Complete Streets
The Columbus Experience

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My Role

- Former City Engineer (1991 – 2002)
- Developed previous Thoroughfare Plan (2003)
- Consultant contracted to prepare new Thoroughfare Plan (2008)
- City Engineer 2011 – 2013
- Back to consulting recently
The Need for a New Plan

• New MPO
• New Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan adopted
• Increased emphasis on:
  • Community sustainability
  • Energy efficiency
  • Fiscal responsibility
• A balanced approach to meet the needs of all street users
Columbus Goals

• City had “become more conscious of the qualitative relationships between transportation and land use and between different modes of transportation.”

• Urban Area Designation
  • “Sharpened the focus on multi-modal planning” through the new CAMPO
Columbus Goals (continued)

• Need to consider the needs of a diverse range of users
  • o Residents of all ages and abilities
  • o Business commuters
  • o Visitors and tourists
  • o Special event travelers
  • o Shopping and recreational travelers
  • o Commercial freight carriers
Thoroughfare Plan

Bike & Ped Plan
Guiding Principles

Make each street complement its setting
  • o All streets are not created equal.
    • Example: Local street in residential area vs industrial area

Use resources efficiently
  • o Limited budgets
    • Flexibility to build narrower streets
    • Reduce initial construction cost and ongoing maintenance costs
Guiding Principles (continued)

Provide equality for various transportation options
  • o Balanced approach – primary mode will remain the automobile
  • o Walking & Biking have increased in frequency and appeal
  • o Plan seeks to balance the needs of motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists

Set realistic priorities based on known funding
  • o With the formation of CAMPO, funding became more predictable
Street Classifications

Traditional

• o Functional use (freeway, principal arterial, minor arterial, collector, local)

New

• o Context (urban, suburban, rural)
• o Land Use (residential, commercial, industrial)

Example

• o Old – Minor Arterial
• o New – Urban residential minor arterial
Policy Statement

Each street is a system of interrelated components serving a wide variety of users.

- Vehicle travel lanes
- Bicycle travel lanes
- Drainage facilities
- Utilities
- Sidewalks
- Street trees
- On-street parking
- Traffic control devices
- Lighting
Policy Statement (continued)

Design and maintain with thoughtful consideration of each likely user.

Relationships between street system components and the effects on efficiency and functionality.
Sidewalk Policy

Sidewalks are an integral part of the transportation system.

Sidewalks should be provided along all streets except in rural areas and along local industrial streets.

The most efficient and effective time to install pedestrian systems is during construction/reconstruction.

Consideration of potential conflicts can best be addressed during the design phase.

“It is intended that developers will install such facilities as integral parts of their development.”
Project Example – Maintenance

- Street Repaving (Re-striping)
- Meet the needs
- Traffic signal upgrades
Project Example – 4th Street

- Wide sidewalks to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Reduced street width to slow or “calm” vehicular traffic.
- Removed all curbs and other barriers to accessibility.
- LED streetlights.
- Porous pavement.
- Permanent gates to allow the street to be closed easily for events and festivals.
- Narrow street width to minimize the crossing distance for pedestrians.
- Providing bicycle parking with Columbus’ signature “C” racks.
4th Street
4th Street
Project Example – Indiana Avenue

Existing street has no curbs, no storm sewers, a few disconnected sidewalks, and random parking. The street is a major route to Columbus East High School and Clifty Park.

Project includes:

• Bike lanes
• Sidewalks
• Curb extensions at intersections
• On-street parking
• Curbs and storm sewers
• Hopefully the project will lead to redevelopment of a low income neighborhood.
Indiana Avenue
Project Example – Bike Lanes

- Speed reduction: 5 – 8 mph
- Keep it simple.
Project Example
Private Development

- Sidewalks required in all new subdivisions.
- Sometimes off-site sidewalk improvements are required.
- Sidepaths, bike lanes are required if included in Thoroughfare Plan or Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
Making things happen

**Partnerships**
- School corporation (SRTS)
- Columbus Regional Hospital – Healthy Communities
- Police Department
- Bicycle Co-Op
- Planning Department
- CAMPO
- Elected officials

**New Developments**

**Street Improvement Projects**
Advice

Know your community
   We chose a balanced plan
   How hard can you push?

Keep your elected officials involved.

Keep the public involved.

Make sure public agencies live by the plan.

Keep it simple.
Final Thoughts...

Many of you probably think of complete streets in terms of:

• Transportation
• Health
• Environment
Final Thoughts...

In non-engineering terms, I want to challenge you to think a little differently.

• Social
• Safety

Complete streets can transform neighborhoods and whole cities.
Final Thoughts...

For the Love of Cities, Peter Kageyama

“Communities benefit from dog owners. People walking their dogs contribute to traffic on our sidewalks, which raises the perception of activity in a neighborhood.”

“The paradox here is that dogs in cities make for a more human place. We walk more, we meet each other, we see vital street activity, and we feel safer because of it.”
Questions?
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