

# ORANGE COUNTY COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

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## 1.0 VISION

Orange County will develop and maintain a safe and accessible transportation network that provides alternative options for all users, coordinates adjacent land uses and promotes a more livable community for people of all ages and abilities. The transportation network will improve public health and safety, while encouraging economic activity, community character, livability, and equity in order to enhance the quality of life for Orange County residents and visitors over the long-term.

## 2.0 PRINCIPLES

Complete Street designed roadways offer better transportation options, improve public health, support an aging population, advance economic development, invest in underserved communities, help children get to and from school, and keep people safe while biking and walking. The benefits of Complete Streets include: better access to safe streets for all, increased opportunities for active transportation, improved individual health, improvements to overall air quality, promotion of equal opportunities, and decreased accidents throughout the County.

Complete Streets core values support long-term safety, health, mobility, economic viability, livability, sustainability, environmental protections, equity, and quality of life in the county through thoughtful street-level improvements to the built environment that make the safe and active choice the easy choice for all users.

### 2.1 Complete Streets serve all users and modes.

It is the intent of this policy to promote a safe and accessible transportation network that balances the needs of all users, including: pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, motorists, emergency vehicles, freight carriers, and agricultural vehicles. This policy promotes and enhances public health and safety, while encouraging economic activity, community character, livability, and equity for people of all ages, abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds, including children, families, aging populations and individuals with disabilities.

### 2.2 A connected, integrated transportation network is a critical component of Complete Streets.

A cohesive transportation network unifies the individual efforts of various entities by ensuring gaps are filled and crucial connections are made. This policy encourages the expansion of integrated public transportation opportunities, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and infrastructure throughout Orange County and the surrounding region. These services and facility improvements will serve to increase personal mobility and travel choices, conserve energy resources, preserve air quality, and foster economic growth in Orange County.

### 2.3 Complete Streets principles apply to all roadways all projects phases.

This policy serves to integrate the consideration of bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation facility planning into regional and local transportation planning programs. These considerations apply to the planning, design and construction phases of all street, sidewalk, trail, and pathway projects, regardless of funding sources, whether public or private, including but not limited to new construction, reconstruction or rehabilitation projects.

The successful implementation of such projects requires ongoing collaboration between the Department of Public Works, Department of Planning, Department of Health and other relevant county departments and divisions as well as with appropriate local and regional agencies.

## 2.4 Best-practice design criteria and context sensitive approaches are essential to Complete Streets.

The best available Complete Streets design standards, policies, principles, and guidelines for both county and local roads will be made available by the Department of Planning and implemented to the maximum extent determined feasible by the Department of Planning, Department of Public Works and other relevant county departments. In recognition of various contexts, public input, and the needs of users, a balanced approach that follows appropriate design standards should be considered. This approach should aim to provide a comparable level of safety for all users and complement the projects physical setting while preserving scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources.

Guidelines and standards may include, but are not limited to:

- a. American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities
- b. Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Traffic Calming Measures and Walkable Urban Thoroughfares
- c. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
- d. National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- e. New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Complete Streets Standards
- f. Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)
- g. American's with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)

## 3.0 JURISDICTION

The design of new, rehabilitated or reconstructed facilities should anticipate likely demand for bicycling, walking, transit and motorist use and should not preclude the provision of future improvements. This policy shall apply to all transportation-related elements of projects involving county property, including county roads, parks and buildings, as well as public and private projects over which the County Department of Public Works has permitting authority.

The county shall foster partnerships with the State of New York, other transportation agencies, neighboring counties, municipalities, school districts and other property owners to develop facilities that ensure the principles and practices of Complete Streets are embedded within their planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities.

## 4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The County views Complete Streets as integral to everyday transportation decision making practices and processes. Next steps include:

- a. Coordination: The County will promote interdepartmental coordination to ensure the consistent application of this policy and encourage the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public right-of-way.
- b. Plans and Policies: The Departments of Planning, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and other relevant departments, agencies, or committees will incorporate Complete Streets principles into proposed and

existing procedures, programs, plans, manuals, checklists, regulations, decision trees, and other processes, as appropriate. This includes, but is not limited to, the Comprehensive Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and ADA Transition Plan.

- c. Land Use: The Orange County Planning Board and Department of Planning will ensure the principles and practices of Complete Streets are observed for all county level GML 239 reviews.
- d. Funding: County staff will work to identify current and potential funding sources and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies, plans, and practices within Orange County.
- e. Education and Training: The Department of Planning, in conjunction with The Department of Health and other relevant departments, will coordinate and provide opportunities to continue professional development and training on non-motorized transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops.
- f. Resources: An inter-departmental working group will create and maintain an online database to serve as a resource for those looking for more information regarding Complete Streets. The database will include educational materials on Complete Streets, policy resource, design standards, implementation strategies, and other relevant guidance materials.

## 5.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The County, coordinated by the Departments of Planning and Health, will define performance measures to track the progress of the implementation of this policy. Such measures will be incorporated into relevant plans, manuals, policies, processes, and programs. These measures will include, but are not limited to:

- a. Total improvements in safety for all users
- b. Attainment of ADA compliance
- c. Total miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- d. Total miles of sidewalk
- e. Number of municipalities that adopt and implement plans that promote Complete Streets
- f. Number of people reached through bicycle and pedestrian education programs

## 6.0 EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Department of Public Works in consultation with the Department of Planning and other relevant county departments. Written findings and supporting data must be provided for all exceptions and will be made publicly available. Exceptions to the Complete Streets policy may be considered when:

- a. A project involves only ordinary maintenance that does not change the roadways operations, including but not limited to, mowing, sweeping, spot pavement repair;
- b. An affected roadway prohibits, by law, use by specified users, in which case a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere, including on roadways that cross or otherwise intersect with the affected roadway;
- c. The cost or impacts of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable current and/or future use;
- d. The existing and planned population, employment densities, traffic volumes, or level of transit service around a particular roadway is so low that future expected users of the roadway demonstrates an absence of current and future need;
- e. There is a reasonable and equivalent project near the corridor under consideration that is already programmed to provide accommodations promoted by this policy.