



Dear Teri Dell and members of the Planning Board,

People Friendly Stamford and a group of stakeholders including the DSSD, RPA, and Stamford Partnership have reviewed the latest draft of the master plan, and would like to applaud the Planning Board and its consultant on their efforts so far. The draft master plan addresses pedestrian and bicycle transportation issues that are of interest to our organizations and we appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback. For your consideration, we have outlined some proposed adjustments to the transportation sections of the draft. We would also suggest that, if accepted, these changes be reflected in the master plan's implementation matrix.

1. Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

While we commend the Planning Board and its consultant for including improved bicycle routes and pedestrian connectivity, we recommend that certain implementation strategies under the Policy 4C.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Improvements be revised to call for the funding and creation of a city-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan. We recommend merging implementation strategies 4C.3-b, 4C.3-c, and 4C.3-d into one strategy including all bicycle and pedestrian improvements. This new inclusive strategy would call for funding and creating a bicycle and pedestrian plan. Suggested language for this new inclusive implementation strategy, 4C.3-a, may read as follows:

4C.3-a: Fund and create a city-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan. The City should seek funding for, and create a city-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan that maps existing sidewalks and bicycle routes, guides the implementation of bicycle routes in appropriate locations throughout the City, and develops a strategy to improve pedestrian connectivity within Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Enhancing walkability should be pursued in coordination with the Walkable Stamford report, and projects should focus on improved sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, curb extensions, pedestrian-scale lighting, landscaping, street furniture and wayfinding. Pedestrian and bike routes should provide direct connections to key destinations.

In working to improve the bicycle and pedestrian environment, the following strategies should be considered:

- Enhance pedestrian wayfinding with attractive signage
- Install bike lanes, sharrows, and "share the road" signage where possible and appropriate
- Introduce on-street parking where feasible
- Introduce medians that could include landscaping and refuge islands at crossings
- Narrow vehicular lanes; 11-foot-wide lanes are safe in urban environments
- Eliminate exclusive right-turn lanes where they are not warranted
- Install bulb-outs at key intersection crossings where they are appropriate and will not interfere with turning movements

2. Complete Streets

We support the Planning Board for including the concept of Complete Streets in the draft, however we recommend some minor edits.

Ordinance vs. Policy

Section 4C.3-a (page 95) should be renamed, as the Board of Representatives has already begun working on a Complete Streets ordinance – not a policy. This change is more than a question of semantics: while a policy might be adopted by one department, an ordinance, on the other hand, once passed by the Board of Representatives and signed by the Mayor, would be effective city-wide and across all departments.

Transit Riders

The National Complete Streets Coalition defines Complete Streets as streets that “are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.” The draft master plan, however, does not include any mention of transit. We recommend a simple edit in section 4C.3-a that acknowledges Stamford’s transit riders. Suggested language for this new revised implementation strategy, 4C.3-b, may read as follows:

4C.3-b: Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance. Complete Streets are streets designed to accommodate users of all ages and abilities including vehicles, transit, pedestrians, and bicycles. This is a departure from the traditional view that the singular function of a roadway is to accommodate vehicular traffic at maximum safe speed. Adopting a Complete Streets Ordinance in Stamford means that accommodations for all users shall be a routine part of the planning, design and construction in all transportation projects in the city limits. Transportation projects include new construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and any other private or public investment within the public right of way regardless of funding source. In all transportation projects, a reasonable amount of funding shall be expended to provide facilities for all users.

3. Transportation Department

The Planning Board is right to recommend that the City establish a City Department tasked with managing Stamford’s transportation needs. However, the responsibilities of such a department are not clearly listed in the most intuitive locations in the master plan. We suggest the plan would be well-served by more clearly listing in one place the functions that the department would be charged with overseeing. For example, text from the Introduction to section D. *Transportation and Mobility Goals and Strategies* (page 87) could be merged with text from Policy 4C.5 (page 97), where one would expect to find the most detail about the creation of a transportation department. Suggested language for the revision of Policy 4C.5 may read as follows:

Policy 4C.5: Creation of a Transportation Department. Some of Connecticut’s largest cities, such as New Haven, have a separate department that manages transportation, traffic and parking. A Transportation Department would be tasked with managing all aspects of Stamford’s transportation needs, including:

- traffic signals
- traffic signs and lines
- road maintenance
- vehicular traffic flow
- road improvements
- bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- parking
- coordinate with state and local transit agencies about enhancements to bus, shuttle and other transit

4. NACTO Endorsement

In addition to the three changes outlined above, we strongly recommend that Policy 4C.3 include an additional implementation strategy: an official endorsement of the [National Association of City Transportation Officials \(NACTO\) *Urban Street Design Guide*](#) (see *attached for description*). Suggested language for this strategy:

Endorse the NACTO *Urban Street Design Guide*. The City should officially endorse the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) *Urban Street Design Guide*, which provides a clear vision for planning and implementing Complete Streets. Six states, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and nearly 40 cities around the country have endorsed the *Guide*, which, unlike the AASHTO guidebook and ConnDOT's Highway Design Manual, emphasizes urban street design as a unique practice with its own set of goals, parameters, and tools that are different from those of traditional suburban highway design.

Thank you for considering these updates to the draft master plan.

Sincerely,

Jerry Silber, Head Organizer, People Friendly Stamford