



2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN &
MUNICIPAL CODE UPDATE
PROJECT
ADVISORY GROUP

MEETING DATES:	February 21, 2024
SUBJECT:	February Agenda Items
CONTACT PERSON:	Patricia Love, Community Development Director Tansy Schroeder, City Planner

Complete Streets Ordinance:

Included in the Title 11 amendments is a chapter on complete streets. The Advisory Group reviewed Title 11 at their January meeting and have discussed the complete streets concept with the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. In general, the Advisory Group has been supportive of the complete streets concept but has wanted to see more information in regard to how the ordinance will be implemented.

To meet the next round of Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) grant funding, the complete streets ordinance adoption process has been segregated from the Title 11 amendments and accelerated to meet the grant application deadline.

The attached ordinance contains the following six sections:

Purpose:

The purpose section provides the policy framework for the ordinance: when designing new roads or reconstructing existing roads, the design should focus on all modes of travel and accessibility including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and automobiles. However, a “one size all” approach should not be applied to the transportation network. Each design needs to reflect its users, travel types and travel volumes: SR 532 will have a completely different buildout design than a local neighborhood street.

Applicability:

This section details who must comply with the complete streets ordinance:

- All street designs, construction and retrofit projects in the city;
- All companies that work within the city right-of-way such as electric, gas, communications, cable, or power utility companies; and
- State or governmental agencies such as Snohomish County, WSDOT, or the School District.

Implementation:

Design and implementation of city streets should be centered around the following criteria:

- Streets must be designed and constructed to provide accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, people of all ages and abilities, transit where appropriate, and vehicles.
- Complete streets require connected travel networks.
- Street designs shall be flexible and innovative rather than purely prescriptive allowing modifications to meet the needs and comfort of all people. An example would be allowing alternative street widths, reducing operating speeds, adding street lighting, and ensuring connectivity to parks, schools, and/or shopping.
- Provide for environmental and aesthetically pleasing designs by including landscaping, street trees, design features or amenities, shade, reduced energy consumption, and improved air and water quality.
- Follow best practices design standards of WSDOT, Americans with Disabilities Act, and various Traffic Control Manuals.

Exceptions:

Provides exceptions for situations when the complete streets standards cannot be met. Exceptions should not become common practice, but rather applied minimally under the following circumstances:

- Potential to negatively impact public health, safety, or critical areas;
- Routine maintenance;
- Repairs needed to quickly respond to an emergency;
- Where costs far exceed the current or future needs; and
- City plans clearly document an absence of current or future needs.

Performance Measures:

Requires monitoring and annual reports to assess how the program is being implemented and the actual number of miles or types of physical improvements being built to accommodate all modes of travel.

Capital Improvements Projects:

Complete streets policies and concepts should be integrated into all future capital facilities projects. Designs can apply multiple strategies to incorporate complete streets policies including phasing, new or innovative concepts, and multi-use facilities.

**CITY OF STANWOOD
WASHINGTON**

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF STANWOOD, WASHINGTON, CREATING NEW STANWOOD MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 11.12, COMPLETE STREETS PROGRAM AND ESTABLISHING SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Stanwood is a member of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), a metropolitan planning organization that develops transportation policies and funds planning and roadway improvement projects in the Puget Sound area; and

WHEREAS, the PSRC encourages cities and counties to adopt local complete streets policies that implement the 2011 Washington State Complete Streets Act per RCW 47.04.320; and

WHEREAS, the Complete Streets Act encourages cities to adopt street designs that provide safe access for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, and public transportation uses; and

WHEREAS, the Complete Streets Act goals promote healthier communities by encouraging use of non-motorized transportation, improve safety by designing roads that accommodate pedestrians, protect the environment by reducing congestion, and preserve community character by involving local residents in the planning process; and

WHEREAS, the City of Stanwood's Comprehensive Plan includes a vision, mission, and seven core value statements; and

WHEREAS, "mobility", one of the seven Comprehensive Plan core value statements states, "Stanwood should provide for all forms of multi-modal transportation, including trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, transit, and private vehicles": and

WHEREAS, the 2016 non-motorized transportation plan seeks to develop a transportation system that provides for alternative modes of transportation such as pedestrian and bicycle travel; and

WHEREAS, as part of the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan update process, Stanwood staff conducted 26 separate outreach events to gain public feedback on the community desires and needs for the Plan update; and

WHEREAS, significant public feedback was received that the community desires new and improved pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, bike lanes and trails connecting the community throughout the city; and

WHEREAS, one specific Comprehensive Plan survey conducted between November 2022 and January 2023 resulted in 71 electronic comments and 35 of those specifically requested improved pedestrian infrastructure improvements to improve mobility throughout the city; and

WHEREAS, the City of Stanwood proposes to adopt a complete street policy with implementing regulations consistent with state guidelines, regional policies and community desires; and

WHEREAS, the City aims to implement complete street standards that prioritize pedestrian comfort and mobility for people of all ages, abilities, and modes of transportation, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, and motorists; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that Complete Streets aim to create a balanced, accessible, and safe environment for all road users, promoting a more sustainable and livable community and that roadway designs will need to be flexible to address the unique characteristics and needs of the community being served; and

WHEREAS, the system's design will be consistent and supportive of local neighborhoods, recognizing that transportation needs vary and must be balanced in a safe, flexible, context sensitive, and cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, the proposed code amendment is not a "development regulation" as defined as RCW 36.70A.030(13) and is therefore exempt from State of Washington Department of Commerce noticing requirements; and

WHEREAS, the City Council Community Development Committee reviewed the option to adopt a Complete Streets ordinance on October 5, 2023 and supported the adoption of such an ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission reviewed edits to the Complete Streets code on October 9, 2023 and recommended that any complete streets ordinance be tailored to work with existing neighborhood conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan / Municipal Code Advisory Group reviewed the Complete Streets code on January 17, 2024 and supported rules that allows for different modes of travel;

WHEREAS, a SEPA Threshold Determination of Non-Significance, non-project action, was issued on [Date] and publishing on [Date]. The SEPA appeal period lapsed on [Date] and no appeals were filed; and

WHEREAS, the City Council intends to improve the safety of city streets, enhance the quality of life of residents, encourage active living, and reduce traffic congestion and use of fossil fuels by providing convenient and comfortable routes for walks, biking and public transportation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held their first reading of the draft code amendment on [Date], and their second and final reading on [Date], and

WHEREAS, the City Council of Stanwood has authority under Title 35A, RCW to adopt plans and regulations related to development and operations within the City of Stanwood; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STANWOOD,
WASHINGTON, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. The City Council does hereby adopt the above listed recitals as set forth fully herein.

Section 2. Code Revisions. Stanwood Municipal Code Chapter 11.12, Complete Streets Program, is adopted as provided in Exhibit "A" attached to this ordinance and incorporated herein by reference as if set forth in full.

Section 3. Severability. The various parts, sections and clauses of this ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph, section, or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of the Ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

Section 4. Authority to Make Necessary Corrections. The City Clerk and the codifiers of this Ordinance are authorized to make necessary corrections to this Ordinance including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener's clerical errors, references, ordinance numbers, section/subsection numbers, and any references thereto.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect five days after its passage and publication as required by law.

PASSED and APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2024.

CITY OF STANWOOD:

Sid Roberts, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa Sokolik, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

Nikki Thompson, City Attorney

Date of Publication: _____

Effective Date: _____

Exhibit A

Chapter 11.12 Complete Streets Program

Chapter	Title
11.12.010	Purpose
11.12.020	Applicability
11.12.030	Implementation
11.12.040	Exceptions
11.12.050	Performance Measurements
11.12.060	Capital Improvement Projects

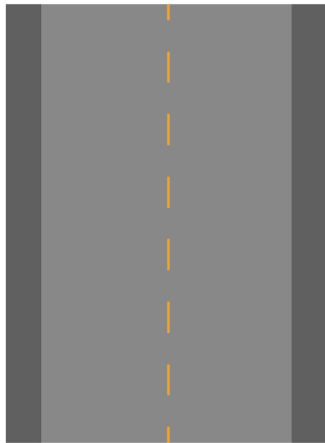
11.12.010 Purpose.

- (1) The Complete Streets Program is intended as a policy framework directing the City to take a holistic approach to transportation planning in its street improvements. The purpose of Stanwood's Complete Streets Program is to:
 - (a) Support different modes of travel while respecting Stanwood's existing neighborhood characteristics by applying Complete Streets concepts uniquely to each neighborhood.
 - (b) Encourage multimodal transportation infrastructure for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, freight, and emergency services.
 - (c) Improve public safety, health, and efficient travel for all ages, abilities, and economic levels, which benefits not only each user but the vitality of the local economy.
 - (d) Create integrated, aesthetically pleasing and connected transportation systems that provide access, mobility and health for all users including people traveling with different levels of ability or mobility.
 - (e) Improve the public health of Stanwood's community members by encouraging active transportation modes.
 - (f) Reduce traffic and congestion and foster cleaner air quality by enabling alternative transportation modes.
- (2) Complete Streets do not necessarily intend to expand facilities and pavement. Rather, Complete Streets intend to find solutions that make transportation facilities comfortable for all users, from vehicles to pedestrians. Street design shall be flexible and innovative rather than purely prescriptive and shall be based on the thoughtful application of engineering, architectural, and urban design principles. Priority shall be on the needs and comfort of all people and travelers, considering issues such as street design and width, desired operating speed, mode balance, street lighting, and connectivity.

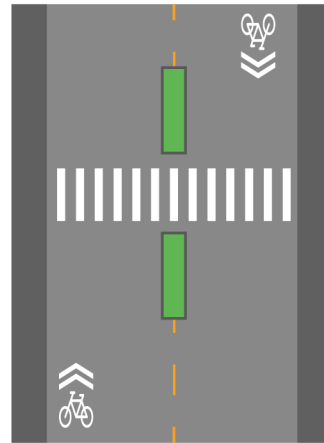
The following, Figures, 11.12.010(A) and Figure 11.12.010(B), show examples of what this could look like.

Figure 11.12.010(A) Local Complete Street Example

Incomplete Street Example



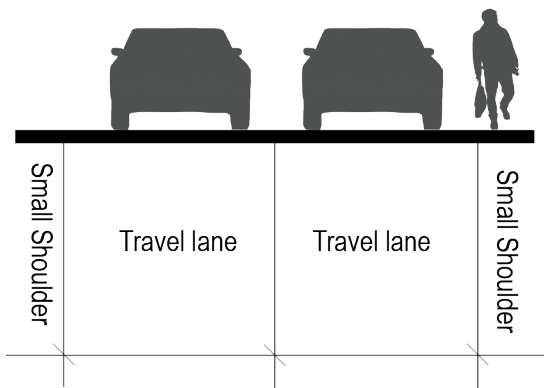
Complete Street Example



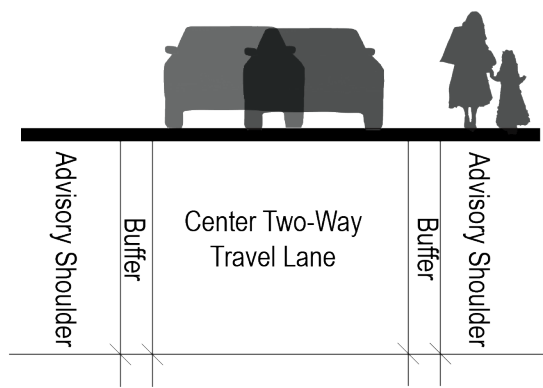
Complete Streets may involve upgrades to existing infrastructure that does not change roadway dimensions but increases the comfort of non-vehicular users on existing streets. The complete street example above adds markings and signage to increase driver awareness of other users, along with a median to slow traffic and provide an island for crossing pedestrians.

Figure 11.12.010(B) Local Complete Street Example

Incomplete Street Example



Complete Street Example



An example of a low traffic flow local street, both “incomplete” and “complete”. This complete street example maintains the pavement width but allows more space for non-vehicular users. Vehicles still have

space to travel in the complete example, but the narrower, shared travel lanes slows traffic speeds and provides more comfort for pedestrians.

- (3) Complete Streets work best with in outside-in approach. Starting with the built improvements outside of the right-of-way then narrowing focus towards the street.
 - (a) Starting with the building, is there a direct and comfortable route to the sidewalk?
 - (b) Is the pedestrian environment comfortable and assessable with a buffer for safety?
 - (c) Are the street and intersections designed to accommodate all modes safely while maintaining shade and aesthetics?

11.12.020 Applicability.

- (1) The standards in this chapter shall apply to all street designs, construction and retrofit projects within public or private right-of-way or private easements.
- (2) All companies which work within city right-of-way shall comply with these requirements and shall not take actions that could adversely affect multimodal travel conditions and future opportunities. Such agencies include, but are not limited to electric, gas, communications, cable or power utilities.
- (3) Stanwood encourages entities not under its jurisdiction to meet the requirements of this chapter, including but not limited to the Stanwood-Camano School District, Snohomish County, and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

11.12.030 Implementation.

- (1) Both public and private streets must be designed and constructed to provide accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, people of all ages and abilities, transit where appropriate, and vehicles. This includes:
 - (a) Using context-sensitive designs and best practices that both provide safety to all users while respecting and enhancing the City's small-town scale.
 - (b) Implementing multi-modal project priorities, as adopted by the City's Transportation Plan.
 - (c) Considering non-infrastructure-based improvements to ensure existing facilities support all modes, for example reducing traffic speeds.
 - (d) In reviewing zoning, site plans, subdivisions plans, and other projects that include streets, or internal circulation routes, the requirements of these complete street's requirements apply.
- (2) Provide Interconnected Networks. Complete streets require connected travel networks. All roadways and routes need not be optimized for all modes; however, people using each mode require a network of safe, convenient travel routes and crossings throughout the city. The City shall prioritize opportunities to create a complete and intuitive transportation network with clear wayfinding that provides connected facilities to serve each mode of travel. The network may include off-street hard-surface trails for biking and walking. Special consideration will be given to underserved areas where multiple transportation options are needed.

- (3) Flexible Design. Street designs shall be flexible and innovative rather than purely prescriptive. Street design modifications may be approved by the Public Works Director, or their designee, where the alternative design provides for the needs and comfort of all people and travelers, considering issues such as street design and width, desired operating speed, mode balance, street lighting, and connectivity.
- (4) Environmental Design. The City shall foster livable, walkable, bicycle-friendly, aesthetically-pleasing, green neighborhoods by including landscaping, street trees, and design features that help define the character of a street while providing added benefits of shade, summer cooling, reduced energy consumption, and improved air and water quality.
- (5) Best Practices Design Standards. The following standards and guidelines shall be applied to the design of complete streets:
 - (a) Street construction standards are adopted under SMC 14.04, Street and Utility Standards.
 - (b) The latest and best design guidelines and practices from the following must also be used.
 - (i) American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO)
 - (ii) Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
 - (iii) Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
 - (iv) National Association of Transportation Officials (NACTO)
 - (v) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - (vi) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)

11.12.040 Exceptions.

Not every street can be complete for each traveler, and consideration of an exception may be requested for projects. These exceptions should not become common. Requests for exceptions will be evaluated by the joint review of the Public Works Director and the Community Development Director (or their designees) and a decision whether to grant an exception is within their discretion. An exception for a specific project may be requested and granted when/where:

- (1) Where their establishment would:
 - (a) Hinder public health or safety.
 - (b) Adversely impact critical areas.
- (2) For routine maintenance of the street that does not change the roadway geometry or operations, such as mowing, snowplowing, sweeping, spot repair, joint or crack sealing, or pothole filing.
- (3) Reconstruction of a right-of-way is needed quickly due to an emergency.
- (4) When the cost would be disproportionate to the current need or probable future uses.
- (5) There is a documented absence of current or future needs, as established in City plans and future travel demand forecasts.

11.12.050 Performance Measurements.

- (1) Annual review of success. The Public Works Director must maintain a summary of transportation projects undertaken within the prior year and planned projects within the coming six-year period. Each listed project must demonstrate how it has met the objectives of this policy.
- (2) As part of the annual review, qualitative and quantitative data must be used to assess the performance of Complete Streets projects. Such performance measures to assess projects under the Complete Streets Code may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - (a) Cumulative miles of improved / new Complete Streets.
 - (b) Linear feet of new / reconstructed sidewalks.
 - (c) Number of new / reconstructed curb ramps.
 - (d) Miles of bicycle facilities added.
 - (e) Number of ADA accommodations provided or improved.
 - (f) Number of intersection improvements.
 - (g) Number of new street trees installed.
 - (h) Number of exemptions from this policy approved.

11.12.060 Capital Improvement Projects

- (1) Consideration of this Complete Streets Policy and its long-range goals shall be incorporated into the planning, scoping, budgeting, funding, design, approval and implementation process for all City facilities, roadways, and right-of-way infrastructure. The Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, Capital Improvement Program, and other relevant City plans shall be used for guidance.
- (2) Projects may be designed to achieve fully complete streets and networks over time, and in future phases of work. Phased projects shall ensure that such phased improvements do not adversely affect the pedestrian realm and opportunities for multimodal travel and facilities.
- (3) Where the costs of acquiring right-of-way to provide separate accommodations for each mode of travel are cost-prohibitive, innovative or multi-use facilities within the existing right-of-way that accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists may be considered.
- (4) For City parks projects, park land may be used for bicycle/pedestrian trails and other elements of the transportation system that provide connectivity and support people's access to parks and recreational/outdoor activities.
- (5) City utilities projects shall ensure that Complete Streets Policy implementation does not create public safety hazards or reductions in levels of utility service unacceptable to utility customers.