

City Council Workshop

Agenda Item #2

September 25, 2017

Complete Street Policy

At the request of City Council, staff have been working on a draft Complete Streets Policy over the past several months. "Complete Streets" are generally defined as streets designed and built in such a way to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. To put it in quite simple terms, Complete Streets make it easier to cross a busy street, walk to nearby shops and cafes, and bike to work. There is no standard Complete Streets design; every street requires its own prescription based on local context, including the physical characteristics of the transportation route, the community, neighborhoods, etc. A Complete Streets approach takes a holistic view and requires that consideration is given to the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Complete Streets commonly include improved sidewalks and multi-use paths, bike lanes or wide paved shoulders, convenient and accessible bus stops and street crossing locations, pedestrian signals, traffic calming design features such as curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, etc. Municipalities often adopt Complete Streets policies that provide general guidance and affirm the community's support for using best practices when undertaking street and utility maintenance and construction. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, communities direct their planning, engineering, and other staff to make Complete Streets guidelines the default approach when designing, building, and maintaining transportation infrastructure.

The Bike/Ped Committee, as well as representatives of Public Works, Water Resources Protection, Transportation, and Planning, have reviewed the draft policy and are recommending its adoption.

Assistant City Manager Josh Reny, who has taken the lead on this topic, will be present to review the proposed policy.



City Manager

## COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Dated: October 2, 2017

- (a) The City of South Portland shall make complete streets practices a routine part of everyday operations and maintenance activities, shall approach every transportation project and program as an opportunity to improve public streets and the transportation network for all users, and shall work in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions to achieve complete streets principles.
- (b) Complete streets infrastructure is defined as design features that provide a safe, inclusive, and convenient or comfortable travel experience for users, including but not limited to features such as: sidewalks; shared-use paths; bicycle lanes; automobile lanes; paved shoulders; curbs; accessible curb ramps; curb extensions; crosswalks; refuge islands; pedestrian and traffic signals, including countdown and accessible signals; signage; street furniture; bicycle parking facilities; public transportation stops and facilities; transit priority signalization; traffic-calming devices such as roundabouts, traffic bumps, and surface treatments (i.e. paving blocks, textured asphalt, and concrete); narrow vehicle lanes; raised medians; and dedicated transit lanes; and streetscape and stormwater improvements, including rain gardens, planting strips, bioswales, permeable pavement, street trees, etc.
- (c) Every street project on public streets shall incorporate complete streets infrastructure sufficient to enable reasonably safe travel along and across the right-of-way for users; provided, however, that such street project may exclude certain complete streets infrastructure or modifications upon written notice from the Public Works Director to the City Manager, including documentation and supporting data indicating that:
  - (1) Use by non-motorized users is prohibited by law;
  - (2) The cost would be excessively disproportionate—exceeding 25% of the full project cost—to the need or probable future use over the long term;
  - (3) There is an absence of current or future need; or
  - (4) Inclusion of such infrastructure would be unreasonable or inappropriate in light of the scope of the project (e.g. street project is relatively small and limited to paving restoration)
- (d) The City of South Portland shall incorporate complete streets infrastructure into existing public streets to improve the safety and convenience of users, to

construct and enhance the transportation network, and to integrate environmental best management practices for its users.

- (e) If the safety and convenience of users can be improved within the scope of pavement resurfacing, restriping, or signalization operations on public streets, such projects shall implement complete streets infrastructure to increase safety for users.
- (f) The City Engineer, or engineering consultant designated to act in that capacity, shall review and either revise or develop proposed revisions to all appropriate plans, zoning and subdivision codes, laws, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines, programs, templates, and design manuals to integrate, accommodate, and balance the needs of all users in all street projects on public streets.
- (g) The City shall follow accepted or adopted design standards and the best and latest design standards available that attain the goals of this policy, which may include without limitation:
  - American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Green Book
  - AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Designing and Operating Pedestrian Facilities
  - AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines
  - Institution of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach
  - ITE Neighborhood Street Design Guidelines
  - National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide
  - NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide
  - Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Guidelines
  - U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
- (h) When fulfilling this Complete Streets Policy the City will generally follow the design manuals, standards, and guidelines above, as applicable, but shall not be precluded from considering innovative or non-traditional design options that offer a comparable level of safety for users.
- (i) The design of new streets provides the best framework for integrating many Complete Streets principles, while existing streets may be more challenging to retrofit. For redeveloped streets, it may be necessary to prioritize simple, cost-effective changes to create a multi-modal environment, such as restriping to reduce vehicular lane widths and create bike lanes, adding crosswalks, planting trees, or incorporating other streetscape improvements.

- (j) Training resources demonstrating how to integrate, accommodate, and balance the needs of users shall be provided to planners, civil and traffic engineers, project managers, plan reviewer, inspectors, and other personnel responsible for the design and construction of streets, when available.
- (k) Successful implementation of this Complete Streets policy will require the cooperation of all departments, agencies, stakeholders and users involved in the planning, design, construction, maintenance and utilization of transportation facilities. This Policy is intended to apply to all streets in South Portland, including private development and subdivisions.
- (l) All relevant internal departments, boards, commissions, and committees in the City of South Portland shall work together to ensure that the policies and goals set forth in this policy are clearly communicated, understood, and implemented whenever possible.
- (m) Ongoing collaboration between neighboring municipalities and transportation agencies, such as the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS), will ensure a complete streets network in both South Portland and the region. The City of South Portland shall also coordinate regularly with utility providers, and other users of the public rights-of-way to ensure the principles and practices of Complete Streets are embedded within their planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities.
- (n) The South Portland Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee shall provide an advisory role with respect to implementation of complete streets practices and report on its work to the City Council as needed.
- (o) The City shall work with PACTS and other organizations as necessary and appropriate to:
  - (1) Collect data measuring how well the streets of the City of South Portland are serving each category of users.
  - (2) Establish performance standards with measurable benchmarks reflecting the ability of users to travel in safety and comfort.
- (p) The City shall establish procedures to allow public participation in policy decisions and transparency in individual determinations concerning the design and use of streets.
- (q) All planning and design studies, health impact assessments, environmental reviews, and other projects requiring funding or approval by the City of South Portland shall evaluate the effect of the proposed project on the ability of all

users to travel safely, and identify measures to mitigate any adverse impacts on such travel.

- (r) The City commits to integrating Complete Streets policy into its long-range transportation and capital planning, and will formalize such policy in the City's Comprehensive Plan when the plan is next revised.
- (s) The City Manager shall appoint a team, including representatives of the Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee and relevant City Departments. The team shall be tasked with drafting an ordinance on Complete Streets that formalizes integrated capital planning for transportation and stormwater projects, sets standards for street design, formalizes an Asset Management Plan to implement Complete Streets Infrastructure, and creates reporting requirements to demonstrate whether the program is adequately funded.