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CITY OF MELROSE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Effective Date	6/15/2016
Expiration Date	None
Date Last Revised	6/15/2016
Date Approved by Mayor	 6-15-16

Vision and Purpose

The purpose of the City of Melrose's Complete Streets Policy is to accommodate road users of all ages and abilities by creating a transportation network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. This policy will be applied in all decision-making for related infrastructure planning and construction.

Melrose residents place high value on the vibrant, walkable downtown and neighborhood business districts, excellent schools, varied public transit options, and multitude of green space. The City is committed to maintaining Melrose's character as a desirable community for residents of all ages, stages of life, and abilities. The City recognizes that the application of Complete Streets principles can enhance health, safety, livability, community character, environmental sustainability, and economic vitality. By incorporating Complete Streets guiding principles, the City of Melrose will advance its efforts to provide safety and accessibility for all users of our roadways, trails, and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, freight and commercial vehicles, and emergency vehicles.

The City of Melrose aims to improve the health of its residents and recognizes that Complete Streets can increase everyday physical activity by enabling additional walking and bicycling by its residents and visitors. The City of Melrose will plan, design, operate and maintain streets so that they are safe for all users as a matter of routine. This policy guides decision makers in consistently planning, designing, and constructing streets to reasonably accommodate current and future users.

Core Commitment

The City of Melrose identifies roadway and development projects, whether new, maintenance, expansion, or reconstruction, as potential opportunities to apply Complete Streets design principles. Complete Streets design recommendations shall be incorporated, where feasible, into all publicly and privately funded projects. This includes transportation infrastructure projects requiring funding or approval by the City of Melrose, as well as projects funded by the state and federal governments using sources such as Chapter 90 funds, City improvement grants, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding, MassWorks Infrastructure Program grants, Mass in Motion funding, other capital borrowing, and other state and federal funding programs incorporating street and infrastructure improvements. The same will be applied to

private developments and related street and sidewalk design components. In addition, to the extent practical, state owned roadways (both Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) roadways) will comply with the Complete Streets policy, including the design, construction, and maintenance of such roadways within City boundaries.

The City will strive to design, construct, maintain, and operate all properties over which it has any control to provide for a comprehensive and integrated network of transportation facilities for people of all ages and abilities.

In addition, the City Engineer, working with Department of Public Works staff, will use best judgment to incorporate Complete Streets principles into routine maintenance activities, with an emphasis on an equitable approach to accommodating multiple modes of transportation. Routine maintenance may include, but is not limited to, restriping, spot improvements, traffic signal adjustments or changes, curb ramp construction, and similar projects in the public right-of-way.

Exceptions to the Complete Streets Policy may be granted by the City Engineer. When considering exceptions, the City will consider an equitable approach to accommodating Complete Street principles and multi-modal transportation. Such exceptions include:

- 1) Transportation infrastructure where specific users are prohibited by law (i.e. interstates, pedestrian paths, etc.). In these cases, an effort will be made for accommodations elsewhere.
- 2) Other transportation infrastructure may be exempt from this Policy, upon approval, where documentation and data indicate that:
 - a) The cost or impact of accommodation is inappropriate for or excessively disproportionate to the need, probable use, or future use,
 - b) Other City policies, regulations, or requirements contradict or preclude implementation of Complete Streets principle(s).

Best Practices

This City of Melrose Complete Streets policy focuses on developing a connected, integrated network that serves all users and provides accessible and efficient connections between home, school; work, and civic, recreational and retail destinations throughout the community.

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 of transportation facilities and in conjunction with redevelopment projects. To the extent possible, recommendations from the City Engineer for incorporating Complete Streets elements will occur in projects' beginning stages, prior to final design.

Implementation of the City of Melrose Complete Streets policy will be carried out cooperatively within all relevant departments in the City and, to the greatest extent possible, among private developers and state, regional, and federal agencies.

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. This 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, recreational, and environmental resources, while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

The City of Melrose recognizes that "Complete Streets" may be achieved through single or multiple elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.

The latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations available will be used in the implementation of this Complete Streets policy, including:

- The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Project Design and Development Guidebook
- Boston Complete Streets Guidelines
- The latest edition of American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets
- Urban Street Design Guide, Urban Bikeway Design Guide, and Urban Transit Design Guide published by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
- The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Guidebook on Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures
- The Architectural Access Board (AAB) 521 CMR Rules and Regulations
- Documents and plans created for the City of Melrose including but not limited to, City of Melrose ordinances and policies, pedestrian and bicycle master plans, and other prioritization plans that may be developed by the City in connection with this Complete Streets Policy.

Complete Streets implementation and effectiveness will be constantly evaluated for success and opportunities for improvement. The City will develop performance measures to gauge implementation and effectiveness of the policy. These will include Complete Streets multi-modal transportation network mapping, to monitor progress and identify areas of further need.

Implementation

The City, acting through the City Engineer, shall make the Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations, shall approach every transportation and development project and program as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all users of all ages and abilities, and shall work in coordination with other departments, boards, committees, agencies, and jurisdictions.

In order to implement this Complete Streets policy, the City will undertake the following specific actions:

- 1) The City will update and solicit feedback on potential projects with the general public to ensure that the perspective of the community is considered and incorporated as appropriate.
- 2) The City will review and either revise or develop proposed revisions to all appropriate planning documents (master plan, open space and recreation plan, etc.), City ordinances, zoning and subdivision rules and regulations, and other policies, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines, programs and templates to integrate Complete Streets principles in all appropriate projects, so as to be consistent with the City of Melrose Complete Streets policy.
- 3) The City will strive toward developing street classification guidelines for Complete Streets infrastructure, containing guidance on topics such as lane widths, fog line striping, bicycle lanes, bike racks, sidewalks, street crossings, curb geometries, and planting strips as they pertain to different types of roadways. The design of new or reconstructed facilities should anticipate and support likely future demand for bicycling, walking and transit facilities.
- 4) As part of the baseline network mapping, the City will maintain a comprehensive record of present and potential future transportation improvement projects in Melrose, as well as locations of possible design issues. The City will also maintain a comprehensive inventory of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that will allow for prioritization of projects to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk and bikeway networks, especially around areas of high usage such as schools and public transit or to establish connectivity with regional networks. The City will coordinate with MassDOT and DCR to confirm the accuracy of the baseline pedestrian and bicycle accommodations inventory in order to prioritize projects.
- 5) The City will consider Complete Streets goals when prioritizing capital improvement projects to encourage implementation of this policy.
- 6) When designing and implementing Complete Streets projects, the City will also consider whether there are opportunities to incorporate low-impact development (LID) principles to address stormwater quality and quantity, to further benefit the community.
- 7) The City will train pertinent City staff and decision-makers on the technical content of Complete Streets principles and best practices, as well as community engagement methods for implementing a Complete Streets policy. Training may be accomplished through workshops and other appropriate means.
- 8) The City will incorporate a public outreach component to this program through which the community can become better educated about the projects that are being implemented and their intent and benefits.
- 9) The City will utilize inter-departmental coordination to make responsible and efficient use of resources in the implementation of this policy.

- 10) The City will coordinate with adjacent municipalities to strive toward a seamless network of facilities for users of transportation infrastructure.
- 11) The City will seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets principles.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

A Complete Streets Working Group will be designated by the Mayor to oversee this initiative and monitor its success. The Complete Streets Working Group will be a multidisciplinary team with members including, at a minimum, representation from the following:

- Mayor's Office
- Board of Aldermen
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- Board of Health and/or Health Department
- Planning Board and/or Planning Department
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Melrose Police Department
- Safe Routes to School Representative
- Other local, regional and statewide committees, departments or organizations as appropriate

An integral element of the Complete Streets Working Group will be to increase communication and forge partnerships among the various stakeholders. The focus of this Working Group will be ensuring the implementation of the Complete Streets policy and, where necessary, altering existing practices and overcoming barriers that may act as impediments to implementation.

The Complete Streets Working Group will develop performance measures to periodically assess the rate, success, and effectiveness of implementing the Complete Streets policy. The Working Group will determine the frequency of assessment and utilize appropriate metrics for analyzing the success of this policy. These metrics may include, but are not limited to: the total number of new bicycle lanes, the linear feet of new pedestrian accommodations, the number of retrofitted pedestrian facilities or amenities, the number of new or repainted crosswalks, the number of new or reconstructed curb ramps or other accessibility accommodations, the number of new street trees or percentage of streets with a tree canopy, the percent completion of bicycle and pedestrian networks as envisioned by municipal plans, the number of intersection improvements to bicycle, pedestrian, vehicle and multimodal safety and/or efficiency, the rate of crashes, injuries, and fatalities by mode, the number of trips by mode, the rate of children walking or bicycling to school, the total expenditure on Complete Streets initiatives, and the number of approved exemptions from the Melrose Complete Streets Policy.

These metrics will be compiled into a report by the Working Group and made public as needed, but no less than annually. Based on the findings of these assessments, this Complete Streets policy and its implementation methodology can be adjusted accordingly to enhance effectiveness.