# Complete & Green Streets for All:

# Model Complete Streets Policy & Guide

# Text-Only Model Complete Streets Policy

*This document is a text-only version of the Model Complete Streets Policy included in the New Jersey Department of Transportation’s* ***Complete & Green Streets for All: Model Complete Streets Policy & Guide****, published in July 2019. For guidance on how to use this template to create your own policy, view the full guide at* [*https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/eng/completestreets/resources.shtm*](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.state.nj.us%2Ftransportation%2Feng%2Fcompletestreets%2Fresources.shtm&data=02%7C01%7Csarah.sahili%40rutgers.edu%7Cd9d3d47c79bd46fa4c9108d71c0f0940%7Cb92d2b234d35447093ff69aca6632ffe%7C1%7C0%7C637008723208232556&sdata=UkEOz0z8aOVdCG8a9UUYANNaLuYeLwL9HRJ616OCme4%3D&reserved=0)*.*

# Model Complete Streets Policy

*[****Municipality/County****]* shall develop an integrated and connected multimodal transportation system of Complete Streets that serve all neighborhoods and populations. Towards this end:

1. All transportation projectsshall result in Complete Streets that allow safe, environmentally healthy, economically sound, equitable, accessible, and convenient travel along and across streets for users of all ages and abilities and for all modes of transportation, including motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, public transportation vehicles and their passengers, delivery trucks and movers of commercial goods [***insert other significant local users if desired, e.g. drivers of agricultural vehicles, emergency vehicles, freight, etc.***] and strive to meet the following goals:
2. Environment: Improve air and water quality; reduce flooding; mitigate traffic congestion.
3. Safety: Eliminate all road fatalities, significantly reduce crash severity and injury, eliminate all road fatalities, significantly reduce crash severity and injury, and improve personal safety through increasing the number of people of walking and bicycling.
4. Economic: Stimulate economic prosperity.
5. Health: Increase physical activity and social connectivity with the goal of lowering the risk of obesity, reducing chronic disease and promoting wellness.
6. Equity: Implement policies and distribute funding and other resources equitably and responsibly in all neighborhoods, particularly in Priority Communities; improve non-motor vehicle transportation systems.
7. This section shall apply to all public and/or private [transportation projects](#_bookmark18), including those using funds awarded by federal, state, regional, county, municipal, or any other public agency. This shall include new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, repaving, rehabilitation, private development projects, and maintenance of highways, roads, and streets.
8. The [***decision-making body***], and the [***municipal/county planner and engineer***] shall routinely work in coordination with each other and adjacent jurisdictions, and any relevant advisory committees/teams, to create Complete Streets and to ensure consistency with the [***Municipal/County*]** Master Plan and Elements and any other existing Pedestrian/Bicycle/Multimodal Plans, Stormwater Management Plans, Pollution Prevention Plans, and Historic Preservation Plans.
9. Within two years of the effective date of this Policy, the [***decision-making body***] shall inventory and audit procedures, policies, plans, documents, training programs, performance measures and other guidance documents to be consistent with this policy. The purpose of this audit is to identify areas where tenets of this policy will need to be incorporated. This includes, but is not limited to, funding, planning, designing, operating, and maintaining transportation infrastructure. The [***decision-making body***] will use this audit to incorporate this policy as it updates its procedures, plans, policies, etc.
10. Transportation projects and Master and Capital Plans shall include, when appropriate, sustainable design elements, including, but not limited to:
11. Green stormwater infrastructure practices
12. Traffic calming
13. Shade trees and other vegetation
14. Rain gardens
15. Bioswales
16. Permeable pavements — including those made from recycled materials such as rubber, concrete, glass, and plastic.
17. Transportation projects and Master and Capital Plans shall include, where appropriate, pedestrian and bicycle design elements and transit amenities, including but not limited to: curb extensions, sidewalks, radar feedback signs, pedestrian countdown signals, pedestrian refuge islands, road diets, lane width reductions, chicanes, roundabouts, bike lanes, protected bike lanes, bike parking, lighting, wayfinding, seating, trash receptacles, transit amenities, etc.
18. The [***decision-making bod*y**] shall utilize the most current editions of guides, manuals, and best practices on street design, historic preservation, construction, operations, and maintenance that apply to bicycle, pedestrian, transit, stormwater and highway facilities. All manuals, standards, and guidelines shall be made publicly available online.
19. The [***person to be identified by the decision-making bod*y**] shall lead the implementation of this Policy and formally coordinate with [planner, engineer, economic development, public works, health, etc.] with advice and input from [***Planning Board, Complete Streets Advisory Committee, Land Use Committee, Green Team, etc****.*] to set benchmarks to ensure the successful implementation of the Complete Streets Policy, including in Priority Communities.

**Public Participation**

1. The [***decision-making body***] shall establish a Complete Streets Advisory Committee to help the [***municipality/county/department***] comply with the Complete Streets Policy and to provide ongoing feedback to [***municipality/county/department***] related to the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy. The Complete Streets Advisory Committee shall consist of a broad group of stakeholders including:
   1. [***Municipal/County***] Elected Officials
   2. Law Enforcement
   3. Public Works
   4. Planners
   5. Engineers
   6. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
   7. Appointed Municipal or County Commissioners
   8. Fire
   9. Schools
   10. Business and Developer Community
   11. Civic and Advocacy Groups
   12. Public Health Professionals
   13. Transit Professionals
   14. Community Members, including Persons with Disabilities, Senior and Youth Organizations, Persons Representing Priority Communities.
2. Beginning with the planning stage, [***municipality/county/ department***] shall identify an existing process or develop a new process that allows for public participation in decision-making concerning the planning, design, and use of streets and roadways covered by this Policy.

**Exceptions**

1. A transportation project may not be required to accommodate the needs of a particular user group if the [***person to be identified by the decision-making bod*y**] determines in writing that:
   1. The use of the transportation facility by the particular user group is prohibited by law;
   2. Regulatory compliance requirements preclude accommodations.
   3. There is a demonstrated absence of both a current and future need to accommodate the category of user (absence of future need may be shown via demographic, school, employment, and public transportation route data that demonstrate, for example, a low likelihood of bicycle, pedestrian, or transit activity in an area over the next 20 years); and
   4. The adverse impacts of implementing this Complete Streets Policy significantly outweigh the benefits.

However, every effort to work within the flexibility allowed should be made, including Design Exceptions for roadway projects.

1. An exception shall be granted only if:
   1. Request for an exception is submitted **in writing** to the[***decision-making body***], with supporting documentation, and made publicly available with a minimum of 30 days allowed for public input; and
   2. The exception is approved **in writing** by the [***decision-making body***], and the written approval is made publicly available.

**Program Reporting**

1. The [***department identified by the*** ***decision-making body***] shall establish benchmarks reflecting the ability of all users to travel safely and conveniently along highways, roads and streets.
2. Each such [***department identified by the*** ***decision-making body***] shall also develop plans and set benchmarks to ensure the successful implementation of the Complete Streets Policy in Priority Communities. On or before [***end of the fiscal year***] each such agency shall prepare an initial report to identify barriers, and propose solutions to successful implementation of the Complete Streets policy, including in Priority Communities.
3. Each such [***department identified by the*** ***decision-making body***] shall assign appropriate responsibility to collect and monitor data under [***municipal/county/department***] jurisdiction, including in Priority Communities, to determine compliance with the [***municipal/county/department***] benchmarks. Benchmarks shall include but are not limited to:
   1. Mileage of new and existing bicycle infrastructure, including in Priority Communities (e.g., bicycle lanes, bike parking, paths, and boulevards)
   2. Linear feet (or mileage) of new and existing pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, trails, transit amenities)
   3. Number of new and existing ADA-compliant infrastructure (e.g., curb ramps, pedestrian buttons)
   4. Number of new and existing street trees
   5. Number of green street practices (e.g., rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavement)
   6. Number of new and existing pedestrian and bicycle lighting improvements
   7. Bicycle and pedestrian counts
   8. Commute mode percentages (e.g., drive alone, carpool, transit, bicycle, walk)
   9. The number and percentage of designated transit stops accessible via sidewalks and curb ramps
   10. The number, locations, and causes of collisions, injuries, and fatalities by each mode of transportation
   11. The percentage of children walking or bicycling to school
4. All benchmarks established by the ***[municipality/county/department***] shall be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, neighborhood, and vehicle ownership when feasible.
5. Each such [***department identified by the*** ***decision-making body***] shall provide a report on an annual basis to the [***decision-making body***] to allow them to evaluate implementation of the Complete Street policy. Each annual report shall include the data collected pursuant to Program Reporting, as well as a list of ongoing and completed transportation projects during that fiscal year. If any exceptions are applied to transportation projects pursuant to Exceptions to Complete Streets Requirements herein, such projects and the relevant exceptions should be identified in the annual report. All benchmarks and reports shall be made publicly available online.

**Adoption of Complete Streets Checklists**

1. The ***[department identified by the*** ***decision-making body***] shall develop and adopt one or more Complete Streets Checklists to be used during the project selection, planning, designing, construction, funding and maintenance of all transportation projects.
2. Each item in the checklist must include an area to provide a brief description for how the item is addressed, not addressed, or not applicable to the Complete Streets policy.
3. The checklist shall explain the process for granting exceptions and indicate who is responsible for approving any exceptions before they are granted.
4. The ***[department identified by the*** ***decision-making body***] shall be responsible for completing the checklists and/or reviewing the checklists.
5. A complete streets checklist shall entail but is not limited to:
   1. Existing pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicle, and truck/freight accommodations (facilities) and operations
   2. Traffic volumes
   3. Existing safety and/or access issues, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
   4. Land use within the study area, including trip generators
   5. Existing and proposed streetscape elements including furniture, trees or other environmental and stormwater enhancements
   6. Review of existing plans
   7. Proposed pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicle, and truck/freight accommodations (facilities) and desired future operations
   8. ADA compliance of the proposed design
   9. Compatibility with the surrounding land use and density
   10. Consistency with applicable design standards and guidelines
   11. Opportunities to improve public health through physical activity and mobility options
   12. Opportunities to manage stormwater through green infrastructure
6. All Complete Streets checklists shall be made accessible online and available to the Complete Streets Advisory Body.

**Effective Date**

The Complete Streets Policy shall take effect on ***[date]***, provided that it shall not apply to any transportation project for which a preliminary design has been completed on or before ***[date].***

**Key Terms & Definitions**

**Complete Streets:** An integrated transportation network designed to enable safe and convenient travel and access along and across streets for all users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, movers of commercial goods, and transit riders.

**Environmental Justice:** Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.Fair treatment means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies. Meaningful involvement means that:

1. People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health.
2. The public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision.
3. Community concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and
4. Decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

**Green Streets:** Streets with landscaped features installed in the right-of-ways that capture and allow stormwater runoff to soak into the ground, while still preserving the primary function of a street as a conduit for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. Stormwater runoff is excess water generated from rain and snowmelt events that flow over impervious surfaces, such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops, and does not soak into the ground.

1. **Green Stormwater Infrastructure:** An approach to managing stormwater by infiltrating it in the ground where it is generated using vegetation or porous surfaces, or by capturing it for later reuse. Infiltration is when water falls to the earth as precipitation and seeps into the soil.
2. **Green Street Stormwater Infrastructure Practices:** Includes types of green infrastructure techniques used to manage stormwater, including but not limited to:
3. Street tree trenches/boxes: utilize soil, gravel, and plants to infiltrate and filter stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces
4. Bioswales: shallow channels that convey, slow down, and infiltrate stormwater runoff.
5. Vegetated curb bump outs: a vegetated curb extension that protrudes into the street either mid-block or at an intersection, creating a new curb some distance from the existing curb.
6. Permeable pavement: a stormwater drainage system that allows rainwater and runoff to move through the pavement’s surface to a storage layer below, with water eventually seeping into underlying soil. Types of permeable pavement include pervious concrete, porous asphalt, interlocking concrete pavers, and grid pavers.

**Priority Communities:** The term Priority Communities refers to categories of underserved and adversely impacted populations. There is a wide range of definitions used to quantify and locate underserved populations developed by agencies and organizations dedicated to social equity by law or mission.

Each county or municipality should evaluate who and where there are concentrations of underserved or marginalized populations based on available data. Below are some of the categories to consider when defining Priority Communities:

1. Minority Concentrations
2. Low-Income Concentrations
3. Other Indicators of Underserved and Adversely Impacted Populations:
   1. Female Head of Household with Children
   2. Persons with Limited English Proficiency
   3. Carless Households
   4. Elderly Populations/Children
   5. Persons with Disabilities
   6. Hispanic Populations
   7. Other Ethnic Minorities
   8. Families in Poverty with Children

**Traffic Calming**: The combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Traffic calming objectives include:

1. Achieving slow speeds for motor vehicles
2. Reducing collision frequency and severity
3. Increasing the safety and the perception of safety for non-motorized users of the street(s)
4. Reducing the need for police enforcement
5. Enhancing the street environment (e.g., streetscaping)
6. Encouraging water infiltration into the ground using Green Street stormwater infrastructure practices
7. Increasing access for all modes of transportation, and reducing cut-through motor vehicle traffic

**Transit Amenities:** Include seating, shelter and shade, wayfinding signage, trash and recycling cans, lighting, route information, bike infrastructure (lockers, racks, fix-it stations, depots, bikeshare, etc.).

**Transportation Facility:** A facility consisting of the means and equipment necessary for the movement of people or goods; any road, bridge, tunnel, overpass, ferry, airport, mass transit facility, vehicle parking facility, port facility or similar commercial facility used for the transportation of persons or goods together with any buildings, structures, parking areas, appurtenances, and other property needed to operate such facility; however, a commercial or retail use or enterprise not essential to the transportation of people or goods shall not be considered a transportation facility.

**Transportation Project:** Any public and/or private land development, project, program, or practice that affects the transportation network or occurs in the public right-of-way, including any construction, reconstruction, retrofit, signalization operations, resurfacing, restriping, rehabilitation, maintenance (excluding routine maintenance that does not change the roadway geometry or operations, such as mowing, sweeping, and spot repair), operations, alteration, and repair of any public street or roadway within a jurisdiction (including alleys, bridges, frontage roads, and other elements of the transportation system).