



AMATS Complete Streets Policy

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Section 1. Definition of Complete Streets.

“Complete Streets” means streets that are designed, used and operated to enable safe access for all traffic (defined as pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transportation users of all ages and abilities) to safely move through the transportation network.

Section 2. Principles of Complete Streets

The following are key principles of Complete Street policies:

- A. They are context-sensitive, considering economic, social, and environmental objectives.
- B. Emphasize appropriate facility connectivity for all modes of travel based on approved planning documents.
- C. Take into account not only the presence of a facility, but also the level of comfort and safety (based on national data for bicycles and pedestrians) that the facility provides for all traffic that is intended to utilize that facility.

- D. Ensure that as the entire right of way is planned, designed, funded, and operated with consideration for safe access for all traffic of all ages and abilities and that all traffic and transportation modes are equally deserving of safe travel facilities.
- E. Encourage the use of national best practice design standards.
- F. Allow design flexibility in balancing traffic and stakeholder needs including maintenance needs and temporary snow storage.
- G. Encourage that the purchase of operations and maintenance vehicles are well suited for current and proposed infrastructure.
- H. Encourage consistency of transportation projects with landuse goals and policies of local land use plans.
- I. Benefit all users equitably, particularly vulnerable users and the most underinvested and underserved communities.
- J. Actively work to consider how to preserve right of ways for all users during all seasons of the year.
- K. Encourage the prioritization of complete streets projects in areas that exhibit high concentrations of vulnerable users.
- L. Encourage collaboration and interagency coordination with all transportation planning agencies and partners including public health.

Section 3. Complete Streets Policy

AMATS encourages the above principles be used for the purpose of planning, designing, building, operating and maintaining a safe, reliable, efficient, integrated and connected multimodal transportation network that will provide access, mobility, safety, and connectivity for all users. This policy is a commitment that future transportation projects will take into account the needs of all users as early as practicable and throughout the transportation planning process.

Section 4. Consistency

1. This policy is consistent with FHWA findings on safety:

- Designing the street with pedestrians in mind – sidewalks, raised medians, turning access controls, better bus stop placement, better lighting, traffic calming measures, and treatments for travelers with disabilities– all improve pedestrian, bicyclist and motorist safety.[FHWA-RD-03-042]
2. This policy is consistent with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention findings on health:
 - U.S. CDC recommends adoption of complete streets policies as a strategy to prevent obesity and promote public health.
(<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5807a1.htm>)
 3. This policy is consistent with U.S. Department of Transportation findings on health and safety:
 - Complete Streets reduce motor vehicle-related crashes and pedestrian risk, as well as bicyclist risk when well-designed bicycle-specific infrastructure is included. They can promote walking and bicycling by providing safer places to achieve physical activity through transportation. (<https://www.transportation.gov/mission/health/complete-streets>)
 4. This policy is consistent with the FHWA Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. CMAQ is a program that emphasizes the importance of the link between transportation and air quality. To that end, CMAQ program funding is applied to transportation projects that reduce vehicle emissions and help improve air quality. Transit and traffic flow improvement projects are included, as are projects such as ride sharing, vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance programs, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and alternative fuels.
 5. This policy is consistent with the goals of the AMATS Interim 2035 MTP:

Goal 1: Ensure development of a balanced transportation network for people, goods, and services that provides an acceptable level of service, maximized safety, minimized environmental impacts, provides a variety of transportation choices, and supports, planned land use patterns.

Goal 2: Provide a transportation system that moves people and goods safely and securely throughout the community.

Goal 3: Develop an attractive and efficient transportation network that considers cost of building, operating, and maintaining the system; the equity of all users; public health impacts; air quality impacts, community values; and social justice.

Goal 4: Develop a transportation system that supports a thriving, sustainable, broad-based economy by locating and using transportation infrastructure and facilities to enhance community development.

Goal 5: Establish community connectivity with safe, convenient, year-round motorized and non-motorized travel routes within and between neighborhoods, commercial centers, and public facilities.

Goal 6: Improve access to goods, jobs, services, housing, and other destinations while providing mobility for people and goods in a safe, affordable, efficient, and convenient manner.

Goal 7: Provide a transportation system that provides viable transportation choices among various modes for all users.

Section 5. Scope of Complete Streets Policy –

- The AMATS Complete Streets Policy will focus on developing a connected, integrated transportation network that serves all users.
- Transportation projects receiving money that passes through the local Anchorage MPO agency (AMATS) will be expected to follow a Complete Streets approach.
- AMATS shall approach each transportation project as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible facilities for all users.
- AMATS does not subscribe to one singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each street is different in function and context. Roadways that are planned and designed using a Complete Streets approach may include a wide variety of transportation solutions.
- This policy should inform all local and state transportation agency representatives, and consultants responsible for planning, designing, constructing or maintaining projects within the Anchorage Metropolitan Planning Area.

- Procurement for consulting services for the planning or design of an AMATS area project or plan will be assisted by this policy, where appropriate.
- Projects that clearly follow complete streets guide lines will receive full points in the TIP scoring category that pertains to complete streets.
- AMATS will work with local municipal, state and public agencies to educate the general public about the importance of complete streets, safe driving, bicycling and walking practices.
- A project's compliance with this policy shall be determined based on the filing of a Complete Streets Checklist Form.

Section 6. Exceptions

Any exception to this policy must be approved by the AMATS Policy Committee and be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision. Such documentation shall be publicly available.

Exceptions may be considered for approval when:

1. Users are legally prohibited from using a roadway. Where access is legally prohibited, project managers should consider opportunities to address or remove barriers to network connectivity and crossings that are important for serving non-motorized and other modes;
2. Cost of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use;
3. There exists substantial funding limitations that cannot be overcome with flexible design solutions; and
4. Where a reasonable and equivalent project along the same corridor is already programmed to provide facilities exempted from the project at hand.

Section 7. Design Guidance

Complete Streets implementation relies on using the best and latest design guidance to maximize design flexibility. Design solutions are needed to balance modal and user needs. AMATS promotes the adoption of national best practice design guidance for designing complete streets. These resources include but are not limited to: the MOA Design Criteria Manual, the latest editions of AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, Urban Street Design Guide, NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, NACTO Transit Street Design Guide, ITE Recommended Design Guidelines to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicycles at Interchanges, AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities,

FTA Manual on Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections to Transit, FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks, and FHWA Measuring Multimodal Network Connectivity.

Section 8. Context Sensitivity

Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of current and future projects in a context-sensitive manner in which project implementation is sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and social setting. This context-sensitive approach to process and design includes a range of goals that give significant consideration to stakeholder and community values. The overall goal of this approach is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, neighborhood character, and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

Section 9. Performance Measures

AMATS promotes the establishment of performance indicators to evaluate the implementation of complete streets.

Performance indicators that contribute to complete streets goals include but are not limited to:

- Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS)
- Decrease in rate of crashes, injuries and fatalities by mode
- Expansion of a comfortable, low-stress transportation network for non-motorized traffic, as measured by an appropriate Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) analysis.
- Miles of new or reconstructed sidewalk
- Number of new or reconstructed curb ramps
- Number of new or repainted crosswalks
- Percentage completion of bicycle and pedestrian networks as envisioned in plans and programs.
- Miles of new non-motorized traffic facilities added to roads within ¼ mile of Core and Standard transit routes.
- Number of completed transportation projects that demonstrated how they are meeting current land use plan goals.
- Number of complete streets projects in underserved or underinvested communities.

Section 10. Implementation and Reporting

AMATS encourages implementation of the Complete Streets Policy to be carried out cooperatively among all Anchorage transportation related departments and agencies and to the greatest extent possible.

AMATS will incorporate Complete Streets principles into their plans and programs.

AMATS encourages incorporation of the Complete Streets Policy into the current design manuals including but not limited to the Context Sensitive Solutions policy, the Design Criteria Manual and the Preconstruction Manual. While the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) policy provides a suggested design and plan review framework for major roadway reconstruction projects, the Complete Streets policy provides network-level planning and design considerations intended to ensure that safe, comfortable, and connected transportation facilities are available to all traffic, regardless of age or ability.

AMATS will continue to offer workshops and other training opportunities to staff, community leaders, and the general public so that the broader Anchorage community understands the importance of the Complete Streets vision.

AMATS is committed to developing and instituting better ways to measure performance and collect data on how well streets are serving all users.

Section 11. References

1. FHWA Bicycle and Pedestrian Legislation

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/legislation/sec217.cfm

2. Context Sensitive Solutions

<http://contextsensitivesolutions.org/>

3. Smart Growth America

<http://smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>

4. AASHTO's A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/standards.cfm>

5. Highway Preconstruction Manual

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwddes/dcsprecon/preconmanual.shtml>

6. AASHTO Materials Online

https://bookstore.transportation.org/collection_detail.aspx?id=110

7. Interim 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

https://www.muni.org/Departments/health/Admin/environment/AirQ/Documents/AMATS%20materials/AAQAC%202015/Interim2035MTP_Public-Review-DRAFT_15y06m26d.pdf