



Legislation Text

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Staff Report for a Resolution Adopting a Complete Streets Policy for Regional and County Funding Requirements

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a Complete Streets Policy Resolution to meet the requirements of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) Measure B funding and Vehicle Registration Fee funding and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) One Bay Area Grant funding.

BACKGROUND

Complete Streets

Complete streets are generally defined as streets that are safe and convenient for all users of the roadway, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, persons with disabilities, users and operators of public transit, seniors, children, and movers of commercial goods. A Complete Street is the result of comprehensive planning, programming, design, construction, operation, and maintenance, and should be appropriate to the function and context of the street. There is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each one is unique and responds to its community context. A Complete Street may include: sidewalks, bike lanes, special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more. Over 400 communities in the U.S. have supported building Complete Streets, through the adoption of Complete Streets policies.

Alameda County has experienced tremendous growth in the number of people bicycling and walking. Counts done by the Alameda CTC show that since 2002 bicycling has increased by 75 percent and walking by 47 percent. As more facilities are built, evidence shows that even more people will likely be attracted to these modes. At the same time, transit ridership has also been increasing, and this trend is expected to continue. The Alameda Countywide Transportation Plan projects that there will be a 130 percent increase in all daily transit trips in the county by 2035.

As found in the entire country, the older population in San Leandro is growing dramatically. In 2005, 10 percent of Alameda County residents were 65 and older, but by 2035, seniors will make up almost 20 percent of the county's population. At the other end of the age spectrum, more and more children are walking and bicycling to school, and this trend is expected to continue as the countywide Safe Routes to Schools program grows.

Complete Streets support safe and convenient travel by all of these existing users (walkers, bicyclists, transit riders, seniors, and children), plus the many other users of the roadway. The many

benefits include improving safety for all users; encouraging walking, bicycling and transit use; improving air quality; reducing greenhouse gas emissions; improving the health of the community by increasing physical activity, and supporting economic development.

Regional and County Complete Streets Policy Requirements

Both the MTC and Alameda CTC have recently enacted requirements that local jurisdictions must have an adopted Complete Streets policy in order to receive or be eligible for certain transportation funding. Both of these requirements take effect in 2013. The MTC and Alameda CTC requirements are described below:

- **MTC Requirements:** With Resolution 4035, any city wishing to receive One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) funding must, by June 30, 2013, either adopt a Complete Streets policy resolution that is consistent with regional guidelines, or have a General Plan circulation element that is in compliance with the state Complete Streets Act. The City of San Leandro does not currently have a General Plan that is in compliance, and therefore must adopt a resolution.
- **Alameda CTC Requirements:** The current Master Program Funding Agreement (MPFA) between the Alameda CTC and the City of San Leandro, which was signed in March 2012 to allow the distribution of Measure B and Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) pass-through funding, includes a Complete Streets policy requirement. The City must adopt a Complete Streets policy that includes ten required elements by June 30, 2013. Alameda CTC developed its required policy elements to be complementary to the MTC requirement, so that the City only needs to adopt the suggested policy to be in compliance with both the Alameda CTC and MTC requirements.

Development and Description of Complete Streets Policy Resolution

The proposed Complete Streets policy resolution is based on Alameda CTC's resolution template with input received from the San Leandro Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) at its November 14, 2012 meeting.

Existing Efforts Supportive of Complete Streets in San Leandro

San Leandro has already adopted transportation-related plans that are consistent with a Complete Streets approach. These plans include the Downtown San Leandro Transit-Oriented Development Strategy in 2007 and the 2010 San Leandro Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Staff is also in the process of preparing an updated ADA Transition Plan for future adoption.

Future Complete Streets Policy Requirements

The California Complete Streets Act of 2008 (Assembly Bill 1358), which took effect in January 2011, requires cities and counties to include complete streets policies as part of their general plan. This must be done at the time that any substantive revisions of the circulation element in the general plan are made. The State Office of Planning and Research has developed guidance for local agencies to comply with the law.

To be eligible for future transportation funding cycles, MTC's Resolution 4035 requires that local jurisdictions must have updated their general plans to comply with the State's Complete Streets Act by October 31, 2014. San Leandro's MPFA with Alameda CTC also requires that it comply with the

State act, but there is no deadline for this action.

Analysis

Staff has developed a Complete Streets policy resolution that meets the Alameda CTC and MTC requirements. The policy includes the following 10 elements: 1) Vision; 2) All Users and Modes; 3) All Project/Phases; 4) Exceptions; 5) Network/Connectivity; 6) Jurisdiction; 7) Design; 8) Context Sensitivity; 9) Performance Measures; and 10) Implementation Next Steps. The following list provides a description of the policy elements included in the resolution:

1. **Vision:** A clear and strong vision for Complete Streets based on City needs and goals. The vision must include that all transportation improvements will be planned, funded, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users, appropriate to the function and context of the facility.
2. **All Users and Modes:** All users (referenced above) will include pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, seniors, children, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, and emergency responders.
3. **All Projects/Phases:** The policy applies to all roadway projects including those involving new construction, reconstruction, retrofits, repaving, rehabilitation, or expansion of existing roadways, as well as those that involve new privately built roads and easements intended for public use.
4. **Exceptions:** The City must prepare a process for approving exceptions, including who is allowed to sign off on exceptions. Written findings for exceptions must be included in a memorandum, signed off by a high level staff person, such as the Engineering and Transportation Director or senior-level designee, and made publicly available. Exceptions must explain why accommodations for all users and modes were not included in the plan or project.
5. **Network/Connectivity:** The transportation system should provide a comprehensive, integrated, and connected network of facilities for all modes of travel. A well-connected network should include non-motorized connectivity to schools, transit, parks, commercial areas, and civic destinations.
6. **Jurisdiction:** All departments in the City whose work affects the roadway must incorporate a Complete Streets approach into the review and implementation of their projects and activities. The City should work in coordination with other agencies, transit districts and jurisdictions to maximize opportunities for Complete Streets, connectivity, and cooperation in designing and building transportation projects.
7. **Design:** The City will define and generally follow its own accepted or adopted design standards, and will also use the latest design standards and innovative design options, with a goal of balancing user needs.
8. **Context Sensitivity:** The planning and implementation of transportation projects will reflect conditions within and surrounding the project area, whether the area is a residential or

business district or urban, suburban, or rural. Project planning, design and construction of Complete Streets projects should include working with residents, merchants and other stakeholders to ensure that a strong sense of place is maintained.

9. Performance Measures: The City will establish performance measures, and identify a means to collect data for the measures necessary to evaluate the implementation of the Complete Streets policy. Specific measures, such as tracking the number of miles of bicycle lanes and sidewalks, numbers of street crossings, and transit ridership, should be listed.

10. Implementation Next Steps: The City will include a list of specific next steps for implementation of the Complete Streets policy. Implementation actions should require that any proposed improvements be evaluated for consistency with all local plans, including bicycle, pedestrian and/or transit plans, and any other plans that affect the right-of-way. Implementation actions should also require that public input on projects and plans will be solicited from stakeholders, including the BPAC and other advisory groups, as appropriate, as early in the development process as possible.

Committee Review and Actions

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee - November 14, 2012: The Committee had a positive reception to the topic and provided input to the Policy Vision statement
- Facilities and Transportation Committee - November 14, 2012

Applicable General Plan Policies

- 14.04 Accommodation of Bicycles and Pedestrians
- 17.01 Traffic Calming Strategies
- 17.04 Coordination with Urban Design Improvements
- 18.02 Capital Improvements
- 18.05 Funding
- 19.01 Street and Building Design
- 19.05 Narrower Streets
- 20.04 Community Input

Fiscal Impacts

Approval of the resolution will allow the City to receive and compete for MTC and ACTC funding opportunities.

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