

**TOWN OF ITHACA
COMPLETE STREETS POLICY**

Section 1. Definition of “Complete Streets”

“Complete Streets” means streets that are designed, maintained and operated to enable safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, emergency responders, public transportation users of all ages and abilities and adjacent landowners.

Section 2. Complete Streets Policy

The Town shall pursue a safe, reliable, efficient, integrated and connected multimodal transportation system that will promote access, mobility and health for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, people of all ages and abilities, motorists, emergency responders, freight providers and adjacent landowners.

Section 3. Scope of Complete Streets Policy Applicability

- (a) All Town-owned transportation facilities in the right of way including, but not limited to, streets, bridges, and all other connecting pathways, shall be designed, constructed, reconstructed, operated and maintained so that users of all ages and abilities can travel safely and independently.
- (b) Landscaping and amenities shall be encouraged to provide shade, create buffers and promote aesthetically welcoming environments within the right-of-way.
- (c) Privately constructed streets and parking facilities requiring Town approval shall adhere to this policy.
- (d) The Town shall foster partnerships with the private sector, state, county, neighboring communities and school districts to develop facilities and accommodations that further the Town’s Complete Streets Policy and continue such infrastructure beyond the Town’s borders.
- (e) The Town shall approach every transportation improvement and project phase as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible streets for all users. These phases include, but are not limited to, planning, programming, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, construction engineering, reconstruction, operation and maintenance

Section 4. Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Town Board for Town projects, or by the Planning Board for any other projects that come before it, or the Director of Public Works for emergency work and be documented with supporting information that indicates the basis for the decision. Such documentation shall be publically available.

Exceptions may be considered for approval when:

- (a) An affected roadway prohibits, by law, use by specified users (e.g., pedestrian malls) in which case a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those special users elsewhere.
- (b) The activities are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g., mowing, cleaning, spot repair and surface treatments such as chip seal) or other interim measures that do not change the existing shoulder, guiderails or road footprint.
- (c) The Director of Public Works or the Town Board issues a documented proposed exception concluding that the application of the Complete Streets Policy is unnecessary, unduly cost prohibitive, or inappropriate because it would be contrary to public safety.
- (d) The existing and planned population, employment densities, traffic volumes, or level of transit service around a particular roadway as documented is so low that future expected users of the roadway will include very few pedestrians, users of public transportation, or bicycles.

Section 5. Design Standards

The Town shall follow accepted or adopted design standards and use the best available based upon resources identifying best practices in street design, construction, operations and maintenance. In recognition of context sensitivity, public input and the needs of many users, a flexible, innovative and balanced approach that follows other appropriate design standards may be considered, provided that a comparable level of safety for all users is feasible. Design standards include, but are not limited to, those from the following: the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), The NYS Department of Transportation, the Institute of Traffic Engineers, the National Association of City Transportation Officials, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG), and the Model Design Manual for Living Streets.

Section 6. Performance Measures

The Town shall measure the success of the Complete Streets Policy using, but not limited to, the following performance measures reported on a calendar year basis:

- Total distance of new bike lanes
- Linear feet of new and reconstructed pedestrian accommodations
- Number of improved crosswalks
- Number of improved transit stops
- Rate of crashes and injuries reported
- Number of children walking or cycling to school
- Number of new street trees
- Satisfaction levels as expressed on customer surveys

Section 7. Implementation and Reporting

The Town of Ithaca shall view Complete Streets as integral to everyday transportation decision-making practices and processes. To that end:

- (a) The Department of Public Works, the Planning Department, other relevant departments, and committees will incorporate this Complete Streets Policy into all existing plans, manuals, checklists, rules, regulations and programs as feasible.
- (b) The Department of Public Works, the Planning Department, and other relevant departments will review current design standards, including subdivision regulations which apply to new roadway construction, to ensure that they reflect the best available design standards and guidelines and effectively implement this Complete Streets Policy where feasible.
- (c) The Town Board Public Works and Planning Committees will monitor progress as appropriate.
- (d) The Town shall encourage staff professional development and training on non-motorized transportation issues through attendance at conferences, classes, seminars, workshops and webcasts.
- (e) Town staff will be alert to outside funding sources for Complete Streets improvements and apply when feasible.
- (f) An annual report based on the performance measures in Section 6 will be submitted for each calendar year to the Town Board along with a summary of all exceptions granted.