



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman
Council Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232
(310) 253-5851

Staff Report

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Item #: A-4.

CC - (1) Consideration of the Development of a Complete Streets Policy; and (2) Direction to Staff as Deemed Appropriate

Meeting Date: October 9, 2017

Contact Person/Dept: Eric Bruins/Public Works Department

Phone Number: 310-253-5616

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing: ☐

Action Item: ☒

Attachments: ☒

Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☐ **Date:**

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (10/04/17);

Department Approval: Charles D. Herbertson, Public Works Director/City Engineer (08/17/17)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council discuss and provide direction to staff regarding the development of a Complete Streets Policy for Culver City.

BACKGROUND

In October 2014, Metro adopted a countywide Complete Streets Policy in order to create clearer requirements for all Metro-funded projects on how to address the needs of all users of the transportation network. This policy included a local mandate that all cities also adopt a complete streets policy, via ordinance, resolution, or general plan update. This mandate became effective January 1, 2017, meaning that the City is no longer eligible for Metro grants until the City Council adopts a complete streets policy.

Culver City is beginning the process of updating its General Plan, which will provide an opportunity to address the need for complete streets more comprehensively. However, in the interim, the City is required to adopt a standalone policy or ordinance in order to restore its grant eligibility.

Elements of a Complete Streets Policy

A complete streets policy is intended to establish minimum standards for all transportation improvements to accommodate people of all ages and abilities traveling by whatever mode. A strong policy not only sets clear expectations for public works projects, but also outlines the procedures that the agency will follow to meet those expectations.

The ten elements of a complete streets policy are:

- 1) Includes a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets
- 2) Specifies that “all users” includes pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses, and motor vehicles
- 3) Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way
- 4) Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions
- 5) Encourages street connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes
- 6) Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads
- 7) Directs the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines while recognizing the needs for flexibility in balancing user needs
- 8) Directs that complete streets solutions will complement the context of the community
- 9) Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes
- 10) Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy

There are now many good examples from around the region to draw from. The City of Hermosa Beach adopted a “Living Streets Policy” that goes beyond a traditional complete streets policy to incorporate stormwater management and placemaking, instead of just mobility. The City of Rancho Cucamonga adopted an ordinance with clear mandates for each department to follow and performance measures to evaluate results.

Successful implementation of complete streets will require the City to adapt its project development and project review procedures to improve coordination and include broader input in decisions. For example, the City will need to:

- Develop a complete streets checklist that applies to all CIP and private development projects;
- Adopt a standard of excellence in street design that references more innovative guidance;
- Establish an interdepartmental committee to coordinate complete streets implementation and review projects;
- Create procedures for which projects need input from the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and which can be reviewed internally by staff; and
- Determine which entity is authorized to approve exceptions to the policy.

Each of these steps requires decisions about how the City will incorporate complete streets into standard operating procedures, and to then inscribe those decisions into the policy adopted by the City Council.

DISCUSSION

Staff seeks direction from the Council on how to prioritize various goals and objectives during policy development. Some of these decisions require tradeoffs among competing policy priorities.

While a complete streets policy does not dictate a particular outcome for any given street, it does mean that over time decisions at the project level are more likely to elevate the importance of safety and accessibility for people walking, biking, and taking transit. In constrained rights-of-way, this may mean deemphasizing delay and throughput for automobiles in order to achieve these other goals. A successful policy provides a framework and a process through which these tradeoffs can be evaluated and decisions can be made.

The following discussion questions are intended to facilitate the Council's consideration of this issue:

- What process does the Council want to follow to develop the complete streets policy? (e.g. staff returns to Council with recommended language, staff seeks input from BPAC, other stakeholder input, etc.)
- What goals does the Council wish to emphasize in this policy? (e.g. economic development, placemaking, encouraging active living, environmental sustainability, etc.)
- Does the Council wish to set a hierarchy among modes (e.g. pedestrians > transit > bicycles > automobiles) or consider all modes equally?
- Does the Council wish to set specific standards for different types of streets? (e.g. neighborhood streets, business districts, arterials, transit corridors)
- Does the Council wish to address related environmental issues in the complete streets policy? (e.g. tree canopy, stormwater, etc.)
- Does the Council wish to set any requirements for stakeholder outreach?
- What measurable outcomes does the Council hope to achieve with this policy?

Staff recommends adopting a policy before the end of the year in anticipation of grant funding opportunities in early 2018.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The Council direction to staff will have no fiscal impact; however, the eventual adoption of a Complete Streets Policy would potentially increase costs for project development and delivery. Some efficiencies are also likely as projects are developed in a more coordinated manner within and across departments.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Best Complete Streets Policies of 2016
2. City of Hermosa Beach Living Streets Policy
3. City of Rancho Cucamonga Complete Streets Ordinance

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Discussion of the development of a complete streets policy; and
2. Provide direction to staff as deemed appropriate.