

BOARD OF SELECTMEN POLICY

COMPLETE STREETS

Date Approved by BOS:

Signature of Chair:

March 7, 2016

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Vision and Purpose:

In 2015, Lexington Town Meeting unanimously approved Article 45, which recommended that the Board of Selectmen make it a priority to develop a town-wide process to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists in a unified, efficient and prompt way. In that same year, Town Meeting also approved unanimously Article 35, which would allow the Town to participate in the State's Complete Streets Program. The passage of both Articles represents the Town of Lexington's understanding and support for the development and adoption of Complete Streets principles.

Complete Streets are designed and operated to provide safe and accessible accommodations for all users of Lexington roadways and travel systems. The implementation of Complete Streets principles contribute toward the safety, health, economic viability, and quality of life in a community by improving the pedestrian and vehicular environments and providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations throughout the community. The purpose of Lexington's Complete Streets policy, therefore, is to accommodate all users by creating a transportation network that meets the needs of residents and visitors who utilize a variety of transportation modes.

It is the intent of the Board of Selectmen to consider, as a matter of practice, the implementation of Complete Streets elements during the planning and design of capital projects so that they are safe for users of all ages and abilities. This policy guides decision-makers to consistently plan, design, and construct capital projects to accommodate all anticipated users. Examples of Complete Streets approaches can be found in Figure 1.

Complete Streets Scope:

The Town of Lexington recognizes the needs of users of various modes of transportation systems, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists of varying ages and physical and cognitive abilities as well as operators of passenger, commercial and emergency vehicles.

The Town of Lexington views its transportation capital projects, new and/or to be reconstructed, as potential opportunities to apply Complete Streets design principles. The Town will, to the maximum extent practical, design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets and other travel systems to provide for a comprehensive and integrated network of facilities.

Complete Streets design recommendations shall be evaluated for all transportation related capital projects, as appropriate and subject to the availability of funds. All transportation infrastructure and capital projects requiring funding or approval by the Town, as well as projects funded by the state and federal government (e.g., Chapter 90 funds, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, and other state and federal funds for infrastructure design), shall consider the Town's Complete Streets policy. Private developments and related roadway design components or corresponding roadway-related components, requiring approval by the Town, shall consider the Town's Complete Streets principles. In addition, to the extent practical, the Town will work with MassDOT to comply with the Complete Streets policy on state-owned roadways within Town boundaries including the design, construction, and maintenance of such roadways.

Transportation infrastructure may be excluded, based upon the determination of the Town Engineer in consultation with the Department of Public Works Director, where documentation and data indicate that:

1. Facilities where specific users are prohibited by law, such as interstate freeways or private property.
2. Cost or impacts of accommodations is excessively disproportionate to the need, current use or probable future use.
3. Funding is currently unavailable, recognizing that all infrastructure projects are subject to the availability of resources. In such cases, efforts will be made to program certain infrastructure improvements at a future date. Costs associated with the maintenance of new infrastructure will also be considered as it effects the Town's future operational budgets.

Model Practices:

The Board of Selectmen's Complete Streets policy will focus on developing a connected, integrated network that serves all users. Complete Streets will be integrated into policies, planning, and design of all types of public projects and private developments, requiring Town approval, including new construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of transportation facilities on roadways, trails and redevelopment projects.

Recognizing that the implementation of a Complete Streets program requires interdepartmental involvement, this Complete Streets policy will be organization wide and, to the greatest extent presently possible, be applied to private developers as well as state, regional, and federal agencies. Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a context sensitive manner in which project implementation 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 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 Lexington recognizes that Complete Streets may be achieved through multiple elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or activities over time.

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

- The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Project Design and Development Guidebook
- The latest edition of the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets
- The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Design Controls (2009)
- The Architectural Access Board (AAB) 521CMR Rules and Regulations
- Proposed and any future adopted versions of the United States Access Board's Public Right-Of-Way Access Guidelines (PROWAG)
- The latest editions of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street, Bikeway, and Transit Design Guides
- Documents and plans created for the Town of Lexington, such as bicycle and pedestrian network plans

Lexington's Complete Streets implementation and effectiveness shall be annually evaluated for success and opportunities for improvement by the Transportation Safety Group (TSG), a multi-disciplinary group designated by the Town Manager. The Town will also work towards developing performance measures to gauge implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

Implementation:

The Town shall apply the principles of Complete Streets design a practice for all transportation projects and programs, as these provide an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all users. The TSG will review all capital transportation and related projects for Complete Streets opportunities.

Town staff, working with relevant Committees and elected officials, 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 codes, laws, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines, programs, and templates to integrate Complete Streets principles in all transportation projects.

To assist in establishing Complete Street priorities, the Town will use existing infrastructure planning tools including a pavement management plan (covering all streets in town), a pedestrian facility condition index, a five-year capital plan, Lexington's Tree Management Manual and various GIS transit related maps. Further, the Town shall maintain a comprehensive inventory of pedestrian and bicycle facility infrastructure to assist in prioritizing proposed projects, helping to eliminate gaps in the Town's sidewalk and bikeway network.

The Town will consider the cost-benefit of capital projects when prioritizing the implementation of proposed Complete Streets projects.

The Town will inform and train pertinent Town staff and decision-makers on the content of Complete Streets principles and best practices for implementing policy through workshops and other appropriate means.

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

Figure 1: Examples of Complete Streets
(Examples of Complete Streets Features Provided by MassDOT)

Traffic & Safety

- Street Lighting
- Addition of or widening of shoulders
- Roundabouts
- Road diets
- Speed attenuation devices
- Intersection reconstruction – reducing complexity and crossing distance
- Intersection signalization (major updates/upgrades & New Installation)
- Pavement markings or signage that provides a separate accommodation for alternative modes
- Removal of protruding objects (pedestrian path of travel, bicycle, vehicular or transit facility)
- Pedestrian Signal & Timing (minor updates)
- Changing pedestrian signal timing (i.e., lead pedestrian interval)
- Traffic calming measures
- Radar speed feedback (“Your Speed”) signs
- Reducing corner radii
- Additional regulatory signing (for existing regulations)
- Speed humps
- Curbing

Transit Facilities

- Improving transit connections for pedestrians, including: ramps, providing and/or moving crosswalks, signing
- Transit signal prioritization
- Bus pull-out areas
- Railroad grade crossings improvements (signs, flange way fill, etc.)
- Transit-only lanes
- Transit contra-flow lanes
- Improving transit connections for pedestrians, including: ramps, providing and/or moving crosswalks, signing
- Transit shelter

Bicycle Facilities

- New shared use paths
- Elimination of hazardous conditions on shared use paths
- Designated bicycle lanes
- Designated Separated Bike Lane
- Advance stop facilities (bike box)
- Bicycle parking at transit and other locations
- On-street bicycle parking
- Provide bicycle-safe drain grates and other hardware
- Bicycle boulevards
- Improvement of shared use paths (non-safety related)
- Bicycle wayfinding signs
- Shared lanes (sharrows)
- Bike route signs

Pedestrian Facilities

- Providing new sidewalks
- Sidewalk Repairs (tree roots, uplifted panels, etc.)
- Providing ADA/AAB compliant curb ramps
- Providing pedestrian buffer zones
- Providing medians with ADA/AAB-compliant design
- Pedestrian Refuge Islands
- Curb extensions at pedestrian crossings
- Crosswalks
- Widening existing sidewalks
- Accessible pedestrian signals
- Detectable Warning Surfaces
- New or improved crossing treatments at intersections, midblock, etc.
- New pedestrian accommodations at traffic signals
- Pedestrian wayfinding signs
- Interim public plazas
- Traffic re-routing to create pedestrian zones