

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2012-064

ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY FOR
THE CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

- WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Northfield adopted City Council Resolution 2012-017, at the City Council meeting of February 17, 2012; and,
- WHEREAS, as expressed in that Resolution, the Northfield City Council desires to develop and adopt a Complete Streets Policy to assure city streets are designed, operated and maintained to be safe and accessible for pedestrians, transit riders, bicyclists, drivers—all users regardless of age or ability; and,
- WHEREAS, The City of Northfield already has many of these elements established in its Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Transportation Plan, Safe Routes to School Plan, Land Development Code, zoning regulations, and design of street improvements projects; and,
- WHEREAS, development and adoption of a Complete Streets Policy will draw these various elements into a single cohesive document that can be enhanced and clarified where necessary; and,
- WHEREAS, having a City of Northfield Complete Streets Policy will better position the City of Northfield to partner with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to fully implement the 2010 state Complete Streets law, especially when considering improvements to State Trunk Highways 3, 19, and 246 into and through Northfield; and,
- WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Northfield adopted City Council Resolution 2012-027, at the City Council meeting of April 3, 2012; and,
- WHEREAS, Resolution 2012-27 established the Complete Streets Task Force, which was directed to report back to the City Council a proposed draft Complete Streets Policy on or about July 15, 2012, and,
- WHEREAS, a Complete Streets Policy for the City of Northfield has been prepared and presented to the Northfield City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THAT:

1. The City Council of the City of Northfield hereby adopts the attached Complete Streets Policy.
2. This Policy shall be reviewed at least every five years to determine its success and make any needed revisions.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Northfield on this 17th day of July, 2012.

ATTEST



City Clerk



Mayor

VOTE: Y ROSSING Y BUCKHEIT Y GANEY Y NAKASIAN
Y POWNELL Y IMM Y ZWEIFEL

City of Northfield Complete Streets Policy

Vision

Pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, motorists, freight carriers, and emergency responders must be able to safely move along and across Northfield's street network. The City of Northfield Complete Streets policy intends to ensure all streets within the City are planned, funded, designed, constructed, operated and maintained to safely accommodate users of all ages and abilities.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to design surface transportation corridors that balance the needs of all users while implementing the principles of the Comprehensive Plan of enhancing Northfield's sense of place and creating a highly connected multi-modal transportation network. As part of developing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure through the implementation of this Complete Streets, Northfield intends and expects to realize long-term cost savings in improved public health, better environmental stewardship, reduced fuel consumption, and reduced demand for motor vehicle infrastructure through the implementation of this Complete Streets policy. Complete Streets also contribute to walkable neighborhoods which can foster interaction, create a sense of community pride and improve quality of life.

Goals

1. Incorporate the vision, purpose, and goals of this Policy into all aspects of the project development process for surface transportation projects within the City of Northfield.
2. Create a balanced, highly interconnected and attractive surface transportation network which is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan and other relevant policies of the City.
3. Manage stormwater and improve Cannon River water quality by reducing impervious surfaces, narrowing street widths where suitable to the context, planting street trees, and, where appropriate, increasing stormwater infiltration along streets through the design of the public right-of-way.
4. Promote the use of the latest and best "complete streets" design standards, principles, policies, and guidelines within the context of the community.

Directives

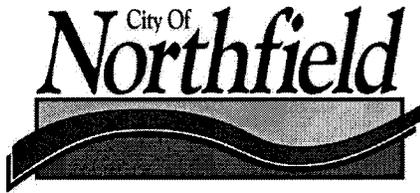
The City of Northfield's surface transportation network shall balance the needs of all current and future users. Project identification, planning, scoping, and design for new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, rehabilitation, repair, and maintenance within the public right-of-way shall adhere to the following:

1. Accommodations for all users of the surface transportation network shall be balanced in accordance with the latest and best "complete streets" standards, principles, policies, and guidelines, **except** under one (1) or more of the following conditions:
 - a. Where the cost of providing such accommodations would be disproportionate given the need or probability of use, or
 - b. Where severe topographic or natural resource constraints prohibit such accommodations, or
 - c. Where conditions or restrictions outside the purview of the City of Northfield prohibit such actions.

In cases where one or more of these conditions occur, the City Administrator and professional staff will evaluate the project and make a recommendation to the City Council for their decision.

2. Where segregated facilities cannot be provided for pedestrians and cyclists, the constructed roadway shall reflect the character of shared space, with appropriate mechanisms to calm vehicular traffic and provide a safe, reliable, integrated, and interconnected surface transportation network.
3. Where projects involve other jurisdictions, the City will work with those jurisdictions to ensure compliance with this policy to the fullest extent. Prior to seeking bids, the City Administrator or designee shall report to the City Council on the detail of how the project does or does not comply with this Policy.
4. Roadways, sidewalks, shared-use paths, street crossings, pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, transit stops and facilities, and all connecting pathways shall be designed, constructed, and operated to limit maintenance, and maintained so that all users of the surface transportation network can travel safely, reliably and independently .
5. The implementation of this Policy shall reflect the context and character of the surrounding built and natural environments, and enhance the appearance of such.

6. The City will implement this policy by evaluating and revising relevant City plans, rules, regulations, and programs as appropriate to incorporate this policy by reference and to utilize the most current and most effective design guidelines and other tools when designing projects.
7. A system of performance measurements shall be established to gauge the success of this Policy with regards to the stated Goals above.
8. This Policy shall be reviewed at least every five years to determine its success and make any needed revisions.



Date of City Council Meeting: July 17, 2012

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Complete Streets Task Force
Rhonda Pownell, City Council
Betsey Buckheit, City Council
Steve Rholl, Planning Commission
Joey Robison, Planning Commission
Joe Gransee-Bowman, Environmental Quality Commission
George Kinney, Environmental Quality Commission
Joe Stapf, Public Works Director

RE: Complete Streets Draft Policy

Action Requested:

The City Council is being asked to approve Resolution #2012-064, which will adopt the proposed City of Northfield Complete Streets Policy.

Update:

The Complete Streets Task Force was initiated through Resolution 2012-017 on February 12, 2012. The Complete Streets Task Force met three times with Public Works Director Joe Stapf. We reviewed Complete Streets policies from other communities, policy elements identified by the national Complete Streets Coalition, and looked at some images of Northfield's streets to better understand what might be possible.

Other City's policies varied considerably from one paragraph statements to large documents with detailed design guidelines. The Task Force quickly determined that Northfield's policy should be a concise statement to direct the project design process rather than attempting to provide design details.

The draft policy attempts to be concise, yet also clear and comprehensive. The policy applies to all streets within the City limits, including those under County or MNDot jurisdiction, includes stormwater management, anticipates how any exceptions to the policy could be made, and recognizes the significance of Northfield's street network to transportation, public health, and sense of place.

Future work:

In addition to adopting this policy, there are two items which still need attention to make implementing the policy easier and ensure consistency with other City documents.

Revise current plans and regulations:

For most purposes, incorporating this policy by reference into Northfield's Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, and Surface Water Management Plan will be sufficient. Several more specific updates are needed for the Land Development Code. Pedestrian access requirements and subdivision design standards in Article 3 of the Land Development Code should be revised to refer to this policy and to provide flexibility and context-sensitive planning for new streets.

Performance measures:

In order to be able to determine the success of this policy and quantify our accomplishments, national Complete Streets policy analysts recommend including performance measures. Examples of simple performance measures could include:

- annual increase in total miles of on-street bicycle routes defined by streets with marked bicycle lanes or bike route signage
- linear feet of new pedestrian accommodations (sidewalk, multi-use trail, crossings, etc.)
- number of new street trees planted
- reduction in sidewalk gaps
- completion of Safe Routes to School Projects
- completion of GreenStep Cities action steps

Many of these performance measures would benefit from having current data – such as total miles of on-street bicycle routes Northfield has established up to 2012 - from which to measure improvement, but the City could also start benchmarking now and measure success from 2012 forward. Having benchmarks could also help the City set goals for annual improvement and allocate resources efficiently.

Attachments:

1. Resolution 2012-064
2. Complete Streets Policy