



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

April 7, 2016

City Council President Linda Morad and
Honorable Members of the New Bedford City Council
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Council President Morad and Honorable Members of the City Council,

Enclosed for your review and consideration is a copy of the City's "Complete Streets Policy" and associated Resolution. The Commonwealth requires municipalities to officially adopt such a policy in order to be eligible for its Complete Streets grant program. This program provides funding over and above Chapter 90 and MassWorks, explicitly for projects that provide safe and accessible transportation options for all travel modes and for people of all ages and abilities.

The Complete Streets Policy is listed as one of the best practices under the Community Compact Cabinet created 2015 by Governor Baker, with funding administered by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services.

Through this policy, municipalities commit to a number of principles and practices related to their Complete Streets endeavors. Through the subsequent Complete Streets Prioritization Plan process, the municipality then strategically analyzes its needs for complete streets infrastructure and determines where it wants to invest. As monies become available, the prioritized projects can be funded. It is important to note that this policy largely memorializes practices already in place for both City infrastructure projects and private development projects.

New Bedford's policy was prepared as a collaborative effort between Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development; the Department of Public Infrastructure; Mass in Motion New Bedford; and our consultants CDM Smith, and presented to my office for review and submission to the Council. I am confident that the enclosed policy not only complies with the Commonwealth's requirements, but will also help us to promote and improve public health, reduce traffic congestion, make neighborhoods safer and more livable, and improve environmental outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jon Mitchell
JFM/crc



City of New Bedford **COMPLETE STREET POLICY**

Effective Date	April 14, 2016
Date of Last Revision	February 18, 2016
Planning Board Review	March 9, 2016
City Council Resolution for Adoption	April 14, 2016

Vision and Purpose:

The City of New Bedford works toward achieving the vision of “Complete Streets,” principles that call for the design and operation of roadways in such a manner as to create safe, comfortable, and accessible streets for all users, including but not limited to, pedestrians, users of wheelchairs and assisted mobility devices, bicyclists, transit and school bus riders, motorists, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers and emergency responders. Complete street principles contribute toward the safety, health, economic viability, and quality of life in a community through improved pedestrian and vehicular environments. Complete streets are safe, accessible, and comfortable means to travel between home, school, work, recreation, and retail destinations. Complete streets provide safe multimodal travel regardless of age, income, or abilities.

The purpose of the City of New Bedford’s Complete Streets Policy is to accommodate all users by creating a road network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. In working to achieve this, the city’s intent is to routinely formalize a plan- for design, operation and maintenance (pavement and sidewalk repairs) of its streets so that they are safe for users of all ages, abilities, and income levels.

This policy directs decision makers to consistently plan, design, construct and maintain streets so that they accommodate the full breadth of potential, anticipated users including, but not limited to able-bodied pedestrians, disabled users of wheelchairs or assisted mobility devices, bicyclists, motorists, emergency vehicles, transit, delivery and service personnel, and those accessing ferry and future commuter rail service.

Core Commitment:

The City of New Bedford recognizes that users of differing modes of transportation as noted herein are legitimate users of roadways and deserve appropriate facilities. “All Users” includes users of all ages, abilities, and income levels.

The City recognizes that all roadway projects – including new construction, reconstruction and infrastructure maintenance (pavement and sidewalk repairs) – are all potential opportunities to apply Complete Streets design principles. The City will, to the maximum extent practicable, design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to provide for a comprehensive and integrated street network of facilities for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.

Complete Streets design recommendations/principles shall be incorporated into all publically and privately funded projects, as appropriate including the following:

- All transportation infrastructure and street design projects requiring funding or approval by the City of New Bedford shall adhere to the City of New Bedford Complete Streets Policy.
- Projects funded by the State and Federal government, including but not limited to, Chapter 90 Funds, Transportation Improvement Funds (TIP), MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), or other State and Federal Funds for street and infrastructure design must adhere to the City of New Bedford Complete Streets Policy to the maximum extent practicable.
- Private developments and related roadway design components shall adhere to the City of New Bedford Complete Streets Policy.
- To the extent practicable, state-owned streets must comply with the City of New Bedford Complete Streets Policy, including design, construction, and maintenance (pavement and sidewalk repairs) of streets within City boundaries.

A Complete Streets Committee will be comprised of the Department of Public Infrastructure, Traffic Commission, Planning Division, and any other committees, departments, or organizations as appropriate. The Committee shall be constituted to ensure the execution of this policy, the appropriate exemptions from this policy and to conduct a periodic review of the policy's efficacy within the city.

Exceptions:

Exceptions to the City of New Bedford's Complete Street Policy may be granted by the Commissioner of Public Infrastructure/Complete Streets and/or his/her designee with the consent of a majority of the Complete Streets Committee when the following conditions are determined to exist and are documented:

- Roadways where specific users are prohibited by law, such as interstate freeways or pedestrian malls. An effort will be made, in these cases, for accommodations elsewhere.
- Where cost or impact of accommodations, or implementation of this policy, is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use as recognized by the City of New Bedford.
- Where other City policies, regulations, or requirements contradict or preclude implementation of Complete Street principles. (i.e. Historic District in Downtown, etc.)

Best Practices:

The City of New Bedford's Complete Streets Policy will focus on developing a connected, integrated network that serves all road users. Complete Streets will be integrated into policies, planning, and design of all types of public and private projects including new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair, and maintenance (pavement and sidewalk repairs) of transportation networks.

Implementation of the Complete Streets Policy will be carried out cooperatively within all departments in the City of New Bedford, and to the greatest extent practicable. This includes coordination with all private developers, and state, regional, and federal agencies undertaking and/or funding work within the City of New Bedford.

The City recognizes that Complete Streets principles may be achieved through single elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance (pavement and sidewalk repairs) activities over time.

The latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations available will be reviewed and applied as practicable in the implementation of Complete Streets including:

- i. Massachusetts Department of Transportation Project Development and Design Guide
- ii. American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials publications including *A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design; Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*
- iii. *The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Design Controls (2009)* with Amendments 1 and 2 as well as the Massachusetts Amendments.
- iv. Institute of Transportation Engineers' Recommended Practice, "*Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context-Sensitive Approach*,"
- v. National Association of City Transportation Officials' "*Urban Bikeway Design Guide*."
- vi. ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- vii. ABA, Architectural Barriers Act

Application of design standards are flexible, recognizing that all streets are not alike and that user needs should be balanced; further that innovative and/or non-traditional design options shall be considered.

Ongoing development and execution of the Complete Streets implementation will be responsive to the community's physical, economic, and social setting. Complete Streets will follow a context-sensitive approach to process and design including a range of goals by giving significant consideration to stakeholders and community values. It includes goals related to livability, connectivity, and sustainability with participation of those affected in order to have projects that best serve the community. The overall goal of this approach is to improve or maintain safety and mobility through infrastructure conditions that also preserve and enhance the scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources.

The latest versions of documents and plans created for the City of New Bedford, will be reviewed and considered to ensure community context sensitivity of complete street projects proposed, including but not limited to:

- The City's Master Plan: New Bedford 2020
- Open Space and Recreation Plan
- Bicycle Network Plan
- Neighborhood and/or District Plans
- Safe Routes to School travel plans
- Walking and Bicycle Audits
- Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA) Comprehensive Service Assessment
- SRTA routes and bus stops studies
- Plans and studies produced by the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD), such as: the Regional Transportation Plan, Regional Bicycle Plan, corridor and transit oriented development studies, traffic counts
- SouthCoast Rail Plan

Implementation:

The Complete Streets Policy will be carried out by the Department of Public Infrastructure within the City of New Bedford to the greatest extent practicable, and will be upheld by any private developers,

and state, regional, and federal agencies working within the city layout will be required to follow this Policy.

The Complete Streets Committee as described in this policy shall serve as a technical review entity where exceptions to this policy are requested. The City's Department of Public Infrastructure will forward the project documentation, plans and proposal to all applicable Committee members for comment during the review process. The Complete Streets Committee shall convene as necessary and provide feedback to the Department of Public Infrastructure periodically as requested. In addition, the Complete Street Committee will periodically update and solicit feedback on potential projects with the general public to ensure the perspectives of the community are considered and incorporated, as may be appropriate.

The City shall make the Complete Streets Policy a routine part of everyday operations. The City shall approach every transportation project and program as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation networks for all users, and shall work in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions to achieve Complete Streets. In so doing, the city will perform the following implementation steps:

- Review and revise or develop proposed revision to all appropriate planning documents, zoning codes, subdivision regulations, laws, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines, programs and any amendments thereto in order to integrate the Complete Streets principles in all infrastructure projects, as feasible.
- Maintain a priority list of transportation improvement projects including problem intersections and roadways.
- Maintain a comprehensive map and inventory of pedestrian and bicycle facility infrastructure that will prioritize projects to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk, bikeway, and recreational trail networks.
- Utilize inter-department coordination to promote the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public way.
- Seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants to ensure the successful implementation of the Complete Streets Policy.

Evaluation:

The City's Complete Streets Committee, in consultation with the current City Performance Measurement Initiative, will determine the frequency of assessment and appropriate metrics for analyzing the success of this policy. These metrics will include amenities such as the total number of new bicycle facilities, the linear feet of new pedestrian accommodations, number of retrofitted pedestrian facilities or amenities, number of intersection improvements made to improve Level of Service (LOS) and safety for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, rates of crashes by mode, rate of children walking or bicycling to school, and/or number of trips made by mode. These metrics will be compiled into a report and presented as needed.

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
IN CITY COUNCIL

April 14, 2016

**RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE CITY OF NEW BEDFORD'S
COMPLETE STREETS POLICY**

WHEREAS, "Complete Streets" are defined as streets that are designed to accommodate all users—motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders; and

WHEREAS, the City of New Bedford has created a Complete Streets Policy that sets forth goals, expectations and guidelines germane to the creation and maintenance of "Complete Streets" within the city; and

WHEREAS, "Complete Streets" can include a range of elements to accommodate all transportation users, including, but not limited to, sidewalks, signage, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, cycle tracks, traffic lanes shared with motorists including sharrows and other bicycle pavement marking, crosswalks and other pavement marking for pedestrians, pedestrian control signalization, bicycle actuated traffic signals, bus pull outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, roundabouts, traffic islands and other traffic calming measures; and

WHEREAS, "Complete Streets" principles should guide future roadway and transportation plans for both new and reconstruction projects in the City of New Bedford, and any exception to this approach should be appropriately justified and documented; and

WHEREAS, a "Complete Streets Committee" shall be constituted, comprised of relevant city staff as articulated within the Complete Streets Policy, to assist in the implementation and evaluation of this policy; and

WHEREAS, the application of the "Complete Streets" Policy sets forth that street and transportation plans should always be guided by the principle that streets should promote multiple transportation options for all people, it is also acknowledged that such application may, at times, vary depending on the surrounding transportation system, land uses and densities and its general context; and

WHEREAS, "Complete Streets" can spark economic and community development by helping to create walkable, vibrant communities where businesses can thrive and be strong and where livable neighborhoods are created for City of New Bedford residents; and

WHEREAS, "Complete Streets" can play a role in transportation projects by improving bicycle and pedestrian safety, reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality both by promoting alternative forms of transportation and by helping to improve traffic flow; and

WHEREAS, the people of the city of New Bedford have expressed a strong desire for increased transportation options including walking, cycling and transit within the city's Master Plan 2020 and through community forums; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the New Bedford City Council strongly endorses a Complete Streets approach for the City of New Bedford in order to enhance transportation options and to improve the quality of life for the residents of New Bedford as articulated in the City of New Bedford Complete Streets Policy, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of New Bedford will work through its Department of Public Infrastructure and the City's Complete Streets Committee in ensuring the execution of its Complete Streets Policy and the fulfillment of its goals.

