

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

TOWN OF WALPOLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WHEREAS, “*Complete Streets*” are streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access and mobility for all users, in that bicyclists, motorists, public transportation users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a street;

WHEREAS, the Town of Walpole recognizes that a transportation system that supports a variety of travel modes can promote physical activity and health, increase personal choice and safety, protect natural resources, and encourage a diverse local economy;

WHEREAS, Complete Streets enhance safe walking and bicycling options for school-aged children; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Walpole Master Plan includes objectives related to creating walkable neighborhoods that connect to local destinations and improving pedestrian and bicyclist safety;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Walpole Board of Selectmen that the attached Complete Streets Policy is hereby adopted.

I. VISION & PURPOSE

The Town of Walpole envisions a safe and well-connected multi-modal transportation network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes, including children, elderly, and those with disabilities. The Town recognizes that a robust and diverse transportation system helps promote access, mobility, affordability, public health, and a sense of community. To support this vision, it is the intent of the Town, through this policy, to ensure that town decision-makers routinely consider the safety of all users of the road – including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, emergency responders, freight providers, and other users such as equestrians, snowmobilers, and agricultural equipment operators– in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of all municipal transportation projects.

III. SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY

(a) All town-owned transportation facilities in the public right of way including, but not limited to, streets, bridges and all other connecting pathways should comply with this policy. In the case of state-owned and controlled routes, the Town should coordinate with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation to ensure that these roadways are designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to support the concept of Complete Streets.

(b) The Town should approach every transportation improvement and project phase as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible streets for all users. These phases include, but are not limited, to: planning, programming, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, construction engineering, reconstruction, operation and maintenance.

(c) Special attention should be given to projects which enhance the overall transportation system and its connectivity. Specifically, high priority should be given to:

(i) Corridors providing primary access to one or more significant destinations such as Walpole Village, North Walpole Village, parks or recreation areas, schools, shopping/commercial areas, public transportation, or employment or medical centers;

(ii) Corridors serving a relatively high number of users of non-motorized transportation modes; and

(iii) Corridors providing important continuity or connectivity links to existing pedestrian, bicycle or trail networks.

(d) Exceptions to this policy may be considered when:

- (i) The existing right-of-way does not allow for the accommodation of all users. In this case alternatives should be explored such as obtaining additional right-of-way, reconfiguring travel lanes and shoulders, installing signage, and/or implementing traffic calming, education or enforcement programs to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles and riders and persons with disabilities;
- (ii) The activities are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g. mowing, cleaning, sweeping, or spot repair);
- (iv) The application of Complete Streets principles is unnecessary or inappropriate when it would be contrary to public safety and increase risk of injury or death; or
- (v) The roadway is a class VI roadway or is privately owned.

IV. BEST PRACTICES

A. Context Sensitivity

The implementation of this Policy should reflect and adapt to the context and character of the surrounding built and natural environments and enhance the appearance of such. This Policy recognizes that transportation needs vary and must be balanced in a flexible, safe, and cost effective manner.

B. Design Standards

The Town should follow the adopted Walpole Complete Streets Planning and Design Guidelines as well as the best and latest design standards available. Public input and other appropriate design standards may be considered, provided that a comparable level of safety for all users is achieved.

C. Performance Measures

This policy encourages the evaluation and regular reporting of progress on the implementation and maintenance of Complete Streets. In the Town's Annual Report, the Road Agent, with assistance from municipal boards, should include in his/her report a summary of the transportation projects undertaken during the year and the extent to which these projects meet the objectives of this policy.

- (i) Linear feet of new or repaired pedestrian accommodation;
- (ii) Number of crosswalk and intersection improvements;
- (iii) Number of transit stops accessible by sidewalks and curb ramps;
- (iv) Total miles of bike lanes;
- (v) Total miles of roads with paved shoulders that are two feet wide or greater; and
- (vi) Number of new or improved bicycle and pedestrian access points to rail trails.

D. Partnerships

The Town, to the greatest extent feasible, should foster partnerships with businesses, private developers, community groups and other governmental agencies, including the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, the neighboring towns of Alstead, Langdon, Surry, Gilsum, Westmoreland, Bellows Falls, and the city of Keene, and the Walpole School District to develop facilities and accommodations that further Complete Streets and ensure the transportation network flows seamlessly between jurisdictions in accordance with local and regional plans.


V. IMPLEMENTATION

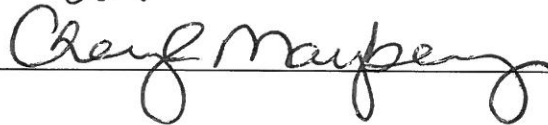
The Town of Walpole views Complete Streets as integral to everyday transportation decision-making practices and processes, and recognizes that Complete Streets principles may be achieved through single elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time. To

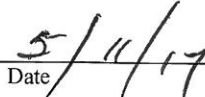
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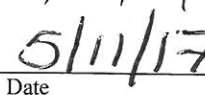
- (a) The Road Agent, Town staff, and other relevant departments, boards, or committees should incorporate Complete Streets principles into existing plans, manuals, checklists, regulations, and programs as appropriate;
- (b) The Road Agent, Town staff, and other relevant departments, boards, or committees should review current design standards, including subdivision regulations which apply to new roadway construction, to ensure that they reflect the best available design standards and guidelines, and effectively implement Complete Streets, where feasible;
- (c) When available, the Town should encourage staff professional development and training on non-motorized transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops;
- (d) Town staff should identify and seek out appropriate sources of funding for implementation of this Policy and recommend improvements to project selection criteria to support Complete Streets projects;
- (e) The Town should promote project coordination among town staff and committees with an interest in the activities that occur within the public right-of-way in order to better use fiscal resources; and
- (f) Complete Streets projects should include an educational component to ensure that all users of the transportation system understand and can safely utilize Complete Streets project elements.

Signed,







Date


Date

Walpole Selectboard

Date

COMPLETE STREETS LANGUAGE

POLICY

A Complete Streets policy formally states the intent of the community to ensure that town decision-makers **consider** the safety of all users of the road in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of all municipal transportation projects.

When a town decides to take action by adopting a Complete Streets policy as official town policy, an internal group of stakeholders, which may include representatives from planning, engineering, public works, economic development, health, and/or elected officials, or a broader group that includes residents and community stakeholders work together to create the document. This document is then taken to the Selectboard for discussion and a vote. These policies tend to be lengthier and more detailed than resolutions or ordinances, and can build partnerships between agencies, community members, and decision makers in a more robust way than resolutions or ordinances. Like resolutions, such policies are not legally binding; however, the community, political, and agency support for change tends to be very high, resulting in a shared, lasting push for implementation of the policy.

It's also important to note that many Complete Streets implementation funding sources see towns with a policy as being more serious and organized about implementing Complete Streets than towns with a resolution. It shows that the town has public support and will of leadership that supports Complete Streets.

RESOLUTION

Issued by a community's governing body, resolutions are non-binding, official statements of support for approaching community transportation projects as a way to improve access, public health, and quality of life. Resolutions are often a very helpful first step, providing the political support for a Complete Streets approach. However, as they do not require action, they may be forgotten or neglected if an implementation plan is not created. If you do not yet have strong support from your elected leaders, a resolution is likely your best choice; be sure to include clear implementation steps to avoid losing momentum.