

COMPLETE STREETS RESOLUTION

There is a growing national trend towards integrating bicycling, walking, and transit as a routine element in highway and transportation projects. This movement has developed under the name of “Complete Streets,” which is defined by the Complete the Streets Coalition as follows: “Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.”

By adopting a “Complete Streets” resolution, the City would be committing, wherever practical, to following the NCDOT [Complete Streets Planning and Design Guidelines](#) when 1) developing new multimodal transportation options, 2) reconstructing or retrofitting existing roadways; and 3) leveraging existing infrastructure to increase connectivity and universal access to all citizens.

WHEREAS:

1. The City of Mebane has a history of applying principles of walkability and access to its public works projects, as evidenced by an expansive sidewalk network
2. Complete Streets promote safety, public health, economic development, and a community’s aesthetics. Complete Streets also strengthen community by providing equity and access for all citizens (and creating manageable solutions to safeguarding our environment). There is precedent and support for Complete Streets in communities similar to Mebane.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mebane City Council that the Council requests that staff partner with community organizations to assess current street standards and land use and transportation plans, policies and programs with regard to the “Complete Streets” concept; identify relevant elements within the city’s existing plans, regulations, and operational standards that support the implementation of “Complete Streets” within the city; and identify the gaps and opportunities to supplement and fund said plans, regulations and standards in order to achieve the implementation, wherever practicable, of “Complete Streets” throughout the city.

SUPPLEMENTAL DETAIL

WHEREAS:

1. The “Complete Streets” concept promotes **SAFETY** for pedestrians, motorists, bicyclists, public transit vehicles and their passengers, as reported by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA, 2001) and others (Smith, 2010; Rethinking, 2017). Every year, pedestrians and bicyclists are injured or killed along roadways because of inflexible infrastructure and inconsistent signage and standards for sharing the road. Complete Streets policies increase overall roadway safety by raising community awareness of cyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders and helping motorized vehicle users better anticipate the movements of other travelers through standardized design solutions like raised medians and curb extensions. (LaPlante, 2008)
2. There is **PRECEDENT** in other communities. The North Carolina Board of Transportation has adopted a Complete Streets policy, and numerous local municipal governments have followed suit, including Hickory, Cary, Winston-Salem, Chapel Hill, and Charlotte. (Project, 2018; Burden, 2011); in addition to local organizations, the Complete Streets concept is **SUPPORTED** by a number of national agencies, including the US Board of Transportation, the Institute of Traffic Engineers, American Planning Association, Smart Growth America, White House Obesity Task Force, and the National Association of Local Boards of Health.
3. Addressing **ACCESSIBILITY** and **EQUITY** of opportunity for all citizens is critical to a growing community’s success. Citizens and visitors of all ages and abilities need to be able to safely cross roads, travel to business districts, get to work, and recreate. Older adults have reported problems with access and safety, and said they would walk, bicycle, or take the bus more often if options were more accessible (Ernst, 2009; Lynott, 2009). According to the study completed by Alta Planning and Design in 2015, 7.7% of Mebane households do not own an automobile. Complete Streets policies can create better access to the City’s amenities, to employment centers, and to educational opportunities for all citizens regardless of location, income, automobile ownership, or ability. (Clifton, 2014)
4. Trends in **PUBLIC HEALTH** necessitate a more thoughtful approach to providing and encouraging opportunities for active transportation (White House Task Force, 2018). Obesity threatens the healthy future of one-third of American children, and opportunities for activity are known to decrease that chance (Sallis, 2006; Humphreys, 2013). Disconnected streets, unsafe options for cyclists, few opportunities for walking or active transport in many areas of Mebane serve as a barrier to more active lifestyles. The City of Mebane and Mebane on the Move work to advance Mebane as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community and encourage bicycling, running, and walking among all its citizens and visitors. When roads are better designed for bicycling, walking, and taking transit, more people do so.

5. Connected streets and neighborhoods strengthen our sense of **COMMUNITY**. Mebane prides itself on its people; by developing integrated, connected networks of streets that are safe and accessible for all people, we further encourage connections among our citizens, businesses, and local attractions, and create a more resilient and robust community (Burden, 2011).
6. An investment in the Complete Streets concept reinforces Mebane's prioritization of its **LOCAL ECONOMY**. Complete Streets policies can enhance existing amenities through connectivity and accessibility, making communities more attractive to large businesses that prioritize a high quality of life for their employees. These policies can also increase foot traffic to small businesses by encouraging new connections between recreational opportunities, greenways, and downtown commercial districts. Well-connected, thoughtful options for multimodal transportation also increase access to places of work and education/training centers for all citizens. (ABW, 2012; NYCDT, 2012, NAR, 2010; Litman, 2003)
7. The experience citizens and guests have while driving, cycling, or walking along Mebane's streets significantly impacts their opinion of the city. These opinions are shaped by both the function and the **AESTHETICS** of the streets. It is therefore important to Mebane's long-term development interests to set a Complete Streets policy that values aesthetics and enhances the quality of life for all of its citizens. (Laplante, 2008; FHWA, 2010)
8. Streets that support and invite multiple uses that include safe, active and ample space for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit provide more **ENVIRONMENTAL** benefits than streets designed primarily to move automobiles and trucks. Sixty-five percent of trips under one mile are now made by automobile, in part because of incomplete streets that make it dangerous or unpleasant to walk, bicycle, or take transit. Studies have found that providing more travel options, including public transportation, bicycling and walking facilities, is an important element in reducing congestion. In addition, multi-modal, well-connected roadways can reduce demands on existing infrastructure and slow the need for additional construction. Reduced construction reduces air particulates from cars and construction, minimizes impervious surfaces, and reduces stormwater runoff, thereby reducing demands on City infrastructure. "Complete Streets" also encourages "green infrastructure" and Low Impact Development (LID) principles that minimize demands on shared City systems. (HEI, 2010)

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