

TOWN OF LEICESTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Adopted by the Leicester Board of Selectmen on February 13, 2017

I. Vision & Intent

The purpose of Leicester'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 Leicester will, to the maximum extent practical, 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, horses, agricultural tractors and machinery, and freight 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, horses, motorists, commercial vehicles, agricultural tractors and machinery, 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

- (1) 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.
- (2) The Town of Leicester recognizes that all transportation improvement and project phase are opportunities 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 Highway Superintendent shall consult with the Board of Selectmen regarding the feasibility of applying Complete Streets principles for routine roadway maintenance and projects prior to doing the work and use the exception criteria outlined under Section II, Paragraph C.
- (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 Leicester, as well as projects funded by the state and federal government, such as the Chapter 90 funds, MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and other state and federal funds for street and infrastructure design shall adhere to (comply with) the Town of Leicester Complete Streets Policy. Private developments and related street design components or corresponding street-related components shall adhere to (comply with) 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.

- (4) Special attention should be given to projects which enhance the overall transportation system and its connectivity. Specifically, high priority should be given to:
 - a. 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;
 - b. Corridors providing important continuity or connectivity links to existing pedestrian or bicycle networks.
 - c. Corridors providing primary access to Town services and other amenities in and around the Town Center.

C. Exceptions

Transportation infrastructure may be excluded from application of Complete Streets elements upon approval by the Board of Selectmen, in consultation with the Highway Superintendent, when:

- (1) 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.
- (2) The activities are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (i.e. mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair);
- (3) The construction is not practically feasible or cost effective because of unreasonable adverse impacts on the environment or on neighboring land uses;
- (4) The cost or impacts of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use or probable future use;
- (5) 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;
- (6) The roadway is a rural road, designated Scenic Road, or is privately owned.

III. Best Practice

A. Context Sensitivity

Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a context sensitive manner in which project implementation is sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and social setting. 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 in order 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 Leicester 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 Massachusetts Department of Transportation Project Design and Development Guidebook
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide
- Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's Healthy Community Design Toolkit
- The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Design Controls
- 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 Leicester, such as the Leicester Open Space & Recreation Plan, Leicester Master Plan, Town of Leicester Zoning Bylaw and the Town of Leicester Subdivision Rules & Regulations.

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 constantly evaluated for success and opportunities for improvement. The Board of Selectmen will work with the Highway Superintendent each year to ensure the upcoming year's road projects meet the Complete Streets principles to the most practical extent possible.

IV. Implementation


The Town of Leicester 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:

- (1) The Town will review and either revise or develop proposed revisions to all appropriate planning documents (Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, etc.); Zoning Bylaws; General Bylaws, Subdivision Regulations; and other regulations, guidelines, and programs as applicable to integrate Complete Streets principles in all Street Projects.
- (2) Contingent upon the availability of funds, pertinent Town staff and decision-makers will be encouraged to attend professional development and training, conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops on Complete Streets principles and best practices;
- (3) The Town will utilize inter-department coordination to promote the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public way;
- (4) The Town will seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies.

The Town of Leicester 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.

Vote to Adopt Complete Streets Policy

The Leicester Board of Selectmen voted to adopt this Complete Streets Policy at their meeting of February 13, 2017. On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, please accept this as Leicester's formally adopted Complete Street's Policy.



Kevin J. Mizikar, *ICMA-CM*
Leicester Town Administrator