

# **TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**Title: Complete Street Policy**  
**Effective Date: 01/11/2022**  
**Selectmen Adoption: 01/10/2022**  
**Date Last Revised: N/A**

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## **COMPLETE STREETS POLICY**

### **I. VISION & PURPOSE:**

The purpose of Northborough's Complete Streets policy is to accommodate all road users by creating a road network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. The Town of Northborough will, to the maximum extent practicable, design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to provide for a comprehensive and integrated street network of facilities that are safe for all users of all ages and abilities, including children, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities, as a matter of routine. This policy directs decision-makers to consistently plan, design, and construct streets to accommodate all anticipated users including, but not limited to pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, emergency vehicles, and commercial vehicles.

### **II. CORE COMMITMENT:**

#### **A. Definition**

"Complete Streets" are streets that are designed and operated to provide safety and accessibility for all users of roadways, 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.

#### **B. Scope of Applicability**

All town-owned transportation facilities in the public right of way including, but not limited to, streets, bridges, and all other connecting pathways shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to support the concept of Complete Streets so that users of all ages and abilities can travel safely and independently. For the purposes of this policy, a connecting pathway would be defined as a connecting street in the public right of way.

The Town of Northborough recognizes that every transportation improvement and/or project phase is an opportunity to apply Complete Streets design principles. These phases include, but are not limited to planning, programming, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, construction engineering, reconstruction, operation and maintenance. The Public Works Department shall evaluate the feasibility of applying Complete Streets principles for routine roadway rehabilitation

projects prior to doing the work and use the exception criteria outlined under Section II, Paragraph C.

- (1) Complete Streets design recommendations shall be incorporated into all publicly and privately funded projects, to the greatest extent practicable. All transportation infrastructure and street design projects requiring funding or approval by the Town of Northborough, as well as projects funded by the state and federal government, such as the Chapter 90 funds, MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and other state and federal funds for street and infrastructure design shall adhere to the Town of Northborough's Complete Streets Policy. Private developments and related street design components or corresponding street-related components shall adhere to the Complete Streets principles. In addition, to the extent practical, state-owned roadways will comply with the Complete Streets policy, including the design, construction, and maintenance of such roadways within Town boundaries. The Department of Public Works will work with other departments, state and federal agencies, and private developers as appropriate to ensure compliance with the Town's Complete Streets Policy across jurisdictions.
- (2) Special attention should be given to projects which enhance the overall transportation system and its connectivity. Specifically, high priority should be given to:
  - (i) Corridors providing primary access to one or more significant destinations such as parks or recreation areas, schools, shopping/commercial areas, public transportation, or employment or medical centers.
  - (ii) Corridors providing important continuity or connectivity links to existing pedestrian or bicycle networks.

### **C. Exceptions**

Transportation infrastructure may be excluded from application of Complete Streets elements, as determined by the Department of Public Works when:

- (iii) The existing right-of-way does not allow for the accommodation of all users. In this case alternatives may be explored such as obtaining additional right-of-way, use of revised travel lane configurations, paved shoulders, or signage.
- (iv) The activities are ordinary and/or preventative maintenance designed to keep assets in serviceable condition.
- (v) The construction is not practically feasible or cost-effective because of unreasonable adverse impacts on the environment or on neighboring land uses.
- (vi) The cost or impacts of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use or probable future use.
- (vii) The application of Complete Streets principles is unnecessary or inappropriate because it would be contrary to public safety.

(viii) The roadway is a rural road or is privately owned.

### **III. BEST PRACTICES:**

#### **A. Context Sensitivity**

Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a context-sensitive way such that the community's physical, economic, and social settings are given great consideration. 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 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 Northborough will weigh a project in keeping with the character of the Town as a factor in its decision making about each project.

#### **B. Design Standards**

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

- The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Project Design and Development Guidebook
- The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide
- The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Design Controls
- The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), with MassDOT Amendments to the MUTCD
- The latest edition of American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets
- The Architectural Access Board (AAB) 521CMR Rules and Regulations
- Documents and plans created for the Town of Northborough, such as the Northborough Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Northborough Master Plan.

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

#### **C. Performance Measures**

Complete Streets implementation and effectiveness should be annually evaluated for success and opportunities for improvement. The DPW will work each year to ensure the upcoming roadway projects meet the Complete Streets principles to the greatest extent practicable.

The progress of the Complete Streets projects will be detailed in the Town's Annual Report. Progress will be described through key metrics identified by the Town, which include:

- Number of new or reconstructed curb ramps
- The total linear feet of sidewalks either expanded or repaired to restore intended functionality.
- The total linear feet of roadway which have been enhanced through which roadway pavement has undergone reconstruction, rehabilitation, and/or preservation to improve functionality and safety of continued shared use.
- Number of locations where pavement markings, signage, and/or some other method has been undertaken to improve functionality and safety of continued shared use.
- Number of specific enhancements suggested through ongoing public outreach efforts.

#### **IV. IMPLEMENTATION:**

The Town of Northborough 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, and shall work in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions to achieve Complete Streets.

The Town will implement the Complete Streets principles through the following means:

- (i) The Public Works Department will ensure the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy and, where necessary, will review and recommend to governing Boards proposed revisions to appropriate and applicable Town documents, codes, by-laws, procedures, rules, and regulations.
- (ii) When available, the Town will encourage staff to attend professional development and training on non-motorized transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops.
- (iii) The Town will utilize inter-department coordination to promote the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public way.
- (iv) The Town will seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies.

The Town of Northborough recognizes that Complete Streets may be achieved through single elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.

We, the Northborough Board of Selectmen voted to adopt this policy at our meeting on January 10, 2022

*Jason Perreault*  
Chair

*Leslie Rutan*  
Vice Chair

*T. Scott Rogers*  
Clerk

*Kristen Wixted*  
Member

*Julianne Hirsh*  
Member