

Complete Streets Policy for The City of Frederick

I. Background

The City of Frederick (“City”) wishes to encourage walking, bicycling, and the use of public transportation as safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and economical modes of transportation that enhance economic development and promote physical activity, health and independence for all people. These goals are found in the Land Use and Transportation Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, various Small Area Plans, the East Street Rising Plan and the Urban Land Institute Report. The City also believes that the most cost-effective way to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users is to integrate them into the design of transportation facilities from the beginning, rather than retrofit facilities to accommodate them later.

II. Definitions

Complete Street - A complete street is a street that safely and adequately accommodates motorized and non- motorized users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, freight vehicles, emergency vehicles, and transit riders of all ages and abilities, in a manner appropriate to the function and context of the facility.

Complete Streets Policy - A directive at the local, state, regional, or federal level that ensures the safe and adequate accommodation, in all phases of project planning, development, and operations, of all users of the transportation network, including pedestrians and transit riders of all ages and abilities, bicyclists, individuals with disabilities, motorists, freight vehicles, and emergency vehicles, in a manner appropriate to the function and context of the relevant facility.

Complete Streets Principle - A specific component of a Complete Streets policy.

Transportation Facility - This includes roads, railways, ports, parking facilities, sidewalks, bus shelters and airports.

III. Policy Statement

All transportation projects in The City of Frederick shall accommodate the safety and convenience of all users in accordance with Complete Streets principles.

IV. Elements

The Complete Streets Policy encompasses the following ten elements:

1. Includes a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets.
2. Specifies that the term “all users” includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of all ages and abilities as well as trucks, buses and automobiles.
3. Encourages street connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes.
4. Adoptable by all Departments to cover all roads.
5. Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations for the entire right of way.
6. Makes any necessary exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions.
7. Directs the use of the latest and best design standards while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs.
8. Directs that complete streets solutions will complement the context of the community.
9. Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.
10. Includes specific next steps for implementation of the Policy, such as
 - Revising procedures and the regulations found in the Land Management Code to reflect the Policy,
 - Developing or adopting new Standard City Design Guidelines,
 - Offering training for staff responsible for implementing the Policy, and
 - Gathering data on how well streets are serving different user groups.

IV. Principles

A. Complete Streets Principles include:

1. The Policy applies to all roadways, shoulders, sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings, pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, landscaping, lighting, transit stops and facilities and rail crossings.
2. All connecting pathways should be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and riders, freight vehicles, emergency vehicles, motorists, and people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently. Access to existing facilities, especially for persons with disabilities, should be maintained during construction.

3. Transportation projects should address the need for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross facilities as well as travel along them. The design and construction of new facilities should not preclude the provision of future improvements to accommodate future demand for walking and bicycling, especially in order to access transit.
4. Transportation projects should comply with up-to-date design standards, particularly standards relating to providing access for individuals with disabilities.
5. Complete Streets principles should be applied in due consideration of the urban, suburban, or rural context in which a project is located, as well as applicable federal, state and local environmental requirements, and the effects of right of way widening on adjacent property owners and residents. While all users should be accommodated, modal priorities may vary by area and facility.

B. The Complete Streets principles are not applicable to the situations outlined below:

1. A transportation facility which prohibits, by law, use of the facility by specified users, in which case a greater effort should be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere in the travel corridor.
2. When the cost to the exempted project in achieving compliance with the applicable Complete Streets Policy would be excessively disproportionate (as per Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidance), as compared to the need or probable use of a particular complete street.
3. When the existing and planned population and employment densities or level of transit service around a particular roadway are so low that there is a documented absence of a need (as per FHWA guidance) to implement the applicable Complete Streets Policy.
4. Passenger, tourism and freight rail projects, shall not be required to accommodate other motorized users in the railway right of way, although safe and adequate rail crossings for motorized and non-motorized users should be provided.
5. Transportation projects which do not provide for direct use by the public, such as maintenance facilities, drainage and stormwater management facilities, education and training, transportation security projects, beautification, and equipment purchase or rehabilitation.