

Town of Fairfield Complete Streets Policy

Prepared by the Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
Endorsed by the Board of Selectmen on September 26, 2018



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Background

In March of 2010, the Town of Fairfield created the Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Advisory Committee under former First Selectman Kenneth Flatto. This committee was then re-structured in April of 2012 by First Selectman Michael Tetreau. With technical assistance from the Greater Bridgeport Regional Council, this committee developed the Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The Plan was endorsed by the Board of Selectmen on June 19, 2013.

The Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan indicated several recommendations including the formation of a standing Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, and the development of a Complete Streets Policy. In November of 2014, the Town appointed the initial Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, which consists of 9 citizens and several Town staff advisors. In December of 2015, a subcommittee was formed to develop the Fairfield Complete Streets Policy.

Acknowledgements

The Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee would like to acknowledge the following members and advisors for their many contributions to this effort:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Members

- Keith Gallinelli, Chair
- Laura OBrien, Vice Chair
- Edward Lane, Secretary
- Don Hyman
- Ann Katis
- Linda Lach
- William Pollack
- Nate Rex
- Karen Secrist
- Michael Allen

Committee Advisors

- William Hurley, Town Engineer
- Santina Jaronko, Public Health Educator, Fairfield Health Department
- Gary Wikman, Traffic Enforcement Officer, Fairfield Police Department

Complete Streets Subcommittee

- William Pollack, Chair
- Ann Katis
- Laura OBrien

Executive Summary

Complete Streets by definition are streets, highways, roadways, travel ways and corridors that are designed and operated to enable safe and comfortable access for all users. All users include pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit riders, and people of all abilities, cars, trucks, buses, and other modes of transportation.

Any future transportation project to which this policy is applicable should be sensitive to the context of the surrounding neighborhood and community, as there is not a one size fits all approach to Complete Streets design and implementation. The policy for Fairfield reflects this understanding.

The Fairfield Complete Streets Policy is based upon research and guidelines provided by the National Complete Streets Coalition, a division of Smart Growth America.

The National Complete Streets Coalition Steering Committee consists of: AARP, AECOM, America Walks, American Public Transportation Association, American Society of Landscape Architects, Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, Institute of Transportation Engineers, MIG | SvR, National Association of City Transportation Officials, National Association of REALTORS®, Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates Inc., Smart Growth America, SRAM, Stantec, VHB, Voices for Healthy Kids, and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

The following list of items describes background information and many of the benefits of Complete Streets:

Complete Streets Saves Lives

Streets that, where appropriate, include sidewalks, better bus stop placement, traffic calming measures, treatments for disabled users, children and the elderly, save lives. From 2005-2014, 376 people were killed while walking in CT. The most threatened populations are children and older adults (info from Smart Growth America).

There is little or no cost associated with developing a Complete Streets Policy

The policy requires transportation planners to consider all users at the onset of transportation projects. Exceptions and exemptions are noted for projects where expected users would not include pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transit users, and considerations where costs would be too prohibitive.

Complete Streets Policies are expanding locally and nationally

Over 1,200 policies are now in place nationwide, and growing, including over 950 municipalities. Several CT municipalities have developed policies, including West Hartford, Middletown, Portland, Enfield, South Windsor, Hartford, Stamford and New Haven.

A Complete Streets Policy reinforces existing regulations

Zoning regulations require sidewalks in certain new construction and renovation projects as well as considerations for pedestrians and bicyclists. Regulations also require development of a bicycle and pedestrian plan as part of the Site Plan review process. The 2016 Fairfield Plan of Conservation and Development recommends a significant number of implementation measures

to improve biking and walking in town. A Complete Streets Policy will support existing regulations and guidelines.

Complete Streets are the law in Connecticut

Complete Streets Law enacted in 2009 (CGS §13a-153f and §13b-13a) requires nearly all highway, road, and street programs and projects in Connecticut to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The Connecticut Department of Transportation adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2014 and encourages municipalities to do the same.

Complete Streets benefit the local economy

Many communities throughout the country that have completed Complete Streets designed projects saw an increase in private development creating the potential to revitalize neighborhoods and corridors. Complete Streets projects are supportive of new businesses and show increases in property values.

A Complete Streets Policy can lead to more funding

Funding for transportation projects that include Federal and/ or State funds usually require considerations for all users of the roadways and a Complete Streets design approach. Without a policy in place, Fairfield could be at a disadvantage when competing with other municipalities in the State for funding of transportation or infrastructure projects.

Complete Streets are flexible

Complete Streets improvements can be achieved in urban, suburban, and even rural areas. In a rural area, consideration can be made to have a paved shoulder for walking and biking as opposed to a sidewalk or other infrastructure. The policy promotes a balance of safety and convenience for everyone on the road.

Town of Fairfield Complete Streets Policy

Vision and Intent

The goal of the Town of Fairfield Complete Streets Policy is to provide safe and welcoming roadways to all people regardless of age, income, ability, or mode of transportation. Fairfield is a vibrant town that has rural areas, historic districts, beach side roads, several thriving business districts, a busy downtown, three heavily used commuter train stations, an historic scenic parkway, and an interstate highway within its borders. A transportation policy for such an active place must provide an integrated and balanced transportation network that accommodates all modes: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit riders, commercial vehicles and freight. The intent of this policy is to consider all users in the planning and implementation of transportation projects that include our roadways, other travel ways, and any portion of the transportation network.

This policy will support an array of benefits including: a healthy citizenry, economic development, reduced traffic congestion, more efficient use of road space and resources, increased use of public transit, less reliance on fossil fuels, improved mobility, increased safety and more livable neighborhoods. Additionally, to increase safety and provide sensible treatment for all citizens, this policy shall provide support for vulnerable populations such as seniors, children, and people with disabilities, without regard to income, when implementing transportation projects.

The implementation of Complete Streets improvements should take into full consideration the character of the project area, values of the community, needs of all users, and cost to the town. Complete Streets improvements should be developed in a context sensitive manner and will not necessarily look the same in all environments, communities or development contexts, and may not include elements of all modes of transportation in all transportation improvements.

Policy Scope

Fairfield Complete Streets Policy covers all users of the streets in town to ensure that each has a safe, efficient, and comfortable passage. As defined in Connecticut General Statutes 13a-153f(a)(d), and as indicated in the Connecticut Department of Transportation Complete Streets Policy, "users means a motorist, transit user, pedestrian or bicyclist." Additionally, this policy recognizes that users include children, seniors, people of all abilities, people of all incomes, commercial vehicles, emergency responders, and freight. The Complete Streets Policy recognizes that all users of the streets in town, as listed above, are subject to the requirements of the appropriate statutes relating to use of the public roadways.

The Complete Streets Policy shall apply to all local and state public roadways within town boundaries, and includes the following: new construction projects within the town's roadways, maintenance projects except as indicated in section "Clear Accountable Exceptions", projects involving the reconstruction of transportation infrastructure, and prioritization of project selection. Additionally, the appropriate regulatory bodies can review and make changes to transportation policy including engineering standards and zoning regulations, in order to incorporate

recommendations identified in this Policy. As necessary, the town will work together with the state as much as is practical when implementing this Policy on state roadways.

The Complete Streets Policy includes and applies to: streets and other travel ways, bridges, lighting, trails and sidewalks in planning and during construction. This Policy does not apply to private property, however, private property owners are encouraged to comply with this Policy when appropriate. Private development that encroaches into public property shall adhere to this Policy.

Application of the Complete Streets Policy shall further the broad considerations and uses of the streets of Fairfield so that, where appropriate, the streets and other travel ways are desirable destinations in addition to safe, efficient and comfortable passage ways.

This policy supports incorporation of best development practices and sustainable design as it relates to the streetscape including street trees and appropriate vegetation, storm water management, drainage design, and related elements, so that they are considered an integral component of the infrastructure of the town. These practices are often referred to in design guidance as Green Infrastructure and/ or Green Streets. Green Infrastructure features include vegetated curb extensions, permeable paving, landscaped medians, vegetated swales, and street trees.

The Complete Streets Policy acknowledges that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (BPC) has no regulatory authority and, therefore, recommendations put forth by the BPC are advisory recommendations to town boards and officials with appropriate regulatory authority. Regulatory boards and officials can take further action on the recommendations noted in this Policy.

Clear Accountable Exceptions

All projects to which the Complete Streets Policy is applicable are also allowed clear exceptions when context warrants. Exceptions should be weighed thoughtfully and with specificity to historic significance, cost, and context sensitivity. Exceptions shall be limited to the following reasons:

- 1) An accommodation that is not necessary on corridors where specific user groups are prohibited
- 2) Documentation that there is an absence of a current and future need
- 3) Cost for accommodations for a particular mode is excessively disproportionate to need and potential benefit of a project
- 4) Project involves ordinary maintenance activity designed to keep improvements in acceptable condition such as cleaning, sealing, spot repairs, patching and micro surfacing

Jurisdiction

Fairfield seeks to provide a transportation network across the town in order to provide safe, efficient, and comfortable access to all points for all users. To do so will require the cooperation of many agencies.

Fairfield includes Interstate 95, the Merritt Parkway, several major state arterial roads (Route 1, Route 58, Route 59, Route 130, Route 135, Route 136), three train stations serviced by Metro North Railroad, public bus transit (Greater Bridgeport Transit, Norwalk Transit District) and private bus providers (Fairfield University and Sacred Heart University) in addition to the regular flow of freight, public emergency responders, private motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists. To adhere to Complete Streets Policy, when applicable, the Town of Fairfield shall work with federal, state and local transportation agencies to incorporate a Complete Streets philosophy into design, planning and maintenance projects.

Design

Design should follow the best practices available and policy guidance including the following documents with the understanding that reasonable updates will be made when new editions are available and appropriate.

Connecticut Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan
Connecticut Department of Transportation Complete Streets Policy
MetroCOG - Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Needs Analysis
MetroCOG - Long Range Transportation Plan
FHWA Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices
ADA Accessibility Guidelines
Town of Fairfield Town Plan of Conservation and Development
Town of Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 13a-153f, accommodations of all users shall be routine part of the planning, design, construction and operating activities of all State roadways. Any proposed project on a State roadway shall refer to the Connecticut Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel Needs Assessment Form, available on the CT DOT website.

Performance Measures

Performance measures are crucial to the success of the Complete Streets Policy. It is critical that the Town understands the goals of the Policy and how the goals are measured. The schedule attached as Appendix A provides performance measures and the agency or department that is most likely to have the data available. This schedule is provided with the understanding that these measures may be revised as necessary.

The performance measures shall be compiled by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and shared with other Town agencies and departments in a report no less than once annually.

Policy Implementation

The Complete Streets Policy fully supports implementation of concepts set forth in currently approved plans such as the Town of Fairfield Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan and the Town of

Fairfield Town Plan of Conservation and Development and any future updates to these Plans. To integrate transportation and land use planning, all future Town of Fairfield land use plans, including transportation plans and design guidance, and related policies should specify how they will support and be supported by this Complete Streets Policy.

Complete Streets requires collaboration between existing town departments and committees. In order to facilitate this process, the following steps shall be taken:

Step 1 – Prepare for Implementation

The Town shall conduct an audit of existing policies and procedures within that should be consistent with the Complete Streets Policy, as follows:

- 1) The Department of Public Works and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee shall meet to review and make recommendations to improve policies and procedures and design standards associated with site plans and other requirements for development to ensure best practices are being utilized.
- 2) The Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee shall review and update the list of performance measures included in this Policy as Appendix A, based on the latest available measureable data from the various sources noted in the appendix.
- 3) The Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee shall review and update the checklist included in this Policy as Appendix B, based on newly revised regulations, practices, and policies. This checklist shall be used on future projects to identify adherence to, or exemptions from, the Complete Streets Policy. The Board of Selectmen shall be notified of any proposed revisions to the checklist for comment.

Step 2 – Implementation

The Town shall implement the Complete Streets Policy as follows:

- 1) Within 12 months of the adoption of the Complete Streets Policy, the review of the existing policies and procedures shall be completed.
- 2) At the direction of the TPZ, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee shall be added to the distribution list of TPZ regarding site plan applications so that the Committee can comment on pending site plan applications. The TPZ can request that the Checklist, included as Appendix B, be filled out and submitted by the project designer to review compliance to the Complete Streets Policy. The Checklist is not required to be submitted for site plan applications regarding private property development.
- 3) Should the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee wish to comment on project submissions identified above, comments shall be submitted by the Committee in writing to the TPZ. This review shall run concurrently to project review by other departments including DPW and TPZ and is not intended to add to the current timeframe for project submission review.
- 4) The Town of Fairfield shall actively promote public information regarding Complete Streets through their website and other appropriate promotional materials.
- 5) The Town shall encourage the continuing education of employees in relevant departments on the topic of Complete Streets through workshops, seminars and conferences.
- 6) The Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee shall develop and maintain a map of existing bicycle infrastructure including delineated bike routes, bike lanes, and shared use trails that bicycling is permitted on, and this map shall be made available to the public.

APPENDIX A

Performance Measures Schedule

Performance Measures Schedule

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee shall use the Performance Measures listed in this Policy to periodically assess the rate, success, and effectiveness of implementing the Complete Streets Policy. These metrics shall be compiled into a report and shared with other agencies and departments as needed, but no less than once annually.

The chart below indicates each measure as well as the agency or department most likely to be able to provide the data.

Abbreviations Legend:

BPC	Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
CTDOT	Connecticut Department of Transportation
DPW	Department of Public Works
ED	Economic Development
FD	Fire Department
FPS	Fairfield Public Schools
GBT	Greater Bridgeport Transit
MetroCOG	Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments
PD	Police Department
TPZ	Town Plan & Zoning Department
TW	Tree Warden

Measure

Data Obtained From

Pedestrian

Linear feet of new sidewalks	DPW
Linear feet of repaired or improved sidewalks	DPW
Crosswalk and multimodal intersection improvements	DPW / PD
Citywide Walk Score	BPC
Number of students who walk to school	FPS

Bicycling

Percentage of Town that is within two miles of a delineated bike route	BPC
Number of bike share users	BPC
Miles of bicycle lanes, routes, or trails built or striped	DPW/ BPC
Number of bicycle parking facilities installed	BPC
Number of students who bike to school	FPS

Safety

Number of traffic control signs/ signals installed/ upgraded	DPW/ CTDOT
Rate of crashes, injuries and fatalities by mode	PD/ CTDOT
Catch basin grate improvements	DPW

Other

Number of people reached through bike/ ped education programs	BPC
Number of exemptions from this policy	BPC

APPENDIX B

Complete Streets Checklist

Complete Streets Checklist

This checklist is intended to assist the project designer in achieving the objectives described in the Fairfield Complete Streets Policy. This checklist shall be completed and submitted by the project designer as part of any project submittal to which the Complete Streets Policy is applicable for review.

Project Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Project Location / Limits: _____

Project Description: _____

Instructions: please check the appropriate box for each item below and provide a description where applicable.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

<u>Item</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Description</u>
<u>Existing Vehicle, Bicycle, & Pedestrian Operations</u>				
Are there existing concerns within the project area regarding motor vehicle safety, congestion, or access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there accommodations for bicyclists?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there accommodations for pedestrians?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there accommodations for transit users?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do bicyclists/ pedestrians regularly use the transportation facility for commuting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do bicyclists/ pedestrians regularly use the transportation facility for recreation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>Existing Transit Operations</u>				
Do transit facilities exist within ½ mile of the project area, including bus and train stops/ stations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the project area on a transit route?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Are there bicycle racks, shelters, or parking for transit riders available?

Project Area Context

Are there major destinations in the project area, including prominent landmarks, schools, parks, shopping, & similar?

Are there major destinations within ½ mile of the project area?

Are there existing street trees, planters, vegetated buffer strips, or other environmental enhancement in project area?

Existing Access and Mobility

Are there any existing access or mobility considerations, including ADA compliance, to schools, medical centers, senior care or community centers in the project area?

Are there any existing access or mobility considerations, including ADA compliance, to other major destinations?

Are there gaps inhibiting continuous access for pedestrians between key destinations in project area?

Are there gaps inhibiting continuous access for bicyclists between key destinations in project area?

PROPOSED DESIGN

<u>Item</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Description</u>
Are there accommodations for bicyclists?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there accommodations for pedestrians?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there accommodations to meet ADA compliance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there accommodations for transit riders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there accommodations for trucks/ freight?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have conflicts been reduced between pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there proposed connections to sidewalks, trails or other pedestrian facilities adjacent to the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there proposed connections to bike routes, bike paths, or other bike facilities adjacent to the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there proposed connections to key destinations including schools, parks, community centers, and similar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there proposed landscape elements including street trees, planters, buffer strips, or other enhancements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there proposed pedestrian level lighting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there proposed public seating areas or benches?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the design meet current design guidelines identified in this policy on page 8?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	