

Complete Streets Policy - Town of Freeport

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Complete Streets Policy - Town of Freeport

Policy Overview

1. Authorization

Consistent with the Duties and Responsibilities outlined in the Town of Freeport Administrative Code, Chapter 2, Article VI, Section 614, the Complete Streets Committee is tasked with developing, proposing, implementing, and updating a Town of Freeport Complete Streets Policy.

2. Vision

This policy envisions and supports the Town of Freeport (the “Town”) becoming a community in which all residents and visitors — regardless of age, ability, or financial resources, can safely, comfortably, and conveniently use the public right-of-way and future multimodal path network to satisfy transportation needs, consistent with federal, state, and municipal transportation regulations.

3. Purpose

Promoting pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation travel reduces negative environmental impacts, promotes healthy living, advances a transportation infrastructure that provides safe travel accommodation for visitors, residents, and commuters of all ages and abilities, supports compact development, and encourages connectivity between neighborhoods, recreational destinations, and commercial infrastructure. The expectation reflected in this policy is that the Town’s transportation system and multimodal path network shall be consistent with Complete Street best practices while recognizing that transportation needs, desires, and expectations must also be balanced, flexible, and cost effective. It is the purpose of this policy to provide guidance, expectations, parameters, requirements, and mechanisms to achieve the vision of this policy.

4. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy document, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- A. Complete Street:** A street or roadway that accommodates safe, comfortable, and convenient travel by all users, to include, but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, people with disabilities, delivery vehicles, users and operators of public transportation, as well as residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.
- B. Transportation Project:** Any project, program, or practice that affects the transportation system or occurs in the public right-of-way, including any construction, reconstruction, retrofit, signalization operations, resurfacing, re-striping, rehabilitation, repair, or maintenance of any public street or roadway within the Town, including bridges, frontage roads, alleys, and other related elements of the transportation system. Exclusions to this

definition include routine maintenance that does not change roadway geometry or operations such as mowing, plowing, sweeping, and spot repair.

C. Multimodal Path: (also known as “Shared-Use Path or “Mixed-Use Path”, or “Multi-Purpose Path) A form of infrastructure that supports multiple permitted recreation and transportation opportunities, such as walking, running, and bicycling, and use of wheelchairs. Motorized vehicles, such as motorcycles, ATV’s, and snowmobiles typically are prohibited. Such paths most often have a surface of asphalt, concrete, or crushed stone, and are physically separated from motor vehicular traffic by open space and/or barriers.

5. Policy Principles

- A. Accommodation** — The Town, within the public right-of-way, shall plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain an integrated transportation system that considers the needs of all users and modes of transportation, to include, but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, people with disabilities, delivery vehicles, users and operators of public transportation, as well as residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.
- B. Safety** — Transportation Project construction and improvements shall be pursued as opportunities to create safer, more accessible, aesthetically pleasing, and environmentally sensitive streets for all users, to include, but not limited to, consideration of traffic calming methods, narrow vehicle lanes, raised medians, dedicated transit lanes, transit priority signalization, curb extensions, road diets, physical buffers that separate motorized vehicles from pedestrians and cyclists, streetscapes, attention to surface water runoff and drainage, and other best practice Complete Street initiatives. This shall apply to new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and striping maintenance.
- C. Crosswalks:** Special attention shall be given to areas of high pedestrian traffic, such as schools, parks, public gathering venues, and retail shopping areas to ensure safety and convenience during street crossings. Considerations during planning, design, and implementation of new construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation shall include crosswalk location and design, self-activated RRFB’s (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons), signage, refuge islands, curb ramps, appropriate and posted speed limits, and other traffic calming and safety measures.
- D. Connectivity:** Special attention shall also be given to Transportation Projects that enhance overall transportation system connectivity. Specifically, high priority shall be given to:
- 1) corridors providing primary access to one or more significant destinations such as recreation areas, parks, schools, shopping, transportation or employment centers,
 - 2) corridors serving a relatively high number of non-motorized transportation modes,
 - 3) corridors providing important continuity or connectivity links to existing pedestrian, bicycle, and multimodal path networks,
 - 4) projects identified in regional or local thoroughfare, bicycle, and pedestrian plans, and,
 - 5) corridors that connect existing and planned residential neighborhoods, developments, and projects to primary destinations, pathways, and trails.
- E. Context and Character:** Transportation and Complete Street Projects, such as those identified in Section 5.D — Connectivity Policy Principle, shall consider and reflect the context and character of surrounding built and natural environments, and strive to enhance these surroundings. At the planning stage, the Town shall work with local residents, business operators, neighboring jurisdictions, school districts, students, property owners,

and other stakeholders directly affected by a Transportation or Complete Street Project to address any concerns regarding context or character. If deemed appropriate, the Town shall make best efforts to mitigate unintended consequences resulting from Transportation and Complete Street projects.

Policy Management

6. Exceptions

- A.** There are elements inherent in certain transportation projects where other committees and governmental bodies may have jurisdiction and, as such, will need to address these elements as part of their review process. That said, transportation projects that meet one or more of the following criteria are exempt from this policy:
- 1) Projects that conflict with or are prohibited by law,
 - 2) Projects deemed unsafe by ~~Public Safety personnel~~ the Police Chief and/or Fire Rescue Chief,
 - 3) Projects that require more space than is physically possible,
 - 4) Projects that would be located where both current and future demand is not evident,
 - 5) Projects projected to exceed approved budget,
 - 6) Projects that would have adverse impacts on environmental resources such as streams, wetlands, floodplains, Shoreland Areas or on historic structures or sites, above and beyond the impacts of currently existing conditions, and,
 - 7) Routine maintenance projects such as mowing, snowplowing, sweeping, spot repair, joint and crack sealing, and pothole repair.
- B.** Exceptions beyond those in Section 6.A will only be considered if an exception request is submitted to the Complete Streets Committee in writing, with supporting documentation; and, the exception request is made publicly available for review and comment, a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the publicly noticed meeting at which it will be discussed by the Complete Streets Committee for review and recommendation by the Complete Streets Committee to the Freeport Town Council; **and**, the exception is approved by action of the Freeport Town Council.

7. Jurisdiction

This policy applies to municipal transportation infrastructure projects, constructed by the Town of Freeport and/or its designee, and located within a public-right-of-way.

8. Design Criteria

- A.** The Town, through its Town Engineer and Public Works Department, and in consultation with the Planning Department, shall utilize design criteria, standards, and guidelines based upon recognized best practices in street design, construction, and operation. To the greatest extent possible, the Town shall follow these standards with particular emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle safety issues. Material deviations to established standards and best practices shall be presented to the Complete Streets Committee for review and recommendation. Important design elements include, but are not limited to:

- Appropriately sized and located sidewalks
- Bike and/or pedestrian pathways
- Street trees and landscaping
- Street lighting and benches
- Transit lanes and facilities
- Bike lanes, racks, and facilities
- Appropriately scaled vehicle lanes and medians
- Pedestrian safety measures such as crosswalks and signals, refuge areas, and minimum curb radii to shorten crossing distances and reduce vehicular speed

B. Resources to be referenced in developing these standards shall include, but not be limited to, the latest editions and versions of:

- American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets; Guide to Planning, Designing, and Operating Pedestrian Facilities; and Guide to Development of Bicycle Facilities;
- Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach;
- Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Neighborhood Street Design Guidelines;
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide;
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide;
- U.S. Access Board Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines;
- U.S. Department of Transportation Highway Capacity Manual and Highway Safety Manual;
- U.S. Department of Transportation Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices;
- Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) Destination Tomorrow Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan;
- (PACTS) Portland Area North Bike Implementation Plan;
- (PACTS) Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Guidance;
- (PACTS) Regional Bicycle Way Finding Study;
- MaineDOT Guidelines on Crosswalks;
- Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG);
- Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG);
- FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) Highway Design Handbook for Older Drivers and Pedestrians; and,
- AARP Planning Complete Streets for an Aging America.

- C. The Town may consider innovative or non-traditional design options that provide a comparable level of safety and utility. Such designs shall be presented to the Complete Streets Committee for review and recommendation.

9. Policy Administration

- A. This policy shall be administered by the Town Manager, in consultation with the Town Engineer, Town Planner, and Complete Streets Committee. The Town Manager's determination as to whether a project complies with this policy will be final.
- B. The Active Living Committee — the Town appointed advisory committee, shall be briefed and consulted, at a minimum, on projects covered by this policy when those projects are included in the Town's capital improvement program.

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Town will coordinate and cooperate with other transportation agencies, including the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) to ensure Complete Street principles and best practices of Complete Streets are incorporated into the planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities of transportation agency partners as such activities relate to Town transportation and infrastructure projects. Material deviations shall be presented to the Complete Streets Committee for review and recommendation.

Policy Implementation and Accountability

11. Performance and Reporting

- A. The Complete Streets Committee shall monitor compliance with this policy and make recommendations for its improvement. Annually, the Complete Streets Committee shall report to Town Council on Transportation Projects undertaken within the prior year highlighting the extent to which each of these projects has met or is expected to meet the objectives of this policy.
- B. Performance measures shall be established by the Complete Streets Committee to monitor elements of this policy most critical to achieving the Vision and Purpose of this policy. Specific measurement criteria shall be evaluated annually and amended and augmented as appropriate. Initial performance measures shall include:
 - **Safety Performance Monitoring** — Annually, and not later than 12/31, the Chief of Police shall provide the Complete Streets Committee a summary report regarding vehicular speed monitoring, crash incidents, enforcement efforts, roadway areas of concern, remedies administered and recommendations for enhancing safety for all modes of transportation within the public right-of-way. Subsequently, upon review and as appropriate, the Complete Streets Committee shall make recommendations to the Chief of Police and/or Town Council consistent with the purpose of this policy as stated in Section Three (3).

- **Public Concerns and Requests** — Monthly the Town Engineer, in conjunction with the Chief of Police, shall provide the Complete Streets Committee a summary of written complaints, concerns, recommendations, and requests received that relate to matters for which the Complete Streets Committee is the appropriate committee to consider and address.
- **Multimodal Path Development** — Annually the Complete Streets Committee shall report on the number of miles of multimodal path developed and the percent change from the previous year. In addition, this report shall include miles of path in planning and miles of path in development.
- **Workgroup and Meeting Participation** — Annually, the Chair of the Complete Streets Committee shall provide Town Council a summary report of meeting and workgroup participation by Committee members in conjunction with Complete Street Committee responsibilities and related matters.

12. Project Selection

Annually the Complete Streets Committee shall provide the Town Council a prioritized list of ongoing or planned Complete Street projects. This report shall include project name & description, committee member lead, date added, estimated completion, projected cost, and status.

13. Implementation

- A. Review and Revise Existing Regulatory Documents** — For the Complete Streets Policy to be effective, the requirements of this policy must be reflected within the Town’s regulatory documents wherever there is interface between this policy and other Town ordinances, codes and standards. The Town Manager, at the direction of Town Council shall coordinate the initial regulatory review and develop processes for additional review as this policy and other Town ordinances are enacted or amended.
- B. Policy Enhancements** — Some elements of the Town’s Complete Street Policy require additional discussion, development, and planning. Initial focus shall be given to enhancing the following policy elements:
- **Crosswalk Policy and Plan** - Establish crosswalk protocols consistent with reference documents in Section 8B; define, identify, and prioritize high need areas; identify crosswalk design options; and create a crosswalk implementation plan.
 - **Complete Streets Education and Outreach Plan** - Create and implement a plan that makes training and education available to planning and public works personnel charged with designing and implementing Transportation Projects; Town committees with interests and responsibilities related to Transportation Projects; school teachers, administrators, and students on subjects related to safety, rules-of-the-road, and safe routes to school; and the community at large to increase understanding, awareness, engagement, input, and support.

Approved 12/01/2020

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway Network Plan** - The Complete Street Committee shall outline long-term goals for network development, establish priorities, participate in project development, and annually report on current projects as well as overall network development.

14. Attachments

A. Complete Street Policy — Implementation and Reporting Requirements