

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

The City of Bloomington will enhance safety, mobility, accessibility and convenience for transportation network users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, transit users, bicyclists, commercial and emergency vehicles, freight drivers and motorists by planning, designing, operating and maintaining a network of multi-modal streets. This objective is consistent with regional transportation goals and formalizes the “Complete Streets Vision” contained in the City of Bloomington’s Alternative Transportation Plan (ATP) and other associated City Plans/Programs shown in Figure 1.

BACKGROUND:

Regional Support of Complete Streets

State of Minnesota

In 2010, the State of Minnesota Legislature directed the Commissioner of Transportation to consult with stakeholders, state and regional agencies, local governments and other authorities to create a state level complete streets policy. The law, Minnesota State Statutes Section 174.75, demonstrates the state’s commitment to the development of a balanced multi-modal transportation system.

Hennepin County

In 2009, Hennepin County was the first county in Minnesota to adopt a Complete Streets policy. The policy supports the county’s commitment to use policy changes and infrastructure planning to encourage Active Living, defined as the integration of physical activity into daily routines through activities such as biking, walking or taking transit. The City of Bloomington is a Hennepin County Active Living Partner.

City of Bloomington Support of Complete Streets

Designing the City of Bloomington’s streets for the safety, mobility and benefit of all users is part of the City’s vision to build safe, sustainable and enjoyable neighborhoods while supporting actions that promote the physical and emotional well-being of Bloomington residents.

Many of the City of Bloomington’s plans, policies, and procedures already support a multi-modal philosophy.

- In 2008, after a year-long collaboration between the City Council, City staff and community stakeholders, the City adopted an Alternative Transportation Plan (ATP) to encourage travel by foot or bicycle, promote active lifestyles, improve safety, support sustainability, promote “Complete Streets,” and improve connections between neighborhoods, transit, and recreational amenities.
- These goals are also embraced in the City’s 2008 Comprehensive Plan.
- In 2010, the Bloomington City Council passed Resolution Number 2010-7 expressing its support for a statewide Complete Streets policy.

Recent projects like the 86th Street bikeway, American Boulevard Corridor, Hiawatha Light Rail Transit demonstrate the City's dedication to this vision.

The City uses its Pavement Management Program (PMP) to move such projects from electronic plans to living streetscapes. The PMP is a street maintenance plan that implements the right maintenance at the right time in a road's lifecycle, reducing the overall cost of keeping the City's streets in good condition. The Public Works Department's annual roadway construction schedule is driven by data gathered through the PMP. Since the passage of the ATP, the Public Works Department also uses the PMP to incorporate Complete Street goals into existing construction budgets where possible.

Along with the PMP, three additional Public Works policies support Bloomington's Complete Streets goals:

- First, the Collector Streets Program evaluates the City's collector street striping configurations in order to improve safety for all users and neighborhood quality of life. Reconfiguring lane geometry by restriping is an inexpensive strategy that can quickly create bicycle facilities and routes and more friendly pedestrian environments.
- Secondly, the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Policy and Procedure For Local Streets is a resident driven program that aims to reduce traffic speeds on local streets through the installation of traffic calming devices such as speed tables and traffic circles. Reducing traffic speed and volume in a neighborhood makes walking and biking more enjoyable and enhances the livability of the neighborhood.
- Finally, the City's Traffic Demand Management (TDM) ordinance requires the owners of new, non-residential developments or additions over 1,000 square feet to develop a Traffic Demand Management Plan for their proposed development. The plans outline a combination of services, incentives, facilities and actions owners will use to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips. This program helps address traffic congestion and reduces air pollution.

The City of Bloomington's Resolution No. 2010-7 recognizes the following benefits of Complete Streets:

- Complete Streets improves safety by reducing crashes and injuries and their costs.
- Complete Streets removes barriers to transportation facilities and services for seniors, children, and people with disabilities, allowing them to lead more active and independent lives.
- Complete Streets promotes public health by supporting exercise as part of daily life.
- Complete Streets helps avoid costly future retrofits by making sure that we build roads right the first time.
- Complete Streets supports affordable transportation options for families.
- Complete Streets reduces congestion by providing safe travel choices that encourage non-motorized transportation options, increasing the overall capacity of the transportation network.
- Complete Streets supports more pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel, which helps protect clean air and clean water and reduces our dependence on costly energy sources.
- Complete Streets promotes 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.
- Complete Streets supports vibrant and walkable neighborhoods that improve quality of life and help build community.

Figure 1
Complete Streets



INTERNAL PROCEDURE:

1. The City of Bloomington will enhance safety, mobility, accessibility and convenience for transportation network users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, transit users, bicyclists, commercial and emergency vehicles, freight drivers and motorists by planning, designing, operating and maintaining a network of multi-modal streets.

“Complete Streets” is a flexible transportation planning and design process that considers the safety and accessibility needs of all users in order to create a connected network of facilities accommodating each mode of travel. This internal procedure applies to all corridors under City of Bloomington jurisdiction.

2. Complete Streets is not a prescriptive roadway design. Individual “complete” street designs vary based on context, including topography, road function, the speed of traffic, pedestrian and bicycle demand, local land use, and other factors. The City will implement Complete Streets in such a way that the character of the project area, the values of the community, and the needs of all users are fully considered. Therefore, Complete Streets will not look the same in all environments, neighborhoods, or development contexts, and will not necessarily include exclusive elements for all modes.

The Alternative Transportation Plan (ATP) contains a set of Complete Streets projects prioritized by the context and needs of the city.

3. Early consideration of all modes for all users will be important to the success of Complete Streets in the City. Project managers of the City’s transportation and development projects will give due consideration to bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities from the beginning of planning and design work. Developing Complete Streets will be a priority, and every transportation project and development project will be treated as an opportunity to realize the goals stipulated in the ATP.

4. Bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities as shown in the City's Alternative Transportation Plan will be considered in street construction, re-construction, rehabilitation projects, and all other street improvement projects except under one or more of the following conditions:
 - a. A project involves only ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition, such as mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair, seal coating, concrete joint repair, pothole filling, utility repair, or when interim measures are implemented on temporary detour or haul routes.
 - b. The City Engineer determines there is an absence of need or insufficient space to safely accommodate new facilities.
 - c. The City Engineer determines there are relatively high safety risks.
 - d. The City Engineer determines that adding new facilities would unduly impair capacity and/or mobility for another user group.
 - e. The City Council exempts a project due to the excessive and disproportionate cost of establishing a bikeway, walkway or transit enhancement as part of a project.
 - f. The City Engineer and Planning Director jointly determine that the construction is not practically feasible or cost effective because of severe topographic, environmental, historic or natural resource constraints.
5. Complete Streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.
6. The City will generally follow accepted or the best available technology when implementing improvements intended to fulfill this Complete Streets Program, but will also consider innovative or non-traditional design options where a comparable level of safety for users is present.
7. The design of new or reconstructed facilities should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling, walking and transit facilities and should not preclude the provision of future improvements.
8. As noted in the ATP, to varying degrees, trail, sidewalk, and bikeway networks are either already in place or planned in the communities that adjoin the City. The City will work with these communities, as well as other authorities who have jurisdiction within Bloomington, such as the State of Minnesota, Hennepin County, Three Rivers Park District and the Metropolitan Council, to enhance the regional continuity of the City's multi-modal transportation network.

At the date of adoption of this Bloomington internal procedure, Hennepin County and the State of Minnesota have adopted Complete Streets policies. As a result, any funding for projects passing through either of these agencies to the City should follow a Complete Streets approach.

9. The City shall encourage private developers to follow this document as the ATP instructs that designing both publically and privately built infrastructure for safe access and movement of all users is a major aspect of the Complete Streets Program.

