

**City of Windsor Heights
Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual**

Title: Complete Streets Policy

Effective Date: January 16,2017
(Revisions)

Resolution No. 17-0107

Policy Number: Reserved for Later Use

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Complete Streets Policy is to use an interdisciplinary approach to incorporate the needs of all Users into the design, construction, and maintenance of public and private transportation infrastructure within Windsor Heights where feasible and fiscally viable. This Complete Streets Policy establishes guiding principles and practices to assist in the creation of an equitable, balanced, and effective transportation system that encourages walking, bicycling, and transit use, to improve health, economic vitality, and reduce adverse environmental impacts, while simultaneously promoting safety for all Users of Streets.

2. EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERM

The Complete Streets Policy shall be in full force and effect from the date of its passage, adoption, and approval.

3. PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles of the Complete Street Policy are as follows:

- A. Complete Streets are designed to serve users of all ages and abilities, including: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. The overall goal of Complete Streets is to preserve, and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.
- B. It is the intent of this Complete Streets Policy that the design and construction of all Street projects should include Complete Streets Elements as feasibility and funding allows, including, but not limited to:

- 1) Public Plans adopted by the City of Windsor Heights, which may be independent or part of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, DART, State of Iowa, and other transportation partners;
 - 2) Development-related ordinances and resolutions, including (Land development Codes and Subdivision Regulations,) among others, that are adopted or passed by the City of Windsor Heights.
- C. Complete Streets Elements should be considered within the balance of mode and context of the community, including but not limited to: environmental sensitivity; costs; budgets; demand; probable use; space and area requirements and limitations; and legal requirements and limitations. Not all Complete Streets Elements are required to make a street complete and/or feasible at all locations or times.
- D. It is the intent of the City of Windsor Heights to recognize that street projects are limited in scope by available funding resources. Fiscal responsibility should be used when considering Complete Streets Elements.
- E. It is the intent of the City of Windsor Heights to incorporate the Complete Streets principles into appropriate public strategic plans, standards, relevant ordinances, practices and policies, and appropriate subsequent updates. The Complete Streets principles, where applicable and appropriate, may also be incorporated into plans, manuals, rules, practices, policies, training, procedures, regulations, and programs.
- F. It is the goal of the City of Windsor Heights to foster a partnership with the State of Iowa, Polk County, area school districts, citizens, businesses, neighboring communities, and neighborhoods in consideration of functional facilities and accommodations in furtherance of this Complete Streets Policy and the continuation of such facilities and accommodations beyond the jurisdiction of the City of Windsor Heights.
- G. The City of Windsor Heights recognizes that Complete Streets may be achieved through elements incorporated into a single Street Project, or incrementally through a series of improvements, in order to create a network of facilities that promotes connectivity to destinations.
- H. The City of Windsor Heights will consider all appropriate possible funding sources to plan and implement the Complete Streets Policy and shall direct staff to investigate grants that may be available to make the realization of Complete Streets economically feasible.

4. APPLICABILITY

- A. The City of Windsor Heights shall make Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations, shall approach transportation projects and programs 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, where feasibility and funding allows throughout the City.

- B. The City of Windsor Heights departments, where feasibility and funding allows, shall incorporate Complete Streets Elements into existing public streets to improve the safety and convenience of all Users and to construct and enhance the transportation network for every User. If the safety and convenience of Users can be improved within the scope of Street Maintenance, then it is the intent of the City of Windsor Heights that such projects shall also include Complete Streets Elements.
- C. The City of Windsor Heights departments shall include key Complete Streets Elements in the normal review and/or development of plans, zoning and subdivision codes, laws, procedures, rules, regulations, ordinances, guidelines, programs, templates, and design manuals, to integrate, accommodate, and balance the needs of all Users in all Street Projects.
- D. The City of Windsor Heights departments shall coordinate Complete Streets design templates with street classifications and revise them to include Complete Streets infrastructure, such as, but not limited to, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, street crossings, and planting strips. All facilities will be designed and constructed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations using best practices and guidance from the following, among others:
 - 1) American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publications;
 - 2) The Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways;
 - 3) State Urban Design and Specifications (SUDAS) Manual;
 - 4) ITE Recommended Practice Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities;
 - 5) National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide;
 - 6) The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG);
 - 7) The Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).

5. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. In order to ensure Implementation of this Policy, the City of Windsor Heights will create a Complete Streets Advisory Committee, which will provide recommendations to the City Engineer and Building and Zoning Official regarding implementation of this policy. The City Engineer and Building and Zoning Official will then be responsible for providing formal recommendations to the Mayor and City Council for consideration.
- B. Membership on the Committee can be inter-departmental and inter-agency and will be subject to appointment by the Mayor. The Committee can include members from, but are not limited to, the following;
 - 1) The City of Windsor Heights Engineering, Administration, Planning, Parks and Recreation, and the Police and Fire Departments.
 - 2) Representatives from the bicycling, trail, disabled, youth and elderly communities, governmental entities, and other advocacy agencies and organizations, as may be relevant and residents.

6. EXCEPTIONS

Exemptions to this Policy shall only be granted when the Complete Streets Advisory Committee recommends, and the City Engineer and Building and Zoning Official concurs, and City Council determines that any of the following are evident:

- 1) Use by non-motorized Users is prohibited by law, there is insufficient space to safely accommodate the facility, or there are relatively high safety risks.
- 2) The cost would be excessive or disproportionate to the need or probable future use over the long term.
- 3) There is an absence of current or future need.

- 4) There are topographic or natural resource constraints.
- 5) A reasonable and equivalent alternative already exists for certain Users or is programmed to exist.
- 6) A legal and/or regulatory impediment or constraint exists.

7. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

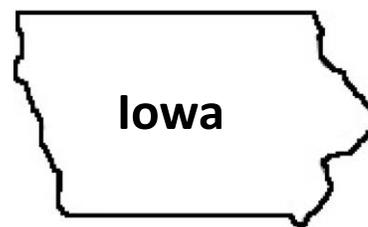
- A. The City of Windsor Heights shall develop, apply, and publicly report on walking and bicycling transportation performance measures in order to;
 - 1) Evaluate the functioning of the non-motorized transportation system.
 - 2) Ensure consistency with current industry standards.
 - 3) Identify strengths, deficiencies and potential improvements.
 - 4) Support development of new and innovative facilities and programs.
- B. Several factors shall be measured or used by the Complete Streets Advisory Committee, City Engineer, and Building and Zoning Official to evaluate the effectiveness of this Policy on an annual basis. The measures may include, but are not limited to;
 - 1) Number of transit and non-motorized users.
 - 2) Community attitudes and perceptions surveys.
 - 3) Number of approved or denied exceptions.
 - 4) Rate of crashes, injuries and fatalities by mode.
 - 5) Total miles of on/off-street bicycle facilities.

Complete Streets

Benefits, Design Elements, Community Resources

What are *Complete Streets*?

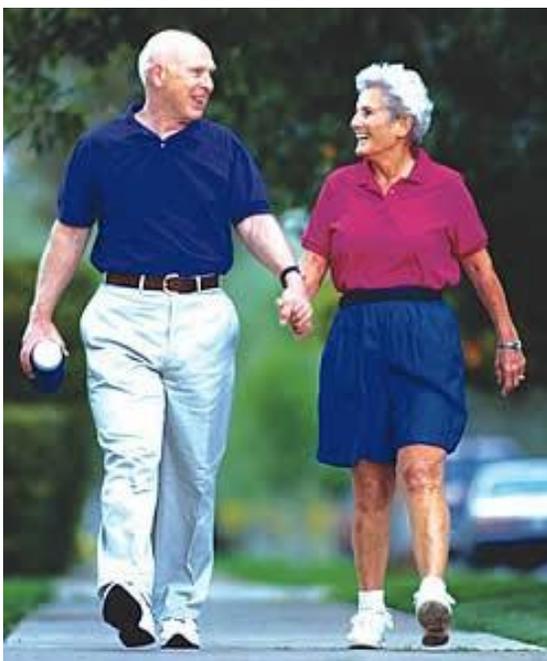
Complete Streets refer to the practice of planning, designing, operating and maintaining roadways with all modes of transportation and all users in mind. Not only are drivers considered, but also those who walk, bike or use public transit. *Complete Streets* support pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities. Streets that are “complete” move all people conveniently and safely. Over time, a network of *Complete Streets* can be established in a community providing safe transportation options and opportunities for physical activity.



Why should Iowa communities have *Complete Streets*?

For Health:

Complete Streets provide opportunities for walking and biking which help citizens stay active and prevent chronic disease.



- Over 30% of adult Iowans are obese making them at greater risk for heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some types of cancers.¹
- Physical inactivity is linked to increased risk of chronic disease, anxiety and depression, plus bone and muscular problems. Only 48% of adult Iowans get the recommended amount of aerobic physical activity.^{2,3,4}
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends changes to the physical environment as a strategy to prevent obesity.⁵
- States with the highest levels of bicycling and walking generally have lower levels of obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes and have the greatest percentage of adults who meet the physical activity guidelines.⁶

COMPLETE STREETS

For Safety:

Complete Streets help reduce traffic fatalities and injuries.

- 14% of all U.S. traffic fatalities are pedestrians or bicyclists.⁶
- The Iowa Department of Transportation (2012) reported 454 pedestrian-motor vehicle and 441 bicycle-motor vehicle crashes resulting in an injury or fatality.⁷
- Slower speeds improve pedestrian safety. Eighty percent of pedestrians hit by a car traveling 40 mph will die. The fatality rate drops to 5% for pedestrians hit by a car traveling 20 mph.⁸ All road users benefit from slower speeds.⁸
- Medians, bike lanes, and wider sidewalks are effective at reducing traffic speed. One study reported that pedestrians were 28% less likely to be injured on a street with raised medians, sidewalks, and safe intersections.⁹

For the Economy:

Complete Streets are good for the economy.

- Iowa commuter and recreational cyclists save healthcare dollars plus generate direct and indirect economic benefits.¹⁰
- Safer, easily-accessible main streets can revitalize rural and urban communities.⁸
- Walkable neighborhoods, those with sidewalks, trails, even trees, can increase home values.⁸



For Equity:

Complete Streets provide travel options and improve safety for at-risk populations including children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

- Nationally, today only 16% of children walk to school compared to 48% of children in 1969.¹¹
- Among older Americans who do not drive, more than half stay home on a given day due to a lack of transportation options.⁸
- Nearly one in five Americans suffers from hearing loss, vision loss, or mobility issues.

Complete Streets elements (e.g. curb cuts, longer crossing pedestrian signals, sidewalk access to bus stops and other destinations) facilitate travel for people with disabilities.⁸



¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (BRFSS 2012). www.cdc.gov

² Johns Hopkins Medicine Health Library. www.hopkinsmedicine.org

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov

⁴ U.S. Physical Activity Statistics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov

⁵ *Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States.* www.cdc.gov

⁶ *Bicycling and Walking in the United States: 2012 Benchmarking Report.*

www.peoplepoweredmovement.org

⁷ www.iowadot.gov

⁸ www.smartgrowthamerica.org

⁹ www.healthyplanning.org

¹⁰ Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Iowa.

www.peoplepoweredmovement.org

¹¹ www.saferoutesinfo.org

COMPLETE STREETS

Examples of *Complete Street* elements

Complete Streets are designed uniquely for each community. Not all *Complete Streets* within a community will have the same level of accommodation for all users. *Complete Streets* may also vary from rural to urban communities. Urban *Complete Streets* may have bike lanes, pedestrian crossing signals, median islands, and covered, easily accessible bus stops. Rural *Complete Streets* may be complete with a paved shoulder, proper signage, or an adjacent multiuse path. Some rural streets have light vehicular traffic and need no modification. Even when a street requires no additional improvements, it should be evaluated in the context of the entire community transportation system.



Polk City, IA

A main road was scheduled for re-pavement - a perfect time to add bike lanes on both sides.



Keosauqua, IA

A bicycle and pedestrian warning sign was added to a frequented street with no sidewalks.



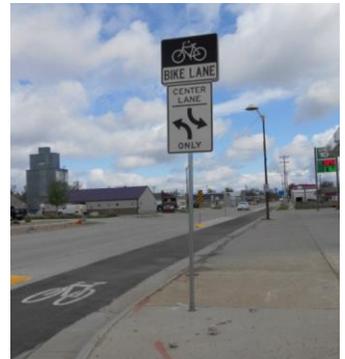
Conrad, IA

A sidewalk en route to the high school was retrofitted with a curb cut and detectable warning.



Madrid, IA

A paved shoulder provides space for a bicyclist.



Sibley, IA

A bike lane was added to a main road through town.



Des Moines, IA

Ingersoll Avenue underwent a "road diet", converting four lanes to three lanes, adding bike lanes.



Cedar Rapids, IA

A bike sharrow is a pavement marking used to encourage sharing the road.



Des Moines, IA

Curb bump-outs shorten the distance pedestrians must cross.

How can a community “Complete” its streets?

Communities wanting to ensure that all users are considered in the construction, repair, and maintenance of a street often adopt a *Complete Streets* policy. A policy will provide consistency in transportation practices over time. *Complete Streets* policies can exist in a variety of forms and be initiated by state, county, regional, city governments or transportation agencies. The National Complete Streets Coalition identified nine Iowa communities with *Complete Streets* policies (www.smartgrowthamerica.org, Sept. 2013):

- Cascade
- Cedar Falls
- Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - Cedar Rapids area
- Des Moines
- Dubuque
- Iowa City
- Johnson County Council of Governments
- Waterloo
- Bi-State Regional Transportation Commission - Quad Cities area



Several resources exist for communities in writing *Complete Streets* policies. Smart Growth America’s *Complete Streets Local Policy Workbook* helps communities decide which policy type is most appropriate and provides sample policy language. Communities may find it reassuring to know that an ideal policy allows for exceptions and design flexibility. The Iowa Department of Transportation is developing a state-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Long-Range Plan (Fall 2014) that can be a model for local community policies.

Complete Streets Resources

Complete Streets Local Policy Workbook. Smart Growth America and National Complete Streets Coalition. www.smartgrowthamerica.org

Complete Streets Policy Analysis. Smart Growth America and National Complete Streets Coalition. www.smartgrowthamerica.org

Model Laws and Resolutions: Complete Streets. ChangeLab Solutions. www.changelabsolutions.org

Transportation and Health Toolkit. American Public Health Association. www.apha.org

Complete Streets Strategies to Increase Bicycling and Walking. Iowa Bicycle Coalition. www.iowabicyclecoalition.org

Costs for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Infrastructure Improvements: A Resource for Researchers, Engineers, Planners, and the General Public. Active Living Research. www.activelivingresearch.org

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