


MEMORANDUM

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

DATE: March 15, 2011

TO: Eric DeLong
Deputy City Manager

FROM: Suzanne M. Schulz, AICP 
Planning Director

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION SUPPORTING COMPLETE STREETS

The attached resolution would support the design and construction of Complete Streets. A Complete Street is safe, comfortable, and convenient for travel by automobile, foot, bicycle, and transit regardless of age or ability. In July, 2010 the Michigan Legislature passed Public Acts 134 and 135 which amended the Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) and the Transportation Act (PA 51 of 1951) to consider all users in road project planning and construction.

Our community has a tradition of working to support multiple transportation modes. In June, 1996 the *Grand Rapids Street Classification Policy Report* was adopted as part of the City's 1963 Master Plan. A citizens' advisory committee assisted in developing report recommendations and they established a set of street design objectives and guidelines. The guidelines were intended to balance the need to move vehicles with the creation of a street environment that accommodates on-street parking, transit stops, pedestrians and cyclists.

One of the 2002 City of Grand Rapids Master Plan's seven themes, *Balanced Transportation*, emphasizes "the coordination of transportation and land use decisions to reduce dependence on the automobile, provide choice in travel modes and to balance the needs for the automobile and truck access with the objectives of improving transit, making streets more walkable and creating a system of bike routes." The recent Green Grand Rapids initiative to update the Master Plan goes further in identifying Complete Streets aspirations and non-motorized needs.

More recent efforts to enhance bicycle facilities within Grand Rapids include implementing the use of on-street bike lanes, sharrows, and signs on Lake Drive. Traffic Safety has placed four-lane cross-sections on "diets" to three lanes, with wide shoulders to calm traffic and provide a larger shoulder for cyclists. And, shared use paths such as the Oxford Street Trail and the Plaster Creek Trail continue to be expanded throughout the area. A great deal of work remains to be done, however. Grand Rapids has constructed less than 2 miles of on-street bike lanes and significant sidewalk gaps on major streets such as Plainfield and 28th Street exist.

The purpose of the attached resolution is to demonstrate a continued commitment to the work of creating Complete Streets. Planning staff, in association with the Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition and Ben VanGessel, has been developing a bicycle facilities implementation strategy. The City's Design Team (comprised of Engineering, Traffic Safety, Planning, Fire, Water, Sewer,

Stormwater, Forestry, The Rapid, and others) is in the process of creating a comprehensive Complete Streets Policy. It is hoped that a draft of this policy will be made available in time for the May 6th Bicycle Summit. Representatives of Disability Advocates of Kent County have been active as well in encouraging intentional actions that will advance accessibility improvements in the community. Finally, the adoption of Complete Streets resolutions/policies/ordinances may be considered as a factor in grant awards from the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Please forward the attached resolution for consideration at the next scheduled City Commission meeting.

SMS

Cc:

City Engineer Mark DeClerq

Assistant City Engineer Rick DeVries

Utility Supervisor Chris Zull

YOUR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE recommends adoption of the following resolution to support the design and construction of Complete Streets.

CORRECT IN FORM

DEPARTMENT OF LAW

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Com. _____, supported by Com. _____,
moved adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Michigan Legislature adopted Public Acts 134 and 135 of 2010 to enact Complete Streets legislation that requires the Michigan Department of Transportation and local governments to consider all users in transportation related projects; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets support economic growth and community stability by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation, and retail destinations by improving pedestrian and vehicular environments throughout communities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Rapids recognizes the importance of street infrastructure and modifications such as sidewalks, crosswalks, shared use paths, bicycle lanes, signage, and accessible curb ramps, that enable safe, convenient, and comfortable travel for all users; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Rapids Master Plan amendment, Green Grand Rapids, and the recently adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan support Complete Streets policies and the creation of a comprehensive non-motorized network; therefore

RESOLVED, the City of Grand Rapids will design and construct Complete Streets wherever feasible and staff will conduct a review of pertinent policies, ordinances, and design specifications that affect the public right-of-way to ensure cohesive Complete Streets implementation.

Yeas

Nays

Bliss

Gutowski

Kelly

Lumpkins

Shaffer

White

Mayor Heartwell

Yeas:

Nays:

Adopted:

Failed:
