

TAC Complete Streets Info

5/9/17

Introduction: Complete Streets are for Everyone

A Complete Street is one that provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes – walking, biking, transit, and motorized vehicles – for people of all ages and abilities. Designing streets with these principles contributes toward the safety, health, economic viability and quality of life in a community by improving the pedestrian and vehicular environments and providing safer, more accessible and comfortable means of travel between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations. More broadly, embedding Complete Streets principles in policy and practice help promote more livable communities.

In addition, the creation of Complete Streets encourages an active transportation lifestyle and is supported by the United States Centers for Disease Control and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as a way to decrease obesity and reduce risk for chronic diseases (heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, etc.). Also inherent in the development of a Complete Street is meeting the most current accessibility guidelines outlined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (AAB), which are upheld by Code of Massachusetts Regulations 521 (521 CMR).

Complete Streets improvements may be large scale, such as corridor-wide improvements that include a separated bicycle lane, new crosswalks and new bus stops; or a small scale improvement, such as a new bus shelter to encourage transit use. Other Complete Street project examples include improved street lighting, minor changes to traffic signal timings, new bicycle or pedestrian facilities, a median refuge island, or improved connection to transit. The design of a Complete Street should be context sensitive and incorporate improvements or treatments that fit with the need and within the character of a community.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) recognizes the importance of supporting projects that provide context-sensitive, multimodal transportation options on appropriate roadways. In 2013 MassDOT issued its own *Healthy Transportation Policy Directive* to ensure that all MassDOT projects are designed and implemented in a way that all our customers have access to safe and comfortable healthy transportation options at all MassDOT facilities and in all the services we provide.

MassDOT also recognizes the importance of supporting Complete Streets on local roads for the benefits they provide, and to assist in closing critical gaps in transportation networks. MassDOT is pleased to provide a new Complete Streets Funding Program to further the understanding and development of Complete Streets on local roads across the Commonwealth.

This *Complete Streets Funding Program Guidance* document describes the full requirements of the program, including guidance on best practices in Complete Streets Policy development and implementation. The Complete Streets Portal provides the online application and program participation process.

MassDOT has allocated \$12.5 million for the first two years of this effort. Future funding will be based on the availability of funds and the interest and success of the program.

Program Tiers

Tier 1 – Training and Complete Streets Policy Development

Tier 2 – Complete Streets Prioritization and Plan Development

Tier 3 – Project Approval and Notice to Proceed

Tier 1 Required Municipal Actions

1. Have a municipal employee **attend Complete Streets 101 or 201 Training**.
2. **Submit a Complete Streets Policy** (Bylaw, Ordinance, or Administrative Policy) that has been approved by the highest elected official or board with one public meeting, or alternatively.
3. **Upload *Intent to Become a Complete Streets Eligible Municipality* letter** (allows municipality to qualify for Technical Assistance funding in Tier 2).

Complete Streets Ten Policy Elements Snapshot

I. Vision and Intent

1. Includes a **vision and intention** for how and why the community wants to advance Complete Streets Infrastructure. (10 points)

II. Core Commitment

2. Specifies that the transportation system serves '**all users**' including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of **all ages and abilities**, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles. (20 points)
3. Applies to **all projects and phases**, including reconstruction, new construction, design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way. (15 points)
4. Makes any **exceptions** specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions. (10 points)

III. Best Practice

5. Encourages and aims to create a **comprehensive, integrated, connected network** for all modes. (10 points)
6. Is clear regarding what **jurisdictions** the policy applies to and emphasizes the need for coordination. (5 points)
7. Directs the use of the latest and best **design criteria** and guidelines while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs. (10 points)
8. Directs that Complete Streets solutions be **context sensitive** and complement the community. (5 points)
9. Establishes **performance standards** with measurable outcomes. (5 points)

IV. Implementation

10. Includes specific next steps for **implementation** of the policy. (10 points)

Chapter 2: Program Overview

The objective of the Complete Streets Funding Program is to reward municipalities that demonstrate a commitment to embedding Complete Streets in policy and practice with technical assistance and construction funding. This chapter provides an overview of the Program, including its objectives, rewards, eligible projects, and structure and process.

Program Objectives

The Complete Streets Funding Program's objectives are as follows:

1. Provide technical assistance and incentives for adoption of Complete Streets policies at the municipal level so that a broader range of communities are encouraged to enter the program in order to be eligible for project funding.
2. Encourage municipalities to adopt a strategic and comprehensive approach to Complete Streets, rather than simply seeking funding for a single project, by providing technical assistance to municipalities to create Complete Streets Prioritization plans (described below).
3. Facilitate better pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel for users of all ages and abilities by addressing critical gaps in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure by funding Complete Streets projects in cities and towns that have already adopted policies and undertaken planning.
4. Distribute funding to reward municipalities who have committed to adopting Complete Streets best practices through the Community Compact Cabinet.
5. Ensure that underserved municipalities are served equitably by the program as anticipated by statute.

Program Reward

The objective of the Complete Streets Funding Program is to reward municipalities that demonstrate a commitment to embedding Complete Streets in policy and practice. There are two program rewards outlined below.

Program Reward

(for municipalities that meet the eligibility requirements)

- 1. Technical Assistance – up to \$50,000** for analysis in support of a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. (Funding is not available for assistance in Policy development.)
- 2. Construction Funding – up to \$400,000** (Design is not an eligible expense. Chapter 90 monies can be used to support design)

Technical Assistance

The technical assistance funding will to determine municipality's Complete Street needs. This could be in the form of a network gap analysis or safety audit.