

Case Study: The Kentuckiana Regional Planning & Development Agency's Complete Streets Policy

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The Kentuckiana Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA) is advancing safety, accessibility, and comfort for all types of travel through its Complete Streets efforts. In September 2022, KIPDA passed an overarching policy providing guidelines and recommendations for incorporating Complete Streets into future transportation planning efforts. This case study provides an overview of KIPDA's Complete Streets policy and how it influences planning and project development.

In the fall of 2022, KIPDA hosted Indiana's annual conference of the state's metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). As a testament to its ongoing commitment to Complete Streets, KIPDA titled the conference "[Nothing Competes with Complete Streets](#)." The co-founder at [City Thread](#), provided the keynote address highlighting the challenges and opportunities for communities prioritizing multi-modal travel.

Background and Demographics

KIPDA oversees transportation and land use planning in the Kentuckiana region, centered on Louisville, KY and including portions of southern Indiana. Approximately 75% of the regional population resides in Kentucky and 25% in Indiana. The area contains the Kentucky's biggest city, Louisville.

The KIPDA MPO has an overarching governing body: the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC). The TPC is comprised of representatives from the region's municipalities, counties, and state departments of transportation, and other related agencies in the bi-state area. KIPDA is also supported by its Transportation Technical Coordinating Committee (TTCC), which provides technical expertise on the transportation system. Its most recent metropolitan transportation plan (MTP), [Connecting Kentuckiana 2040](#), was adopted in February 2020. The update of that document, [Connecting Kentuckiana 2050](#), and an updated

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- The KIPDA adopted a regional Complete Streets Policy in 2022.
- The Complete Streets Policy determines eligibility and guides project selection for dedicated federal funding.
- The KIPDA region prioritized Complete Streets design elements and regional connectivity prior to the policy adoption.

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

- The Complete Streets Policy requires projects to account for the needs of all users in projects submitted for dedicated funding.
- The KIPDA oversees counties across two states with different sets of requirements and regulations for project funding.
- The KIPDA staff will lend support to applicants in developing eligible project applications.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are scheduled to be adopted in Spring 2023, and will further incorporate the new Complete Streets Policy.

Louisville is home to the UPS Worldport facility, a hub for air freight. Substantial upticks in e-commerce increased travel to and from the hub and created additional considerations for transportation planners. Air, rail, and road freight travel, each with unique needs and constraints, must be accommodated to maintain the flow of resources and support local economic vitality. For instance, planners balance the need for facilities that accommodate larger vehicles, which need larger turning radii on roadways, with Complete Streets guidelines, that often advocate for narrower lanes to expand surface area for walking and biking. The KIPDA transportation planners apply Complete Streets concepts in a context-sensitive manner, considering the needs of different industries and lifestyles across the region.

The Dixie Highway, a central artery through the KIPDA transportation system, provides many area residents a route to and from school, work, home, and essential services like grocery stores and medical care. A study completed in 2017 found that the highway moves approximately 60,000 vehicles per day. The City of Louisville received a \$16.9 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant in 2017 from the U.S. Department of Transportation to reimagine and redevelop the Dixie Highway corridor to include safety improvements, multimodal infrastructure and facilities, and a new rapid transit system. The New Dixie Highway Project, completed in 2021, includes a new median installation, roadway resurfacing, and additional sidewalks.

Agency Challenges

As KIPDA's jurisdiction captures part of two states, it must navigate, two distinct regulatory and funding environments, including approaches to funding and road ownership. This requires generating two state-specific versions of the calls for projects that align with the funding sources and requirements for each state. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) gave control of urbanized roads (except for Interstates) to the cities and towns for local management. The city has development control but is also responsible for the costs of maintenance. Conversely, in Kentucky, the state owns all major roads, which can disincentivize some cities and towns from making local improvements.

KIPDA planners are challenged with balancing the needs of all residents and travelers in the region. Roads that connect with interstates must accommodate freight and other commercial travel, creating obstacles for incorporating Complete Streets amenities and access for non-vehicular travel. Transforming interstates and interchanges into multi-modal thoroughways is more complex and costly than simply building highways.

Connected Mobility for All

A KIPDA Complete Streets Policy

As KIPDA observed regional transportation projects aligning with Complete Streets goals, it began to pursue codifying its commitment to Complete Streets. This effort led to its adoption of the 2022 [Complete Streets Policy](#). KIPDA received pushback on the initial draft of the policy from the suburban governments, fearing its populations – which often do not have access to transit and heavily depend on private vehicles for travel – would experience increased challenges navigating the region. To compromise, the final policy draft included exemptions and language shifted to guiding rather than requiring alignment. The Complete Streets Policy provides guidance on qualifying and applying for the KIPDA MPO dedicated Federal funding for Complete Streets projects.

Project Evaluation through a Complete Streets Lens

The MPO established a working group, with representation from across various KIPDA committees, to perform project evaluation and selection. Projects receive different scoring parameters depending on the nature of the project, which then determines how projects will be scored. The requirements for eligibility include considerations and design elements that target the project's most vulnerable users, inclusion of a holistic systems approach to regional connectivity, and long-term vision for how a project might change or accommodate future travel needs. For the next version of its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), projects must meet criteria related to Complete Streets to advance selection. The [2020-2025 TIP](#) includes upcoming Complete Streets projects such as the Charlestown Road Corridor. The 1.31-mile project includes the construction of a 10-ft wide multi-modal path from Sunset Drive to County Line Road in New Albany, Indiana, in addition to re-striping and additional signage.

KIPDA established a new [Project Management Guidebook \(PMG\)](#), which was established in 2016 and updated in 2020, for clarifying specific policies and processes on how dedicated funds are awarded and managed to the jurisdiction's MPOs. The PMG expands on KIPDA's existing process, which relies on convening a working group if funding becomes scarce relative to the number and size of applications. The working group can opt to utilize Complete Streets as a lens for evaluating projects. This process for the working group is still in its early stages, with the first round of Complete Streets project evaluations to be implemented in early 2023.

Regional Complete Streets Resources

Louisville Metro Government, which is a merged government between the old City of Louisville and Jefferson County, has produced local level resources for guiding Complete Streets efforts. Louisville Metro adopted its [Complete Streets Policy](#) in 2008 to provide standard guidance for planners across the city. To support Complete Streets in project development and construction, the city also published a [Complete Streets Design Guide](#) in 2020. The guide offers planners tools, standards, resources, and regionally tailored considerations for advancing Complete Streets concepts.

Similarly, in 2022, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet released a [Complete Streets, Roads, and Highway Manual](#). The manual serves as a guide for transportation planning agencies of all sizes, capacities, densities, and population compositions to reimagine its transportation networks to accommodate all users through design changes, infrastructure modifications, and education and outreach campaigns. The manual includes sections on how to get started, strategies for project prioritization in line with Complete Streets principles, and best practices for incorporating Complete Streets elements in new construction and reconstruction. The document also includes visuals to demonstrate how Complete Streets elements can be applied in different system contexts.

Looking Forward

The regional population is expected to grow in the coming two and a half decades. New residents may live, learn, and work in an urban center, a rural township, or somewhere in between. KIPDA planners will continue to address the needs of the cities and the smaller communities within the region to establish connectivity for all. KIPDA is currently developing its next MTP - [Connecting Kentuckiana 2050](#). To inform this plan, KIPDA is seeking input from residents through its public participation processes, aiming to have the plan ready for TPC review in February 2023 and adoption in April 2023. Ultimately,

KIPDA aims to be an unconventional champion for Complete Streets in the coming years by sourcing new funding streams for Complete Streets and expanding its portfolio of projects, across rural and urban spaces.

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Resources

[KIPDA Connecting Kentuckiana 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#)

[KIPDA Connecting Kentuckiana 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#)

[KIPDA Transportation Improvement Plan](#)

[KIPDA Public Participation](#)

[KIPDA Regional Transportation Council](#)

[KIPDA Environmental Justice](#)

[KIPDA Bike and Pedestrian Planning](#)

[2022 Indiana MPO Conference](#)

[City of Louisville Complete Streets Policy](#)

[City of Louisville Complete Streets Design Guide](#)

[City of Louisville Complete Streets Coalition](#)