

Policy Number:

Date approved:

Date amended:

Title: COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

I. Vision and Purpose

The purpose of the Town of Sturbridge Complete Streets Policy is to accommodate all users by creating a road system that is safe for multi-modes of transportation and users of all ages and abilities. A recommendation of the 2011 Master Plan is that Sturbridge transportation must meet the needs of its residents, commuters (traveling through town), tourists and commercial trucking through vehicular, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian means. Transportation must be convenient, safe and aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly as it meets the complex needs of residents and travelers. A thorough transportation plan which ties Sturbridge in with neighboring communities, and connecting to the greater region, is essential to ensure a sustainable system over the long term. To support this vision, it is the intent of Town of Sturbridge to formalize the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of all streets so that they are safe for users of all ages and abilities as a matter of routine.

II. Core Commitment

A. Definition

“Complete Streets” are streets that are designed and operated to provide safety and accessibility for all users of our roadways and trails including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists, commercial and emergency vehicles and for people of all ages and of all abilities. 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, tourists and other commercial destinations by improving pedestrian and vehicular environments throughout communities.

B. Scope of Applicability

- (1) Complete Streets practices will become a routine part of the everyday operations for the Planning Department and Department of Public Works. These departments shall approach every transportation project as an opportunity to improve both public and private streets when possible, and the transportation network for all users.

- (2) The Town of Sturbridge recognizes that all projects (new, maintenance, or reconstruction) are potential opportunities to apply Complete Streets design principles. The Town will, to the maximum extent practical, design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to provide for a comprehensive and integrated street network of facilities for people of all ages and abilities.
- (3) Complete Streets design recommendations shall be incorporated into all publicly and privately funded projects, as appropriate. All transportation infrastructure and street design projects requiring funding or approval by the Town of Sturbridge, as well as projects funded by the state and federal government, such as the Chapter 90 funds, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Capital Funding and other state and federal funds for street and infrastructure design shall adhere to the Town of Sturbridge Complete Streets Policy wherever possible. Private developments and related street design components or corresponding street-related components shall adhere to the Complete Streets principles.
- (4) In the event that the existing right-of-way does not allow for the accommodation of all users, alternatives will be explored such as obtaining additional right-of-way (if economically feasible), use of revised travel lane configurations, paved shoulders, signage, traffic calming, education or enforcement to accommodate all potential users.
- (5) Transportation projects may be excluded from application of Complete Streets elements when costs are excessively disproportionate to future use or would be inappropriate in light of the scope of the project, as determined by the Town Administrator in consultation with the DPW Director and Town Planner.

III.

A. Context Sensitivity

The implementation of this Policy should reflect and adapt to the context and character of the surrounding built and natural environments and enhance the appearance of such. This policy recognizes that transportation needs vary and must be balanced in a flexible, safe and cost effective manner.

B. Design Standards

The Town of Sturbridge will utilize the latest design guidance and standards available in the implementation of Complete Streets including:

- The Massachusetts Project Development and Design Guide (2006)
- The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (1999)
- The Architectural Access Board (AAB) 521 CMR Rules and Regulations

- The latest edition of the American Association of State Highway and 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
- Plans created for the Town of Sturbridge including but not limited to the Master Plan (2011), Commercial Tourist District Revitalization Plan (2014), and Recreational Trails Master Plan (2012)

In recognition of context sensitivity, public input and the needs of many users, a flexible, innovative and balanced approach that follows the above and other appropriate design standards may be considered, provided that a comparable level of safety for all users is present.

C. Performance Measures

This policy encourages the evaluation and regular reporting on the implementation and maintenance of Complete Streets. The Planning Department will work with the DPW Director to ensure that projects meet Complete Street principles to the most practical extent possible. The Town shall regularly document complete streets measures implemented. These measures shall include, but not be limited to documenting the amount of linear feet of new or reconstructed sidewalks, number of new street trees, and number and type of crosswalk and intersection improvements.

D. Implementation

The Town views Complete Streets as integral to everyday transportation decision-making practices and processes. To this end:

- (1) The Town of Sturbridge will 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.
- (2) The Town shall review and where necessary revise appropriate planning documents, zoning bylaws and other regulations and guidelines to integrate Complete Streets principles in all street projects.
- (3) The Town shall maintain a comprehensive inventory of pedestrian and bicycle facility infrastructure that will prioritize projects to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk and bikeway network.
- (4) The Town will encourage municipal staff and community leaders to attend introductory and advanced classes and training opportunities on Complete Streets. The Town will utilize

inter-departmental coordination to promote the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public way.

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