

Introduced by: Vice-Mayor Albertson  
Date: September 8, 2015  
Public Hearing: September 22, 2015  
Action: Passed  
Vote: 5-0

## *CITY OF BETHEL, ALASKA*

### **Ordinance #15-28**

#### **AN ORDINANCE BY THE BETHEL CITY COUNCIL AMENDING BETHEL MUNICIPAL CODE BY INSERTING CHAPTER 12.01, COMPLETE STREETS**

- WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel wishes to ensure that all users of our transportation system are able to travel safely and conveniently on all streets and roadways within the public right-of-way in Bethel;
- WHEREAS,** the term "Complete Streets" refers to a comprehensive, integrated transportation network planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to facilitate safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all potential users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicle operators, transit riders, and people of all ages and abilities, including children, the elderly and the disabled;
- WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel wishes to encourage walking, bicycling, and public transportation use as safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and economical modes of transportation that promote health and independence of all people;
- WHEREAS,** the 2011 Bethel Comprehensive Plan, after incorporating extensive feedback from citizens and administration, described safe pedestrian and bicycle pathways as a priority for our community;
- WHEREAS,** the concepts of "complete streets" were described as goals under sections pertaining not only to roads, but also economic development, transportation, trails and energy;
- WHEREAS,** complete streets better serve the needs of those who use transit systems by providing access to those systems;
- WHEREAS,** while roadway construction and maintenance has traditionally focused primarily on motor vehicle users, most residents of Bethel do not drive

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regularly and according to census data, 58.4% of households in Bethel do not have drivable vehicle available as compared to 10.9% statewide;

**WHEREAS,** complete streets have public health benefits, such as encouraging physical activity and improving air quality, by providing the opportunity for more people to bike and walk safely;

**WHEREAS,** complete streets improve access and safety for those who cannot or choose not to drive motor vehicles;

**WHEREAS,** complete streets are essential in providing safe routes to school for children;

**WHEREAS,** complete streets policies have been adopted legislatively by at least five states, and by at least 36 localities – of which 13 are by local law (resolutions or ordinances);

**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel currently has a limited complete streets policy;

**WHEREAS,** it is the desire of the City of Bethel to formalize a commitment to the principles of complete streets for all of our streets;

**WHEREAS,** the Public Works Committee and Planning Commission shall develop goals for the Complete Streets policy based on recognized practices including but not limited to National Complete Streets Coalition Complete Streets Policy Analysis 2010 and American Planning Association Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices;

**WHEREAS,** the City Council will provide Administration with reasonable resources to ensure the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy is effective;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED,** that the City of Bethel authorizes a change to the Bethel Municipal Code as described herein.

**SECTION 1. Classification.** This ordinance is of a general and permanent nature and shall become a part of the Bethel Municipal Code.

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**SECTION 2. Amendment.** The Bethel Municipal Code is to be amended by adding a new chapter under Title 12, Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places, Chapter 12.10, Complete Streets:

### **Section 12.10 Complete Streets**

**12.10.010 Definitions.** The following words and phrases, whenever used in this chapter, shall have the meanings defined in this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

- A. "Complete Streets" means design features that contribute to a safe, convenient, or comfortable travel experience for users, including but not limited to features such as: sidewalks; shared use paths; bicycle lanes; automobile lanes; paved or surfaced shoulders; crosswalks; pedestrian and traffic signals; signage; public transportation stops and facilities; traffic bumps, and surface treatments such as paving blocks, textured asphalt, and concrete; narrow vehicle lanes; raised medians; and dedicated transit lanes and those features identified in the City of Bethel's most recent Comprehensive Plan.
- B. "Street" means any right of way, public or private, including arterials, connectors, alleys, ways, lanes, and roadways by any other designation, as well as bridges, and any other portions of the transportation network.
- C. "Street Project" means the construction, reconstruction, retrofit, maintenance, alteration, or repair of any Street, and includes the planning, design, approval, and implementation processes, except that "Street Project" does not include minor routine upkeep such as cleaning, sweeping, mowing, spot repair.
- D. "Users" mean individuals that use Streets, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicle drivers, public transportation riders and drivers, and people of all ages and abilities, including children, youth, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

#### **12.10.020 Application**

The provisions of this chapter will apply to the scoping, design, and construction of projects involving roadways in the City of Bethel. The provisions of this chapter do not

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apply to the ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g., spot repair and surface treatments or interim measures on detour or haul routes.

#### **12.10.030 Requirements**

- A. Any roadway in the City which is to be newly constructed or completely reconstructed must be designed and constructed to:
  - 1. Provide for the safety and convenience of all users of all ages and of all abilities: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists; and
  - 2. Address the needs of all users both along roadway corridors and crossing the corridors.
- B. Any project in which an existing roadway surface is to be restored or rehabilitated, and any remediation of deficient or non-existent sidewalks, shall be reviewed for the potential of making the roadway a complete street.
  - 1. Consideration shall particularly include proportionality, the scope of work needed to make a complete street reasonable in relation to the scope of the proposed roadway construction, maintenance or improvement.
  - 2. The application of design standards will be flexible to permit context-sensitive design fitting the roadway design within the context of the neighborhood recognizing that all streets are different and user needs will be balanced.
- C. The Public Works Department will review current designs standards which apply to new roadway construction to assure that they reflect the best available design standards and guidelines, and effectively implement the Complete Streets Policy above stated.
- D. Design standards also serve as guidance for all existing roadway rehabilitation, reconstruction, or resurfacing, to the extent that the work required is reasonably proportional to the scale of the proposed rehabilitation, reconstruction, or resurfacing.

#### **12.10.040 Exceptions.**

Infrastructure improvements specifically intended for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders need not be planned nor made where the planning commission recommends and the city council approves with sufficient documentation of the reason for the exception, through resolution.

Such exceptions should generally be considered where:

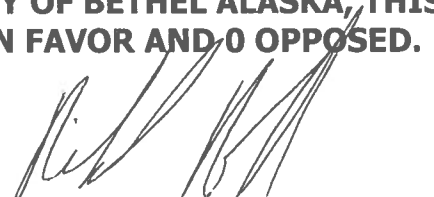
- 1. Bicycles and/or pedestrians are prohibited by law,
- 2. Transit operation is not present or likely to occur in the foreseeable future,

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3. Encouraging walking, biking, or transit use would be contrary to public health and safety,
4. The cost would be excessively disproportionate to the need or potential use,
5. The project segment length would not result in a meaningful addition to the non-motorized network,
6. ~~Ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g., spot repair and surface treatments or interim measures on detour or haul routes),~~
7. There is no identified long-term need, and/or
8. The public works project in question is due to an emergency that requires near-term action.

**SECTION 3. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days from its passage by the Bethel City Council.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BETHEL ALASKA, THIS 22nd DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2015, BY A VOTE OF 5 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.**

  
Richard Robb, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Lori Strickler, City Clerk