



Legislation Text

File #: 2024-0277, **Version:** 2

AN ORDINANCE relating to the concept of Complete Streets, which promotes roadways that are safe and convenient for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motor vehicle drivers of all ages and abilities.

PREAMBLE:

Complete Streets are roads that prioritize safety, comfort, and connectivity to destinations for all people who use the street network, particularly those from underserved communities facing historic disinvestment. Those roads serve: people walking, biking, using transit, and driving; children and older individuals; people with disabilities; and freight vehicles. Complete Streets balance the health and safety needs of all road users, reflect the function of the road, and respond to the different needs and service levels for urban and rural areas.

Designing roads with pedestrians in mind significantly reduces pedestrian risk. About one quarter of the population of Washington state does not drive, including people who cannot afford cars, and an increasing number of older adults. Whether they walk or bicycle directly to their destinations or to public transportation, those individuals require safe access to get to work, school, shops, and medical visits, and to take part in social, civic, and volunteer activities.

The development of a network of Complete Streets can improve pedestrian safety, increase the capacity of the transportation network, promote improvements in public health, and reduce carbon pollution from transportation.

The Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA") encourages local transportation agencies to adopt and implement policies to equitably evaluate, plan, and construct Complete Streets.

FHWA support for Complete Streets includes a goal of increasing the proportion of federal aid funded transportation projects that are routinely planned, designed, built, and operated as Complete Streets.

King County has established policies in its Comprehensive Plan that support the development of Complete Streets, including a commitment to consider the needs and abilities of people walking and biking in the planning, design, construction, maintenance, preservation, and operation of road infrastructure and other transportation facilities; prioritization of safety and mobility when improving the transportation system for people walking and biking; and direction to actively seek grant funding to improve infrastructure that serves the needs of people of color, low-income communities, and others who might have limited transportation options.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1.

A. King County endorses the concept of Complete Streets, which promotes roadways that are safe and convenient for all users. King County strives to provide and require the implementation of Complete Streets for all users on newly constructed or reconstructed county roads. The county road engineer may, in the county road engineer's sole discretion, determine that there are exceptions to the provision of Complete Streets.

Among the conditions that may preclude the construction of Complete Streets are the following:

1. Their establishment would be contrary to public safety;
2. Their construction is not practically feasible because of significant adverse environmental impacts to streams, wetlands, steep slopes, or other critical areas;
3. Their construction is not practically feasible because of significant adverse impacts on neighboring land uses, including impacts from right-of-way acquisition;
4. Where their establishment would violate Comprehensive Plan policies;
5. There is no identified need for the improvement; or

6. When their cost would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use.

B. If the county road engineer determines that a condition precludes the construction of Complete Streets on a roadway project, the county road engineer should consider whether users can be accommodated by nearby facilities. Aside from new and reconstructed roadways, the county road engineer shall consider other measures that can benefit users, such as standalone sidewalk projects, shoulder improvement projects, or other projects.