Complete Streets Policy

Forest Hills Borough, PA

Policy adopted by Forest Hills Borough Council on June 15, 2022

Vision and Statement of Intent

The Borough of Forest Hills commits to the development and maintenance of a complete and well-connected transportation network that meets the needs of all residents and provides users of all ages, abilities, and travel modes with safe and convenient access. The Borough shall consider improvements and accommodations for all modes including but not limited to pedestrians, wheelchair users, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers in all transportation projects. This Complete Streets Policy shall act in conjunction with the Borough's existing Climate Action Plan and Active Transportation Plan with the intent of improving health and safety of residents and mitigating environmental impacts.

Policy Overview

- Users and modes
    - Policy shall ensure that the safety and convenience of all users of the transportation system are accommodated, including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, people with disabilities, children, the elderly, motorists, freight providers, emergency responders, and adjacent property owners, residents, and visitors.
- Types of projects
    - All new construction and reconstruction/retrofit projects shall account for the needs of all modes of transportation and all users of the road network.
    - All maintenance projects and ongoing operations, such as resurfacing, repaving, restriping, rehabilitation, or other types of changes to the transportation system shall account for the needs of all modes of transportation and all users of the road network.
- Coordination with other agencies/municipalities
    - The Borough shall coordinate and build working relationships with the relevant agencies and other nearby municipal governments, including but not limited to PennDOT, Allegheny County, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Port Authority of Allegheny County, the Township of Wilkins, and the Boroughs of Wilkinsburg, Churchill, Chalfant, North Braddock, and Braddock Hills.

- Exceptions
    - Facilities for all users will be included in the construction, reconstruction, retrofit, repaving, and rehabilitation of Borough streets, except under one or more of the following conditions:
        - Specific modes are prohibited by law from using a particular area or segment of the transportation network
        - Emergency repair projects may prioritize efficient reopening over new multimodal accommodations
        - Accommodation of users is cost prohibitive or carries a cost disproportionate to the expected benefit
        - Individual field conditions make design for accommodations of certain modes impossible or cause significant scheduling delays, utility relocation, or right-of-way impacts
        - Current and future land use, density, mode share, and/or traffic volumes around the new facility are demonstrated to be incompatible with certain modes such that the project will not accommodate existing users nor attract future users. Absence of future need may, for example, be demonstrated by demographic, school, and/or employment data that demonstrate a low likelihood of future use for a given mode.
    - Exceptions shall be reviewed by the Borough Planning Commission during their regular public meetings and granted only in the case that one or more of the conditions are present.
    - In the case that current or future need is present for accommodations that are deemed cost prohibitive, the Borough shall consider an easement in the case that the accommodation becomes financially feasible in the future.

Design Standards

The Borough shall follow the most recently adopted design standards for all new facilities and for upgrades and maintenance of existing facilities, including but not limited to:

- AASHTO
- FHWA
- PennDOT
- NACTO
- ITE

Land Use and Neighborhood Context

The Borough shall ensure that transportation projects account for existing and future land use and select projects that improve connections between areas of generation and areas of attraction. Transportation facilities shall be developed in a way that best serves the needs of the neighborhoods they are in as well as the neighborhoods they connect. Every effort shall be made to create safe and convenient connections between residential, commercial, and institutional zones and the Borough

Planning Commission shall recommend changes to the zoning code as necessary to ensure that such connections are possible.

Tree Policy

One of the defining characteristics of Forest Hills is the abundance and diversity of trees within the Borough. As part of this Complete Streets policy, every effort shall be made to maintain existing trees as well as plant new trees wherever feasible. If a tree is removed for any reason during a transportation project, a new tree must be planted within the project limits. Additionally, appropriate types of trees should be selected for planting based on context. For example, trees that grow large roots should not be planted immediately adjacent to a sidewalk, and tall trees should not be planted next to overhead wires.

Performance Measures

The Borough shall develop an annual report that evaluates the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy and identifies benchmarks to ensure successful implementation in the coming year. Each annual report shall list ongoing and completed transportation projects during that fiscal year. If any exceptions are applied to transportation projects pursuant to Exceptions to Complete Streets Requirements herein, such projects and the relevant exceptions should be identified in the annual report. All benchmarks shall include relevant demographic data such as income, race/ethnicity, and/or vehicle ownership whenever available and reports shall be made publicly available online.

The Borough shall assign appropriate responsibility to collect and monitor data to determine compliance with the benchmarks identified in the annual report. Such benchmarks may include, but are not limited to:

- Mileage of new and existing bicycle infrastructure, (e.g., on street bicycle lanes, bicycle parking, and off-street paths and trails)
- Linear feet (or mileage) of new and existing pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, trails, transit amenities)
- Number of new and existing ADA-compliant infrastructure (e.g., curb ramps, pedestrian buttons)
- Number of new street trees
- Number of pedestrian and bicycle lighting improvements
- Number of bicycle amenities such as repair stations, covered and uncovered racks
- The number and percentage of designated transit stops accessible via sidewalks and curb ramps.
- The number, locations, and causes of collisions, injuries, and fatalities by each mode of transportation
- Percentage of children walking or bicycling to school
- Percentage of adults walking, bicycling, carpooling/ridesharing, or riding public transit to work

Project Selection Criteria

The Borough shall identify and prioritize several capital projects to be pursued during each fiscal year. These projects shall be ranked in order of potential impact, cost, and feasibility, and included in the annual report. Selected projects may include but are not limited to those identified in the Borough's Active Transportation Plan and/or the Transportation section of the Borough's Climate Action Plan. Additionally, funding shall be prioritized for projects that benefit underserved populations; seek to

alleviate disparities in health, safety, and economic opportunity; and optimize connections both within and between different neighborhoods and land uses.

Implementation Process

The Complete Streets policy detailed herein will be implemented through the following steps:

1. Within two (2) years of the effective date of this Policy, the Borough shall inventory and audit all applicable procedures, policies, plans, ordinances, documents, training programs, performance measures and other guidance documents to be consistent with this policy. The purpose of this audit is to identify areas where tenets of this policy will need to be incorporated. This includes, but is not limited to, funding, planning, designing, operating, and maintaining transportation infrastructure as well as potential updates or revisions to the zoning code. The Borough will use this audit to incorporate this policy into updates to its procedures, plans, policies, etc. as they are scheduled.
2. The Borough Transportation Engineer, in cooperation with the Planning Commission, shall review current design standards and amend them as necessary using the sources identified in the Design Standards section of this document to ensure that they are compliant with the Complete Streets Policy.
3. The Borough shall offer educational opportunities including but not limited to workshops, trainings, and webinars on active transportation and Complete Streets to Borough employees, community organizations, and the public.
4. The Borough, shall identify all potential sources of funding for both short-term and long-term projects as well as recommend improvements to the project selection criteria as described in the Project Selection Criteria section of this document.
5. The Complete Streets Policy will be implemented through the Borough Planning Commission and reviewed and updated as necessary on an annual basis.