

SUBSTITUTE

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY FOR THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

WHEREAS, the Town of West Hartford actively promotes safe streets through design, education and enforcement of all of its transportation network; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets are Right-of-Ways that are planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained in such a way as to enable safe, comfortable and convenient access along and across the Right-of-Way by users of all ages and abilities, including but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, emergency, freight and commercial vehicle operators; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets may include facilities and amenities, including but not limited to, pavement markings and signs; sidewalks and pedestrian safety improvements such as medians, curb extensions and crosswalks; ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals; transit shelters and signage and improved pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stops and stations; bicycle detection at intersections and wide travel lanes, bike lanes, or shared use lanes; bicycle parking facilities; street trees, landscaping, street lighting, street furniture; and adequate drainage facilities, including opportunities for storm water quality treatment facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Town's Bicycle Advisory Committee advocates for and the Town's Master Bike Plan recommends "Adopt[ing] a Complete Streets Policy"; and

WHEREAS, the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development has specifically recommended "Promot[ing] an integrated and balanced 'complete street' transportation systems which provides the best possible service, mobility, convenience, and safety while reinforcing positive social, economic, and environmental influences on West Hartford"; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council adopted a resolution directing the Town Manager to consult with interested stakeholders and prepare a policy that demonstrates the Town's commitment to the development of Complete Streets for the benefit of the entire community; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF WEST HARTFORD that the attached Complete Streets Policy is adopted and shall be applicable to the planning and design of all new transportation and Complete Streets Improvements initiated after the adoption hereof.

Community Planning and Physical Services Committee
(Davidoff, Kindall, Hall)
7-21-15

Town of West Hartford Complete Streets Policy

1. VISION

Complete Streets are necessary to promote an integrated and balanced transportation network. Complete Streets strive to provide the best possible blend of service, mobility, and convenience, and safety while reinforcing a positive social, economic, and environmental influence on West Hartford.

Complete Streets are a vital component of the Town's transportation network and contribute directly to the health, safety, economic vitality and quality of life in the West Hartford Community. Through implementation of Complete Streets principles, the transportation network in West Hartford will be safe, accessible, comfortable and convenient for all transportation users.

2. GOALS

The goal of the Complete Street Policy is to ensure our Town roadways complement and enhance the surrounding land use and neighborhood character and accommodate all users, including drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and transit patrons, older residents, children and persons with mobility impairments. The specific goals are:

- a. To protect and preserve the environment of the Town of West Hartford by reducing the emission of greenhouse gases, and reducing the consumption of non-renewable energy resources.
- b. To ensure the neighborhoods of West Hartford remain vibrant and livable.
- c. To expand opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the Town.
- d. To make the roadway and street environment safer and more inviting by reducing the frequency and severity of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian-related accidents.
- e. To ensure safe pedestrian and bicycle routes for children to get to school.
- f. To improve and enhance the health and physical fitness of the city's residents by providing more safe and convenient opportunities for bicycling and walking in West Hartford.
- g. To improve the Town's quality of life and local economy by providing high quality recreational and multi-modal transportation facilities and providing non-motorized means of transportation.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

It is recognized that each Complete Street is unique and the following principles shall guide the development of transportation projects:

- a. Shall be suitable and appropriate to the function and context of the transportation facility;
- b. Shall be sensitive to the neighborhood context and cognizant of the neighborhood needs;
- c. Shall be flexible in project design to ensure that all users have basic safe access and use;
- d. Shall be considered a component of a comprehensive, integrated and interconnected transportation network that allows all users to choose between different modes of travel; and
- e. Shall be consistent and compatible with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development and the Town's Bicycle Facilities Plan.

4. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

All Transportation Improvements and phases fall under this policy. Complete Streets principles will be applied to all Town- or State-sponsored improvements and all privately-funded projects and developments that impact the right-of-way. The Town will approach every planned Transportation Improvement as an opportunity to create safer and more accessible streets for all users. Transportation improvement phases include, but are not limited to, planning, programming, designing, engineering, construction and reconstruction, operation and maintenance.

Maintenance activities alone are not Complete Streets Improvements, nor should they prompt street improvements that necessitate Complete Streets consideration except those improvements that may be necessary to satisfy legal mandates such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. To the maximum extent possible, provisions for safe access shall be made for pedestrians and bicyclists during maintenance activities.

Complete Streets policy objectives may be achieved by implementing single elements into a project, completing a series of improvements over the course of time, or by developing major network level improvements.

The Town recognizes that its infrastructure includes a transportation network that should provide convenient access and safe travel for all users within the Town and beyond the Town's borders. Because of its regional impact, implementation of this policy reinforces the need for collaboration among the many regional partners and stakeholders affected by the implementation of this policy.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

The Town of West Hartford (Town) will plan, design, construct, operate and maintain appropriate Facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, children, the

elderly and people of all abilities in all new construction, reconstruction, and repaving improvements subject to the exceptions contained herein.

An important aspect of this Complete Streets policy is to ensure that West Hartford bicycle riders feel safe traveling within and through the Town. The Town currently lacks defined bicycle routes for convenient and easily accessible transportation through and around the Town. To address this, the Town Staff, in consultation with the Town's Bicycle Advisory Committee, shall develop a Bicycle Facility Plan. Such Plan shall be presented to the Council for adoption no later than nine (9) months from the adoption of this Complete Streets Policy, and shall be reviewed and/or updated every three years.

a. Definitions:

Bicycle Facilities Plan – A comprehensive plan and accompanying map that identifies a vision and framework for bicycle facility improvements to implement a continuous and easily accessible bicycle route network within and through the Town.

“Complete Streets” -- Right-of-ways that are planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained in such a way as to enable safe, comfortable and convenient access along and across the Right-of-Way by users of all ages and abilities and modes of transportation.

Complete Streets Improvements -- Facilities and amenities associated with the transportation network, that are recognized as contributing to Complete Streets, such as, but not limited to, pavement markings and signs; sidewalks and pedestrian safety improvements such as medians, curb extensions and crosswalks; ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals; transit shelters and signage and improved pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stops and stations; bicycle detection at intersections and wide travel lanes, bike lanes, or shared use lanes; bicycle parking facilities; street trees, landscaping, street lighting, street furniture; and adequate drainage facilities, including opportunities for storm water quality treatment facilities.

Facilities - An area or structure which is built, installed or established to serve a particular purpose or transportation mode/user.

Maintenance Activity - Ordinary repair designed to keep Facilities in safe working condition, such as, but not limited to, mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair, concrete joint repair, pothole filling, water, sewer and drainage or other utility installation or repairs.

Right-of-Way --An area, public or private, dedicated for use by pedestrians and vehicles. Right-of-way includes thoroughfares such as streets, highways, bike paths and walkways and normally incorporates curbs, lawn strips, street trees, sidewalks, lighting, signage, drainage facilities, street furniture and other similar features.

b. Cooperation and collaboration

The implementation of Complete Streets will require cooperation and collaboration between many stakeholders on a regular basis. As such, the Town will take the following steps to facilitate the process:

- The Planning Division shall review and propose revisions to all appropriate land use ordinances, policies and regulations to support the implementation of Complete Streets.
- The Planning and Engineering Divisions shall review, revise or recommend changes to all policies, procedures and design standards associated with site plan and other requirements for public and private development to ensure best practices are utilized to support Complete Streets.
- The Town shall continue to identify regional, state and federal funds to implement Complete Streets Improvements to supplement the Town's Capital Improvement Program.
- The Town shall promote collaboration and coordination between Town departments and other transportation and planning agencies, including the Connecticut Department of Transportation and Capitol Region Council of Governments that work within the Right-of-Way and utilize the transportation network for programmatic purposes in order to make the most efficient use of limited financial resources.
- The Engineering Division shall establish necessary procedures to ensure the application of Complete Streets principles at the earliest design stage.
- The Town shall encourage staff professional development in the area of Complete Streets through attendance at seminars, conferences and workshops.
- The Town shall actively promote public information and education and solicit feedback about Complete Streets to West Hartford stakeholders including but not limited to, Boards and Commissions, residents, community groups and leaders, the business community, and the private development community.

c. Exceptions

The Town is committed to Complete Streets and application of this policy and/or Complete Street principles will begin at the earliest phase of a project, except in the following extraordinary circumstances:

1. Where pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited by law from using the Facility. (In such an instance, alternative facilities and accommodations shall be considered within the same transportation corridor.)
2. If the cost of constructing Complete Streets Improvements is disproportionate to the current need or anticipated future demand for such improvements.
3. Where there is an absence of current or projected need.

All requests for exceptions shall be submitted at the earliest project phase (e.g. during initial project planning and budgeting) and may include the following elements if available: a narrative, site photographs, project site map, drawings and any other supporting data. All proposed requests for exception shall be posted to the Town's website and distributed to stakeholder groups, including the Bicycle Advisory Committee, and shall be subject to a seven (7) day public comment period. At the end of the public comment period, all comments received, if any, shall be included in the final documentation for exception request. The final documentation shall be transmitted in the form of an exception request to the Town Manager.

For projects that do not include any state or federal funding, the Town Manager, acting in his or her capacity as the "Local Traffic Authority", in consultation with the Directors of Community Services and Public Works and upon recommendation from the Town Engineer shall determine whether the application of this policy and Complete Streets principles falls under one or more of the exceptions outlined above.

Notwithstanding the above, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, where a transportation project includes state or federal transportation funding, the determination of the applicability of the exception request must be made by the Town Council. Once the Bicycle Facilities Plan is adopted by the Town Council, any recommendation for an exception to this policy that is objected to, where the exception concerns the Bicycle Facilities Plan, shall be brought to the Town Council for their approval or denial.

All granted exceptions shall be posted to the Town's website. Where exceptions are granted, parallel accommodations for the category of users excluded shall be considered on alternate routes within the transportation system.

6. BEST PRACTICES -- DESIGN GUIDANCE

The Town will follow accepted or adopted design standards and use the best and latest design standards available, including the following:

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)
 - A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets (6th Edition, 2011)
 - Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (4th edition, 2012)
 - Guide for the Planning, Design and Operations of Pedestrian Facilities (2004)

- American Planning Association (APA)
 - Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices (2012)
 - U.S. Traffic Calming Manual (2009)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
 - Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
 - PEDSAFE: Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasures Selection System
- Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
 - Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach (2010)
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
 - Urban Bikeway Design Guide (2nd edition, 2014)
 - Urban Street Design Guide (2013)
- U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board
 - Accessible Rights-of-Way: Design Guide

7. REPORTING TO TOWN COUNCIL

The application of Complete Streets will be a process that requires regular evaluation to determine progress and effectiveness. To facilitate that regular evaluation, the Town Manager shall provide a written report to the Town Council on an annual basis on the progress and effectiveness of the Complete Streets policy, and any exceptions granted from the Complete Streets policy.

Within the Annual Report from the Town Manager to the Town Council, the performance measures that will be evaluated include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Miles of bicycle lanes, routes, or trails built / dedicated by width and type
- Number of bicycle parking Facilities installed
- Number of traffic calming Facilities built / installed
- Number of traffic control signs/signals installed/ upgraded
- Linear feet of pedestrian accommodations built or repaired
- Number of crosswalks built or improved
- Number of ADA accommodations built / installed
- Number of transit accessibility improvements built
- Number of street trees planted
- Maintenance Activities of existing Complete Streets Facilities.
- Number of exceptions approved
- User data .bicycle, pedestrian, transit and traffic counts
- Bicycle and pedestrian accident data
- Total dollar amount spent on Complete Streets Improvements