

RESOLUTION 18,703

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY FOR THE CITY OF CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

WHEREAS, the mobility of freight and passengers and the safety, convenience, and comfort of motorists, cyclists, pedestrians – including people requiring mobility aids, transit riders, and neighborhood residents of all ages and abilities should all be considered when planning, designing, and improving Cedar Falls' streets; and

WHEREAS, integrating sidewalks, bike facilities, transit amenities, and safe crossings into the initial design of street projects avoids the expense of retrofits later; and

WHEREAS, streets are a critical component of public space and play a major role in establishing the image and identity of a city, providing a key framework for current and future development; and

WHEREAS, streets are a critical component of the success and vitality of adjoining private uses and neighborhoods; and


WHEREAS, a goal of Complete Streets is to improve the access and mobility for all users of streets in the community by improving safety through reducing conflict and encouraging non-motorized transportation and transit; and

WHEREAS, it is recognized that there are some streets or corridors in the City which would not fully satisfy a complete streets environment – where it would not be advisable to have non-motorized travel; and


WHEREAS, the National Complete Streets Coalition recognizes ten (10) elements of a successful complete streets policy; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Cedar Falls hereby adopts the following Complete Streets policy, which is consistent with the National Complete Streets Coalition guidance.

ADOPTED this 8th day of July 2013.



Jon T. Crews, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jennifer Rodenbeck, CPA, CPFO
Finance Manager/City Clerk

**Cedar Falls, Iowa
Complete Streets Policy**

The following elements shall constitute the Cedar Falls, Iowa Complete Streets Policy:

1. Sets a Vision

This Complete Streets Policy incorporates the simple and basic concept that streets and roadways should be designed, constructed, and operated to be safe and accessible for all transportation users whether they are pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, vehicular motorists or trucks.

Further, Complete Streets are designed to improve mobility and connectivity, improve health, increase safety, enhance neighborhoods, businesses, and institutions, and advance the quality of life for all Cedar Falls citizens and visitors.

2. Specifies all Users

The City of Cedar Falls will ensure that the safety, access, and convenience of all users of the transportation system are accommodated in all future roadway projects, as defined in the Exceptions element of this Policy (#4 below), including: pedestrians (including persons with mobility aids), bicyclists, transit users, persons with disabilities, youth, seniors, scooter riders, motorcyclists, private motorists, commercial vehicle drivers, freight providers, emergency responders, and adjacent land uses.

3. All Projects (All New and Reconstruction Projects)

Develop as many transportation improvement projects as possible in an affordable, balanced, responsible, and equitable way that accommodates and encourages travel by motorists, bicyclists, public transit vehicles and their passengers, and pedestrians.

For the City of Cedar Falls, Complete Streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements activities over time.

Transportation improvements will include facilities and amenities that are recognized as contributing to Complete Streets, which may include street and sidewalk lighting; sidewalks and pedestrian safety improvements such as median refuges or crosswalk improvements; improvements that provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant accessibility; transit accommodations including improved pedestrian access to transit stops and bus shelters; bicycle accommodations including bicycle storage, bicycle parking, bicycle routes, shared-use lanes, wide travel lanes or bike lanes as appropriate; and street trees, boulevard landscaping, and street furniture.

4. Exceptions

Exemptions to this Policy shall only be granted when the Department of Developmental Services recommends and City Council determines that any of the following are evident:

- a. The project is occurring on a roadway where non-motorized use is prohibited by law; or

- b. A cost and/or health impact assessment demonstrates that the cost for a particular Complete Streets project would be excessive compared to the need, public health benefit, safety improvement and probable use of that particular street; or
- c. There is absence of use by all, except motorized road-users, that would continue in the future even if the street were a Complete Street; or
- d. An alternate facility has been previously programmed at that location; or
- e. A legal and/or regulatory impediment or constraint exists.

Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities shall be included in new street construction, reconstruction, and other transportation improvement projects, except under one or more of the following conditions. Any condition approval shall follow the Implementation process outlined in the corresponding element in this Policy (#10 below).

- a. A project involves only ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition, such as mowing, cleaning, sweeping, patching, joint repair, crack-filling, or pothole filling, or when interim measures are implemented on temporary detour or haul routes;
- b. There is insufficient space to safely accommodate new facilities, as determined by the Department of Developmental Services and City Council;
- c. Where determined by the Department of Developmental Services and City Council to have relatively high safety risks;
- d. Where the City Council exempts a project due to the excessive and disproportionate cost of establishing a bikeway, walkway or transit enhancement as part of a project;
- e. Where jointly determined by the Department of Developmental Services and City Council that the construction is not practically feasible or cost effective because of significant or adverse environmental impacts to streams, floodplains, remnants of native vegetation, wetlands, steep slopes or other critical areas, or due to impacts on neighboring land uses, including impact from right-of-way acquisition.

5. Creates a Network

The City of Cedar Falls recognizes the absolute necessity of promoting pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation network connectivity as an alternative to the automobile in order to provide transportation options and to protect all road users, reduce negative environmental impacts, promote healthy living, and advance the well-being of commuters. Furthermore, the City acknowledges that as public spaces, roads must be designed to afford safety and accessibility to all users. Finally, the City recognizes that the full integration of all modes of travel in the design of streets and highways will help increase the capacity and efficiency of the road network, hopefully reduce traffic congestion by improving mobility options, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and therefore improve the general quality of life.

6. Jurisdictional (Project) Application

This Policy shall apply to all local and/or private development transportation improvement projects whether proposed and/or constructed by the City or private developer, unless specifically excluded through the Exceptions element of this Policy (#4 above). Federal and state transportation improvement projects shall be encouraged to consider inclusion of Complete Streets elements.

7. Design Criteria

The design of new or reconstructed facilities should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling, walking and transit facilities and should not preclude the provision of future improvements. Said design criteria must be guided by national or state recognized standards (i.e. AASHTO, SUDAS, etc.) for the City of Cedar Falls. For example, under most circumstances bridges (which last for 75 years or more) should be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation of a future need for such facilities.

The City will generally follow accepted or adopted design standards when implementing improvements intended to fulfill this Complete Streets policy but will consider innovative or non-traditional design options where a comparable level of safety for users is present.

8. Context Sensitivity

It will be important to the success of the Complete Streets policy to ensure that the project development process includes early consideration of the land use and transportation context of the project, the identification of gaps or deficiencies in the network for various user groups that could be addressed by the project, and an assessment of the tradeoffs to balance the needs of all users. The context factors that should be given high priority include the following:

- a. Whether the corridor provides a primary access to a significant destination such as a community or regional park or recreational area, a school, a shopping/commercial area, or an employment center;
- b. Whether the corridor provides access across a natural or man-made barrier such as a river or freeway;
- c. Whether the corridor is in an area where a relatively high number of users of non-motorized transportation modes can be anticipated;
- d. Whether a road corridor provides important continuity or connectivity links for an existing trail network; or
- e. Whether nearby routes that provide a similar level of convenience and connectivity already exist.

9. Performance Measures

The City of Cedar Falls shall develop, apply, and report on walking and bicycling transportation performance measures in order to evaluate the functioning of the non-motorized transportation system; to ensure consistency with current industry standards; to identify strengths, deficiencies and potential improvements; and to support development of new and innovative facilities and programs. Several factors shall be measured or used by the Department of Developmental Services to evaluate the effectiveness of this Policy on an annual basis. However, the City recognizes that assessing the effectiveness of this Policy is a long-term process and that the community may not experience large scale improvements or be able to collect sufficient data during the initial two (2) years of the implementation of a Complete Streets project. The measures may include:

- a. Changes in traffic counts;
- b. Changes in transit system ridership;
- c. Change in school transportation survey information (transportation to-and-from school);

- d. Changes in bicycle and pedestrian count data; and/or
- e. Other measures, which may include: miles of on-street bicycle routes; miles of off-road trails; new linear feet of pedestrian sidewalks; number of new or reconstructed curb ramp; number of new or repainted crosswalks; number of new street trees planted; percentage of transit stops with shelters; change in Level of Service (LOS) measurement; customer satisfaction surveys; etc.

10. Implementation

In order to ensure Implementation of this Policy, the City of Cedar Falls will have the Department of Developmental Services provide annual recommendations regarding implementation of this Policy to the Mayor and City Council for consideration.

Within six (6) months of the passage of this Policy, the Department of Developmental Services will develop administrative guidelines and implementation of strategies related to this Policy.