

CITY OF SOMERVILLE
ORDINANCE NO. 2023-
IN CITY COUNCIL: _____, 2023

Be it ordained by the City Council, in session assembled, that Chapter 12, Article VII, the Complete Streets Ordinance, of the code of ordinances of the City of Somerville is amended as follows by removing the ~~struckthrough~~ text and adding the underlined text.

Sec. 12-116. – Purpose.

The primary aim of the Complete Streets Ordinance is to eliminate fatalities and injuries on city streets in accordance with the City’s Vision Zero goals, and to enhance access, convenience, and comfort for all users of all ages and abilities, providing for equality in use between pedestrians (including people who make use of mobility aids), bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and freight drivers. The method for accomplishing this aim is the design, operation, improvement, and maintenance of the transportation network to create a connected network of facilities accommodating each mode of travel, consistent with and supportive of the local community. The ordinance recognizes that all streets are different and that the needs of various users will need to be balanced in a flexible manner to achieve complete streets.

Sec. 12-116.1. – Definitions.

Adequate directionality means either:

- (1) A two-way street with a separated bicycle lane or lanes that allow bicycle travel in both directions; or,
- (2) A one-way street with a separated bicycle lane or lanes that allow bicycle travel either in the direction of the flow of vehicular traffic or in both directions.

Bicycle lane miles means the combined distance of separated bicycle facilities. A two-way facility or one-way facilities in both directions on a one-mile street segment shall count for two bicycle lane miles. A one-way facility on a one-mile one-way street segment shall count for one bicycle lane mile. If a gap in a separated bicycle facility of any distance occurs for any reason other than those specified in the definition of the particular separated bicycle facility, the distance of the gap shall not be counted toward bicycle lane miles.

Connectivity means the provision of a permanent separated bicycle lane system that reflects desired routes between all major origins and destinations in the City.

Improvements means the construction of new city-owned streets or the reconstruction of an existing city-owned street, including but not limited to full depth reconstruction, expansion, and/or alteration of a roadway or intersection. Improvements shall not include routine maintenance provided that existing bicycle lanes will be restored to existing conditions or better.

Permanent separated bicycle lane means a bicycle lane separated from motor vehicle traffic by a permanent vertical barrier that shall remain in place year-round, including but not limited to granite or concrete barriers and raised curbs, provided, however, that the bicycle lane need not be separated from motor vehicle traffic by a permanent vertical barrier for short stretches to accommodate crosswalks, curb cuts, accessible parking and accessible loading, intersections, and Public Transportation, and provided further, that existing bicycle lanes may be temporarily removed during construction of improvements or maintenance, so long as they are restored to existing conditions or better.

Public transportation means bus and shuttle stops for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), college and university bus and shuttle stops that exist prior to [INSERT DATE]. If the City of Somerville or City Council determines it is appropriate to add a particular bus or shuttle provider to the definition of Public

Transportation, any such bus or shuttle provider may be added to this definition upon the approval of the City Council.

Quick-build separated bicycle lane means a bicycle lane separated from motor vehicle traffic by flexible delineator posts, or a similar separator, that shall remain in place year-round, provided, however, that the bicycle lane need not be separated from motor vehicle traffic for short stretches to accommodate crosswalks, curb cuts, accessible parking and accessible loading, intersections, and Public Transportation, and provided further, that existing bicycle lanes may be temporarily removed during construction of Improvements or Maintenance, so long as they are restored to existing conditions or better.

Separated bicycle facilities means either a Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane, a Quick-Build Separated Bicycle Lane, or a Temporary Traffic Control Device Separated Bicycle Lane, provided that any such Temporary Traffic Control Device Separated Bicycle Lane is not removed at any time except during significant snow events and is converted to a Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane or a Quick-Build Separated Bicycle Lane by no later than the applicable deadline for the completion of Separated Bicycle Facilities along the street segment on which the Temporary Traffic Control Device Separated Bicycle Lane is constructed.

Separated network means the proposed set of bicycle facilities identified in the Somerville Bicycle Network Plan, or any plan superseding it, provided, however, that any such plan shall maintain Connectivity.

Somerville Bicycle Plan means the plan adopted by the City of Somerville on [INSERT DATE] to create a framework for developing a network of complete streets. It shall include any update to the existing plan, regardless of potential name changes.

Temporary traffic control device separated bicycle lane means a bicycle lane with painted lines separated from motor vehicle traffic by traffic cones, traffic barrels, non-permanent flex posts, or a similar bicycle lane separator, that shall remain in place year-round except during significant snow events, but shall be reinstalled as quickly as is feasible following significant snow events, provided, however, that the Temporary Traffic Control Device Separated Bicycle Lane need not be separated from motor vehicle traffic for short stretches to accommodate crosswalks, curb cuts, accessible parking and accessible loading, intersections, and Public Transportation, and provided further, that existing bicycle lanes may be temporarily removed during construction of Improvements or Maintenance, so long as they are restored to existing conditions or better.

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- (a) The City of Somerville shall enhance the safety, access, convenience and comfort of all users of all ages and abilities, providing for equality in use between pedestrians (including people requiring mobility aids), bicyclists, transit users, motorists and freight drivers, through the design, operation and maintenance of the transportation network so as to create a connected network of facilities accommodating each mode of travel that is consistent with and supportive of the local community, recognizing that all streets are different and that the needs of various users will need to be balanced in a flexible manner to achieve complete streets.
- (b) The City of Somerville will incorporate complete street elements into public transportation projects in order to provide appropriate accommodation for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users and persons of all abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users, in comprehensive and connected networks in a manner consistent with, and supportive of, the surrounding community.
- (c) As feasible, City of Somerville shall incorporate complete streets infrastructure into existing streets to improve the safety and convenience of users, construct and enhance the transportation network for each category of users, and foster economic development and new employment.

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- (d) The City of Somerville recognizes that complete streets may be achieved through single elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.
- (e) The City of Somerville shall approach every transportation project and program as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all users, including conducting, once per year, a "rules of the road" education campaign to better inform cyclists of city/state traffic regulations. This work shall be done by the office of strategic planning and community development, with approval from communications, traffic and parking, DPW, and in cooperation with other departments, agencies, jurisdictions and associations.
- (f) City of Somerville shall follow the most current version of the National Association of City Transportation Officials Street Design Guide.
- (g) Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities shall be incorporated, when applicable and practical, in all street projects, reconstruction, repaving, and rehabilitation projects, with only the following exceptions:
 - (1) Bicycles or pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the facility;
 - (2) The cost of establishing bikeways or walkways as part of the project would be disproportionate in cost or to anticipated future use (not the current use);
 - (3) The existing right-of-way is constrained in a manner that inhibits simple addition of transit, bicycle, or pedestrian improvements. In this case, the city shall consider alternatives such as lane reduction, lane narrowing, on-street parking relocation or reduction, shoulders, signage, traffic calming, or enforcement; or.
 - (4) Where such facilities would constitute a threat to public safety or health in the determination of the city traffic engineer in consultation with the department of transportation and infrastructure.
- (h) All initial planning and design studies, health impact assessments, environmental reviews, and other project reviews for projects requiring funding or approval by City of Somerville shall (1) evaluate the effect of the proposed project on safe travel by all users, and (2) identify measures to mitigate any adverse impacts on such travel that are identified.
- (i) In design guidelines, City of Somerville shall coordinate templates with street classifications and revise them to include complete streets infrastructure, such as bicycle lanes and cycle tracks, sidewalks, street crossings, curb geometries, and planting strips. The design of new or reconstructed facilities should anticipate and support likely future demand for bicycling, walking and transit facilities.
- (j) Nothing in this article is intended to impose any additional civil liability upon the City of Somerville other than that which is imposed by existing law.

Sec. 12-116.2. – Bicycle lane installation.

- (a) Whenever Improvements are made to a City-owned street under the Five-Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan, the City of Somerville shall cause such Improvements to comply with the Somerville Bicycle Plan, or any plan superseding it; provided, that if improvements are made to a segment of the Separated Network, a Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane with adequate directionality shall be installed along that segment.
- (b) Full compliance with the provisions of Subsection A is not required where the City of Somerville can demonstrate through a written alternatives analysis, to be made public, why it is impractical to comply with the provisions of Subsection A above, and where there will be a loss of Connectivity if the provisions of Subsection A are not complied with, how Connectivity could be otherwise advanced, if

possible. Full compliance with the provisions of Subsection A above will be considered impracticable only in those rare circumstances where the City of Somerville determines that the characteristics of the physical features or usage of a street, or financial constraints of full compliance prevent the incorporation of a Permanent Separated Bicycle Lane with Adequate Directionality.

- (c) By no later than Dec 31, 2030, the City of Somerville shall complete the installation of 36 Bicycle Lane Miles of Separated Bicycle Facilities; provided however, that all such Separated Bicycle Facilities shall be installed on streets in the Separated Network.
- (d) If any of the Separated Bicycle Facilities are proposed to be Permanent Separated Bicycle Lanes, the requirements of this Subsection C shall be satisfied so long as the construction of such Separated Bicycle Facilities has commenced prior to the deadline established by this Subsection C. The City of Somerville shall have the discretion to extend the deadline set out in this Subsection C by no more than one year if the City of Somerville deems it infeasible to meet the deadline, provided, however that the City of Somerville shall submit to the City Council a report detailing why the extension was necessary by no later than Dec 31, 2025 [*4 years after legislation passes].

Sec. 12-116.3. – Accessible Parking.

If the installation of any separated bicycle facility includes a reduction in the number of available on-street parking spaces, the city shall not reduce the number of accessible spaces reserved for persons with disabilities by making them available for general use. Wherever possible, and it will not unreasonably limit available parking for other drivers, the number of such spaces shall be increased.

Sec. 12.116.4. – Pedestrian Improvements.

Whenever improvements are planned for a city-owned street, the city shall also evaluate the condition of the sidewalk along that stretch of street as well as any crosswalks and effect repairs where necessary in parallel with the street improvements.

Sec. 12-116.5. – Reporting.

- (a) Starting on January 1, 2024, the City of Somerville shall cause the installation of at least 4 Bicycle Lane Miles of the Separated Bicycle Facilities designated in Subsection C and D every year. If the City of Somerville causes the installation of more than 4 Bicycle Lane Miles of such Separated Bicycle Facilities in a given year, the City of Somerville can apply the surplus Bicycle Lane Miles toward meeting the requirements of this Subsection F for later years. If the City of Somerville fails to install 4 Bicycle Lane Miles in a particular year and no surplus from a prior year is available to meet the requirements of this Subsection F for that year, then the City of Somerville may install the deficient Bicycle Lane Miles in the following year; provided, however, that this shall not relieve the City of Somerville of the duty to meet all other deadlines set out in Subsections C and D.
- (b) By no later than Dec 31, 2024, the City of Somerville shall submit a report to the City Council detailing progress towards meeting the requirements set forth in Subsections C, D, and F. Such report shall include details on the Separated Bicycle Facilities planned for the coming twelve months. Thereafter, a report shall be given to the City Council no later than 12 months from the date of the preceding report. All such reports shall include details on the Separated Bicycle Facilities planned for the coming twelve months. Installation of Separated Bicycle Facilities including the total of Bicycle Lane Miles installed under Subsections C, D, and F shall be shown on a publicly accessible website. Such website shall also track exactly where those Bicycle Lane Miles were installed, and the distance of each contiguous segment of Bicycle Lane Miles installed. Such website shall be established by no later than January 1, 2024, and updated at least twice yearly thereafter. All other reports and updates required by this ordinance shall also be uploaded to such a website.

(c) By no later than Dec 31, 2028, if Separated Bicycle Facilities of Adequate Directionality are yet to be completed along the street segments designated in this Subsection C, the City of Somerville shall submit a report to the City Council detailing how the outstanding Separated Bicycle Facilities of Adequate Directionality shall be installed within the next year.

Approved:

President

Approved:

Mayor

Outstanding pieces:

- Recommended language around outreach, information about what outreach was conducted
- Communication requirements - mail, flyering along areas where parking will be removed in multiple languages

