

Complete Streets for Private Development



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Austin has a Complete Streets policy

Austin City Council adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2014 to implement the community's Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan for a healthy, green, vibrant, compact & connected city.

The policy applies to both private-sector and public-sector projects. Its 8 principles are now the standard for the City of Austin. Updated street criteria, cross-sections, and code provisions are under active development.

Below are examples of how to incorporate elements of the policy into your project.

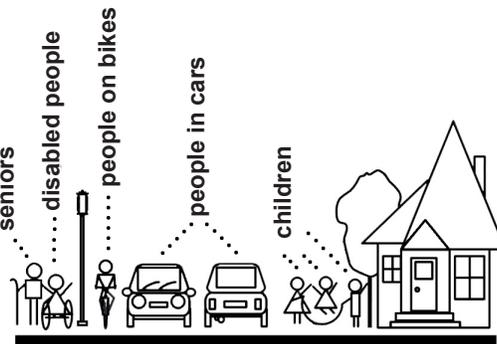
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What is a Complete Street?

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. As public spaces, they are safer, inviting, and accessible places to walk, bike, or ride for people of all ages and abilities.

Improvements may include include sidewalks, bike facilities, and shade trees. Places with high numbers of people walking and biking need the most Complete Streets improvements.

Streets are for...



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What should projects do?

- Design all streets and roads to be safe and convenient for people walking and biking - in addition to drivers.
- Provide protected facilities for people walking and biking.
- Offer an active and livable place that is compatible and connected to the community.
- Improve the streetscape to make walking safe, comfortable, and interesting
- Encourage tenants and visitors to bike and walk to and from your project.

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Project Considerations Incorporating Complete Streets into your project

Principle 1. Complete Streets serve all users and modes

1. People Walking: Is the project site fully served by sidewalks?

Example: Sidewalks along the front of the property, along all private drives, and leading to building entrances.

2. People Biking: Is the project site fully served by bikeways? If not, are new bikeways included in the project?

Example: Separated bicycle lane along the front of the property; on-site bicycle parking; ensure all private drives and streets provide visibility and space for cyclists.

3. Transit Riders: If a transit stop is located within a 1/4 mile, does the project provide an appealing, accessible walk to the stop?

Example: sidewalks directly connect to transit stop; shade along sidewalk and around transit stop.

4. Overall, does the design balance vehicle mobility with the mobility and access of all other roadway users?

Example: Internal drives and roads are designed to accommodate all modes.

Project Considerations

Principle 2. Complete Streets require connected travel networks

5. Does the project provide bicycle connections to the City’s cross-town network of bicycle routes?

Example: Connect to existing bicycle lanes and facilities; consult Austin’s Bicycle Master Plan.

6. Do proposed sidewalks connect to the surrounding pedestrian network?

Example: Sidewalks connect to surrounding sidewalks; ADA connections between buildings and the primary street frontage; all pedestrian crossings along a driveway are visibly marked; reduced curb radii for driveways.

7. Does the design provide routes for all modes throughout the site?

Example: Narrow driveways; sidewalks along driveways that lead to all building entrances on property; connections to adjacent properties.

8. Where new streets are being developed, do they connect and extend the street grid?

Example: Connect stub-outs to create a through street; plan to build private drives and streets to City standards during zoning, subdivision, and/or PUD agreement process.

Principle 3. Complete Streets are beautiful, interesting, and comfortable places for people

9. Does the design protect the pedestrian where the building meets the street?

Example: Include storefront awnings for shade; narrow streets or travel lanes; extend curbs; reduce curb cuts and curb radii; provide a buffer (e.g. planting strip with street trees) between sidewalk and roadway.

10. Does the project remove/consolidate utility or curb cuts when possible?

Example: Reduce driveway cut length across sidewalk; remove head-in parking accessed by a continuous curb cut; ensure driveway/alley apron lip does not exceed 1 inch; maintain a fully raised continuous sidewalk across driveways.

11. Does the design create a “people place” along the street?

Example: Subchapter E furnishing and glazing requirements; ground-floor large windows for people to look through; planting strips along sidewalks; building entrance on main frontage; decorative accent strips or pavers within the furnishing zone; street lighting (similar to UNO or Great Streets).

12. Are overhead or underground utilities a barrier to tree planting or streetscape improvements?

Example: Bury or move utilities; work with City arborist and Urban Design Division to develop alternative planting plan.

Principle 4. Complete Streets require best-practice design criteria and context-sensitive approaches

13. Does the design adhere to City streetscape standards that govern the project area? Have streetscape improvements been included in the project?

Example: Street furniture such as benches, decorative lighting, bicycle parking; street trees; landscaping and planting strips; public art; placemaking; special signage; orientation of building to the street; parking hidden from street.

14. Does this project create potential barriers to future Complete Street improvements?

Example: Streetscape does not prevent a future bike lane, transit lane, tree planting. Internal streets are positioned to connect in the future (stub outs, adjacent vacant land) Improvements align with adjacent property improvements.

15. Does the project make the area a more inviting place to walk, shop, stroll, or dine?

Example: Design the building entrances, the size and spacing of windows, setback, facade materials and paint colors, and architectural treatments to blend in or enhance the neighborhood; consult area neighborhood plan to ensure project aligns with neighborhood vision.

Principle 5. Complete Streets protect Austin’s sustainability and environment

16. Does the project include any “Green Street” elements?

Example: Rain gardens designed to treat stormwater, vegetated bump-outs, street trees, below-ground cisterns, native/drought tolerant vegetation, porous/cool pavement, sustainable construction methods and materials.

