

Town of Falmouth Complete Streets Policy

Introduction

The Town of Falmouth is a diverse, historical, seaside community with a rich cultural background pre-dating the revolutionary war. The transportation system experiences significant seasonal challenges owing to harsh New England winters and the summer influx of tourists.

Falmouth is committed to providing a transportation system and infrastructure that is safe, efficient, accessible and reliable to accommodate the widest array of transport modes.

Vision and Intent

Complete Streets are intended to provide safety, comfort and accessibility for all the users of our roads, trails and transit systems which include pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit riders, commercial vehicles and emergency vehicles. “Users” refers to people of all ages, abilities / disabilities and income levels. Further, Complete Streets principles contribute toward the safety, health, economic viability and quality of life in the community by providing greater opportunities in multi-modal and non-motorized transportation in conjunction with accessible and efficient transportation connections between home, school, work, recreation, medical facilities and retail destinations and transportation hubs by improving the pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular infrastructure environments throughout the community.

The intent of Falmouth’s Complete Streets Policy, therefore, is to accommodate all users by creating a roadway network that fulfills the needs of persons utilizing a variety of transportation modes, while preserving the aesthetic character of the roadways.

The Town will, to the maximum extent possible, design, construct, maintain and operate all streets to provide for a comprehensive and integrated roadway network of facilities for people of all ages and abilities.

Core Commitment

The Town of Falmouth recognizes that users of all transportation modes including, but not limited to pedestrians, cyclists, transit and school bus riders, motorists, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers and emergency responders are legitimate users of roadways and deserving of safe facilities.

All roadway projects – including new, reconstruction or maintenance – represent opportunities to implement Complete Streets design principles. Where feasible, Complete Streets design recommendations shall be incorporated into all publicly and privately funded projects. This includes transportation infrastructure and roadway design projects requiring funding or approval by the Town of Falmouth as well as projects funded by the state or federal government such as Chapter 90 funds, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Capital Funding and other state and federal funds for roadway and infrastructure design. The same will be applied to private developments and roadway related design components. In addition, to the extent practical, state-owned roadways will comply with the Complete Streets resolution, including the design, construction and maintenance of such roadways within Town boundaries.

The Department of Public Works shall use its best judgement regarding the feasibility of applying Complete Streets principles for routine roadway maintenance and projects. Transportation infrastructure projects, including, but not limited to roadway reconstruction, roadway reconfiguration, subdivisions or transportation improvements may be excluded upon approval by the Director of Public Works or designee where documentation and data indicate any of the following:

- Areas where specific users are prohibited by law such as interstate freeways or pedestrian malls. An effort will be made, in these cases, for accommodations elsewhere.
- Where the costs or impacts of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use.
- There is an absence of current and future need.
- Protected scenic, historic and/or environmental features/qualities would be adversely impacted.

Best Practices

The Town of Falmouth's Complete Streets Policy focuses on developing a connected, integrated transportation network that serves all users. Complete Streets principles will be integrated into policies, planning and design of all types of public and private projects, including new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation or repair / maintenance of transportation facilities on roadways and redevelopment projects.

The Town of Falmouth recognizes that Complete Streets may be achieved through single elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.

Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a context-sensitive manner in which project implementation is sensitive to the community's physical, economic and social setting. The context-sensitive approach to process and design includes a range of goals by considering stakeholder and community values on a level plane with the project need. It includes goals related to livability with greater participation of those affected in order to gain project consensus. The design process may incorporate flexibility to balance user's needs. The overall goal of this approach is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility and infrastructure conditions.

The latest design guidance, standards and recommendations available will be used in the implementation of Complete Streets including, but not limited to:

- Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) - Project Development & Design Guide
- American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) – A policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets
- United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration’s - Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
- Architectural Access Board (AAB) – 521 CMR Rules and Regulations
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) – Urban Street Design Guide and Urban Bikeway Guide
- Cape Cod Commission – Complete Streets/Living Streets Design Manual
- Cape Cod Metropolitan Planning Organization – Regional Transportation Plan

The Town of Falmouth Complete Streets Policy shall be consistent with project selection criteria for multi-purpose pathway and pedestrian projects as determined by the Falmouth Department of Public Works. Guidance for selection criteria may be found in the above cited references.

Generally, selection criteria will favor projects that meet one or more of the following categories:

- Continuity – These projects alleviate network gaps or deficiencies. The facilities integrate with or improve an existing network or link to either complete or extend systems. However, a project that is the first element of a planned multi-purpose path or walkway system will also be valued. Isolated projects with no clearly defined origin or destination will be avoided.
- Destinations / Attractions – The purpose of such facilities is to provide pedestrian or multi-modal links to destinations including transit stops, business district / shopping centers, beaches, playgrounds or other pedestrian oriented destinations.
- Schools – These facilities serve roadways and the transportation network surrounding schools. They may augment other programs such as Safe Routes to Schools.

- Regional Connectivity – Projects that integrate with regionally recognized routes or networks that extend into adjacent communities.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

The Falmouth Department of Public Works will develop performance measures to periodically assess the effectiveness of implementing the Complete Streets Policy; including determining the frequency of assessment and utilizing appropriate metrics for analyzing the success of this policy. These metrics may include:

- Total miles of new on-street bicycle routes defined by lane markings or signage.
- Linear feet of new pedestrian accommodation.
- Number of new curb ramps or other retrofitted pedestrian facilities.
- Number of intersection improvements made to improve multi-modal Level of Service (LOS) and safety for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Steps taken to preserve the aesthetic character of roadways undergoing complete street reconstruction.
- Increase in the number of users of public transportation.
- Increase/Decrease in the number of traffic accidents involving vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians in Complete Streets areas.

These metrics will be compiled into a report by the town Department of Public Works (with assistance from other departments and committees) and presented as needed.

Implementation strategies will be adjusted as needed based on the findings in these reports.

Implementation

Falmouth's Town Planner shall integrate Complete Streets principles in all new planning documents as applicable (e.g., Master Plan, Open Space Plan, Historic Plan). The Planner shall make recommendations for changes to Site Plan Review criteria and changes to the Subdivision Rules and Regulations to encourage contextual design of Complete Streets

policies respecting the presence of important scenic, cultural, environmental and historic resources.

The Town of Falmouth shall approach every transportation project or program as an opportunity to improve roadways and the overall transportation network for all users.

The Town of Falmouth will prioritize and implement recommended improvements under the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan.

Approved projects meeting the requirements of this Complete Streets Policy will be incorporated into the Town's Capital Improvement Plan.

The Town of Falmouth will ensure the availability of training for pertinent staff and decision-makers on the content of Complete Streets principles and best practices.

The Town of Falmouth will incorporate inter-department and committee coordination to promote the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public way.


The Town of Falmouth will seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants for implementation of Complete Street policies.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Selectmen at a public meeting on December 16, 2019.



Megan English Braga
Chairman, Board of Selectmen

Date 1/21/2020



Julian M. Suso
Town Manager

Date 1/21/2020