



## CITY OF KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

## City Council

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

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**AGENDA DATE:** October 14, 2014  
**DEPARTMENT:** Office of Sustainability  
**DIRECTOR:** Erin Gill

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**AGENDA SUMMARY** An Ordinance to amend Chapter 23, Article I of the Knoxville City Code to add a new section requiring the adoption of a Complete Streets policy.

**COUNCIL DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED** All

**BACKGROUND** "Complete Streets" are streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access for users of all ages, abilities, and modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders, and motor vehicle drivers. By promoting Complete Streets, the City encourages increased walking, biking, and use of public transit, which in turn can result in more livable and walkable neighborhoods, cleaner air, improved health, reduced traffic congestion, and more efficient use of road space and natural resources. Complete Streets can also promote mobility and independence for Knoxville residents who cannot or do not want to drive traditional vehicles because of age, physical disability, personal preference, or the costs of private vehicle ownership.

The City of Knoxville has a long history of supporting Complete Streets and integrating Complete Streets principles into projects led by the Department of Engineering, Office of Redevelopment, Office of Sustainability, Knoxville Area Transit, and other city departments. At a City Council workshop in February, 2014, Bike Walk Knoxville (a non-profit organization promoting safe streets for bicyclists and pedestrians) asked City Council to pass an ordinance formalizing the City's commitment to advance Complete Streets. This proposed ordinance change is in direct response to City Council's support of Bike Walk's request.

The proposed ordinance would direct current and future city administrations to adopt and adhere to a Complete Streets Policy. If the ordinance is adopted, the attached "Proposed Administrative Complete Streets Policy" is the administrative policy that Mayor Rogero intends to adopt. City officials worked closely with representatives from Bike Walk Knoxville and the Knoxville Transportation Planning Organization to develop the proposed administrative policy. The administrative policy may be changed as the City Mayor's Office, or designated department, deems appropriate, provided that such changes are subject to public hearing and that the public is allowed to submit comments before proposed changes are finalized.

**OPTIONS** Approve or deny

**RECOMMENDATION** Approve

**ESTIMATED PROJECT SCHEDULE** City administration will adopt the Proposed Complete Streets Policy within two weeks of ordinance adoption.

**PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW** On August 11, 2009, City Council adopted a resolution endorsing the creation, adoption, and adherence to a "Complete Streets" policy to promote safe, convenient, thoughtfully designed streets within the City of Knoxville (R-287-09). On February 27, 2014, Bike Walk Knoxville presented a Council Workshop on Complete Streets principles and encouraged the City to adopt a Complete Streets policy.

**FISCAL INFORMATION** N/A

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Complete Streets Ordinance (DOCX)
- Complete Streets Policy (DOCX)

**ORDINANCE**

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE TO AMEND CHAPTER 23, ARTICLE I OF THE KNOXVILLE CITY CODE TO ADD A NEW SECTION REQUIRING THE ADOPTION OF A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY.

ORDINANCE NO: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office of Sustainability  
REQUESTED BY: & Dept. of Engineering  
PREPARED BY: Law

APPROVED ON 1<sup>ST</sup>  
READING: \_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED ON 2<sup>ND</sup>  
READING: \_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED AS AN EMERGENCY  
MEASURE: \_\_\_\_\_

MINUTE BOOK: \_\_\_\_\_ PAGE \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEREAS**, the network of streets and roadways in the City of Knoxville contributes to the safety, health, economic viability, and quality of life in Knoxville by providing connections between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations; and

**WHEREAS**, these connections should be as convenient, safe, reliable, and accessible as possible for all modes and all users of Knoxville’s transportation network; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Knoxville desires to strengthen connectivity and safe access for all transportation modes and users among the City’s street network as a whole; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Knoxville defines “Complete Streets” as streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users of all ages and abilities; and

Attachment: Complete Streets Ordinance (3254 : Complete Streets Ordinance)

**WHEREAS,** Complete Streets principles lead to the development of Complete Streets.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE:**

**SECTION 1:** Chapter 23, Article I of the Knoxville City Code is hereby amended to add a new Section as follows:

Section \_\_\_\_\_. Complete Streets Policy.

The City of Knoxville, through its Mayor’s Office and in collaboration with other applicable departments, shall adopt a Complete Streets Policy committing the City, to the maximum extent practical, plan for, design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to reflect Complete Streets principles and provide for a comprehensive and integrated street network that accommodates all users and modes. The Complete Streets Policy may be updated from time to time, as needed, in the discretion of the Mayor’s Office or other applicable designated departments, provided that such changes are subject to public hearing and that the public is allowed to submit comments before proposed changes are finalized.

**SECTION 2:** This Ordinance shall take effect seventeen (17) days from and after its passage, the public welfare requiring it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer of the Council

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City Recorder

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Attachment: Complete Streets Ordinance (3254 : Complete Streets Ordinance)



## I. VISION & PURPOSE

The network of streets and roadways in the City of Knoxville contributes to the safety, health, economic viability, and quality of life in Knoxville by providing connections between home, school, work, recreation, retail, and other destinations. These connections should be as convenient, safe, reliable, and accessible as possible for all modes of transportation, including but not limited to walking, biking, riding transit, and driving trucks, buses, automobiles, commercial vehicles, freight vehicles, and emergency vehicles, and all users, including people of all ages and abilities.

Complete Streets principles lead to the development of Complete Streets. By adopting and complying with this Complete Streets Policy (“Policy”), City decision-makers will consistently plan for, design, construct, operate, and maintain streets to accommodate all anticipated users and modes and thereby provide transportation options and encourage active transportation.

For the purposes of this Policy, the City of Knoxville defines “Complete Streets” as streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users of all ages and abilities.

This Policy recognizes that each individual street project may not be appropriate for incorporation of Complete Streets principles. Rather, the purpose of this Policy is to strengthen connectivity and safe access for all transportation modes and users among the City’s street network as a whole.

## II. CORE COMMITMENT

The City of Knoxville will, to the maximum extent practical, plan for, design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to reflect Complete Streets principles and provide for a comprehensive and integrated street network that accommodates all users and modes.

By adopting this Policy, the City commits to incorporate Complete Streets principles into its development plans and agreements, area plans, transportation plans, land-use policies, site plan review regulations, standards and specifications documents, and other plans, manuals, rules, regulations and programs, when practicable and as opportunities arise.

The City will approach every transportation improvement and project phase as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible streets for all modes and users. These phases include, but are not limited to planning, programming, design, construction, reconstruction, operation and maintenance.

Maintenance activities do not necessarily trigger requirements for major street improvements and should not be expected to do so. Maintenance activities do present



some opportunities that can improve access for roadway users beyond those for whom the facility was originally designed.

### III. SCOPE

This Complete Streets Policy will apply to all public and private street design, construction, and retrofit projects initiated after Policy adoption and managed or implemented by the City of Knoxville, except in unusual or extraordinary circumstances contained in *Exemptions* below.

For projects or policies implemented in the City or directly affecting the City street network, but which are outside of City control, the City will encourage the use of this Policy where appropriate.

#### *Exemptions*

Transportation projects may be exempted from this Policy where documentation and data indicate that:

1. Specific modes or users are prohibited by law or policy from using the facility, such as interstate freeways or pedestrian malls. An effort will be made, in these cases, to accommodate prohibited modes and users elsewhere within the same transportation corridor.
2. The cost of establishing walkways or bikeways or implementing other accommodations is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use, or would prohibit project implementation.
3. Construction is not practically feasible or cost effective because of unreasonable adverse impacts on the environment or on neighboring land uses, including impact from right-of-way acquisition.
4. The project is ordinary maintenance activity designed to keep street and other transportation assets in serviceable condition, or is an interim measure implemented on temporary detour or haul routes. However, all detours and temporary route modifications shall accommodate all modes and users to the maximum extent practical, in accordance with ADA and MUTCD guidance.
5. The project is ordinary public works or utility maintenance activity, including, but not limited to water, sewer and storm sewer main repairs; installation of new or removal of existing water or sewer service lines, installation or repair of fire hydrants, installation or repair of private utility fixtures.

Exclusive of Exceptions 4 and 5 above, the director of the managing City department shall document and explicitly explain why a transportation project is exempt from this Policy. This explanation shall be issued in the form of an official memorandum. When projects or related contracts require City Council approval, this memorandum shall be included in the official agenda information packet submitted to City Council.



#### IV. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Policy will be carried out cooperatively within all departments in the City of Knoxville with multi-jurisdictional cooperation among private developers, constituents, and state, regional, and federal agencies to the greatest extent possible.

In implementing this policy, City departments shall be sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and social setting and seek to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

The City 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. Additionally, the City recognizes the importance of approaching transportation projects within the context of the larger street network, and that all modes do not necessarily need to receive the same type of accommodation and space on every street.

The City shall follow accepted or adopted design standards and use the best and latest design standards available, including but not limited to:

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)
  - *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* (4th Edition, 2012)
  - *Guide for the Planning, Design and Operations of Pedestrian Facilities* (2004)
- American Planning Association (APA)
  - *Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices* (2010)
- American Planning Association (APA) & American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)
  - *U.S. Traffic Calming Manual* (2009)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
  - PEDSAFE: Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasures Selection System
- Institution of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
  - *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach* (2010)
  - *Neighborhood Street Design Guidelines* (2010)
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
  - *Urban Bikeway Design Guide* (2nd Edition, 2012)



- *Urban Street Design Guide* (2013)
- U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (the Access Board)
  - Accessible Rights-of-Way: A Design Guide
- Active Transportation Alliance
  - *Complete Streets Complete Networks: A Manual for the Design of Active Transportation*
- Documents and plans created for the City of Knoxville, such as bicycle and pedestrian network plans

Complete Streets implementation and effectiveness should be evaluated annually for success and opportunities for improvement. Performance will be evaluated by measures including, but not limited to miles of greenways, miles of designated bike lanes/routes, and Knoxville Area Transit annual ridership.

#### *Next Steps*

In coordination as necessary with the Law Department and other relevant City departments, the City Engineering Department shall:

1. Incorporate Complete Streets principles into all appropriate planning documents, and other manuals, contract documents, checklists, decision trees, rules, regulations, and programs as appropriate.
2. Review and either revise or develop as necessary design standards, including subdivision and site plan review regulations, to ensure that they reflect the best available design guidelines, and effectively implement Complete Streets.
3. Encourage leaders and staff to pursue professional development and training on the content of Complete Streets principles and best practices for implementing policy through workshops and other appropriate means as available.
4. Develop performance measures and collect data as appropriate and necessary to evaluate how well the street network serves all users.
5. Promote project coordination among City departments and agencies with an interest in the activities that occur within the public right-of-way in order to better use fiscal resources.

The City Mayor's Office, or designated department, is authorized to make changes to this Policy as it deems appropriate, provided that such changes are subject to public hearing and that the public is allowed to submit comments before proposed changes are finalized. Such changes are not required to be approved by City Council.