

8. POLICY REVIEW



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This Policy Review section summarizes the key findings from the documents in the Literature Review. It highlights significant insights concerning existing transportation safety barriers and opportunities for integrating a safety approach into the Town of Highland's transportation decision-making processes. The insights from this policy review reflect the current state of transportation safety in the Town of Highland and serve as a guiding framework for developing actionable and effective strategies in the final CSAP.

8.1.1.1 TOWN OF HIGHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE

The code establishes foundational regulations influencing transportation safety and community design, making it a critical document for the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP). Understanding these regulations helps identify existing barriers and opportunities for improvement in transportation planning.

TITLE 8 – CHAPTER 8.10 – SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION

8.10.080 Repair and maintenance of sidewalks and driveways:

- Property owners are responsible for maintaining sidewalks and driveways adjacent to their property. They must keep these areas safe and in good condition at their own expense, as determined by the public works director.
- If a property owner fails to maintain a safe sidewalk or driveway, the town can issue a notice to repair to the responsible owner. The notice will be sent by certified mail to the property address and, if applicable, the owner's address.
- Property owners must complete the required repairs within 30 days of receiving the notice, or within any extended timeframe granted by the public works director or designer.
- If the property owner does not make the necessary repairs, the town council may choose to repair the sidewalk or driveway. The town can hire a contractor for the work, following state regulations for such contracts.
- The cost of repairs or construction will be assessed to the property owner based on the length of the sidewalk or driveway that abuts their property. The assessment will be following state law (IC 36-9-36 et seq.).

TITLE 8 – CHAPTER 8.20 – STRUCTURES, MAINTENANCE OF TREES, AND OTHER PLANTS IN PARKWAYS

8.20.020 Responsibility for maintenance and care – Paving prohibited:

- Property owners whose land abuts a street or alley are responsible for maintaining adjacent parkways. The responsibilities include caring for grass, bushes, trees, and flower beds. The town handles tree maintenance where necessary (e.g., limbs obstructing streets).

Paving restrictions:

- Paving parkways is generally prohibited, except for driveway access, maintaining green spaces, and promoting safe pedestrian movement.

8.20.030 Structures, bushes, trees, tree stumps:

- No raised structures or material of any kind or height may be placed near existing parkways or public property trees that, when filled with soil or other material, result in any change of the existing grade near the tree's root flare.

TITLE 9 – CHAPTER 9.50 PREMISES WHERE SKATEBOARDING IS PROHIBITED

9.50.010 Premises where skateboarding is prohibited:

- Skateboarding is prohibited in several key public areas, including the Highland Municipal Building and blocks of Highway Avenue and Jewett Street.

TITLE 10 – CHAPTER 10.20 STOPPING, STANDING, AND PARKING

10.20.020 Applicability of parking rules:

- Parking regulations are enforced at all times or when specified by signage. Compliance ensures clear roadways and reduces conflicts between vehicles.

10.20.040 Stopping, standing or parking near the industrial plant gate:

- Parking is prohibited within 50 feet of industrial plant gates to avoid traffic blockages.

10.20.050 Stopping, standing or parking on the parkway:

- Prohibits parking on parkways (between sidewalk and curb), with some exceptions, ensuring clear pedestrian paths and roadways.

10.20.060-090 Parking not to obstruct traffic:

- Restrictions prevent vehicles from obstructing sidewalks, alleys, and other key public areas, ensuring safety for pedestrians and drivers.

TITLE 18 – CHAPTER 18.80 OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING

18.80.020 General provisions:

- Off-street parking and loading provisions apply to all new buildings and land uses established after the ordinance's effective date.
- Developments must submit a parking site plan with improvement permit applications detailing all proposed parking and loading facilities.
- Increases in the intensity of use require corresponding adjustments in parking and loading facilities.
- A change in a building's use mandates the provision of parking and loading facilities as required for the new use.
- Existing users may voluntarily establish off-street facilities, provided they comply with regulations.

18.80.030 Location of accessory off-street parking facilities:

- Parking spaces must be located on the same zoning lot or within 300 feet for non-residential uses.
- Required parking must be within 1,000 feet of the use served, with specific distance limitations for residential uses.

18.80.040 Additional parking regulations:

- Off-street parking in residential areas must be for residents and guests only; commercial vehicles are prohibited.
- Off-street parking can be collectively provided for different uses, ensuring the total meets individual requirements.
- All off-street parking must provide safe access to the street or alley to minimize traffic interference.

18.80.080 Schedule of loading requirements:

- Different loading berth requirements are established based on the type of business (e.g., retail, industrial) and building size. For example:
 - One loading berth per 20,000 square feet for retail.
 - One loading berth per 40,000 square feet for industrial uses.
 - Exemptions for buildings under 10,000 square feet.

8.1.1.2 GENERAL DESIGN STANDARDS – REDEVELOPMENT SUBDISTRICT**General Design Standards:**

- **Streetscape Design:** All new developments must incorporate street elements adjacent to properties, promoting safe pedestrian movement and compatibility with vehicles. These designs must incorporate all appropriate design standards identified in the General Design Standards document.
- **On-Street Parking:** Parallel parking is mandatory on all streets, with angle parking allowed where speed limits are 30 mph or less.
- **Alleys:** Required in Gateway and Corridor Sub-Districts to minimize curb cuts and provide access to parking/service areas; dimensions and locations are flexible but must serve their intended purpose.
- **Curb-Return Radii and Clear Zones:** Design curb radii between 10-20 feet to minimize pedestrian crossing times, with a 25-foot clear zone for emergency vehicle access at corners.
- **Curbs:** Must meet town standards, with specific gutter requirements, unless justified by sustainable stormwater initiatives.
- **Traffic Calming:** Encouragement for devices like landscape bump-outs and roundabouts to improve safety.
- **Sidewalks:** Must comply with ADA requirements, parallel to adjoining streets within the right-of-way.
- **Lighting:** Light fixtures should reduce energy consumption, support night sky initiatives, and ensure adequate illumination levels.

8.1.1.3 PAVEMENT ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The plan follows Indiana General Assembly requirements for Local Road and Bridge Matching Grants. This management plan categorizes roads by segments based on characteristics, and data is maintained for effective management and improvement planning.

- The Town of Highland has five major arterial routes, two lanes in each direction – these roads are part of the regional transportation system but are under local jurisdiction for operation and maintenance.
- US Route 41 is not part of this management plan as it is under the jurisdiction of the Indiana Department of Transportation.
- Major collectors comprise the remainder of the system, minor collectors, and local streets that provide local traffic access to the residential areas.
- Most of the roads in the Town are residential through streets and dead-end streets (cul-de-sac).

The Town used the Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating System (PASER). The University of Wisconsin Madison Transportation Information Center developed PASER. The rating is based on a scale from 1 through 10, with a value of 10 being excellent conditions and a value of 1 being failed roadway.

Based upon the PASER rating, the Town will implement the following management plan for each condition, as budgetary constraints allow:

- **PASER 9-10:** No treatment necessary – Roads will be re-evaluated on an annual basis and re-categorized as necessary
- **PASER 6-7-8:** Crack sealing is recommended. When weather conditions permit, crews will be dispatched during March, April, and May to fill all longitudinal and transverse pavement cracks.
- **PASER 5:** No treatment—Roadway surfaces with a PASER rating of 5 and below are not candidates for pavement treatments less than structural milling and resurfacing. PASER 5 streets are generally in fair condition; however, crack sealing or seal coating is not cost-effective for extending pavement life.
- **PASER 4-3:** Milling and structural overlay (1 ½” to 2” surface) – Streets with a PASER rating of 4 or 3 will be milled and resurfaced. Areas with subsurface or subgrade distress will be removed and patched before milling and overlay.
- **PASER 2:** Reconstruction required (2 ½” binder and 1 ½” surface) – Streets with a PASER rating of 2 will be milled to a depth of approximately 4”. Aggregate base will be re-graded/compacted as necessary. Overlay of 2 ½” binder and 1 ½” surface will be placed.
- **PASER 1:** Total reconstruction required—Based on engineering review and design, Streets with a PASER rating of 1 will be reconstructed (aggregate base, binder, surface).

Drainage and Right-of-Way (ROW) Maintenance Plan:

- **Sidewalk Construction:** Requirements for inspection and replacement of substandard public sidewalks, ensuring compliance with ADA standards.
- **Open Road Cuts:** Establishes a permit process for any work performed within the public ROW, including traffic control measures.
- **Parkway Maintenance:** Outlines responsibilities for maintaining parkway trees and prohibits paving of these areas.
- **Drainage Management:** Prior evaluations of drainage structures before resurfacing work, with regular inspections and cleaning of catch basins every three years.

8.1.2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Based on the existing policies and guidelines from the Town of Highland, here are high-level recommendations to enhance driver and pedestrian safety. These high-level programs are only recommended but not required to be implemented.

Recommendations for Improved Safety:

- **Incorporate safe pedestrian crossings:** Mandatory installation of high-visibility crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands at key intersections to facilitate safer crossing points should be a priority in areas with high foot traffic.
- **Increase curb extensions:** Implement curb extensions (bulb-outs) at intersections to shorten pedestrian crossing distances and improve their visibility to drivers. This aligns with the existing encouragement for traffic calming devices.
- **Broaden traffic calming implementations:** Extend traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps and raised crosswalks, in residential areas and near schools to lower vehicle speeds and enhance safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Roundabouts:** Consider roundabouts in areas with high accidents. Roundabouts can significantly reduce the likelihood of severe collisions and improve pedestrian safety.
- **Wider sidewalks in high-traffic areas:** Implement policies that require wider sidewalks in commercial and densely populated areas to accommodate higher pedestrian volumes and enhance comfort.
- **Expand the prohibition of parking vehicles on sidewalks:** Current Town policy prohibits parking on sidewalks but exempts sidewalks crossing driveways. This policy merits reconsideration.
- **Programs:**
 - Develop and promote safe routes: Create a Safe Routes to School program that identifies safe paths for children to walk or bike to school, incorporating infrastructure improvements along these routes, such as additional signage, lighting, and crossings.
 - Community education programs: Launch educational campaigns focused on safe driving, pedestrian rights, and the importance of shared roadways—partner with local schools and organizations to disseminate this information effectively.