



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 11-0200 **Version:** 2 **Name:** 3/7/11 - Complete Streets Resolution
Type: Resolution **Status:** Passed
File created: 3/7/2011 **In control:** City Council
On agenda: 3/7/2011 **Final action:** 3/7/2011
Enactment date: 3/7/2011 **Enactment #:** R-11-088

Title: Resolution Proclaiming the City of Ann Arbor's Commitment to Complete Streets

Sponsors:

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Code sections:

Attachments:

| Date | Ver. | Action By | Action | Result |
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| 3/7/2011 | 2 | City Council | Approved | Pass |

Resolution Proclaiming the City of Ann Arbor's Commitment to Complete Streets

The State of Michigan recently adopted new Complete Streets legislation by enactment of Public Act 134 of 2010, which amended requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, and Public Act 135 of 2010, which amended the Michigan Transportation Fund law. The State's recent action establishes policies to encourage transportation projects on all levels of government throughout the state to take all road users into account. In recognition of this new state law, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has revised project competitiveness guidelines for the state's Transportation Enhancement (TE) program. These new guidelines give funding preference to "Projects supporting a community's Complete Streets policy."

For the City to be recognized as being aligned with Michigan's new law and in line with the national "Complete Streets" movement, the following information and proposed resolution have been drafted for City Council's consideration.

The City of Ann Arbor maintains a decades-old commitment to a Complete Streets philosophy for transportation planning, project development and delivery. A "Complete Street" is one planned, designed and maintained to comfortably accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists of all ages and ability levels. While there is no standard complete street design in the newly adopted state law, Complete Streets often feature elements such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, full-featured transit stops, pedestrian and bicycle oriented traffic signals, medians, pedestrian crossing islands, and curb extensions.

The National Complete Streets Coalition, a non-profit association organized for the purpose of advancing and contributing to the advancement of the concept of Complete Streets, has identified ten elements of a comprehensive complete streets policy. The ten elements include:

1. A vision
2. A comprehensive policy applying to all users of the roadway
3. A complete network for all modes of travel

4. Speaking to the many agencies responsible for transportation (In Ann Arbor that includes our own forces as well as AATA's and MDOT's)
5. Addressing all transportation projects
6. Containing only limited and clearly expressed exceptions, where any may exist (An example is the language in the City's non-motorized plan indicating some elements may be more costly and disproportionate to the need or probable use of a facility)
7. Design standards to accommodate all modes of travel
8. Recognition of the context in which the transportation system element is developed
9. A broad look at system performance measures including elements beyond the traditional roadway capacity or vehicular level of service (LOS)
10. Incorporation of implementation mechanisms (An example is the City's commitment of resources to Alternative Transportation)

Complete Streets is not a new concept in the City of Ann Arbor. The City has long embraced the concept and enacted many such policies. The City's policies and programs that are recognized as Complete Streets elements include: providing sidewalks on both sides of streets; defining an appropriate accommodation for bicyclists within the right-of-way; basing planning and project decisions on comprehensive community input processes; administering a long-standing transit millage; and allocating a portion of the City's Act 51 funding for the expansion and maintenance of a non-motorized transportation system.

In recent years, the City has enhanced its commitment to transportation systems for all users through policies contained in recently adopted planning documents including: the Transportation Master Plan Update in 2009; the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan in 2007; and the Northeast Ann Arbor Transportation Plan in 2006. All of these important transportation planning documents fit within and support a Complete Streets framework.

Development of our local transportation system under these policies and programs has resulted in completion of numerous Complete Streets projects, including: the segments of the West Stadium Boulevard reconstruction; Platt Road improvements; and, citywide non-motorized improvements. Additionally, the City has successfully applied for and received MDOT TE funding to support crucial transportation projects, such as the Stadium Boulevard Bridges, non-motorized and streetscape enhancements on Fifth Avenue and Division Street, and the upcoming non-motorized path along Washtenaw Avenue.

The City of Ann Arbor's long-running commitment to all forms of transportation facilities and services has resulted in the City being recognized as a leader in this program area. The City of Ann Arbor currently contains one of the most extensive and complete pedestrian, bicycle and transit systems in the State of Michigan.

While the City embraced a Complete Streets philosophy in its transportation planning and project delivery long ago, no official statement exists that would allow MDOT to recognize the City's efforts. The following resolution allows City Council to formalize the City's commitment to providing transportation facilities and services for all users. This resolution memorializes the City's efforts taken to date, serves to allow the City to receive appropriate recognition in MDOT's Transportation Enhancement grant funding process and may encourage other communities to embrace and implement complete streets policies and transportation systems.

Prepared by: Eli Cooper, Transportation Program Manager

Reviewed by: Sue F. McCormick, Public Services Administrator

Approved by: Roger W. Fraser, City Administrator

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor's transportation systems are provided to support mobility for all, regardless of age or abilities, to safely and conveniently travel throughout the city;

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor utilized a complete streets evaluation framework throughout the City's 2007 Non-motorized Transportation Plan and 2009 City Transportation Plan Update processes;

Whereas, All phases of planning, engineering, construction, operation and maintenance of transportation systems and projects in the City of Ann Arbor are designed and delivered to promote safe, convenient, comfortable, energy efficient and environmentally sustainable travel for all users;

Whereas, According to the recent City of Ann Arbor transportation planning data and the United States Census Bureau statistics, a significant percentage of Ann Arbor residents utilize walking, bicycling or public transit as their primary means of transportation;

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor strives to provide accessibility throughout the public rights-of-way for all residents regardless of ability;

Whereas, Existing City of Ann Arbor plans and policies already provide guidance for transportation projects and investments to facilitate progress toward developing a network of Complete Streets consistent with the objectives of the Michigan Complete Streets legislation and with the practices promoted by the National Complete Streets Coalition;

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor wishes to confirm its commitment to Complete Streets policies in its planning process and in its street and transportation projects; and

Whereas, The adoption of this Complete Streets Proclamation allows the City of Ann Arbor to remain competitive in the pursuit of future state transportation project funding.

RESOLVED, The City of Ann Arbor proclaims its commitment to a Complete Streets Policy, including but not limited to the policies already adopted and embodied in the City's 2009 Transportation Master Plan Update (R-09-165), the City's 2007 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (R 8-1-07), as elements of the City's Master Plan, in resolutions setting aside 5% of the City's Act 51 funds for non-motorized transportation and adopting a policy to build non-motorized elements as part of each road construction project (R-176-5-03 and R-217-5-04), and requirements in the City Public Services Department Standard Specifications; and

RESOLVED, This proclamation be provided to the Michigan Department of Transportation and the National Complete Streets Coalition for the purpose of allowing the City to be recognized for embracing Complete Streets policies and practices.