COMPLETE STREETS
On Rural Roads
Presenter

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Historical Street Design

- Capacity
- Safety
- Efficiency
- Car-Centric
What is a “Complete Street?”

- A street that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to:
  - Provide access and
  - Serve the local context and
  - Enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel for all users
  - Consider land use
Complete Street Components
Based on Needs / Context
Context and Complete Street Components

- Houses far apart?
- Extensive agricultural fields?
- No pedestrian destinations?
- No existing trails, bicycle routes (existing or planned)
Context and Complete Street Components

- Rural road, but has:
  - Clusters of houses
  - Pedestrian or bicycling destinations within walking distance

Should consider additional modes
What is “walking distance”?

- The distance that most people will walk as opposed to drive.
  - For over 20 years, 0.25 miles or 5 minute walk.
  - Based on more recent studies, 0.5 miles or 10 minute walk is average.
    - Many walkers traveled over 1 mile.
  - Walking trips predominantly <2 miles.

2009 National Household Travel Survey, FHWA
More on Contextual influences

- Rural area with some existing developmental pressure
- No / few existing land use controls
- Numerous existing access points
- Potential for increased traffic

Consider access management planning and, possibly, land use planning
City / Town vs. Rural Road
Complete Streets
Project Example

- Arnold Palmer Regional Airport
- Airpark Industrial Park
- Westmoreland Intermodal Center
- Potential PA Turnpike Interchange with Route 981
- SR 981-V10
Project Example

- Feasibility Study
  - Identified pedestrian needs
  - Identified desire to maintain rural character
  - Need to serve the Airpark Industrial Park
  - Potential for PA Turnpike interchange

http://laurelvalleyproject.com/
Project Example

Existing Route 981

Proposed

LAUREL VALLEY
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
Trail Connections

Source: Parks Horizons A Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan for Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania
Project Example

- Local Land Use Planning
  - Led by Westmoreland County
  - Working with affected municipalities
  - Evaluating existing land use regulations
  - Assessing possibility for land use changes after construction
  - Determining community vision for future land use
  - Helping to develop land use controls (corridor overlays, ordinances, etc.)
Project Example

- Local Land Use Planning

http://www.hlplanning.com/portals/westmoreland/
Things to Consider

- Distance between homes and pedestrian destinations
- Posted Speed
- Roadway Geometry
- Lighting needs
- Vehicle mix
- Need for land use controls
- Access management
Benefits of Complete Streets

- Support economic growth
  - Increase accessibility
- Improve the environment
  - Less cars = better air quality
- Foster independence
- Increase healthy behaviors
- Reduce potential for costly future retrofits
- Maintain future capacity by controlling growth and access
Future of Transportation
2010 National Transportation Survey of Americans

- 67% want more options
  - Freedom to choose HOW they get there
- 73% feel they have no choice but to drive
- 57% want to spend less time in a car

Preference to Reduce Traffic Congestion
Future of Transportation National Survey

- 59%: We need to improve public transportation, including trains and buses, to make it easier to walk and bike to reduce traffic congestion
- 38%: We need to build more roads and expand existing roads to help reduce traffic congestion
Opportunity

- 50% of trips are less than 3 miles
- 28% are less than 1 mile
- 60% of these trips are by motorized vehicle

Source: National Household Travel Survey (2009), FHWA
Complete Streets are not:

- A demand to immediately upgrade existing roads
- A one-size fits all approach
- A special street design
- A silver bullet, still need to address
  - Environmental issues
  - Demand management
  - Special considerations in certain areas
Thank you!

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