

City of Minneapolis
Request for Committee Action

To: Transportation & Public Works
Date: 5/17/2016
Referral: N/A
From: Public Works Department
Lead Staff: Nathan Koster, Supervisor Transportation Planner, Transportation Planning and Programming
Presented by: Nathan Koster, Supervisor Transportation Planner, Transportation Planning and Programming
File type: Action
Subcategory: City Policies

Subject:
Minneapolis Complete Streets Policy

Description:
Approving and adopting the attached Complete Streets Policy for its inclusion as a companion item to “Access Minneapolis.”

Previous Actions:
None.

Ward/Address:
Citywide

Background/Analysis:
The City of Minneapolis is committed to building a complete and integrated public right-of-way to ensure that everyone can travel safely and comfortably, regardless of whether they are walking, biking, taking transit, or driving. This commitment is consistent with the vision of Complete Streets, which is generally defined as an approach by which safe travel for people of all ages and abilities are supported by an integrated and inclusive transportation system. Support for Complete Streets policies has been growing at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. For example, the US Surgeon General’s “Step It Up!” program identified Complete Streets as an implementation tool to promote walking and walkable communities, whereas the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act is the first federal transportation bill to include provisions specifically supporting the implementation of Complete Streets.

To formalize this approach, staff developed a Complete Streets policy to inform decision-making throughout all phases of transportation projects and initiatives. This process-based policy emphasizes that planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance activities are carried out in a context-sensitive manner that is inclusive of all modes and users. A central component of the policy is the establishment of a modal priority framework that prioritizes public right-of-way use in the following order: walking, biking or taking transit, and driving motor vehicles. This approach is consistent with – and builds upon – guidance that Minneapolis has already established in its transportation policy plan, Access Minneapolis, its Comprehensive Plan (*the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*), and many other adopted policies.

Stakeholder and Advisory Committee Outreach

City staff initiated planning and outreach efforts for the development of the Complete Streets Policy in early 2015. These efforts included the identification of internal and external committees to help guide the content of the policy. A stakeholder advisory group was established to represent a diverse mix of modes, users, business interests, and partner agency stakeholders. This group actively participated with City staff from the Public Works, Health, Community Planning and Economic Development, and Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) departments in a series of work sessions throughout 2015 to help shape the content and direction of the policy.

These meetings served as interactive working meetings that provided stakeholders opportunities to provide feedback and direction to City staff at key milestone throughout the development of the policy. The initial meetings focused on the identification of goals, expectations, key elements, and desired outcomes, whereas later meetings focused on actively editing the draft policy. Throughout the policy development process City staff worked to generate consensus amongst the committee's diverse set of stakeholder groups by addressing each stakeholder group's primary areas of concern.

In addition to working with the stakeholder advisory group, City staff attended the following City advisory committees: Minneapolis Advisory Committee on Aging, Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Bicycle Advisory Committee, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Public Health Advisory Committee, and the Minneapolis Tree Advisory Committee. Additional presentations were provided to Minneapolis Downtown Council's Greening and Public Realm and 2025 Transportation Committees, as well as the City of Minneapolis' NCR department. Staff engaged NCR's Access and Outreach division, made up of community specialists from Minneapolis' under-represented communities.

Policy Development Research

City staff sought guidance, examples, and resources published by peer cities and the National Complete Streets Coalition to develop a policy that aligns with the City of Minneapolis' goals and vision. These efforts focused on identifying policy type, content and language, implementation strategies, performance metrics, and best practices, from a variety of city, county, regional, and state transportation agencies. This research provided additional guidance and lessons learned from a variety of agencies, particularly as it related to policy type and steps to implementation.

Key Policy Elements

- Establishment of a modal priority framework to inform City transportation related decision-making that prioritizes people as they walk, bicycle, and take transit over people when they drive.
- All city transportation related decisions will follow the Complete Streets policy and implementation will encompass all elements within the public right-of-way.
- All transportation projects are subject to the process laid forth by the policy and implementation will be documented through the completion of the project delivery checklist.
- Application of the policy shall apply to all public and private projects and initiatives that interact with and impact the public right-of-way.
- Exemptions will be required from the City Council where adopted City plans and goals identify facilities for prioritized modes and are not include in proposed projects.

Financial Review:

No financial impact.

Attachments:

1. Complete Streets Policy
2. Bicycle Advisory Committee Resolution of Support
3. Pedestrian Advisory Committee Resolution of Support
4. Public Health Advisory Committee Resolution of Support