Town of Acton **COMPLETE STREET POLICY**	
Effective Date	July 28, 2014
Expiration Date	None
Date Last Revised	
Planning Board vote to recommend	May 20, 2014
Selectmen vote to adopt policy	July 28, 2014

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

WHEREAS, Goal #3 of the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan is to improve connections, particularly emphasizing safe and pleasant ways to travel through walking, biking, and public transportation; and

WHEREAS, Integrating existing and proposed off-road paths, conservation and recreation trails and ways, including the Assabet River Rail Trail and the Bruce Freeman Trail with Town streets create a safe network for transportation would help realize Goal #3; and

WHEREAS, Goal #2 of the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan is to ensure environmental sustainability by reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets is an approach to community transportation using design principles to ensure the safety, comfort, and accessibility for users of all ages, abilities, and income levels and for all the users of our streets, trails and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, users of wheelchairs and other power-driven mobility devices, commercial and emergency vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets can reduce congestion by providing safe travel choices that encourage non-motorized transportation options, increasing the overall capacity of the transportation network as well as decreasing consumer transportation costs and overall carbon footprint; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets support economic growth and community stability by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations by improving the pedestrian and vehicular environments throughout communities; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets enhance safe walking and bicycling options for school-age children, in recognition of the objectives of the national Safe Routes to School program and Physical Activity Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets can help reduce crashes and injuries and their costs

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Selectmen adopts this Complete Streets Policy.

Vision and Purpose:

Complete Streets are designed and operated to provide safety and accessibility for all the users of our streets, trails and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial vehicles, and emergency vehicles and for people of all ages and of all abilities. Furthermore, Complete Streets principles contribute toward the safety, health, economic viability, and quality of life in a community by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations by improving the pedestrian and vehicular environments throughout communities. Complete Streets can also reduce the Town's carbon footprint and contribute to a more sustainable built environment. The purpose of the Town of Acton's Complete Streets Policy, therefore, is to accommodate all street users by creating a street network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. It is the intent of the Town of Acton to formalize the planning, design, operation and maintenance of streets so that they are safe for all users of all ages and abilities as a matter of routine. This Policy directs decision-makers to consistently plan, design, construct and maintain streets to accommodate all anticipated users including, but not limited to pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, emergency vehicles, and freight and commercial vehicles.

Core Commitment:

The Town of Acton recognizes that users of various modes of transportation, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, cyclists, transit and school bus riders, motorists, users of wheelchairs and other power-driven mobility devices, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders, are legitimate users of streets and deserve safe facilities. "All Users" includes users of all ages and abilities.

The Town recognizes that all building and infrastructure projects, both new or reconstruction, as well as routine maintenance projects, are potential opportunities to apply Complete Streets design principles. The Town will, to the maximum extent practical, design, construct, maintain, and operate all properties over which it has any control to provide for comprehensive and integrated networks of travel consistent with Complete Streets principles.

Complete Streets design principles shall be incorporated into all publicly and privately funded projects. To the maximum extent practical:

(1) All transportation infrastructure, and street design and construction projects requiring funding or approval by the Town of Acton shall adhere to the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy.

(2) Projects funded by the State or Federal government, including but not limited, Chapter 90 funds, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), or other State and Federal funds for street and infrastructure design shall adhere to the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy, subject to and as may be modified by funding agency guidelines and standards.

(3) Private developments and related or corresponding street design and construction components shall adhere to the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy.

(4) To the extent possible, state-owned streets shall comply with the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy, including the design, construction, and maintenance of such streets within Town boundaries, subject to and as may be modified by MassDOT guidelines and standards.

Exemptions:

(1) State Route 2 through the Town of Acton.

(2) All transportation facilities that are limited to non-motorized transportation modes, such as multi-use paths, pedestrian paths and malls, bicycle paths, and walking and hiking trails.

(3) Other transportation infrastructure may be exempt from this Policy, upon approval by the Board of Selectmen, where documentation and data indicate that:

(A) The cost or impacts of implementing this Policy are excessively disproportionate to the need for this Policy and the benefits derived from its implementation.

(B) Other Town policies, regulations, or requirements contradict or preclude the implementation of this Policy, after such policies, regulations, and requirements have been examined and updated to be consistent with the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy

Best Practices:

The Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy will focus on developing a connected, integrated network that serves all street users. Complete Streets principles will be integrated into policies, planning, and design of all types of public and private projects, including new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, redevelopment, repair, and maintenance of transportation facilities on, adjacent to, and related to streets, as allowed by law and regulation.

To the greatest extent possible, implementation of the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy will be carried out cooperatively within and between all departments in the Town of Acton, private developers, and State, regional – including the Acton Boxborough Regional School District – and federal agencies.

Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a manner that is sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and social setting. The context-sensitive approach to process and design includes a range of goals by considering stakeholder and community values on a level plane with the project need. It includes goals related to livability, connectivity and sustainability with greater participation of those affected in order to gain project consensus. The overall goal of this approach is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

The Town of Acton 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.

The latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations available will be used in the implementation of Complete Streets including:

- The Massachusetts of Department of Transportation Project Design and Development Guidebook http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/DoingBusinessWithUs/ManualsPublicationsForms/ProjectDevelopmentDesignGuide.aspx
- The latest edition of American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets (A copy is available at the Health Department Office)
- The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Design Controls. http://wwwcf.fhwa.dot.gov/exit.cfm?link=http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-28322.pdf

- The Architectural Access Board (AAB) 521CMR Rules and Regulations http://www.mass.gov/eopss/consumer-prot-and-bus-lic/license-type/aab/aab-rules-and-regulations-pdf.html
- Documents and plans created by and for the Town of Acton, such as bicycle/pedestrian network plans and conservation/recreation trails plans.

Complete Streets implementation and effectiveness should be constantly evaluated for success and opportunities for improvement.

Implementation:

The Town shall make Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations, shall approach every transportation project and program as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all users, and shall work in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions to achieve Complete Streets.

The Town shall review and either revise or develop proposed revisions to all appropriate planning documents (master plans, open space and recreation plan, etc.), zoning and subdivision rules and regulations, laws, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines, programs, and templates to integrate Complete Streets principles so as to be consistent with the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy. A Complete Streets Advisory Group of relevant stakeholders selected by the Town Manager or his/her designee will facilitate the implementation of this initiative.

The Town shall maintain a comprehensive map and inventory of pedestrian and bicycle facility infrastructure that will prioritize projects to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk, bikeway, and conservation/recreation trails network.

The Town will reevaluate prioritizations of Capital Improvement Projects to encourage implementation of this Policy.

The Town will train pertinent town staff and decision-makers on the content of the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy and best practices for implementing this Policy through workshops and other appropriate means.

The Town will conduct a needs assessment to determine and appropriately plan for future financial costs, capital or otherwise associated with implementation of this Policy.

The Town will seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies.

Evaluation:

The Town will develop performance measures to periodically assess the rate, success and effectiveness of implementing the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy. The advisory group of relevant stakeholders designated by the Town Manager will determine the frequency of assessment and utilize appropriate metrics for analyzing the success of this ordinance. These metrics may include the total number of new bicycle lanes, the linear feet of new pedestrian accommodation, number of retrofitted pedestrian facilities or amenities, number intersection improvements made to improve Level of Service (LOS) and safety for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, rate of crashes by mode, rate of children walking or bicycling to school, and/or number of trips by mode.

Complete Streets Policy Overview

Acton , MA
Board of Selectmen
Adopted - July 28, 2014

Complete Streets Policy Overview

- Project Background
- Complete Streets Overview
- Complete Streets Legislation
- Acton Complete Streets Policy
- Questions

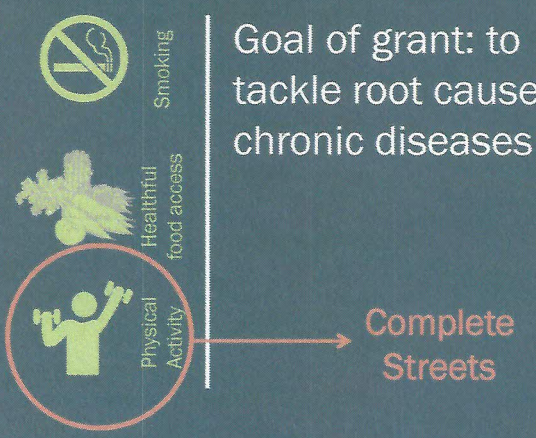
Project Background

Purpose

To assist interested communities with developing an official complete streets policy that is appropriately tailored to reflect each community's goals

Project Background

Community Transformation Grant



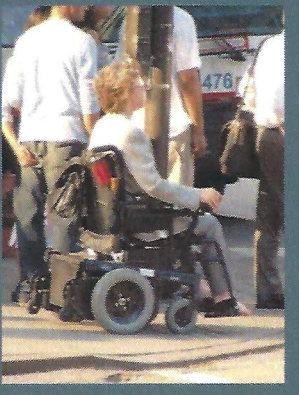
Goal of grant: to tackle root causes of chronic diseases

Complete Streets Overview

What is a complete street?

Streets that are safe, comfortable, and accessible for:

All Users

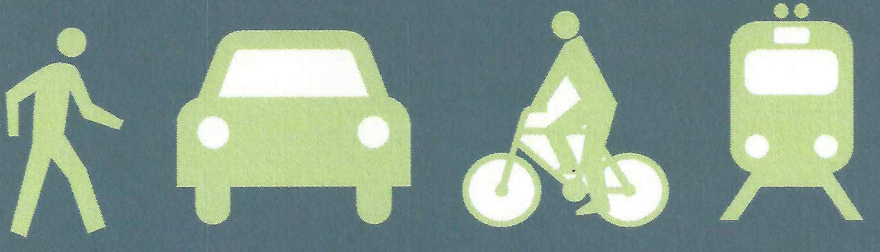


Complete Streets Overview

What is a complete street?

Streets that are safe, comfortable, and accessible for:

Multiple Forms of Travel



Walking Driving Biking Commuter Rail

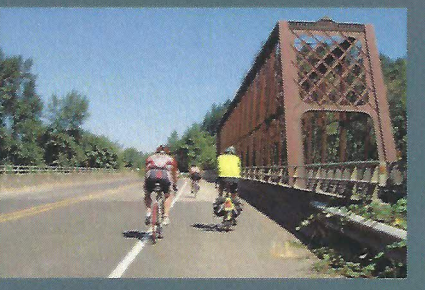
Complete Streets Overview

What is a complete street?

Streets that are context sensitive

City Streets

VS



Rural Roads

Complete Streets Overview

What is a complete street?

Streets that are context sensitive

Retail Areas

VS

Residential Areas

Complete Streets Overview

What is NOT a Complete Street

Complete Streets Overview

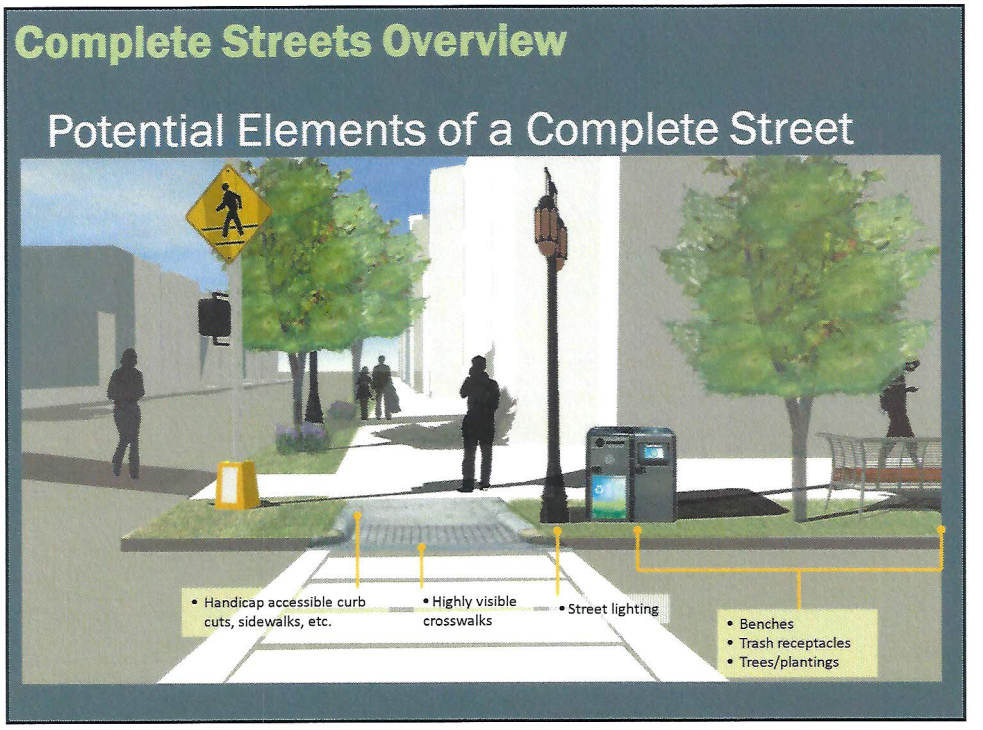
What is NOT a Complete Street

Complete Streets Overview

Potential Elements of a Complete Street

Complete Streets Overview

Potential Elements of a Complete Street


Complete Streets Overview
Potential Elements of a Complete Street
• Handicap accessible curb cuts, sidewalks, etc.
• Highly visible crosswalks
• Street lighting
• Benches
• Trash receptacles
• Trees/plantings

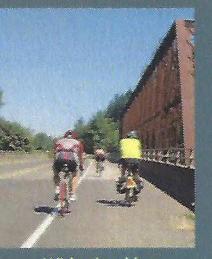
Complete Streets Overview
Potential Elements of a Complete Street
• Countdown clocks
• Audible cross signals
• Pedestrian warning signs
• Walkable pavements
• In good condition, free of cracks and holes

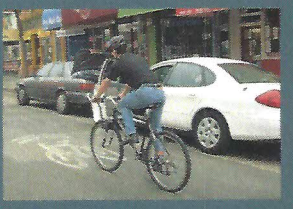
Complete Streets Overview

Potential Elements of a Complete Street

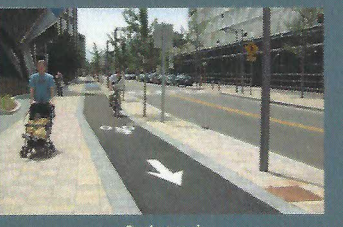
Bike lanes or buffered bike lanes

Bike racks


Wide shoulders


Markings for shared lanes

Adequate bike signage and education


Cycle track

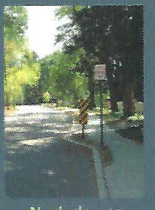
Complete Streets Overview

Potential Elements of a Complete Street

Rumble strips

Reduced speed limits

Elevated speed tables


Neck-downs

Bow-outs

- **Narrower lanes**
- **Tight curb radii**
- **Reduced # lanes**

Other considerations

Complete Streets Benefits

Benefits to Complete Streets

- Improved health
- Improved safety
- Increased economic development
- Reduced personal transportation costs
- Reduced congestion
- Improved environment and air quality
- Improved connections

- Potential access to funding from proposed Complete Streets Legislation

Complete Streets Overview

Complete Streets Policy

A policy does:

- Provide high-level direction
- Change the everyday decision-making processes and systems
- Create an incremental changes
- Achieve long-term results

A policy is not:

- A one-size fits all design prescription
- A requirement for bike/ped facilities on every single road
- Only appropriate for cities
- A silver bullet

Complete Streets Overview

1. **Vision and intent**: The policy outlines a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets and takes into account Acton's goals and plans.
2. **All users and modes**: The policy specifies that "all users" includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles.
3. **All projects and phases**: Both new and retrofit projects are subject to the policy, including design, planning, maintenance and operations, for the entire right-of-way.
4. **Clear, accountable exceptions**: Any exceptions are specified and must be approved by a high-level official.
5. **Network**: The policy encourages street connectivity and creates a comprehensive, integrated and connected network for all modes across the network.
6. **Jurisdiction**: All other agencies can clearly understand the policy and may be involved in the process.
7. **Design**: The policy recommends the latest and best design criteria and guidelines, while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs.
8. **Context sensitivity**: Community context is considered in planning and design solutions.
9. **Performance measures**: Performance standards with measurable outcomes are included.
10. **Implementation next steps**: Specific next steps for implementing the policy are described.

Complete Streets Legislation

Purpose

Creates a program to encourage MA municipalities to routinely include contextually appropriate complete streets design elements in locally funded road projects

What the Legislation Does

Creates the Active Streets Certification Program

Certified communities will be eligible to apply for funding to implement complete streets projects

- Adoption of a complete streets policy is key component for certification
- Proposed amount of funding to draw from is $50,000,000 over 5 years