- Sustainability
- Economic Development
- Water Pollution Control
- Public Safety
- Park Maintenance
- Public Health
- Public Utilities
- Equity/Equal Opportunity

The working group will discuss upcoming roadway projects, identify alignment with adopted plans and complementary initiatives, recommend which roadway projects should be reviewed in detail by the TIAC, receive TIAC input, identify and document exceptions, track the progression of TIAC-reviewed streets, collect and report data for the annual report, and publish an annual report.

### Transportation Infrastructure Advisory Committee (TIAC)

The TIAC is tasked with providing guidance to the scoping of City-sponsored transportation projects. Cleveland City Council and the Mayor of Cleveland have appointing authority for representatives to the TIAC, as defined in Section 7 of Ordinance No. 370-2022. The TIAC will elect a chairperson annually who will be the primary liaison with City staff, assist with meeting facilitation, and be the primary spokesperson for the committee's input. TIAC meetings will be held in-person at City Hall in Room 514. The Director of the Mayor's Office of Capital Projects will convene the TIAC on a quarterly basis. TIAC meeting times will be posted online, and meetings will be livestreamed on the City of Cleveland's YouTube channel.

The Director of the Mayor's Office of Capital Projects (or his or her appointee) will present approximately one new project per meeting. For each project, staff will present contextual information, City priorities, possible project funding sources, and relevant project timing information. Committee representatives will ask questions and discuss. TIAC members will be asked to provide comments at a subsequent quarterly meeting following the initial presentation. The comments will be compiled as the "Complete and Green Streets List" and submitted by the TIAC chairperson to the Director of the Mayor's Office of Capital Projects.

TIAC members, led by the chairperson, may adopt additional governance or community engagement practices as they see fit within their role as an advisory committee to the City of Cleveland.

## Roadway Design

### Standards & Guidelines

Roadway design standards and design guidelines are similar in that they both influence the design of roadway projects. They differ in that standards are a mandatory set of criteria, often regulated by the federal government. Guidelines are recommendations that can be applied within the thresholds established by the standards. Decisions based on guidelines rely on engineering judgment and knowledge of transportation facility design supported by available data.

To improve transparency around the application of roadway design standards and guidelines, the City of Cleveland's Complete and Green Streets webpage will provide links to the standards and guidelines the City of Cleveland relies on for roadway design.

## Traffic Calming Policy

According to the Institute of Transportation Engineering (ITE), traffic calming is:

“The combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.”<sup>1</sup>

Since Complete and Green Streets is a policy focused on the capital project cycle, City staff will consider potential traffic calming elements from project scoping through implementation. Citywide crash and speed data and safety priorities will inform initial project scoping. During project design, city staff will use proven, targeted countermeasures to address unacceptable safety outcomes.

The City of Cleveland has begun to address traffic calming outside of the capital project cycle through the citywide [Residential Speed Table Pilot Program](#), launched in Summer 2022, as well as other spot treatments involving low-cost safety treatments such as painted and delineated curb extensions and roadway narrowing. Data collected during the speed table pilot will inform a traffic calming policy for residential streets, anticipated in 2023.

## Other Tools

While most of the Policy focuses on process improvements for City-sponsored transportation projects (building new, reconstructing, or rehabilitating roadways), the City of Cleveland continues to develop additional complementary programs and initiatives to increase safety, accessibility, multimodal accommodations, and sustainability in the public right-of-way. Outside of major capital projects along main corridors, the City will continue to invest in and expand the following mechanisms to provide Complete and Green Streets improvements across the transportation network:

- Vision Zero Safety Analysis and Systemic Countermeasure Implementation
- Neighborhood Traffic Calming
- Resident-Led Decorative Street Painting
- Traffic Signal Upgrades
- Street Tree Planting Program
- 50/50 Sidewalk Repair
- Tree-Damaged Sidewalk Repair

## Community Engagement for Roadway Projects

Aligning with principles guiding Complete and Green Streets, this Policy creates better opportunities for community engagement by:

- Providing early information about upcoming roadway projects to the TIAC and the public,
- Discussing project elements in detail prior to the finalization of the scope, and
- Educating the public and agency partners about the City of Cleveland’s roadway project development process.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ite.org/technical-resources/traffic-calming/>

In addition to the process improvements described in this Policy, which will lead to more clarity and transparency around capital project development and implementation, the City will also work with the TIAC to develop community engagement practices for capital projects.

## Transparency and Accountability

A transparent process with accountability measures is an essential component to fulfilling the principles of Complete and Green Streets. Critical steps to ensuring transparency through the process of roadway project design with CGS elements include:

- A clear presentation of the City of Cleveland's priorities for upcoming roadway projects;
- A clear understanding of the TIAC's desired Complete and Green Streets project elements and;
- Clear communication around the reasoning for any exceptions prior to Council approval of legislation to accept and receive grants and/or to approve bond funding.

## Website

The Complete and Green Streets webpage is a public-facing communication resource designed to:

- Provide general information about Complete and Green Streets, design guidance, and implementation practices;
- Communicate TIAC meeting times and agendas;
- Provide information about roadway projects that undergo Complete and Green Streets review by the TIAC;
- Increase community understanding around roadway project elements by increasing transparency around roadway project scoping, funding, and implementation.

## Annual Reporting

Aligning with the principles guiding Complete and Green Streets, the City of Cleveland will publish a Complete and Green Streets annual report to depict progress on projects by September of the following year. This timeline is based on the availability of state-level datasets that inform the City's assessments of effectiveness.

At a minimum, the CGS annual report will include:

- A list of the Complete and Green Street projects (streets reviewed by the TIAC);
- The Complete and Green Streets List (TIAC input) for each roadway project;
- Exceptions for each project.

Depending on data availability, the Annual Report will report on the following data points for each Complete and Green Street project:

- Pre- and post-usage data by transportation mode;
- Pre- and post-project crash data;
- Pre- and post-project speed data;
- Feedback from the community via community engagement exercises;
- The number of new construction or rehabilitation building permits issued along project routes.

Annual reports will be available to the public on the City's Complete and Green Streets webpage.



## Staff Acknowledgements

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