

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY FOR HAMILTON

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Definition

- a) Complete streets are designed to be safe, convenient and comfortable for every user, regardless of transportation mode, physical ability or age.

Taken from: Transport Canada <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/programs/environment-utsp-casestudy-cs72e-completestreets-812.htm>

2. Context

- a) Through this policy Hamilton will join over 500 communities in North America who are using Complete Streets policies to improve livability and quality of life for all residents.

3. Purpose

- a) The City of Hamilton intends and expects to realize long-term cost savings in improved public health, better environmental stewardship, reduced fuel consumption, and reduced lifecycle costs of motor vehicle infrastructure through the implementation of this Complete Streets policy. Complete Streets also contribute to walkable neighborhoods, which can foster interaction, strengthen street-level retail business, create a sense of community pride, and increase safety for all residents. In addition, Complete Streets will contribute to reducing health disparities between Hamilton's high, middle and low income neighbourhoods.

Adapted in part from: City of Northfield <http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/index.aspx?NID=732>

4. Supportive Vision, Values, Strategic Priorities and Policies

- a) This policy is an important tool for the City to realize its vision of becoming the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.
- b) The elements of this policy correspond to many of the city's values such as: accountability, cost consciousness, equity and excellence.
- c) This policy will help to achieve the City's Strategic Priority #1: A Prosperous and Healthy Community.

- d) This policy will help to attain the City's Vision 2020's transportation goals and will help to implement policy goals set out in section 4.0 Integrated Transportation Network in the City of Hamilton's Urban Official Plan (not yet in force).
- e) This policy will also help the City to achieve goals in the province's growth management plans, policies and legislation. Some parts of the implementation of this Complete Streets policy will be enhanced by land use changes as set out in the Urban Official Plan, such as the creation of Complete Communities.
- f) This policy will help achieve the City of Hamilton's Urban Official Plan and Transportation Plan objectives of a balanced transportation network.

PART II: PRINCIPLES

5. Objectives

- a. The City of Hamilton shall scope, plan, design, fund, construct, operate, and maintain all City streets to provide a comprehensive and integrated network of facilities that are safe and convenient for all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, persons using mobility aids, cyclists, public transit users and vehicles, motorists, freight providers, emergency responders, and adjacent land users.
Adapted from: Cities of Birmingham and Indiana, and Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization. <http://bloomington.in.gov/media/media/application/pdf/4425.pdf>
- b. The implementation of Complete Streets shall contribute to reducing the social, health and economic impacts of disparities between Hamilton's neighbourhoods. Making streets safe and convenient for walking, riding a bike or taking transit helps families save money on transportation and relieve strained budgets. The implementation of Complete Streets shall be used as a key strategy to reduce health inequities by contributing to reducing air pollution, motor-vehicle accidents, and rates of chronic diseases in Hamilton's lowest income neighbourhoods.
Adapted in part from: Complete Streets Mean Equitable Streets, factsheet published by the National Complete Streets Coalition <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/cs/factsheets/cs-equity.pdf>
- c. Safety shall be achieved by street design that ensures fewer cars drive above the speed limit and well-designed intersections that demonstrate Hamilton's commitment to becoming a pedestrian-friendly community, among other methods. Particular attention shall be paid to improving safety on school routes and around schools, to ensure more students and parents feel it is safe and convenient to walk, bike, or skate to school.

- d. The conversion of currently one-way streets to two-way streets shall be investigated for streets in the lower city in particular. Conversion to complete two-way street will be implemented where it would achieve a higher level of safety and convenience for all users than conversion to complete one-way street. The additional benefits of complete two-way streets for retail stores and way-finding will also be considered.
- e. Engagement with residents shall be valued in the implementation of this policy. Local projects that can demonstrate the impact of small scale improvements on safety and convenience or that can be used to evaluate new approaches to street design, will be welcomed as opportunities to show that City is reacting to neighbourhood traffic concerns in a constructive fashion.

6. Funding

- a. Allocation of public resources for the design, construction, redevelopment and maintenance of streets shall balance the following objectives:
 - a. Cost effective mobility
 - b. User convenience and comfort
 - c. Overall accessibility
 - d. Safety and security
 - e. Fairness for non-drivers
 - f. Local economic development

Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute: Evaluation Complete Streets: The Value of Designing Roads for Diverse Modes, Users and Activities (2013)

- b. The City of Hamilton roads and transit budgets shall reflect the needs of all street users and shift funding priorities to measures that achieve the goals of this Complete Streets policy, including among other measures:
 - Wider sidewalks, intersection improvements to increase pedestrian safety and additional mid-block crossings for pedestrians;
 - Accelerated implementation of cycling network;
 - Enhanced transit service, frequency and network.
- c. The process to select projects for capital funding shall include additional points for projects that would increase connectivity and safety for all users of the transportation network.

PART III: IMPLEMENTATION

7. Operation

The City views Complete Streets as integral to everyday transportation decision-making practices and processes. To this end:

Adapted from: City of Indianapolis <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/Council/Proposals/Documents/2012/PROP12-208.pdf>

- a. Complete Streets across Hamilton will be achieved incrementally over time through a combination of:
 - Street design and construction in new residential neighbourhoods and road developments, including roads and parking lots built by private developers.
 - Single road reconstruction/retrofit projects.
 - A series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities.

Adapted in part from: City of Seattle <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/completeStreets.htm>

- b. All forms of travel shall be accommodated while recognizing that all streets are different and that the needs of various users will need to be balanced in a flexible manner, provided that a comparable level of safety for all users is present. The balance between the needs of users shall not be based on current ratios of users travelling on roadway, but instead on the assumption that a greater variety of users will travel on roadway if it was designed in a safe and convenient manner for all users.

Adapted in part from: City of Rochester, Minnesota

http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/planning/programs_projects/ActiveLiving/Documents/CompleteStreetsResolution.pdf

- c. Complete streets principles shall be applied in due consideration of the urban, suburban, or rural context in which a project is located;

Adapted from: US Congress, Safe Streets Act (proposed) http://files.eesi.org/cs-Safe_Streets_Act_of_2013.pdf

- d. The City shall promote inter-departmental project coordination among city departments with an interest in the activities that occur within the public right-of-way in order to better use fiscal resources, including Planning and Economic Development, Public Health, Public Works and Recreation.

Adapted from: City of Roanoke [http://www.modestogov.com/ced/pdf/completestreets/MISC-11-](http://www.modestogov.com/ced/pdf/completestreets/MISC-11-001%20DOC%20Roanoke%20Policy%205-24-12.pdf)

[001%20DOC%20Roanoke%20Policy%205-24-12.pdf](http://www.modestogov.com/ced/pdf/completestreets/MISC-11-001%20DOC%20Roanoke%20Policy%205-24-12.pdf)

- e. All relevant departments will review and revise as necessary their plans, manuals, policies, processes and programs to foster the implementation of Complete Streets

and will consider innovative design options where a comparable level of safety for users is present.

Adapted from: Rochester, Minnesota

http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/planning/programs_projects/ActiveLiving/Documents/CompleteStreetsResolution.pdf

- f. The Public Works Department, the Planning and Economic Development Department, and other relevant departments will review current design standards, including subdivision regulations that apply to new roadway construction, to ensure that they reflect the best available design guidelines, and effectively implement Complete Streets.

Adapted from: Sample language, Smart Growth America <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/cs-local-policy-workbook.pdf>

- g. Appropriate City staff shall be required to keep up-to-date on Complete Street implementation best practices and look for ways to update regulations, procedures and design standards as needed.
- h. When available, the City shall encourage staff professional development and training on topics related to complete streets including non-motorized transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops.

Adapted from: Sample language, Smart Growth America <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/cs-local-policy-workbook.pdf>

- i. When updating guidelines to reflect Complete Streets principles, the Level of Service (LOS) measure, primarily a quantitative measure of the throughput of cars, shall be replaced by measures that include quantitative and qualitative data on service for all users. Two current alternatives are the Complete Streets LOS, and the Quality of Service (QOS) measure.
- j. While land-use is not included in this policy, the City shall continue to enhance land use regulations that complement this Complete Streets policy, so that a greater variety of destinations are accessible for pedestrians and cyclists. In particular, the City shall collaborate with major institutions such as schools, health facilities, and major employers, so that the site selection and design of new facilities is compatible with this policy.

8. Exception mechanism

- a. Any exception to applying this Complete Streets Policy to a specific roadway project, including private roadways, must approved by the General Issues

Committee of City Council, and city staff must document the specific reason and supporting data for the exception. Such documentation shall be publicly available.

Exceptions may be made when:

- 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; or

Adapted from: US Congress, Safe Streets Act (proposed) http://files.eesi.org/cs-Safe_Streets_Act_of_2013.pdf

- The costs of providing accommodation are excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use; or

Adapted from: Georgia Department of Transportation

<http://www.dot.ga.gov/doingbusiness/PoliciesManuals/roads/DesignPolicy/GDOT-DPM-Chap09.pdf>

- 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 will not include pedestrians, public transportation, freight vehicles, or bicyclists.

Adapted from: North Carolina Department of Transportation

http://www.completestreetsnc.org/wp-content/themes/CompleteStreets_Custom/pdfs/NCDOT-Complete-Streets-Planning-Design-Guidelines.pdf

PART IV: MONITORING

9. Progress Reporting and Measures of Success

- a. There shall be an annual Complete Streets report prepared by the City showing progress made in implementing this policy and measuring the success in achieving the policy's desired outcomes. The report shall include the current status of the following indicators:

Complete Streets Outputs

- Linear metres of new pedestrian accommodation
- Kilometres of on-street bicycle facilities
- Number of new or reconstructed curb ramps
- Number of new mid-block intersections or crosswalk improvements
- Number of new street trees/percentage of streets with tree canopy
- Percentage completion of bicycle networks as detailed in Cycling Master Plan

- Total transit stops
- Percentage of transit stops with shelters
- Number of one-way to two-way conversions.

Complete Streets Outcomes

- Transportation mode share, including pedestrian and cyclists counts and HSR ridership data.
- Rate of collisions, injuries, and fatalities by mode. Collisions shall be defined to include cyclist or pedestrian injuries due to car doors opening in travel path.
- For at least one street per year, in-depth analysis of change in rate of collisions, injuries, and fatalities by mode with enhanced complete street features.
- Number of intersections where there have been requests for improved accommodations for all users
- Rate of children walking or cycling to school
- Rates of residents walking, cycling, or taking transit to a recreation centre

10. Open Data

- a. The City shall make available to residents, using an open-data license, data about our streets including traffic volume data, to help increase citizen engagement and accountability about decisions related to street design and construction affecting the public.

11. Complete Streets Advisory Committee

- a. A Complete Streets Advisory Committee made up of residents and stakeholder groups shall be created to serve as a resource and a collaborative partner for City elected officials and municipal staff.