

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY TOWN OF SWANZEY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

WHEREAS, the Town of Swanzey strives to provide a safe, efficient and diversified transportation network that is sensitive to the Town's rural character;

WHEREAS, the Town of Swanzey recognizes that a diversified transportation system that supports a variety of travel modes and provides links between modes has the power to influence the community's social, economic, and natural characteristics;

WHEREAS, the more alternatives to the personal motor vehicle there are the more efficient and effective the existing transportation system becomes - reducing the need for infrastructure expansion and empowering residents without personal vehicles to access employment, health care, cultural and social opportunities;

WHEREAS, the Town of Swanzey Master Plan includes objectives related to coordinating land use and transportation decisions, and enhancing pedestrian bicycle and public transit opportunities;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Swanzey Board of Selectmen that the attached Complete Streets Policy is hereby adopted.

I. VISION & PURPOSE

Although Swanzey is one of the few towns in the Southwest Region with a well-established network of sidewalks and rail trails, it maintains a broader vision for its transportation infrastructure. It recognizes that public roads, which occupy nearly 15% of the Town's total land area, are a significant asset and should be developed to promote access, mobility, affordability, and public health. The Town seeks to enhance the safety, reliability, efficiency and connectivity of the municipality's transportation network and to develop a system that will promote access, mobility, affordability and public health. To create and support this vision, it is the intent of the Town, through this policy, to ensure that the safety of all users – including motorists, pedestrians of all ages and abilities, bicyclists, emergency responders, freight providers, and users of public transit – is considered in all municipally managed transportation projects and project phases.

II. CORE COMMITMENT

A. Definition

"Complete Streets" are streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access and mobility for all users, in that bicyclists, motorists, public transportation users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a street.

B. Scope of Applicability

(a) 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.

(b) The Town should approach every transportation improvement and project phase as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible streets for all users. These phases include, but are not limited to: planning, programming, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, construction engineering, reconstruction, operation and maintenance.

(c) 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 serving a relatively high number of users of non-motorized transportation modes;

(iii) Corridors providing important continuity or connectivity links to existing pedestrian or bicycle networks; and,

(iv) Projects identified in regional or local bicycle and/or pedestrian plans.

(d) Exceptions to this policy may be considered when:

(i) The existing right-of-way does not allow for the accommodation of all users. In this case alternatives should be explored such as obtaining additional right-of-way, use of revised travel lane configurations, paved shoulders, signage, traffic calming, education or enforcement to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles and riders and persons with disabilities;

(ii) The activities are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g. mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair);

(iii) The construction is not practically feasible or cost effective;

(iv) The application of Complete Streets principles is unnecessary or inappropriate because it would be contrary to public safety and increase risk of injury or death; or

(v) The roadway is a class VI roadway, designated as a Rural Road according to the Swanze Complete Streets Design Guidelines, or is privately owned.

III. BEST PRACTICES

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 should follow the adopted Swanze Complete Streets Design Guidelines as well as the best and latest design standards available. 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

This policy encourages the evaluation and regular reporting of progress on the implementation and maintenance of Complete Streets. In the Town's Annual Report, the Director of Public Works (DPW)

should include in his/her report a summary of the transportation projects undertaken during the year and the extent to which these projects meet the objectives of this policy. In addition, the DPW should provide to the Board of Selectmen (on a yearly basis) transportation projects planned for the upcoming year and the extent to which these projects meet the objectives of this policy.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

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

- (a) The Public Works Department, the Planning Department and other relevant departments or committees will incorporate Complete Streets principles into all existing plans, manuals, checklists, regulations, and programs as appropriate;
- (b) The Public Works Department, the Planning Department and other relevant departments, agencies, or committees will review current design standards, including subdivision regulations which apply to new roadway construction, to ensure that they reflect the best available design standards and guidelines, and effectively implement Complete Streets, where feasible;
- (c) The Town, to the greatest extent feasible, will encourage partners such as the NH Department of Transportation to develop and implement Complete Streets elements and considerations when working on projects or programs in the Town.
- (d) When available, the Town will encourage staff professional development and training on non-motorized transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops;
- (e) Town staff should identify and seek out appropriate sources of funding for implementation of this Policy and recommend improvements to project selection criteria to support Complete Streets projects;
- (f) The Town should promote inter-departmental project coordination among departments with an interest in the activities that occur within the public right-of-way in order to better use fiscal resources;
- (g) Every Complete Streets project should include an educational component to ensure that all users of the transportation system understand and can safely utilize Complete Streets project elements;
- (h) 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.

Signed,

Deborah J. Davis
Deborah J. Davis, Chair

10/27/15
Date

W. William Hutwelker III
W. William Hutwelker, III

10/27/15
Date

Kenneth P. Colby, Jr.
Kenneth P. Colby, Jr.

10/27/15
Date