

# Town of Casco, Maine

## Complete Streets Policy

### I. VISION

Streets and roadways within the Town of Casco will be safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users. By improving road design and focusing on safer speeds, the Town of Casco will achieve zero fatal or severe injury crashes.

### II. CORE COMMITMENT

#### DEFINITIONS

**Complete Streets** – streets that are safe and accessible for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

**Vision Zero** – a global strategy aimed at eliminating all traffic fatalities and severe injuries by prioritizing road safety through better design, speed management, and equitable mobility for all road users.

#### ALL USERS AND MODES

The Town of Casco will develop a safe and well-connected transportation network for all road users, ensuring that streets are inclusive, equitable, and appropriately scaled to meet the needs of the community. A well-designed transportation network must accommodate the diverse needs of all present and future road users.

The Town of Casco is committed to prioritizing equity and inclusivity, particularly for neighborhoods and areas with higher rates of accidents involving vulnerable road users. A vulnerable road user is someone who is at higher risk of injury in a collision, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, and users of other non-motorized transportation.

#### ALL PROJECTS

The Town of Casco will approach every transportation and development project as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible streets for all users. These projects include, but are not limited to: planning, programming, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction engineering, construction, reconstruction, operation and maintenance.

Complete Streets Principles and design guidelines will be applied to all Town projects and privately funded developments, and incrementally on existing streets through a series of small improvements and activities over time.

#### Exceptions and Alternatives

The Town of Casco is dedicated to implementing Complete Streets Principles and design guidelines for all projects, but there are situations where alternatives may be necessary:

1. Where non-motorized use is prohibited by state or federal regulations.  
In this case, alternative facilities and accommodations shall be provided within the same transportation corridor.
2. The existing right-of-way does not allow for the accommodation of all users.  
In this case, alternatives shall be explored such as obtaining additional right-of-way, using revised travel lane configurations, signage, traffic calming, education or enforcement to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and persons with disabilities.
3. Where the cost of providing accommodations is excessively high relative to the anticipated need or usage, particularly if alternative facilities are available within a reasonable walking and/or bicycling distance.
4. The project faces significant environmental or topographical challenges, including wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, or other sensitive areas.

In situations where exceptions or alternatives are considered, the project should still attempt to meet Complete Streets Principles and Design Guidelines to the fullest extent practical. The Select Board will determine the decision making process for reviewing and granting/refusing exceptions or alternatives.

### **III. COMPLETE STREETS PRINCIPLES**

#### **ACCESS + MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE**

Streets should allow people to travel in a safe, dignified, and efficient manner no matter their age, gender, or level of ability. Streets must allow for harmony between multiple modes — allowing for safe and efficient movement of trucks, public transit, and emergency response vehicles.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainable streets protect and enhance natural ecosystems with tools like esplanades, pervious pavement, and bioswales that control stormwater. Street trees are a vital part of sustainable streets: they provide shade, filter the air, and slow traffic. Integrating ecological considerations into street design can also ease maintenance costs, as uncontrolled stormwater can damage street surfaces over time.

#### **SAFETY + SECURITY**

Streets should be designed to reduce or eliminate traffic-related fatalities or serious injuries. Vehicle speed is one of the most significant factors in crash severity, so controlling speed has a big impact on street safety for everyone. Street safety is also closely connected to public life — streets that encourage walking and biking throughout all hours of the day provide more "eyes on the street," and increase people's sense of security.

## **CONNECTIVITY**

A connected street network helps make walking and biking viable modes of transportation, and disperses traffic across the network. Intersection density is one of the most important ways to create slower, safer streets. A well-connected street network results in fewer fatalities.

The transportation network shall be designed to ensure that common routes that link key destinations within the community can be safely navigated by walking, cycling, driving, and public transit (where applicable). On-road connections will be complemented by off-road paths or trails in appropriate locations. Cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets should offer through connections for biking and walking.

## **LAND USE CONTEXT**

A great land use plan is also a great transportation plan. A good street design is inherently connected to land use — compact land use patterns and connected multi-modal streets support transportation options and reduce demand for drive-alone trips.

Implementation of Complete Streets will vary based on the specific characteristics of an area. Consistent with the Casco Comprehensive Plan, there should be an emphasis placed on connecting the Villages of Casco with safe streets and trails. Projects located closer to the Villages of Casco will prioritize pedestrian infrastructure more heavily than those in less populated areas.

## **CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS**

Complete Streets should respond to local environmental factors such as climate. Recommendations for improving walking and biking conditions in Casco must embrace the town's winter climate and integrate best practices for providing safe walking and biking options year-round.

## **COMFORT**

When creating new walk and bike infrastructure, comfort is an important consideration. For example, sidewalks should be made as wide as practical and retrofitted to be fully ADA accessible. Streets should feature amenities such as benches and street trees. Bikeways should be developed to allow cyclists to travel safely with passing motor vehicles.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Complete Streets are an economic asset to communities. Well-designed streets have been shown to generate higher revenues for businesses and increase home values. Casco's streets should be designed to support a mix of commercial and cultural activities, and leveraged to attract economic opportunities and talent.

## **ACTION!**

Casco can start improving safety now with low-cost materials. Many Complete Streets projects can be implemented quickly, with little else than paint. For large projects that require significant capital planning and investment, Casco should look for opportunities to use demonstration and/or "pilot" projects to test options and inform public decision-making before committing to big ticket

infrastructure investments. Casco leadership should proactively engage with MaineDOT and neighboring communities on projects of regional scale.

## **IV. BEST PRACTICES**

### **DESIGN**

The Town of Casco will revise existing road construction and design standards and adopt new standards as needed to ensure that all road users are considered during the design process. The Planning Board, Select Board, Public Works Department, and Town Planner will begin developing standards upon the adoption of this policy.

The latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations available will be used in developing these standards, including:

- U.S. Department of Justice
  - [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) Standards for Accessible Design](#)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MUTCD\)](#)
- [National Association of City Transportation Officials \(NACTO\)](#)
  - [Urban Street Design Guide](#)
  - [Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)
  - [Urban Street Stormwater Guide](#)

Ideally, the above list shall be updated once every five years. The links provided above are current at the time of adoption.

### **REGIONAL COORDINATION**

Town boards, committees, and municipal staff should actively collaborate with neighboring municipalities, state agencies, and other stakeholders to develop infrastructure and facilities that support Complete Streets. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- MaineDOT
- Regional Transportation Program (RTP)
- Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG)
- Bicycle Coalition of Maine
- Loon Echo Land Trust
- Crooked River Snowmobile Club
- Lakes Region ATV Club

### **OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

The Town of Casco will actively solicit feedback from the community to assess ongoing needs and the effectiveness of Complete Streets implementation. This outreach will engage residents, businesses, and community groups through various channels, including public meetings, surveys, focus groups, and online platforms. The feedback gathered will inform adjustments to the transportation network, ensuring that it continues to meet the evolving needs of all users.

To complement these efforts, the Town of Casco will develop and implement comprehensive education programs aimed at promoting safe driving, cycling, and walking behaviors. These programs could include:

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Regular campaigns utilizing local media, social media, and town events to highlight the importance of road safety and discourage dangerous driving behaviors.
- **Workshops and Training:** Interactive sessions and workshops for residents, schools, and community groups focusing on practical safety tips for all road users.
- **Community Events:** Hosting events such as bike safety rodeos, pedestrian safety workshops, and driver education sessions to engage the public in a hands-on learning environment.
- **School Collaboration:** Partnering with local schools to integrate road safety education into the curriculum, ensuring that young residents are equipped with the knowledge to navigate streets safely.
- **Law Enforcement Partnership:** Collaborating with law enforcement to reinforce educational initiatives with targeted enforcement efforts, creating a culture of safety and compliance.
- **Friends of Casco Safe Streets:** Foster a group of Casco transportation users who strive to improve safety for all road users.

Through these initiatives, the Town of Casco will ensure that all members of the community are informed, engaged, and equipped to contribute to a safer, more accessible transportation network. The town is committed to cultivating an inclusive approach to education and outreach, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and considered in the ongoing development of Complete Streets.

## V. IMPLEMENTATION + ADMINISTRATION

### MUNICIPAL STAFF, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES

The Town Manager or his/her designee shall administer this policy. All town boards, committees, municipal staff, and residents share a collective responsibility to actively contribute to the successful implementation of this policy. Each project will be reviewed by the Planning Board to determine the appropriate Complete Streets design elements, based on the project's location and land use context.

The Town of Casco shall work to revise all related procedures, plans, regulations and other necessary processes to adhere to Complete Streets Principles within five years of this policy's adoption. This includes but is not limited to zoning codes, planning documents, public works standards, and development guidelines. Any new procedures, plans, regulations, and processes developed after the adoption of this policy shall fully adhere to Complete Streets Principles.

The Town of Casco will make Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations, and will approach every project and program as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all users, working in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions to achieve Complete Streets. The Town of Casco shall encourage professional development and training of its staff on non-motorized transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops.

The Town of Casco will ensure that this policy stays up-to-date with the latest best practices and guidelines for street planning and design, and continues following the guidelines authored by the National Complete Streets Coalition, by reviewing this policy at least once every 5 years.

**CAPITAL PROJECT SELECTION + PRIORITIZATION**

When the Town of Casco adopts a project selection and prioritization framework, there shall be certain criteria in this framework that encourage the prioritization of Complete Streets projects. Active transportation projects that broaden access for underserved communities should be prioritized in order to reduce health, safety, and economic disparities.

Examples of Complete Streets Principles for consideration:

- **Access + Mobility for Everyone** – expand infrastructure for modes of transportation other than the car, broadening transportation options for neighborhoods with limited connectivity to community assets, and for individuals who have limited options for connectivity due to socioeconomic status, disability, or other mitigating factors.
- **Environmental Sustainability** – utilizing tools like green spaces, permeable pavement, and bioswales help manage stormwater, while street trees provide shade, clean the air, and calm traffic
- **Safety + Security** – improving safety for all road users through short or long term design changes, implementing traffic calming measures to reduce speeding, re-aligning dangerous intersections, and improving lighting in key areas.
- **Connectivity** – connecting existing infrastructure to existing infrastructure and creating additional connections to community assets (including, but not limited to, businesses, schools, community centers, town hall, medical facilities, parks, trailheads, water access points, voting locations, and libraries)

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The Town Manager will report to the Select Board on an annual basis regarding transportation projects undertaken in the prior year and those planned for the coming year. The report will evaluate the extent to which these projects have met the objectives of the Complete Streets policy. The report should detail any instances where the Complete Streets policy was not applied to a project, including the reasons for such decisions.

**Date:**

**Approved by Casco Select Board:**

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Eugene Connolly, Chair

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Grant Plummer, Vice-Chair

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Mary-Vienessa Fernandes

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Robert MacDonald

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Scott Avery

## Addendum A

### Additional Resources

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
  - [Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks](#)
- [Institution of Transportation Engineers \(ITE\)](#)
  - [Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach](#)
  - [Curbside Management Practitioners Guide](#)
- [National Association of City Transportation Officials \(NACTO\)](#)
  - [Don't Give Up at the Intersection](#)
- MaineDOT
  - [Maine DOT Complete Streets Policy](#)
  - [MaineDOT Highway Program Design Guidance](#)
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)
  - [Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities](#)
  - [Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#)