

First Reading: _____
Second Reading: _____

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHATTANOOGA CITY CODE,
PART II, CHAPTER 32, STREETS AND SIDEWALKS, BY
ADDING A NEW ARTICLE XIV, TO INCLUDE COMPLETE
STREETS DEFINITION AND REGULATIONS.

WHEREAS, Chattanooga strives to be a great city, with strong neighborhoods for families, safe streets, and a vibrant economy; and

WHEREAS, Chattanooga’s transportation and public space network strives to support such livable communities with context sensitive, aesthetically pleasing and well-connected streets that allow safe, efficient, and convenient walking, biking, public transit, and driving; and

WHEREAS, Chattanooga’s street network should provide not only for safe and efficient movement through the City, but also for the vitality and development of strong communities and neighborhoods;

WHEREAS, Complete Streets create monetary savings by incorporating more transportation users into the existing right-of-way. As greater numbers walk, bike, or use transit for daily trips, the need for costly road widening projects can be alleviated and future maintenance costs reduced, allowing more tax dollars to address the preservation and enhancement of Chattanooga’s current transportation system; and

WHEREAS, CEOs for Cities released a report called “Walking the Walk” which measured the dollars and cents value that homes in walkable areas command over homes with average walkability, and found that in thirteen (13) of the fifteen (15) housing markets they

studied, increased neighborhood walkability was positively correlated with increased home value; and

WHEREAS, increased use of alternate modes of transportation provide environmental benefits by reducing vehicle emissions, decreasing polluted runoff from roadways, reducing impervious area, and moderating dependence on non-renewable fuels; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau reports the number of Chattanooga residents over 65 at 14.7%, totaling nearly 25,000 people, who need the public right-of-way to better serve them as safe places to walk, bicycle, and board the bus, making it a viable option for Chattanooga residents to age in place; and

WHEREAS, more than one-third (1/3) of Americans do not drive due to age, disability, or poverty and need transportation alternatives; and

WHEREAS, Millennials are now the largest generation in the United States and have shifted significantly away from car usage to walking, biking, and public transit with preference for living in urban walkable neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Chattanooga and the Hamilton County Step ONE wellness initiatives program recognizes obesity as a growing health epidemic across the community, and that incomplete streets are a transportation barrier preventing many of our residents from accessing safe places to exercise or integrate physical activity into daily life; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 Chattanooga Area Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan prescribes inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities for city streets; and Chattanooga has been awarded a bronze designation as a “Bicycle Friendly Community” by the League of American Bicyclists since 2003; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chattanooga now operates one of only thirty (30) bicycle transit systems in the United States to encourage multimodal transport and make it easier for citizens and tourists to move around the City.

SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE, that Chattanooga City Code, Chapter 32, Streets and Sidewalks, be and hereby is amended by adding a new Article XIV as follows:

ARTICLE XIV. COMPLETE STREETS

Sec. 32-340. Definition of Complete Streets.

“Complete Streets” are streets that are designed, built and operated to enable safe access for all users, in that pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across the street right-of-way.

Sec. 32-341. Complete Streets Policy.

The City shall develop a safe, reliable, efficient, integrated and connected multimodal transportation system that will promote access, mobility and health for all users, and will ensure that the safety and convenience of all users of the transportation system are accommodated, including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, motorists, emergency responders, freight providers, adjacent land owners, and people of all ages and abilities, including children, youth, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

Sec. 32-342. Scope of Complete Streets Applicability.

(a) All city-owned transportation facilities in the public right-of-way including, but not limited to, streets, bridges and all other connecting pathways shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so that users of all ages and abilities can travel safely and independently.

(b) The City shall approach every transportation improvement project phase with the purpose to create safer, more accessible streets for all users. These phases include, but are not limited to: planning, programming, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, reconstruction, operation and maintenance. Other changes to transportation facilities on streets and rights-of-way, including capital improvements, re-channelization projects and major maintenance, must also be included.

(c) Privately constructed streets and drives shall adhere to this policy.

(d) The City shall foster partnerships with the State of Tennessee, neighboring communities and counties, and business and school districts to develop facilities and accommodations that further the City's Complete Streets policy.

(e) Transportation projects shall incorporate sustainable water quality management principles where applicable to reduce pollutant, temperature and runoff impacts to local waterbodies.

Sec. 32-343. Exceptions.

Any exception to this policy, including for private projects, must be approved by the Administrator of the Transportation Department. Exceptions may be considered for approval when:

(a) An affected roadway prohibits use by specified users (such as a limited-access highway or a pedestrian mall), in which case a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere;

(b) The activities are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g. mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair, or other interim measures);

(c) Severe existing topographic, natural resource, or right-of-way constraints exist that preclude construction of bicycle or pedestrian facilities without incurring excessive cost. Exceptions granted under (a) and (c) must be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision and posted in quarterly reports on the Transportation Department webpage.

Sec. 32-344. Design Standards.

The most current editions of the following engineering manuals are hereby adopted as design guidelines:

(a) The Street and Bikeway Design Guides published by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO).

(b) Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE).

(c) Using these manuals as guidance, the Transportation Department will create and publish Complete Streets Design Standards to govern the design and construction of all transportation elements within the city.

Sec. 32-345. Performance Measures.

The City shall measure the success of this Complete Streets policy using, but not limited to, the following performance measures:

- Total miles of bike lanes (standard, buffered and protected), bike routes, and shared-use pathways
- Total miles of pedestrian accommodation
- Percentage of intersections with ADA accessible curb ramps
- Percentage of transit stops accessible via sidewalks and bicycle facilities
- Rate of crashes, injuries, and fatalities by mode
- Rate of children walking or bicycling to school
- Commute mode share
- Mass transit ridership rates

Unless otherwise noted above, within six months of policy adoption, the City shall create individual numeric benchmarks for each of the performance measures included, as a means of tracking and measuring the annual performance of the policy. Annual reports shall be posted online for each of the above measures.

Sec. 32-346. Implementation and Reporting.

The City of Chattanooga shall view Complete Streets as integral to everyday transportation decision making practices and processes. To this end:

(a) The Transportation Department, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Economic & Community Development, the Chattanooga - Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency, and other relevant departments, agencies, or committees will review and modify current city standards, including but not limited to subdivision regulations, zoning codes and ordinances, to ensure that they effectively implement Complete Streets principles; and such groups shall incorporate Complete Streets principles into all future planning documents, manuals, design standards, checklists, decision-trees, rules, regulations, programs, neighborhood redevelopment projects, and other appropriate endeavors.

(b) When available, the City shall encourage staff professional development and training on multimodal transportation issues through attending conferences, classes, seminars, and workshops.

(c) City staff shall identify all current and potential future sources of funding for street improvements and recommend improvements to the project selection criteria to support Complete Streets projects.

(d) A periodic report (annual or otherwise, as appropriate) will be made to the City Council showing progress made in implementing this policy. The Transportation Department with assistance from the Department of Public Works, the Department of Economic & Community Development, the Chattanooga - Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency, and other relevant departments, agencies, or committees shall report on the annual increase or decrease for each performance measure contained in this policy compared to the previous year(s).

(e) Complete Streets endeavors shall be accompanied by educational elements to ensure that all users of the transportation system understand and can safely utilize project components.

SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That this Ordinance shall take effect two (2) weeks from and after its passage.

Passed on second and final reading:_____

CHAIRPERSON

APPROVED:____ DISAPPROVED:____

MAYOR