

ROCKY HILL COMPLETE STREETS

INTRODUCTION

Complete Streets is a national movement that fundamentally changes how we view our community and how we design, build, and use our streets to further the health, safety, welfare, economic vitality, and environmental well-being of our town. Complete Streets are supported by several national organizations such as not but limited to the Federal Highway Administration, Institute of Transportation Engineers, American Planning Association, US Conference of Mayors, and other planning and public health professionals. The term “Complete Streets” describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, emergency responders, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, youth and families, etc.

Rocky Hill Connecticut realizes there are benefits associated with the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy to enhance mobility, improve safety, expand transportation access/choice and related contributions toward building a healthy community. A Complete Streets approach to design contributes to an enhanced quality of life and economic vitality for residents and businesses alike. Benefits include reducing vehicle miles traveled and increasing transportation by walking, bicycling and public transportation, which can help address a wide variety of challenges, including pollution, climate change, traffic congestion, social isolation such as that brought about by the pandemic and physical inactivity. Complete Streets are an important component of transportation design, and economic and community development, by helping create walkable communities, which attract and retain businesses and residents, and allow for the option to safely walk or bicycle to school, work, parks, or other community events and destinations.

The 2015 Plan of Conservation Development provides roadway strategies to provide for safer roadways for motorists, pedestrians of all abilities, bicyclists and transportation modes of all types. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, the Town of Rocky Hill will meet those needs through the development of a user-friendly transportation network that accommodates, encourages, benefits and welcomes all users and transportation modes. Elements of the policy shall include the following:

1. Vision and intent
2. Diverse users
3. Commitment in all projects and phases
4. Clear, accountable expectations
5. Jurisdiction.
6. Design
7. Land use and context sensitivity
8. Performance measures:
9. Project selection criteria
10. Implementation steps

1. VISION

Rocky Hill, Connecticut will encourage a Complete Streets culture that promotes an inter-connected community, healthy lifestyle and modes of transportation to serve all in our diverse community and all who enter herein. A Complete Streets policy shall direct the design, construction, use, and maintenance of town roadways, pathways/ trails, and sidewalks creating a comprehensive, integrated transportation network that is safe, accessible, accommodating, and welcoming to all users regardless of all age, race, ethnicity, income, and ability, A Complete Streets approach will encourage non-motorized modes of transportation and a Complete Streets culture that promotes an inter-connected community and healthy living.

1. BARRIERS TO MOBILITY

Users throughout our community face the following barriers to access of complete streets:

- While growing, our sidewalk network does not yet connect the whole town.
- Bike riders in town do not yet have access to safe, clearly define biking lanes.
- Public transit networks do not fully extend to all corners of our community.

As such, the Town of Rocky Hill will be flexible in its approach to Complete Streets, recognizing the need for flexibility since all streets are different and user needs vary in each community

2. COMMITMENT IN ALL PROJECTS AND PHASES

Every street is unique, however the Town of Rocky Hill, recognizing that every street is to be considered as a Complete Street shall be guided by the following principles:

1. Shall be appropriate to the function and context of the transportation network and mode
2. Shall be sensitive to the neighborhood, it's residents and their needs
3. Shall be flexible in deign to ensure that All have basic safe access and use of the Town's Complete Streets
4. Shall be considered as a part of a comprehensive, integrated network that allows all users choices amongst the various modes of transportation
5. Shall be consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development.
6. Shall consider public health during planning and design programs

3. EXCEPTIONS

The Town of Rocky Hill commits to applying Complete Streets principles at the outset of all transportation and roadway improvement projects. Each project shall be approached as an opportunity to improve the safety and accessibility of the street/right of way for all users. However, the Town realizes that the incorporation of Complete Streets may not always be possible and therefore exceptions shall be made if any of the following criteria render Complete Streets improvements unworkable:

1. Where specific users are prohibited by law from using the ROW (e.g. pedestrians and bicyclists within a limited access highway). However, exclusion of certain users on particular ROW's shall not exempt projects from accommodating other permitted users;
2. Cost is disproportionate to the current need or projected future need for Complete Streets improvements, or unusual circumstances, such as where natural features (e.g. steep hills, ledge, shorelines) make it very costly or impossible to accommodate all modes, or funding is not available;

3. There is an absence of current and future need (e.g. a rural road that carries low Average Daily Traffic (ADT) and is remote from neighborhoods, schools, or points of interest);

4. JURISDICTION AND COORDINATION

This Complete Streets Policy shall apply to all Town streets and land within public ROWs. All new private development projects, and retrofitted projects, which propose improvements within the public ROW, shall comply with this Complete Streets policy. Private development projects proposing privately owned rights-of-way shall be reviewed for consistency with the Complete Street policy as part of the approval process.

All Complete Streets improvements must be coordinated between all relevant Town departments as well as other government departments, Plan Implementation Committee and community groups.

5. DESIGN GUIDANCE

The Town of Rocky Hill will follow accepted design standards and using the best and most current design standards available which may include but not be limited to the following as may be amended periodically:

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

- Policy on Geometric Design of highways and Streets
- Guide for planning, design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities
- Guide for developing Bicycle facilities

American Planning Association (APA)

- Complete Streets: Best Policies and implementation Practices
- U.S. Traffic Calming Manual

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
- PEDSAFE-Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasures Selection System
- Incorporating on-Road Bicycle Networks into roadway resurfacing projects where feasible

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)

- Designing Walkable Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach

U.S. Access Board

- Accessible Public Rights-of-way: Planning and Design for Alterations

National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)

- Urban Bikeway Design Guide

6. LAND USE AND CONTEXT SENSITIVITY

Land use context and flexibility shall be considered relative to all potential Complete Street improvements. The overall goal is to preserve and enhance the scenic aesthetic, historical and environmental resources while improving and/or maintaining safety, mobility an infrastructure condition.

It is the intent of this policy that the Town Council, Town Departments and Town Land Use Boards and Commission will endeavor to incorporate Complete Street policies into their respective Ordinances, Regulations, practices, the Plan of Conservation and Development and other planning

and regulatory documents to help support the Complete Streets vision. All initial planning and design studies of complete streets infrastructure projects are to consider opportunities to improve public health. Additionally, the Planning and Zoning Commission is encouraging to review all private development proposals with the goal of facilitating the Town's Complete Streets vision.

Where feasible, walking and biking to municipally-owned facilities shall be encouraged and facilitated.

7. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS AND ANNUAL REPORTING TO TOWN COUNCIL

Annually the measurement of all Complete Streets improvements for the previous calendar year are to be reported to the Town Council:

1. Funding: Total dollar amount spent on Complete Streets Improvements
 - Funding sources to be noted Town, grants, other
2. Sidewalks/Pedestrian/ Public Transportation
 - Linear feet, proximity to municipal facilities, ADA improvements, bus stops
3. Bicycle -related improvements
 - Trails, lanes, signage, bike racks
4. Traffic calming measures
5. Maintenance of existing infrastructure
6. User Data/Crash Data
7. Exceptions Requested

8. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

When there are conflicting needs among users and modes, safety is the highest priority followed by mobility. The goal is to strive for balance among all modes. It is recognized that all modes cannot be accommodated within every right-of-way (publicly owns transportation corridors) but the overall goal is that all users of varying ability on varying modes can safely and conveniently use the transportation network.

9. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of Complete Streets will require the collaboration and cooperation of many stakeholders on a regular basis.

Community Development Services Department along with Public Works shall review and propose revisions where needed to applicable ordinances and regulations to further the implementation of Complete Streets.

The Municipality shall encourage professional staff development in Complete Streets through attendance at seminars and training sessions. The Municipality shall actively promote public information and education on Complete Streets through use of its website, social media, educational materials distributed to municipal buildings such as the library, community center, and community groups.