



What is a Complete Streets Policy?

A policy that demonstrates your municipality's commitment to routinely *CONSIDER* the needs of *ALL* users, modes, and ability levels to create a transportation network that balances the needs of drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, emergency responders, and local businesses.

What it is not?

A mandate that requires putting bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb-ramps everywhere, regardless of context.

What does a Complete Street look like?

It depends. Context is key. It is not a one size fits all approach. Complete Streets amenities commonly used in a busy downtown may be excessive for a quiet residential street or a rural highway.



What's in a Complete Streets Policy?

NJDOT identifies six key elements found in an effective Complete Streets policy:

- 1. Statement of Purpose and Intent** – Describes the vision, goals, and desired outcomes of the policy.
- 2. Definition of Users and Modes** – Commonly defined users include: pedestrians; bicyclists; public transit riders; the disabled; the elderly; and children. Depending on local context, it may also include: skateboarders; equestrians; farmers; and emergency responders.
- 3. Types of Improvements** – Types of projects to which this policy will be applied include, but are not limited to: new construction; reconstruction; rehabilitation; resurfacing; maintenance; operations; private development; and public private partnerships.
- 4. Design Standards** – Point towards accepted standards and guides that should be employed when developing projects. This section could simply state that the latest local and national standards will be used, or it may refer to specific guides (i.e. MUTCD, AASHTO, NACTO, state or local standards).
- 5. Exemptions** – Directives on determining exempt projects and the exemption review process are extremely important. Costs disproportionate to need is the most commonly employed exemption. A common threshold to allow exemptions is if incorporating Complete Streets would increase project costs by 20% or more. Additional considerations include safety, environmental impact, or user restrictions. Exemption reviewers may be an individual, such as a department head or engineer, or it may be an entity such as a committee or governing body.
- 6. Implementation Plan** – A common method to implement a Complete Streets policy is to create a project review checklist. NJDOT has created a sample checklist employed by a number of municipalities. Additional implementation strategies include reviewing and updating master plans, zoning and subdivision codes, and other existing policies, procedures, and ordinances to reflect Complete Streets. Developing performance measures to track progress is another effective way to help implement a Complete Streets policy.