

POLICY FOR COMPLETE STREETS

Vision

As the transit agency and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) is committed to fully integrating modal options. This includes supporting projects that enhance walking and bicycling infrastructure. Additionally, the RTC will improve access to public transportation facilities and services. This includes supporting urban development patterns and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) infrastructure that allow for greater accessibility to transit stops and stations. Finally, the RTC continues to improve safety for all travelers. This is particularly important for those who rely on transportation infrastructure to be physically active and for students who walk or bike to school.

The recent growth period in Southern Nevada directly impacted transportation needs. Many of the RTC's federal, state, and local funding sources were used to develop better traffic signals and more travel lanes. Today, these funding sources are running well short of what is needed. Plus, urban growth in the region has slowed down. The typical roadway transportation project that just adds capacity and infrastructure is insufficient given these conditions. The RTC must adhere to its vision, which is to "provide a safe, convenient and effective regional transportation system that enhances mobility and air quality for citizens and visitors."

Recent RTC and RTC-supported projects have already fulfilled some of these desires. There are already bus rapid transit routes existing in the region and more are being constructed for implementation in the near future. New transit shelters are being placed throughout the metropolitan area, while the recently built transit station in Downtown Las Vegas provides greater mobility and accessibility. Efforts are underway to add more bicycle lanes and routes. Recent planning studies are looking to improve roadway safety, pedestrian safety, and access management between roadways and building developments. Jurisdictions and the RTC are working together on projects that improve landscaping, sidewalks, and the interface with building developments.

Promoting Complete Streets projects can offer Southern Nevada the ability to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and increase the quality of life of residents by providing safe, convenient, and comfortable routes for walking, bicycling, and public transportation. Integration of Complete Streets into the RTC's existing policies allows the potential to prevent chronic diseases, reduce motor vehicle related injury and deaths, improve environmental health, stimulate economic development, and ensure access of transportation options for all people in Southern Nevada.

Complete Streets Definition

Complete Streets are roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all users, regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation. Users include motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and all vehicle types, including public transportation, emergency responders, and freight and delivery trucks among others.

In addition to providing safety and access for all users, Complete Street design treatments take into account accommodations for disabled persons as required by the ADA. Design considerations for connectivity and access management are also taken into account for non-motorized users of the facility.

Implementation of Complete Street design treatments will be based on whether it connects the networks for all modes, whether it improves the functionality for all users, and whether it is appropriate given the surrounding context of the community. The final elements of a Complete Street roadway will be largely based on these factors. At a minimum, a Complete Street roadway includes sidewalks and sidewalk amenities, transit shelters and amenities whenever there is a route along the corridor, and provisions for bicycle facilities where appropriate.

Complete Streets Attributes

While every street cannot be designed to serve all users equally, there are opportunities to enhance service for all users while maintaining its principal transportation function. Complete Streets incorporate community values and support adjacent land uses while ensuring safety and mobility. Proper applications of Complete Streets concepts support sustainable growth and preservation of scenic, aesthetic and historic resources.

Goals

The purpose of this RTC Complete Streets Policy is to create a comprehensive and uniform Complete Streets vision and policy for the region. This will allow the implementing entities to incorporate Complete Streets guidelines and standards into both development and redevelopment actions. The regional goals are:

- Southern Nevada's transportation network will be supported through a variety of feasible transportation choices, which allows for sustainable growth.
- The livability of neighborhoods and commercial centers located along the region's transportation corridors will be enhanced by a safe and inviting pedestrian environment.
- The design of multimodal roadway facilities will not compromise the needs of larger vehicles such as transit vehicles, fire trucks, and freight delivery trucks.
- Inclusion of Complete Streets design elements will allow for design flexibility on different street functions and neighborhood contexts.
- Inclusion of Complete Streets design elements will improve the integration of land use and transportation, while encouraging economic revitalization through infrastructure improvements.

Objectives

- To create an integrated and connected transportation network that supports transportation choices and sustainable growth.
- To ensure that all transportation modes are accommodated to the extent possible in all public roadway facilities in the region.
- To develop and use the latest design standards and guidelines in the design of Complete Streets.
- To provide flexibility in the implementation of this policy so that streets chosen for implementation of Complete Streets elements can be developed to fit within the context of their principal purpose and surroundings without compromising the safety of users and needs of larger vehicles.

Complete Streets Policies

1. RTC promotes the incorporation of Complete Streets concepts and design standards in all appropriate public streets (except freeways) throughout the region.
2. RTC will seek every opportunity to provide guidance and funding for the planning, design, and implementation of Complete Streets.
3. RTC will provide policy and technical support to local entities in the incorporation of Complete Streets elements into their development codes and comprehensive plans.
4. RTC will provide technical support to local entities in the development of a process for evaluating, ranking, and prioritizing Complete Streets projects in their area.
5. RTC will encourage local entities to consider Complete Streets elements as an integral part of the planning and design of roadway projects, whether new construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation.
6. RTC will consider modifications to the Master Plan of Streets and Highways or the Roadway Functional Classification that may be necessary to configure a particular street as a Complete Street.
7. Public streets excluded from this policy include those where:
 - a. Complete streets concepts is in conflict with existing laws, codes, or ordinances, or
 - b. Compliance with this policy would conflict with goals or physical conditions related to the unique aspects of the location.

Reimbursement of Costs

Construction of curb, gutter, sidewalk, landscaping, street lights, and parking lanes (defined as the eight feet of pavement to the curb) included in an approved, entity-sponsored Complete Streets project will be eligible for reimbursement by the RTC on a case by case basis.

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