
CITY COMMISSION POLICY ON COMPLETE STREETS

Adopted December 15, 2025

The following policy is hereby adopted by the City Commission of the City of Traverse City and shall be applicable to all committees and appointments hereafter made by the City Commission, Mayor, or City Manager.

1. Vision and Purpose

The purpose of this Complete Streets Policy is to create an equitable and effective transportation network where all users can travel safely, conveniently, and efficiently; and to set clear, measurable goals so that progress may be fairly evaluated. Traverse City aims to provide a complete and connected transportation system that enhances safety, health, and quality of life for all users.

This policy prioritizes sustainable transportation modes such as bicycling, walking, rolling, micro-mobility, and public transit. Additionally, it supports climate mitigation efforts by reducing greenhouse gas emissions through increased use of non-motorized and public transportation. A well-designed Complete Streets network also contributes to economic vitality by improving access to businesses and services for all residents.

The policy shall be reviewed initially after one year, and at least every three years thereafter, and updated as deemed necessary.

2. Equity, Accessibility, and Safety

While this policy applies citywide, Traverse City will prioritize Complete Streets improvements in historically underinvested and underserved neighborhoods. All projects shall consider the needs of all users, including persons of all ages and abilities.

- Projects in areas with lower-income populations, high senior residency, youth, or limited mobility options.
- Areas identified through equity mapping tools and public input as needing better access to transportation.

3. Commitment in All Projects and Phases

Complete Streets principles shall be applied to all transportation projects, including new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, repaving, restriping, and rehabilitation. The City shall ensure safe and continuous access for all modes of transportation during construction or maintenance work. The City Commission has pledged to commit 1% of the Annual Budget to be used for Complete Streets projects.

4. Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy will only be granted where:

- The proposed improvements would not meet accepted minimum safety standards
- Approval is obtained from the City Commission.
- Documentation supporting the exception is publicly available for at least 30 days before approval.

Engineering judgment is necessary to allow decisions to account for unique site-specific conditions and considerations to provide high quality products, within budget, and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

5. Jurisdiction

This policy applies to all public rights-of-way in Traverse City. The City will encourage compliance from state and county agencies within its limits as well as entities responsible for private roads and collaborate with regional partners to expand Complete Streets beyond city boundaries.

6. Design Guidelines

Complete Streets improvements shall adhere to best practices from national, state, and local sources, including but not limited to:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guides
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) design guides
- U.S. Access Board's Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)
- Vision Zero Network
- City of Traverse City Street Design Manual
- City of Traverse City Master Plan
- City of Traverse City Mobility Action Plan
- City of Traverse City Policies
- Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), FHWA

- Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD), MDOT
- Department of Justice ADA Standards for Accessible Design

7. Land Use and Transportation Integration

Land use and transportation planning must be aligned to support the Complete Streets vision. When policies, zoning regulations, and plans, including the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan, are revised, they shall reflect this commitment. To further enhance the safety and sustainability of the transportation network, the City will incorporate Traverse City's Tree Ordinance into street planning efforts. Vegetation shall be used strategically to provide traffic calming, improve pedestrian comfort, and contribute to environmental benefits such as air quality improvement and stormwater management. Priority shall be given to native plants and trees.

8. Performance Measures

Traverse City and/or interested partners will track progress using key performance indicators, including but not limited to:

- Miles of sidewalks with pedestrian-scale lighting
- Winter maintenance levels for all users
- Miles of missing sidewalks completed
- Ridership of local transit agencies
- Pedestrian and bicycle counts on streets
- Improvements in ADA accessibility and curb ramps
- Miles of completed Complete Streets

The City Manager will report progress to the City Commission during the annual budget process.

9. Complete Streets Advisory Committee

A Complete Streets Advisory Committee shall be established to make recommendations consistent with this policy, at the recommendation of the City Manager and appointed by the City Commission in accordance with the City's Charter and shall include:

- A total of seven (7) members
 - One City Commissioner
 - City Manager or their Designee
 - Five residents

The Complete Streets Advisory Committee shall meet at least quarterly during regular City office hours.

The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to:

- Determine specific measurable goals
- Advise the City Manager regarding prioritization of Complete Streets projects and proposed use of the Complete Streets fund
- Review Complete Streets plans for compliance with the Complete Streets Policy
- The citizen advisory committee will create a rubric to measure and prioritize project selection

10. Project Selection Criteria

Complete Streets projects will be prioritized based on:

- Context of the street segment being considered and the surrounding area
- Impact on historically underserved communities (reference section 2 for definition)
- Potential to improve safety for all users
- Contribution to a connected multimodal network
- Cost-effectiveness and feasibility
- The citizen advisory committee will create a rubric to measure and prioritize project selection

This policy is designed to ensure that Traverse City's streets support a safe, accessible, and connected transportation system for all users, improving quality of life, and promoting sustainability.

I certify that the above City Commission Policy on Complete Streets was adopted at the regular meeting of the City Commission held on December 15, 2025.



Sarah Lutz, Interim City Clerk

Exhibit Flow Chart

December 2025

City of Traverse City Transportation Projects Flow Chart*

Complete Streets
Advisory Committee

City Commission
Meeting

Public
Input

*Not all projects may follow this path. Specific project paths depend on project scope and complexity, and/or direction from the City Commission.

