



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Jennifer Kammerzell, Senior Engineer, Public Works
Kurtis D. Kingsolver, P.E., Public Works Director/City Engineer *KDK*
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Ordinance – Adopting Complete Streets guiding principles and practices – July 25, 2017
DATE: July 5, 2017

SUMMARY:

An ordinance adopting Complete Streets guiding principles and practices.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

The strategic policy priorities aligned with this action are:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.
- Assure outstanding stewardship of the natural and built environment.

The proposed ordinance adopts Complete Streets guiding principles and practices so transportation improvements are planned, designed, and constructed to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users of the City’s transportation network.

BACKGROUND:

Complete Streets creates a comprehensive, integrated, connected transportation system. In 2009, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 37916, which endorsed the creation and ongoing development of Tacoma’s Complete Streets Design Guidelines, and directed the City Manager to implement the Mixed-use Centers Complete Streets Design Guidelines and the Residential Complete Streets Design Guidelines.

In 2015, the City Council passed Ordinance No. 28335, relating to the Transportation Master Plan, which identifies a vision for a multimodal transportation system, offers travel options that provide safe access for all users and encourages healthy living. The City has also adopted other policies, guidelines, and practices that support and implement Complete Streets such as Vision 2025, the ADA Transition Plan, Greenroads, the City of Tacoma Right-of-Way Design Manual, the Right-of-Way Restoration Policy, and the Environmental Action Plan.

A Complete Streets ordinance confirms Public Works’ commitment to approach every transportation improvement and project phase as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible streets for all users. Project types include capital improvements, re-channelization projects, major utility work, and major maintenance. Project phases include, but are not limited to, scoping, planning, programming, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, construction engineering, reconstruction, resurfacing, operation, and maintenance.

It is the City’s intent that all transportation projects implement Complete Streets, when appropriate and feasible. Complete Streets are desired in accordance with accepted or adopted design standards and use the best and latest design standards available including, but not limited to, existing design guidance from the American Association of State Highway Officials, Washington State Department of Transportation, Institute of Transportation Engineers, National Association of City Transportation Officials, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines.



The proposed ordinance provides that implementation of Complete Streets shall begin through the consideration of the following:

1. Incorporate policy into the Comprehensive Plan;
2. Modify the City of Tacoma Right-of-Way Design Manual and other guiding documents in accordance with this policy;
3. Participate in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Mayor's Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets;
4. Pursue the highest certification level of Walk Friendly Community and Bicycle Friendly Community;
5. Continue engagement in the Safe Routes to School program; and
6. Identify gaps in the non-motorized transportation network, and work to fill these gaps.

An exception to this ordinance, including for private projects, must be approved by the City Engineer and be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision. Such documentation shall be publicly available. Exceptions may be considered for approval when:

- A. An affected roadway prohibits, by law, use by specified users (e.g., interstate highways or pedestrian malls);
- B. The costs of providing the accommodation are disproportionate to the need or probable use;
- C. Routine maintenance of the transportation network does not change the roadway geometry or operations such as mowing, sweeping and spot repair (in which case existing bicycle and pedestrian traffic must be safely accommodated during maintenance); or
- D. Other available means or factors indicate an absence of current or future need.

Staff presented the draft Complete Streets ordinance to the Transportation Commission on February 15, 2017, and to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee on March 22, 2017, and April 12, 2017.

ISSUE:

Tacoma is expected to grow by 127,000 residents and 97,000 jobs by 2040. Complete Streets will facilitate a comprehensive, integrated, connected transportation system to serve the growing population. Transportation improvements include an array of facilities and amenities such as sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, traffic calming measures, street and pedestrian lighting; targeted pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements; access improvements for freight; access improvements in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; public transit facilities accommodations including, but not limited to, pedestrian access improvements to transit stops and stations; street trees and landscaping; green infrastructure; and street furniture.

Other jurisdictions and agencies nationwide have adopted Complete Streets legislation including the U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Transportation, and Pierce County. In addition, the ordinance is necessary to allow the City to compete for and obtain state grant funding. The City was recently selected to receive \$250,000 from the Transportation Improvement Board. In order to obligate funds, the City is required to adopt a Complete Streets ordinance.

ALTERNATIVES:

No action may result in a loss of funding or delay in project completion, specifically for the Lincoln Business District and Yakima Festival Street projects, which are relying on an approved Transportation Improvement Board Complete Streets Award of \$250,000.



RECOMMENDATION:

An ordinance adopting Complete Streets guiding principles and practices.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.