

Yarmouth Complete Streets Policy

November 13, 2015

Vision and Adoption: The Town of Yarmouth seeks to provide for all of its residents and visitors a transportation network that is safe, efficient, interconnected, and sustainable for all modes of travel. Doing so will help the Town remain competitive in economic growth and investment, and help appeal to a diverse, healthy, and motivated population and workforce that values transportation options and sustainability. A Complete Street is one that safely accommodates the needs of all street users – pedestrians, wheelchair users, bicyclists, transit users and motor vehicle users. This Complete Streets policy document is adopted pursuant to goals and policies set forth in the Town of Yarmouth's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, and is hereby incorporated therein by appendix. This policy is aspirational and shall not be construed to have ordinance or rule authority as to public or private development road, bridge, thoroughfare or Complete Streets elements design principles or construction.

All Projects & Phases: In order to further the goals established herein, the Town and the Complete Streets Advisory Committee as herein established shall view every public project and phase related to transportation, from design and planning to construction and maintenance, as an opportunity to improve the street network and make it safer, better connected and more accessible for all users. The Complete Streets Advisory Committee may also comment and recommend Complete Streets design principles and practices for any new private roads or infrastructure proposed and reviewed under the Town's various land use ordinances, including, but not limited to, roads and other infrastructure proposed to be dedicated as new public facilities. It is important to understand that these goals will likely be achieved over time, and to guarantee success, this policy requires prioritization, phasing, communication, and implementation at all points in the development timeline.

All Agencies & All Roadways: Complete Streets require the cooperation of all departments, agencies, stakeholders, and users involved in the planning, design, construction, maintenance, and utilization of transportation facilities. This Policy shall apply to all streets, roads and ways, including paved and unpaved roadways and connections in Yarmouth, including those in private developments and subdivisions. Privately constructed streets and ways should meet Complete Streets standards for development approval, regardless of whether they will become private or public. All departments, boards, and committees of the Town of Yarmouth shall work together to ensure that the policies and procedures set forth in this policy are clearly communicated, understood, and fully considered.. In order to ensure consistency in the implementation of Complete Streets goals, all relevant ordinances, plans, manuals, and guidelines pertaining to Yarmouth's streets should be updated as necessary, and shall always be construed and applied to incorporate (and not exclude) Complete Streets goals.

Network: In order to ensure a connected system throughout the Town, Yarmouth shall take a network approach, rather than an individual street approach. Modifications (such as repurposed rights-of-way) that improve the overall network and better connect fragmented portions of the town should take priority over those that affect single thoroughfares. New developments and redevelopment projects shall seek to provide interconnected networks, not just within the development, but with the surrounding existing network, be it street, sidewalk, path or trail, including any transit network.

Context Sensitivity: The development of Complete Streets in Yarmouth must take into consideration the local context, issues, and obstacles unique to the Town. Obstacles include the Royal River, Route One, and I-295, which all impede connectivity. Additional factors include the low-density pattern of development that characterizes the more rural areas outside the village with a resulting dependence on automobiles for transportation. Some contextual questions regarding roads, streets and ways include:

- Proximity to a route with similar facilities to those considered; in low-traffic areas, it may not be necessary to provide multiple nearby routes. In high-traffic areas, it may be advisable to provide alternate routes to the same destination(s).
- Access to public transit service; these roadways should be accessible to multiple modes of transportation, as they contribute to the larger network.
- Access to neighboring communities; these roadways contribute to the larger network and multi-modal access is desirable.
- Character or expected future character of the area it traverses:
 - Areas expected to remain rural may not require elaborate separate pedestrian/bicycle facilities and could retain their rural character.
 - Rural areas that are expected to become more urban may require enhanced bicycle-pedestrian facilities.
 - Different portions of a thoroughfare may have different requirements, e.g., some roads/streets may change in character as they travel through rural areas and in and out of the village.

Design/Principles: Some of the most important elements to provide in the public realm of Complete Streets include:

- appropriately sized and located sidewalks,
- bike and/or pedestrian pathways,
- street trees and landscaping,
- street lighting and furniture,
- transit lanes and facilities,
- bike lanes and facilities,
- appropriately scaled vehicle lanes and medians, and
- pedestrian safety measures such as crosswalks and signals, refuge areas, and minimum curb radii to shorten crossing distances and reduce motor vehicle speed.

The goals of a Complete Streets initiative (multi-modal safety and connectivity) cannot be achieved through the public right-of-way alone. Additional focus must be placed on the areas linked by the transportation network and the overall user experience. Outside the public realm, consideration should be given to neighborhood destinations and amenities, and streetscapes. Pedestrian areas should be appropriately scaled for human comfort. All of these elements determine the quality of the pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist experience.

The Town shall seek to follow accepted or adopted design guidance and the best and latest design concepts available, such as:

- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) Destination Tomorrow Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Institution of Transportation Engineers (ITE) – Designing Walk able Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach
- Institution of Transportation Engineers (ITE) – Neighborhood Street Design Guidelines
- U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration - Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
- AASHTO Guide
- PACTS: Portland Area North Bike Implementation Plan
- PACTS: Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Guidance
- PACTS: Regional Bicycle Way finding Study

- PACTS: STRAVA Data mapping at:

<http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=504725bb706047a1b4e59e6e7c316854&extent=-70.5398,43.5115,-70.0327,43.7351>

It is also important to consider innovative or non-traditional design options and take a context-sensitive approach that considers the unique needs of Yarmouth. When designing new streets, consideration shall be given to the destinations that they are expected to provide access to, any natural or man-made barriers they will cross, and whether they are part of a current or future critical route for non-motorized traffic. It is often necessary to prioritize simple, cost-effective changes to create a multi-modal environment, such as re-striping to reduce vehicular lane width and create bike lanes, wider shoulders, adding crosswalks, or planting trees or incorporating other streetscape improvements.

Exceptions: While it is important to consider bicycle, pedestrian, and transit users and facilities in all transportation projects throughout the Town, exceptions may be made where circumstances dictate. Establishment of bicycle and pedestrian facilities need not be required:

- Where their establishment would be contrary to public safety;
- When the cost (including foreseeable cost of future maintenance) would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use;
- Where there is no identified present or reasonably foreseeable future need;
- Where the establishment would violate Comprehensive Plan policies; or
- The justification and reasoning for such decisions and exceptions should be documented.

The aforementioned exceptions do not preclude the consideration and implementation of all other Complete Streets policies within the given travel corridor. The inability to accommodate certain users within a given right-of-way may require an analysis of the local street network and reprioritization of transportation facilities along nearby or parallel routes, to the end that no user is excluded.

Implementation: The implementation of Complete Streets will begin with a series of broad changes to local policies governing streets, and then as physical, measurable changes to those streets. The implementation process can be summarized in four main phases, some of which may overlap in time.

1. **Form Committee; Identify Responsible Parties & Develop Implementation Plan:** The first step to ensuring the success of a Complete Streets Policy in Yarmouth shall be to identify responsible parties and stakeholders, and develop an implementation plan with clearly defined steps, measurable performance indicators, data reporting procedures, and a process by which projects are prioritized for execution and funding. This work shall be done by or at the direction of an advisory committee (the **Complete Streets Advisory Committee**) comprised of the Yarmouth Planning Director, Director of Public Works, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Town Engineer, Director of Community Services, and a representative from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (to be appointed by the Town Council for a four year term), or their respective designees. The Committee shall meet at least quarterly and as the need arises to review, and evaluate for compliance with this Policy, any:
 - Major developments,
 - Roadway projects,
 - Capital improvement projects,
 - Regulatory issues, and/or
 - Recommendations for policies, constructed improvements, public services and programs, budgets and other measures to advance the Complete Streets goals and design principles.

2. **Review and Revise Existing Regulating Documents:**

The second step shall be to review all existing codes, ordinances, standards, etc. to determine whether they require updating in order to further the Complete Streets goals, and to be sure there are no rules or guidelines that would hinder the development and redevelopment of Complete

Streets. Any needed amendments or modifications should be drafted and submitted for adoption as soon as possible. The Committee shall review all future land use and transportation plans to be sure that the Complete Streets goals for connectivity and safe, efficient multi-modal transportation are incorporated - if not, plan amendments and updates should be drafted and recommended..

3. **Review Funding and Capital Improvement Procedures:** The third step will be to review the procedures for obtaining funding for street projects and any existing or proposed capital improvement plans, to be sure projects will advance the Complete Streets policies and ensure Complete Streets are prioritized and able to receive funding. The Committee shall identify current and potential future sources of funding for street improvements (including possible public/private partnerships).
4. **Measure Performance and Report Findings:** In order to monitor the implementation and success of the Complete Streets policy, the Police Department and Bike/Pedestrian and/or Complete Streets committees shall regularly monitor several measurable performance indicators, including, without limitation:
 - User Data –
 - Number of users (with a goal to increase all bike/pedestrian users).
 - Age of users (with a goal for a broader range of ages and an increase in older users).
 - Ability of users (with a goal to accommodate a broader range of abilities and an increase in users with disabilities that can affect mobility).
 - Sidewalk Data - Linear feet of sidewalk throughout the Town (with a goal to increase overall sidewalks, and a decrease in sidewalks in disrepair).
 - Vehicular Speed Data (with a goal of calming of motor vehicle speeds).
 - Crash Data – Number and type of crashes and severity of injuries (with a goal of decreasing crashes of all types, especially those involving bicycles and/or pedestrians, with lower severity of injury)
 - Completion of bicycle/pedestrian network – The percent of completion of the overall planned network.

The Complete Streets Committee shall determine measurement criteria and parties responsible for regular measurements and/or surveys for each item based on clearly identified short- and long-term goals. For example, crash data should be collected throughout the Town, perhaps as a map showing traffic incidents by type (vehicle vs. bicycle, etc) over a set period of time. The data would be provided to the Committee at regular intervals. An annual report of all measured performance indicators shall be provided to the Town Council and any other groups deemed necessary or advisable by the Complete Streets Committee.

Sept 3 Ped/Bike Committee draft as reviewed and recommended by the Planning Board with suggested revisions as of Nov 10, 2015, and Nov 13, 2015. njt