

IMPLEMENT THE PLAN



CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

Your proposed active transportation network is now fully prioritized and phased, which is a milestone in your plan development. Your active transportation plan (ATP) is almost complete, but there are several more items to consider before finalizing the plan. Identifying roles and responsibilities for moving projects forward once the plan is adopted, creating funding and maintenance strategies, and planning for network monitoring and performance evaluation will help guarantee as smooth an implementation process as possible.



Roles and Responsibilities

Once a plan is complete there are typically one or two implementing agencies who have the legal authority and financial resources to build projects, such as county engineers, city departments of public works, and ODOT Districts. Lead agencies collaborate with the public, health departments, local advocacy groups, private businesses, and

other stakeholders throughout plan development. During implementation it is important to continue to work with these groups to maintain support for active transportation projects. Table 10 identifies responsibilities across all agencies involved in active transportation implementation.

Table 10: Implementation Responsibility of Agencies/Organizations in Ohio

Agency	Responsibility	Description
ODOT	State owned facilities outside of municipalities	ODOT incorporates bicycling and walking facilities into state and U.S. highways. ODOT also supports the implementation of local projects through technical resources and funding.
MPOs/ RTPOs	While MPOs/RTPOs do not own roadways, they support local communities with technical resources and funding. Federal law requires MPOs to develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).	A TIP is a list of upcoming transportation projects covering a period of at least four years that includes active transportation projects. TIPs are fiscally constrained, showing the specific funding sources that are committed to each project.
Counties	County owned facilities	County agencies incorporate bicycling and walking facilities in county transportation projects.
Cities/Villages	City or village owned facilities	Municipal agencies incorporate bicycling and walking facilities in local transportation projects.
Parks Districts	Trails and parks under their jurisdiction	Parks Districts have tools for planning, designing, implementing, and maintaining trails and trail networks.
Advocacy Organizations and Community Stakeholders	While advocacy organizations do not own roadways, they play an active role in championing projects, educating community members, fundraising, and other key elements of project implementation.	Advocacy organizations support education and encouragement around new and existing bicycling and walking facilities.
Transit Agencies	Transit facilities	Transit agencies provide seating, bicycle parking, bike racks on buses, and other active transportation amenities to encourage first and last mile connections.

Fiscally constrained vs. aspirational plans: landing in the middle

Aspirational plans focus on an ideal active transportation network without regard for funding limitations. Fiscally constrained plans include sufficient financial information to confirm that projects can be implemented using committed or available revenue sources, such as capital improvement programs.

In reality, most ATPs include a combination of aspirational and fiscally constrained content, and the best ATPs fall somewhere in the middle. It is important to be aware of your constraints early on in the development of your network, but if you design a network based only on how much money you have, you will never push yourself to create something visionary. There will be projects that are essential to the health, safety, and comfort of your community for which you do not have adequate funding. Rather than removing them from your plan, seek out partners, leverage relationships, and build a case for decisionmakers to support those recommendations. When funding becomes available, make sure these

projects are at the top of everyone's list.

Manage stakeholder and public expectations as circumstances evolve. For example, if more funding becomes available for plan implementation than initially anticipated, scaling up expectations over the long-term may be appropriate.

Your ATP should capture the active transportation needs and desires of your community and work toward creating a complete transportation network. Since no network can be built in a day, you ranked your recommendations during project prioritization to identify the most important ones to build in the near future. It is now time to evaluate the feasibility of those projects. Which projects are eligible for funding under currently available sources? Which ones will require grant assistance or additional financial support to implement? You may need to revisit these questions as your community's conditions and priorities change. Developing cost estimates is an important tool in this step (see [Project cutsheets](#)).

Funding

Government agencies across many sectors are facing a constrained fiscal environment. As a result, public works projects often rely on creative problem-solving and collaboration between public agencies to succeed. Active transportation projects comprise a fraction of overall transportation network construction and maintenance. While they generally do not serve as many users as highways, bridges, and other critical infrastructure, they can have a substantial positive effect on local economies through tourism and job creation. Providing opportunities for active living also promotes public health and may reduce the burden on tax-payer funded healthcare systems over time. In this light, active transportation infrastructure is a critical

component of a complete transportation network and results in a positive return on investment for communities that fund such projects.

Funding strategies

ATPs are an opportunity to explore a range of funding options, including federal, state, regional, local, and private sources. You should coordinate among key stakeholders to develop a set of priorities, specific implementation projects, and a long-term capital plan for improvements, recognizing opportunities to combine funding sources into single projects for cost efficiency and completeness.



Consider evaluating the following funding sources as part of your ATP implementation:

- ◆ **State and Federal Funding:** ODOT manages five funding programs that can be used for standalone active transportation projects: Metropolitan Planning Organization + Large Cities Program (MPO LC), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Safe Routes to School (SRTS), and Recreational Trails Program (RTP).
- ◆ **Regional Funding:** In most of the state, MPOs or RTPOs oversee federally funded programs to local jurisdictions.
- ◆ **Local Funding:** Work with partners to leverage resources that fill gaps in your budget. Local funds are typically used to fill these gaps and match federal and state funding sources. These types of funds can include voter-approved tax levies or bond measures that target specific projects and outcomes.
- ◆ **Private Funding:** Developers also play a role in pedestrian and bicycle improvements through development approval conditions, right-of-way dedication, and frontage improvements.

[Walk.Bike.Ohio's Funding Overview 2020](#) provides a list of funding sources available in Ohio. The document includes details on local match requirements, application schedules, and eligible active transportation projects and activities.

Applying for funding

The lead applicant should be the agency that will ultimately own and maintain an infrastructure project or the organization that will implement the program or initiative. It is helpful to have partner organizations or agencies endorse the ATP before applying for funding. For example, if a city is applying for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) infrastructure funding, the school district should endorse the ATP. It is also important to consider the application timeline and any specific requirements early on in the planning process.

Adapting priority projects

In some cases, your top-ranked projects may simply be unfeasible given your financial constraints. For example, a section of separated bike lane may have scored highly across all prioritization criteria and enjoy broad public support. However, drainage would pose a significant challenge to the facility and may require street

reconstruction, which is not programmed in any existing budgets or plans.

Low-cost temporary demonstrations can move otherwise unattainable projects forward and help decisionmakers and the public understand the benefits of investing in permanent treatments when funding becomes available. Installing the separated bike lane using temporary barriers would complete a key connection in the active transportation network without the high upfront cost of street

reconstruction. See [temporary demonstrations](#) in Chapter 3 for more information.

In other cases, you may need to divide top-ranked projects into phases, breaking them down into manageable chunks that can be funded and constructed individually. Ensure that each phase contributes to a meaningful expansion of the active transportation network, such as connecting to a new destination, rather than being too small to provide any real benefits.

Maintenance Strategies

The long-term performance of active transportation networks depends on both the construction of new facilities and an investment in continued maintenance. Maintaining bicycle and pedestrian facilities is critical to ensuring those facilities are accessible, safe, and functional. Maintenance planning and programming should begin in the design phase. The agency that will eventually own the completed project should collaborate with partners to determine the infrastructure placement, final design, and life cycle maintenance cost.

Coordination between government agencies is key for effective maintenance programs. In many jurisdictions, there is confusion around which entity is responsible for the maintenance of active transportation facilities. Intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each agency regarding ongoing maintenance.

Develop your maintenance plans with engineers and maintenance crews. Maintenance staff can help identify typical maintenance issues, such as areas with poor drainage or frequent public complaints. They may also have suggestions for design elements that can mitigate these issues. Maintenance plans should include activities required for different types of facilities as well as how frequently

maintenance should be performed. ODOT published a [Maintenance Overview](#) as part of Walk.Bike. Ohio that provides ODOT maintenance activities and responsibilities, sidewalk maintenance strategies, and funding strategy examples, such as cost sharing programs, municipal borrowing power, assessing repairs at time of property sales, and sliding scale fees. ODOT's [Active Transportation Plan Template](#) provides a table of maintenance strategy recommendations by facility type and guidance on maintenance activity frequency. In Ohio, different seasons require varying approaches to maintenance. See Toole Design's [Winter Maintenance Guide](#) for information on winter maintenance approaches.

It is also important to consider the needs of under-resourced groups during maintenance planning. Research shows that pedestrian and bicycle facilities in low-income, Black, and Latinx neighborhoods are in poorer condition than more affluent, white neighborhoods. Local governments should prioritize maintaining facilities in under-resourced communities. These are often the same neighborhoods where a higher percentage of people rely on walking, bicycling, and transit to get to work and other needs, and where a disproportionate number of bicycle and pedestrian fatalities and severe injuries occur.

Plan Adoption

Adopting the plan marks a milestone in your community's active transportation evolution. Plan adoption means that your local governing body (city or village council, township trustees, county commissioners, or board of directors) officially endorses the recommendations in your ATP and commits to implementing the plan in good faith.

How the plan is adopted will vary based on the community (see Table 11). Also, ODOT will give significant credence to a locally adopted plan when implementing a nearby state roadway project.

Table 11: ATP Adoption Process

Agency	Adoption Process	Relationship to Other Plans
MPOs/ RTPOs	The Board of Directors adopts the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), of which the ATP is one component.	The LRTP should incorporate any projects or initiatives from county, city, or village ATPs that have regional significance.
Counties	The county commissioners typically adopt a countywide ATP through a resolution.	Countywide ATPs should consider regional connections identified in their MPOs/ RTPOs' LRTP within their county as well as connections between communities within their county.
Cities/Villages	City or village councils typically adopt a local ATP through a resolution or ordinance.	City or village ATPs should consider active transportation projects that have been identified in County ATPs or LRTPs that fall within their jurisdictional boundaries. Cities or villages should also integrate any walking and bicycling projects or initiatives into their comprehensive plan's transportation component or other related plans, such as a school travel plan or Vision Zero initiative.

When adopting an ATP consider the following:

- ◆ Keep decisionmakers up to date on the planning process from the beginning to ensure a smooth adoption. Professional development rides, walk audits, and other engagement strategies invite community leaders to participate early in plan development, which can lead to more support for the plan when it comes up for adoption. Consider inviting a commissioner or council member to join your advisory team or steering committee. Alternatively, you can update local decisionmakers on progress and share major milestones at regularly scheduled meetings.
- ◆ Contact the adopting agency early in the planning process to understand how long it typically takes to adopt a plan. Sometimes a plan must be read at a meeting before being adopted at the next meeting, which could impact your overall project timeline and when you will be ready to apply for funding opportunities.
- ◆ By integrating active transportation projects into related plans in your area, you can build a stronger case for funding opportunities. For example, a project listed in both a local ATP and regional LRTP shows a potential funder that there is broad support for the project.
- ◆ Consider who will oversee implementation after the plan is adopted. Some communities create an implementation team comprised of some or all of the same members of an advisory team or steering committee from the planning process.

Monitoring and Implementation

The ability to effectively evaluate successful implementation of the ATP is essential. Establishing performance measures will help track the effectiveness of active transportation investments.

Multimodal performance measures

Bicycle and pedestrian counts, crash records, and other data contribute to building a case for continued improvement of and investment in multimodal infrastructure. As you build out your active transportation network, you must be able to measure whether these investments are paying active transportation dividends (i.e. more people walking and bicycling). An affirmative answer reinforces your ATP's legitimacy and provides evidence that future investments will also yield positive results.

Your community should establish baseline targets and revisit these metrics as new plans and priorities occur. Data on these measures should be documented and published for public review annually. A robust performance measures program includes establishing baseline measurements, performance targets, data collection frequency, and data collection and analysis responsibility.

There are two types of performance measures:

- ◆ **Inventory measures** evaluate specific implementation of recommended improvements. For example, they may include the number of miles of bike lanes, the number of enhanced crossings with a pedestrian refuge, the number of pedestrian activated signalized crossings, the number of miles of wide sidewalks, and the



percentage of the population within a given distance of a bike facility. These inventory measures may also include the percentage increase in these improvements across a jurisdiction in a given year.

- ◆ **Outcome measures** evaluate the effectiveness of active transportation in changing and shifting travel modes and thus reducing congestion and improving air quality. As an example, outcome measures could assess reductions in crash rates and increases in rates of bicycle, transit, or pedestrian travel on streets with active transportation improvements.

ODOT's [Active Transportation Plan Template](#) provides a table of recommended performance measures that can be modified for a specific community. FHWA also provides a [Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures](#).

Plan updates

Revisiting and updating the ATP every four to six years will maintain momentum for active transportation in your community. As funding and political circumstances evolve, updating the ATP to reflect such changes will ensure its continued relevance. Your advisory team or steering committee can help revisit and update the ATP on a regular basis.

Continued engagement

The ATP should be reevaluated when stakeholders change, public buy-in changes, or when the plan is updated. Over time the community will change, and the ATP should adapt to shifting priorities and circumstances. You should engage residents who are directly impacted by an individual project or program prior to implementation. More information on community engagement can be found in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

Completing your ATP is the first step toward building a complete active transportation network in your community. Available resources and funding levels will likely limit the ability to accomplish all of your recommendations in the foreseeable future. But it is important to get started. Prioritizing projects and determining implementation steps, such as what funding is available and who should apply for it, will help determine which projects or programs to pursue first. Many thriving communities have realized that their prosperity depends on safe, convenient, pleasant, and active ways of getting around. ATPs are a key step in this journey. See ODOT's [Active Transportation Plan Template](#) and supporting materials to help you get started on developing an ATP for your community.

