



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

AUGUST 10, 2012

Dear Honorable Board,

With the strong support and partnership of the Somerville Bicycle Committee, I respectfully submit the following ordinance for consideration of the Board to be known as Article VII – Complete Streets Ordinance of Chapter 12 of the Somerville, Massachusetts, Code of Ordinances. This ordinance is part of a policy framework that will provide a comprehensive set of guidelines to design and implement safe, convenient and comfortable routes for walking, bicycling and public transportation that encourage increased use of these modes of transportation in Somerville.

Purpose

As part of our mission to ensure Somerville is a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family, we are also committed to providing safe, convenient modes of transportation for all users. To accomplish this task, design of routes for walking, bicycling and public transportation that encourage increased use of these modes of transportation while decreasing automobile dependency and congestion, enable convenient active transportation as part of daily activities, improve the public welfare by addressing a wide array of health and environmental problems, encourage walkable economic/business development, and meet the needs of all users of streets, including children, older adults and people with disabilities is imperative.

Definition of a Complete Street

The following words and phrases, whenever used in this ordinance shall have the meanings defined in this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

"Complete Streets" is the planning, scoping, design, implementation, operation, and maintenance of roads in order to reasonably address the safety and accessibility needs of users of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets considers the needs of motorists, pedestrians, transit users and vehicles, bicyclists, and commercial and emergency vehicles moving along and across roads, intersections, and crossings in a manner that is sensitive to the local context and recognizes that Somerville is a dense, urban setting.

“Complete Streets Infrastructure” means physical street features that provide a safe, convenient, or comfortable travel experience for users, supports and encourages non-motorized



transportation and prioritizes the needs of the most vulnerable users: children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Such physical street design features include but are not limited to:

- Pedestrian focused elements: sidewalks; multiuse paths; accessible curb ramps; bulb outs; high-visibility, raised, and/or large width zebra crosswalks and tables; refuge islands; Pedestrian signals, including leading, countdown, and or accessible signals for the blind; improvements that provide ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant accessibility; improved pedestrian access to transit stops and bus shelters; signage; street furniture
- Bicycle focused elements: conventional and buffered bicycle lanes; cycle tracks; or shared-use lanes when lanes are infeasible; paved shoulders; bicycle parking facilities
- Traffic calming and/or greening elements: street trees and landscaping; planting strips; marked automobile lanes; curbs; modern roundabouts, traffic bumps, raised tables and crosswalks; small turn radius curb geometries; raised medians; surface treatments such as paving blocks, textured asphalt, and concrete
- Transit focused elements: safe and attractive public transportation stops and facilities; transit priority signalization; bus stop curb extensions to prevent obstruction by parked cars; queue jump lanes for buses, and where applicable dedicated transit lanes

“Complete Street Design Guidelines” Guidelines including those outlined by the National Complete Streets Coalition; developed at the state level by Bay State Roads and MassDOT, and at the local level by the Somerville Bicycle Committee Facility Design Guide..

“Street” means any public right of way, including arterials, connectors, alleys, ways, lanes, and roadways by any other designation, as well as bridges, tunnels, and any other portions of the transportation network.

“Street Project” means the construction, reconstruction, retrofit, maintenance, alteration, or repair of any Street, and includes the planning, design, approval, and implementation processes, except that “Street Project” does not include minor routine upkeep such as cleaning, sweeping, mowing, spot repair, or interim measures on detour routes.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE

The ordinance proposed today has a few key features to advance healthy transportation in Somerville. These proposals are based on national and international best practices. Specifically, the ordinance:

1. Adds an Article 7 – Complete Streets Ordinance to Chapter 12 of the Somerville Code of Ordinances.
2. Provides examples of complete streets elements of all scales.
3. Provides detail on how to design and implement these improvements to accomplish “Complete Streets”.

CONCLUSION

I hope that the Board of Aldermen will approve this proposal for the addition of an Article VII – Complete Streets Ordinance to Chapter 12 of the Somerville Code of Ordinances to encourage health transportation for all users in Somerville.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Curtatone
Mayor