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Complete Streets Policy City of Independence

This Complete Streets policy was created under City of Independence Resolution 10-0413-03. The resolution demonstrates the City's commitment to develop and maintain a safe, efficient and cost effective transportation system and to support Active Living – integrating physical activity into daily routines through activities such as biking and walking along our streets and trails. The City strives to be a leader in providing opportunities and choices for its residents, and believes that a well-planned transportation system that includes Complete Streets demonstrates this leadership. Because of this goal, the City has a history of partnering with Hennepin County on both Active Living and Complete Streets and of encouraging a statewide Complete Streets policy.

The City of Independence will enhance safety, mobility, accessibility and convenience for all roadway users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, commercial and emergency vehicles, and for people of all ages and abilities by planning, designing, operating, and maintaining a network of Complete Streets. This policy applies to all roadways under the City's jurisdiction. The City will work with other transportation agencies to incorporate a Complete Streets philosophy and encourages other municipalities, counties and regional organizations to adopt similar policies.

Given residents' desire for a rural atmosphere, flexibility and sensitivity to the character of our setting in accommodating different modes of travel is essential to balancing the needs of all roadway users. The City will implement Complete Streets in such a way that the character of the project area, the values of the community, and the needs of all users are fully considered. Therefore, Complete Streets will not look the same for all roadways, neighborhoods and developments, and will not necessarily include separate elements for all modes.

Developing Complete Streets will be a priority on all roadways, neighborhoods and developments, and each project will be treated as a cost effective opportunity to make improvements. Complete Streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.

Priority should be given to roadway or development projects based on the following:

- Project provides connections to significant destinations such as shopping/commercial areas; employment centers and community or regional parks;
- Project connects new and existing residential and commercial developments
- Project provides access across a natural or man-made barrier such as wetlands or a highway;
- Roadway provides connections between existing trails or paths;
- The design of new or reconstructed facilities should anticipate future demand for bicycling and should not preclude the provision of future improvements. Infrastructure with a long life span (such as bridges) should be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation of future need. This will include roadways that provide connections or critical linkages to other communities, trails and parks, and in areas used frequently by pedestrians and bicyclists today or with the potential for frequent use in the future.

The City of Independence will assess existing roadways and develop a Complete Streets process. The Complete Streets policy and implementation process will be included in the City's manual of standards and ordinance updates, as well as other appropriate plans or documents.

Applicable design standards and best practices will be followed in conjunction with construction, reconstruction, changes in allocation of pavement space on an existing roadway, or other changes to a City roadway. Early consideration of all transportation modes will be important to the success of this policy. The planning, design, and implementation processes for all roadways will:

- Involve residents and community stakeholders,
- Consider the function of the road,
- Integrate innovative and non-traditional design options,
- Consider linkages to roadways under the authority of other jurisdictions,
- Assess the current and future needs of roadway users,
- Include documentation of efforts to accommodate all modes and all users,
- Incorporate a review of existing system plans to identify Complete Streets opportunities.

The City of Independence will implement Complete Streets unless one or more of the following conditions are documented:

- The cost of establishing Complete Street elements is excessive in relation to total project cost.
- There are safety risks that cannot be overcome.
- The roadway has severe topographic, environmental, historic, or natural resource constraints.

The City staff will document all conditions that require an exception. City staff will provide a report on Complete Streets implementation to the City Council and applicable commissions during the planning and design of roadway projects and during development reviews.

The City of Independence will monitor the impact of Complete Streets on Active Living and the active and rural quality of life enjoyed by its residents.