

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Town of Weymouth

Vision and Purpose

The Town of Weymouth encompasses 21.61 square miles and is home to approximately 54,000 residents with diverse demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Although primarily a residential community, over time, four distinct commercial centers have evolved. Each center has faced its own unique challenges as they have adapted to the automobile-dominated reality of the 20th century and beyond. The Town recognizes the importance of maintaining and promoting the vibrancy of these areas and each has been the subject of site-specific studies which have emphasized the consideration of multiple modes of transportation both within the centers and along the roadways providing access to them.

Similarly, the *Weymouth Open Space & Recreation Plan (2014)* and the *Safe Routes for Seniors Report (2014)* identified several goals consistent with those expressed as part of this policy. Most relevantly, the plans stressed the following:

- Enhance connections between existing open space resources.
- Maintain the Town's open space and recreational facilities and promote their accessibility to Weymouth's citizens of all ages and abilities.
- Improve access to and management of the Town's parks and open space /conservation land.
- Provide open space networks linking Town, state and other open space lands.
- Incorporate healthy living concepts in all phases of Town activities and development.
- Construct sidewalks with an unobstructed, four to six feet wide pedestrian right of way that offer comfortable clearways for older adults who have difficulty avoiding and may rely on walking aides or motorized wheel chairs for travel.
- Plan for high-contrast grade changes, detectable warning strips and ADA-compliant curb ramps to alert older adults of their approach to streets and hazardous drop offs.
- Plant street trees to buffer traffic and install benches to provide comfortable resting places for older adults.

A major goal of this policy is to assemble and codify many of these existing Town findings and objectives into a document that will guide and inform planners, engineers and policy makers going forward. Complete Streets are designed and operated to

provide safety and accessibility for all users of our roads, trails and transit systems. The Town of Weymouth aims to improve the health of its residents and acknowledges that Complete Streets can increase everyday physical activity by enabling additional walking and bicycling by its residents and visitors. In addition, Complete Streets can help reduce congestion, decrease consumer transportation costs, reduce crashes and injuries, and support economic growth and community stability by encouraging users to choose non-motorized transportation options by providing them with safe, accessible and efficient connections between places where people live, learn, work, play and shop.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA 1990) was enacted to ensure equal participation for people of all abilities and stresses many of the same goals as the Complete Streets initiative. As Complete Streets gains greater influence in street and sidewalk design, there is a clear opportunity to implement complimentary ADA standards thus benefitting the entire community.

It is the intent of the Town of Weymouth to formalize the plan, design, operation and maintenance of our streets so that they are safe for all users of all ages and abilities as a matter of routine. This policy guides decision makers in consistently planning, designing and constructing streets to reasonably accommodate all anticipated users including, but not limited to pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, emergency vehicles, and freight and commercial vehicles.

Core Commitment

The Town of Weymouth recognizes that users of various modes of transportation, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, cyclists, transit and school bus riders, motorists, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders are legitimate users of our roadways and deserve safe facilities. Furthermore, it is understood that “all users” includes residents of all ages, abilities and income levels.

The Town of Weymouth recognizes that all projects, new, maintenance or reconstruction, are included as opportunities to implement Complete Streets principles. The Town will, to the maximum extent possible, design, construct, maintain and operate all streets to provide for a comprehensive and integrated street network for people of all ages and abilities.

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 Weymouth, as well as projects funded by the State and Federal government, including but not limited to Chapter 90 funds, city improvement grants, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Capital Funding and other state and federal funds for street

and infrastructure design shall adhere to the Town of Weymouth's Complete Streets Policy. Private developments and related roadway design components shall adhere to 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.

The Town's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is reviewed and approved annually by the Planning Board in accordance with the Town Charter. Said board is encouraged to consider Complete Streets principals as it considers the final prioritization of proposed projects.

In debating possible exceptions to the Complete Streets Policy, the Planning Board, Board of Zoning Appeals or other decision making bodies should consider the following as basis for exception:

1. Transportation networks where specific users are prohibited by law, such as interstate freeways or pedestrian malls.
2. Where cost or impacts of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use.
3. Documentation of an absence of current or future need.

Transportation projects that do not require the review or consent of a Town decision making body may also be excluded from application of Complete Streets elements based on the same considerations, as determined by the Mayor of Weymouth in consultation with the appropriate Town departments.

Best Practices

The Town of Weymouth'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 of transportation facilities on streets and redevelopment projects. As practicable, recommendations for incorporating Complete Streets elements will occur in projects' beginning stages prior to design.

Implementation of the Town of Weymouth's Complete Streets Policy will be carried out cooperatively among all departments in the Town of Weymouth and, to the greatest extent possible, among private developers and state, regional, and federal agencies. All departments should consider the goals of this policy during their review and commentary process. Findings should be incorporated into official recommendations provided to the appropriate governing bodies prior to public

hearings.

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 giving significant consideration to stakeholder and community values. 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 Weymouth 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.

The latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations available will be used in the implementation of Complete Streets, including the most up-to-date versions of:

- The Massachusetts of 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 Streets Design Guide
- Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's Healthy Community Design Toolkit
- The latest edition of American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets
- The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Design Controls
- The Architectural Access Board (AAB) 521CMR Rules and Regulations
- Documents and plans created for or by the Town of Weymouth, including but not limited to:
 - *Master Plan (2001)*
 - *Design Guidelines for the Village Center, Retail and Office Districts (2013)*

- *Open Space & Recreation Plan (2014)*
- *Safe Routes for Seniors Report (2014)*
- *Weymouth Regulatory Assessment for Healthy Community Design (2015)*

Implementation

Implementation of the Complete Streets Policy will be carried out cooperatively among all departments in the Town of Weymouth with multi-jurisdictional cooperation, and to the greatest extent possible, among private developers and state, regional and federal agencies. The Department of Planning and Community Development will serve as the technical review agency for all Complete Streets projects. The Department of Planning and Community Development will forward the project documentation and plans to all applicable Town departments for comment during the review process. Ultimately, the project will require a vote by the appropriate governing body.

The Town shall make the 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.

The Town will review and revise or develop proposed revisions to all appropriate planning documents, zoning codes, subdivision regulations, laws, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines and programs to integrate the Complete Streets principles in all street projects, as feasible.

The Town will maintain a comprehensive priority list of transportation improvement projects including problem intersections and roadways.

The Town will maintain a comprehensive inventory of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and will prioritize projects to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk and bikeway network. The Town will coordinate with MassDOT to confirm the accuracy of a baseline pedestrian and bicycle accommodations inventory in order to prioritize projects.

The Town will re-evaluate Capital Improvement Projects prioritization to encourage implementation of Complete Streets principles.

The Town will incorporate Complete Streets principles into the Town of Weymouth's Master Plan as well as other plans

The Town will train pertinent Town staff on the content of Complete Streets principles and best practices for implementing this policy.

The Town will utilize inter-department coordination to promote the most responsible and

efficient use of resources for activities within the public way.

The Town will seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies.