

Memo



Metro

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Date: December 4, 2019
To: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and interested parties
From: Lake McTighe, Regional Transportation Planner
Subject: Designing Livable Streets and Trails Guide

OVERVIEW

Metro has finalized new regional street and trail design guidance, the Designing Livable Streets and Trails Guide (the Guide). Refer to Attachment 1 for a link to the Guide or visit oregonmetro.gov/streetdesign. The purpose of the Guide is to support implementation of the 2040 Growth Concept and the Regional Transportation Plan and other local and regional plans and policies. The Guide was developed with input from regional partners (see Background and Attachment 3).

The Guide was developed as a resource for local governments, agencies and communities in the greater Portland area. The Guide serves as Metro's transportation design guidance for any transportation projects planned, designed or constructed with funds allocated by Metro. The Guide replaces Metro's Creating Livable Streets (2002, second edition) and Green Streets for Stormwater Management (2002, first edition) handbooks. The Guide and related resources are available on Metro's website at oregonmetro.gov/streetdesign

The Guide provides the following information:

- Purpose of the guidelines
- Policy framework (land use and transportation; regional street design classifications; designing for desired outcomes; key policies and requirements)
- Definition and description of design functions
- Design principles; design elements (description, design approach, application); list of design resources
- Renderings and cross-sections
- Performance-based design decision-making framework

BACKGROUND

Metro first developed street design policies and guidelines in direct response to the adoption of the 2040 Future Vision Growth Concept in 1995. Starting with the 2002-2005 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program, projects funded with regional flexible funds have been required to be consistent with regional street design guidance. The Metro Council provided additional policy guidance in January 2019, requiring that any funding allocated by Metro for transportation projects will be required to apply the regional design guidance. Other street and trail design guidelines, including those developed by local jurisdictions, may also be used as long as the design approach and decision making process used are consistent with Metro's guidelines.

The Guide identifies design approaches for Metro's regional street design classifications, identified in the [Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#), and for regional trails. The Guide uses a performance based approach to planning and design. The Guide recommends design guidance that has been shown to reduce vehicle miles traveled and increase walking, bicycling and transit use.

The Guide was developed on the basis of current design guidance, case studies, best practices for urban areas, research and evaluation of existing designs, and professional review and input. All of the guidance in the Guide is allowable under national guidance including those developed by the

National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Other Metro guidelines provide complementary design resources to the Guide: Trees for Green Streets (2002), Green Trails (2002) and Wildlife Crossings (2009).

Timeline of regional street design guidance and policy

Policies that support livable street design have been a part of transportation and land use planning in the greater Portland region for more than twenty years. The following timeline includes major milestones in the development of regional street design guidance and policy from 1992 to 2019.

1992 Metro Charter is approved by voters and directs the Metro Council to adopt a Future Vision to manage future growth in the region, and a Regional Framework Plan, and to address, among other things “regional transportation and mass transit systems.”

1995 2040 Future Vision Growth Concept is adopted. The 2040 Growth Concept established a broad regional vision to guide all future comprehensive planning at the local and regional levels. The 2040 Growth Concept introduced a series of land use design types that are the building blocks of the regional strategy for managing growth in the region. Transportation should help implement the strategy.

1996 Regional street design policies and classifications are included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) adopted by the Metro Council. The street design classifications link land use and transportation. The policies and classifications are applied to throughways and arterial streets and respond to the land use design types identified in the 2040 Growth Concept.

Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) determines that more detailed street design guidance is needed to implement the 2040 Growth Concept and to move away from a “one-size-fits-all” approach to street design and requests that Metro develop street design guidelines consistent with the RTP regional street design policies.

1997 Metro Council adopts the Regional Framework Plan, which identifies policies to implement the 2040 Growth Concept, including transportation policies that meet multiple goals.

Metro develops the first edition of the Creating Livable Streets guide. This guide provides more detailed guidance to develop streets in different land use contexts, including town centers and regional corridors, to make them more walkable, bikeable and transit friendly. The guidelines also provide the tools to achieve many of the transportation policies of the Regional Framework Plan and Regional Transportation Plan.

2000 Metro Council adopts the 2000 RTP which applies regional street design classifications to the Regional Street Network and are identified on the Regional Street Design System map.

2002 Metro Council adopts the 2002-2005 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program which requires that projects funded with regional flexible funds must be consistent with regional street design guidelines.

Metro finalizes a second edition of Creating Livable Streets guide. Two new, supplemental guides are also completed: Green Streets, guidelines for stormwater management, and Trees for Green Streets.

- 2003 Metro develops Green Trails, a guide to develop environmentally trails, and Wildlife Crossings, a supplemental design guide on safe passage for urban wildlife across roads and highways.
- 2009 Metro develops second edition of Wildlife Crossings. Metro receives regional flexible funds to update the 2002 Creating Livable Streets Guide.
- 2010 Metro Council adopts the Regional Transportation Functional Plan (RTFP), the implementing plan of the RTP. Title 1: Transportation system design, presents requirements for implementing regional street design policies.
- 2012 Metro develops The Intertwine Regional Trails Signage Guidelines. Metro requires that the guidelines be used on regional trail projects that use regional flexible funds.
- 2014 Metro Council adopts the 2014 RTP and the 2014 Climate Smart Strategy. Both identify updating regional street design guidelines as needed near term implementation activities. Metro Council adopts the 2014 Regional Active Transportation Plan which includes pedestrian and bicycle design guidelines to be integrated into updated regional street design guidelines.
- 2015 Metro Council approves the work plan for the update of the 2018 RTP, including formation of a technical work group to guide development of updated street and trail design guidelines.
- 2018 Metro Council adopts the 2018 RTP which includes updated street design policies.
- 2019 Metro Council provides direction on a framework for a regional transportation investment measure, including direction that any regional investment, regardless of facility ownership, will require that the projects meet regional design guidelines, and that projects shall be designed using performance based practical design principles and will adhere to regional design guidelines, and these design guidelines will also serve as the basis for all cost estimates. (Memo reflecting direction at Council work sessions on January 24 and 31, 2019.)

Metro Council provides policy direction to staff to finalize the Designing Livable Streets and Trails Guide and application of the guidelines to transportation projects.

Metro finalizes the Designing Livable Street and Trails Guide, the third edition of regional street design guidelines and second edition of stormwater management design guidelines.

Process to develop the guide

Metro received a regional flexible fund grant to update the design guidelines in 2009. Staff began to develop a work scope in 2015 (refer to Attachment 2: Project timeline). The project was managed by Metro and the Oregon Department of Transportation. The Guide was developed in coordination with regional partners. Design was identified as one of eight key policy focus areas for the update of the 2018 RTP. Therefore, much of the stakeholder engagement for the Guide was part of the larger RTP engagement process.

A technical work group with city, county and agency engineering and planning staff, community members and transportation advocates met five times and provided input on the development of the Guide 2017 (refer to Attachment 3: Technical Work Group). Periodic updates, with opportunity to provide input, were provided to Metro's technical and policy advisory committees, the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC), the Metropolitan Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC), the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation.

Additionally, staff provided updates to the county transportation coordinating committee technical advisory committees and other groups as requested.

The Metro Council provided policy direction through work sessions on the update of the 2018 RTP and at a work session on the guidelines. Opportunity to comment on regional street design policies were provided during the public comment period for the 2018 RTP.

2015

September 25	TPAC input on draft work plan
October 15	MTAC input on draft work plan
Oct- Dec.	Interviews with agency staff
December 3	Metro Council approves RTP work plan, formation of technical work groups
December 7	Mark Fenton healthy community design workshop and walking audit

2016

Jan-March	Technical work group established
March-Oct	Request for consultant proposals developed
October	Consultant selected, IGA process begins

2017

March	Consultant work begins
June 29	First technical work group meeting
July 28	TPAC project overview
August 2	MTAC project overview
September 28	Second technical work group meeting
November 15	MTAC input on outline
November 17	TPAC input on outline
Ongoing	Updates to Metro Council, JPACT and MPAC through 2018 RTP update

2018

Ongoing	Development of Guide content and update RTP street design policies
March 6	Emerging technologies and future of street design workshop, Urbanism Next conference
Ongoing	Updates to Metro Council, JPACT and MPAC through 2018 RTP update

2019

January 28	Third technical work group meeting
January 24, 31	Metro Council policy direction on regional investment measure, use of guidelines
March 12	Metro Council provides policy direction at work session
March 18	Fourth technical work group meeting
March 21	JPACT update
April 17	TPAC/MTAC workshop on regional street design classifications
April 22	Performance-based design leadership forum and technical workshop
May 20	Final technical work group meeting
Nov-Dec	Roll-out to Metro technical and policy committees
December	Metro Council adoption

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Link to Designing Livable Streets and Trail Guide
Attachment 2: Project timeline
Attachment 3: List of technical work group members