

CITY OF PORTAGE

RESOLUTION OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF THE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Minutes of a regular meeting of the City Council for the City of Portage, Michigan held on August 11, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. local time at the City Hall in the City of Portage, Michigan.

PRESENT: Ansari, Ford, Pearson, Randall, Reid, Strazdas, Urban

ABSENT: None.

The following resolution was offered by:

Councilmember: Pearson, and supported by:

Councilmember: Reid.

WHEREAS, Complete Streets are defined as a design framework that enables safe and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers of all ages and abilities; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Legislature has passed Complete Streets legislation that requires the Michigan Department of Transportation and local governments to consider all users in transportation related projects; and

WHEREAS, a complete streets policy provides guidance for the planning, design, and (re)construction of roadways and/or an interconnected network of transportation facilities that promotes complete streets: and

WHEREAS, increasing walking and bicycling offers improved health benefits for the population and makes the City of Portage a more livable community; and

WHEREAS, complete streets enhance safe walking and bicycling options for school-age children, in recognition of the national Safe Routes to Schools program; and

WHEREAS, complete streets support economic growth and community stability by providing accessible and efficient connections between neighborhoods, schools, places of

employment, recreational areas, and commercial establishments by improving pedestrian and vehicular mobility throughout the city; and

WHEREAS, the City of Portage recognizes the importance of complete street infrastructure improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Portage supports the Complete Streets Policy for use by the City of Portage in the planning design, and (re)construction of public infrastructure improvements.

ADOPTED: 7 to 0

AYES: Councilmember Ansari, Ford, Pearson, Randall, Reid, Strazdas, Urban

NAYS: Councilmember None.

ABSENT: Councilmember None.

James R. Hudson, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, James R. Hudson, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed and acting City Clerk of the City of Portage, Michigan, and that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City of Portage on the 11th day of August, 2015.

James R. Hudson, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Date: 8/29/15

City Attorney

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

I. THE COMPLETE STREETS INTENT

The City of Portage, through this Complete Streets Policy and the adopted Comprehensive Plan, recognizes that planning the city transportation system involves more than just moving vehicles efficiently and safely. A transportation system needs to meet the needs of all types of users – motorists, pedestrians (including those with disabilities), bicyclists, transit vehicles and users, freight haulers, emergency responders and citizens of all ages and abilities.

For many years, the City of Portage has designed and implemented a multi-modal transportation system to safely and efficiently move both motorists and non-motorists throughout the community. Furthermore, the design of the multi-modal system has also considered the context of the adjacent land uses. Comprehensive planning, design and construction efforts that consider all users as part of a transportation system will continue as public and private developments and capital improvements are implemented.

II. BENEFITS OF A COMPLETE STREETS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Continuing to provide and invest in a Complete Streets system is a priority for residents, businesses and city leaders, and includes many benefits such as:

- Provides multi-modal transportation connections between homes, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations.
- Enhances safe walking and bicycling options for school-age children, consistent with the national Safe Routes to Schools program
- Encourages economic growth, positively impacting property values.
- Improves pedestrian and cyclist safety by reducing potential crashes between motorized and non-motorized users.
- Encourages walking and bicycling that improves health and fitness.
- Provides driving alternatives positively impacting the environment, conserves fuel and saves money.

III. APPLICABILITY OF THE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

The City of Portage will consider every municipal transportation improvement and private development project as an opportunity to evaluate the level of Complete Streets elements within the general project area and connectivity to adjacent areas with the intent to improve safety and accessibility for all users. This Complete Streets Policy will be utilized with all planning, design, funding and approval involving any street construction, reconstruction, resurface, major repair or alteration, or right-of-way acquisition project. This policy is also applicable to the installation, replacement or reconstruction of underground utilities located within a public street right-of-way; however, water and sanitary sewer enterprise funds cannot be used as a Complete Streets funding source.

A determination as to whether or not a specific street is a Complete Street, or how many design elements are appropriate will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

IV. DESIGNING A MULTI-MODAL SYSTEM TO MEET THE NEEDS TO ALL USERS

The City of Portage will seek to enhance the safety, access, convenience and comfort for all users of all ages and abilities through the design, operation and maintenance of the transportation network. The goal is to continue to expand an interconnected network of facilities accommodating each mode of travel consistent with the goals identified in the adopted Comprehensive Plan and other related planning documents. Furthermore, this policy recognizes that all streets are not the same: Streets vary by type and intensity of adjacent land uses, number of travel lanes, posted speed limits, traffic volumes, available right-of-way and other characteristics such as topography, soil types, and proximity of trees. As a result, the necessity for certain non-motorized transportation facilities will need to be carefully evaluated such that the cost of the non-motorized facility is balanced with the demand and availability of right-of-way.

Transportation improvements will include facilities and other amenities that are recognized as contributing to Complete Streets, which may include, but not necessarily limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Sidewalks (new construction, gap construction, repair or replacement, ADA improvements).
2. Pedestrian refuge islands or crosswalk improvements.
3. Traffic calming measures, where appropriate.
4. Street and/or sidewalk lighting.
5. Multi-use trails.
6. Accessibility improvements consistent with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).
7. Improved pedestrian access and amenities (e.g. bus shelters) to transit stops and/or installation of bus turnouts.
8. Bicycle accommodations including designated bike lanes, widened travel lanes and bike storage facilities.
9. Connecting sidewalks along a public street to internal private development sidewalks.
10. Interconnected and/or shared off-street parking lots and other access management techniques to reduce driveways and subsequent points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists.

V. CONTEXT SENSITIVE STREET DESIGN

Historically, streets were designed to meet expected traffic volumes at a selected speed. Streets or intersections were widened to meet vehicular needs provided right-of-way was available. That traditional approach has been changed in response to best practices in street design, which recognize that many factors along a particular street influence the speed of traffic, crashes, and how a street can be in harmony, or in conflict with its surroundings.

Street width, presence of on-street parking and sidewalks, block length, building setbacks, design speed, pavement markings and signs, street trees, and even boulevard landscaping and street furniture all contribute to how the street functions. Driver perceptions can affect vehicle speed and care used in driving. These elements can also affect how people view a corridor and their impression of Portage in general. A street designed in tandem with its surroundings can foster an inviting place to live, work and visit.

The City of Portage will continue to rely on a wide range of concepts to help ensure the transportation system operates safely and efficiently, but also in context with the immediate area and overall character of the city.

VI. IMPROVE NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

Improving the connectivity between the current network of sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use trails, paths, public transit routes and roadways is important to ensure the continued success of complete streets concepts in the City of Portage. A well-connected network will encourage citizens to fully utilize all available forms of transportation that will provide safe access for all users, promote healthy living, increase the capacity and efficiency of the roadway network and reduce negative environmental impacts. It is also important that a well-connected network include safe and convenient transitions from one mode of transportation to another, from one jurisdiction to another and from one type of infrastructure improvement to another. This can be accomplished by including ADA compliant improvements, appropriate signage/pavement markings, refuge islands, sidewalk connections to bus stops, among others.

VII. NON-MOTORIZED COMPLETE STREET ELEMENTS

The Transportation Chapter of the City of Portage Comprehensive Plan provides specific recommendations concerning the provision of the following non-motorized Complete Street elements:

1. Sidewalks (that are ADA compliant) on local and major streets:
 - a. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of all streets within new residential subdivisions.
 - b. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of all major thoroughfares.
 - c. Sidewalks within existing residential subdivisions are inconsistent throughout the community. In such areas, the following efforts should be pursued:
 - i. Fill gaps in the sidewalk system where they exist as redevelopment and infill development occurs;
 - ii. Concurrent with capital improvement planning, construction of sidewalks along primary pedestrian routes to schools, parks or other activity nodes should be considered;
 - iii. Where concerns regarding pedestrian safety exist and have been documented, construction of sidewalks and other appropriate safety improvements should also be considered.
2. A paved-shoulder bikeway on major thoroughfares to accommodate bicycle travel.

VIII. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy may only be appropriate when the City Administration determines that one or more of the following provisions exist:

1. An affected roadway prohibits, by law, specified users (such as an interstate freeways or pedestrian malls), in which case a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere.
2. An alternative route, such as a multi-use trail in the immediate vicinity provides an option for non-motorized transportation.
3. A wide shared-shoulder bikeway designed to accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian use is available in the street right-of-way.
4. There is insufficient right-of-way to accommodate a Complete Street element.

5. The activities, such as spot repair or crack seal, are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition, which meet MDOT's ADA upgrade exceptions.
6. Capital preventive maintenance projects where the roadwork is not substantial enough to recognize costs savings by including the non-motorized element. Examples of preventive maintenance projects include thin overlays (less than 1.5-inch), micro-seals, chip seals or slurry seals.
7. The type of project does not have a substantial impact on the roadway, such as signal upgrades, addition of turning lanes and utility installations signal interconnect projects, which do not remove existing non-motorized or transit facilities.
8. Safety projects which are funded only for specific safety features identified by crash patterns, due to the funding parameters of the program.
9. The adopted Comprehensive Plan, or other present and/or anticipated market conditions that can be documented, indicate an absence of existing or future need (e.g. sparse population), for a Complete Street element or elements.
10. An element of this policy will have an adverse impact on existing environmental resources such as wetlands, floodplains, creeks or historic structures or the presence of an environmental resource will add significant cost to an element of this policy.

Exceptions to this policy involving private (re)development projects requiring plan review approval or recommendation to City Council by the Planning Commission shall only be granted or recommended when the Planning Commission, after recommendation from the City Administration, determines one or more of the above applicable provisions exist, is consistent with applicable sections of the Zoning Code concerning Planning Commission review/approval authority and is consistent with the goals, objectives and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

IX. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The City of Portage will cooperate with adjacent communities, the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study and Kalamazoo County to ensure the principles and practices of complete streets concepts are consistent in appropriate planning documents and implanted along the mutually shared corporate boundaries. The City of Portage, together with its adjacent neighbors, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study and Kalamazoo County, will cooperate to make sure the transportation network as it transitions from one community to the next is seamless in accordance with local and regional road, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian plans and design criteria.

X. DESIGN GUIDELINES

The City of Portage will consider design guidelines promulgated in the documents listed below or as may be required by the funding source. Sources for design guidelines include, but are not limited to:

1. American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 6th Edition, or latest edition.
2. American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: Guide for the Planning, Design, Operation of Pedestrian Facilities – July 2004 edition or latest edition.
3. American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: Development of Bicycle Facilities – Fourth Edition or latest edition.
4. Institute of Transportation Engineers: Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach – 2010 edition or latest edition.

In conjunction with the references noted above, the city will also consider the impact on a street and any proposed improvements will have on surrounding land uses pursuant to Section V.

XI. IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Portage will take the following actions to implement this Complete Streets policy:

1. The Department of Transportation and Utilities, with assistance from the Department of Community Development, will lead the implementation of this policy and coordinate with other departments and outside organizations.
2. The city will continue to maintain a comprehensive inventory of the pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure within the city's GIS mapping system. This information can be used by various departments to identify and prioritize projects in accordance with this policy, Comprehensive Plan and other related planning documents.
3. Through the private development project plan review process, installation of Complete Street elements will be incorporated during the construction phase of the private development project when appropriate.
4. Each year, the city will evaluate applicable transportation-related projects for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program in accordance with the recommendations of this Complete Streets Policy. Each municipal project submitted for Capital Improvement Program approval will include a summary of incorporated Complete Streets elements or, if none are proposed, an explanation as to the reasons why.
5. When appropriate, the city will review existing plans and policies related to transportation planning/improvements to ensure consistency with this Complete Streets policy.
6. The city administration will develop educational materials intended to inform elected officials, staff and interested citizens regarding the content of Complete Streets principles and best practices for implementing this policy.
7. The city will coordinate transportation improvement projects involving complete street elements with other departments and outside agencies to promote the most responsible and efficient use of financial resources for activities within the public right-of-way.
8. The city will continue to seek public and private sources of funding to implement the elements of this Complete Streets policy. The city will also continue to coordinate transportation-related projects, including complete streets infrastructure planning and funding, through the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study through implementation of the Metropolitan Transportation plan and Transportation Improvement Program.