



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Jim Ortbal

SUBJECT: SAN JOSE COMPLETE STREETS
DESIGN GUIDELINES

DATE: January 17, 2018

Approved

Date

1/26/18

RECOMMENDATION

Accept report on San Jose's Complete Streets Design Guidelines and recommend that the City Council adopt a resolution to:

- (a) Adopt the San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines that will serve as the official street design guide to be used by staff in the design of San Jose streets for all roadway users;
- (b) Adopt Complete Streets principles, implementation methods, and exceptions as required by the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to be eligible to receive VTA 2016 Measure B funding;
- (c) Endorse the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)'s Design Guidance, which serves as a model for the City's Complete Streets Guidelines.

OUTCOME

San Jose's Envision 2040 General Plan sets goals to transform a car oriented street system to a more balanced complete street system. A complete street system and design guide focuses on the planning, design and operation of the street system in a way that supports implementation of the General Plan, and is safe, connected, and convenient for all types of users, ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. The adoption of a resolution supporting Complete Streets principles and implementation makes the City of San José eligible to receive VTA 2016 Measure B funds. Endorsing NACTO Design Guidance integrates national and international design best practices into how the City designs streets, and demonstrates support for an organization for which the City is a member and receives important benefits.

BACKGROUND

As San Jose experienced significant growth over many decades, the car became the primary transportation mode to serve the lower density neighborhoods that characterized the City. Accordingly, the design of the street system favored automobile travel to handle its demands and capacity needs in the most efficient manner possible. More recently, the City aimed to balance both its transportation network and the multi-modal use of the transportation system.

City of San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines

In 2011, the City adopted the Envision San José 2040 General Plan (General Plan), which establishes a vision of San José as a “walking and bicycling first” city. The San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines is an implementation document and tool for the General Plan. The Guidelines have been developed as a comprehensive set of street designs to guide how the City of San José builds and retrofits streets with elements that embrace all travel modes and activities appropriate for a particular transportation facility. The final draft of the San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines is attached at the end of this report. The Guidelines translate the goals in the General Plan into technical design guidelines to create streets that are safe, efficient, and convenient for all modes of travel. This includes design in accordance with the City’s Vision Zero priorities that aim to achieve the goal of eliminating traffic related deaths and severe injuries. The main design principles in the Guidelines are focused on developing streets that are people-oriented, connected, and resilient.

Resolution to Comply with VTA 2016 Measure B Complete Streets Principles

In November 2016, voters in Santa Clara County passed Measure B, a half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements and programs in Santa Clara County. In June 2017, the VTA Board approved Complete Streets Reporting Requirements for Measure B requiring every jurisdiction that receives funding from Measure B to adopt a resolution which includes Complete Streets principles listed in the policy resolution.

NACTO Design Guidance

NACTO is an organization of large city transportation officials from across the U.S. The mission of NACTO is to “build cities as places for people, with safe, sustainable, accessible and equitable transportation choices that support a strong economy and vibrant quality of life.” NACTO pursues that mission through a variety of policies, advocacy, practices and design guides. The City of San José, Department of Transportation is an active member of NACTO.

NACTO design guidance, represented through numerous published design guides, primarily recognizes that cities are places for people and shifts the parameters of designing urban streets from only considering automobile movement to emphasizing access, safety and mobility for all roadway users. The Design Guides also focus on the environmental quality, economic benefit, place making, public health and overall quality of life on urban streets. Staff has been working

with NACTO and its member cities for a number of years, and has had the benefit and experience of applying the progressive and balanced street designs that make up the content of the design guides.

ANALYSIS

San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines

Through a grant from the VTA, the City of San José initiated an effort to update its aging street design guidelines. In partnership with Fehr & Peers, a transportation consulting firm, research was initiated to identify the best practices in street design being applied throughout California and the nation. NACTO is the recognized national leader in urban street design, and has developed numerous design guides that cover streets, bikes, transit, and green facilities. Significant content from the NACTO design guides was adapted and incorporated into San Jose's Complete Streets Design Guidelines.

The San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines include the following elements and sections:

- I. Vision and Guiding Street Design Principles
- II. San Jose Street Types
- III. Elements of Complete Streets
- IV. Complete Intersections
- V. Sidewalks and Walking
- VI. Bicycle Design

The guidelines are to be used by City staff, consultants, designers, developers and staff from other agencies in the planning and design of City streets and street related projects.

The development of the new Complete Streets Design Guidelines has implications to specific City municipal code sections and other City plans, policies and guidelines. As a result, a parallel effort has been initiated to update and ensure alignment and consistency among all the related governing and guidance documents. The municipal code amendments will be minor in nature and will be specified in a recommended ordinance for City Council consideration after this initial review occurs by the Transportation and Environment Committee. In addition, work has been completed or is underway to update or create the following City design standards, manuals and guidelines to conform with these guidelines:

Underway

- San Jose Transportation Analysis Handbook
- City Crosswalk Installation Guidelines

Near Term

- San Jose Bicycle Plan

Future

- San Jose Transportation Mobility Plan
- Downtown San Jose Transportation Plan
- Urban Village Plans and Station Area Plans
- Downtown San Jose Streetscape Master Plan
- San Jose Standard Plans and Specifications

Resolution to Comply with VTA 2016 Measure B Complete Streets Principles

The November 2016 VTA Measure B is estimated to raise roughly \$6.5 billion over 30 years for transportation improvements and programs in Santa Clara County. Measure B includes two programs with formula funds to cities – Local Streets and Roads and Bicycle/Pedestrian Education Funding – as well as several competitive programs. Local Streets and Roads is projected to have an estimated allocation of approximately \$19 million annually to the City of San José to be used for local streets and roads pavement maintenance. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Education Fund is projected to bring in approximately \$500,000 annually to the City of San José for the Walk n’ Roll program and the Viva Calle open streets event. Measure B also includes a number of competitive funding programs, including Highway Interchanges and Overcrossings and Bicycle/Pedestrian Capital Projects. VTA is requiring all jurisdictions to adopt a Complete Streets Resolution with principles, implementation requirements and exception directives before any Measure B funding becomes eligible for disbursement.

The Complete Streets Resolution principles and implementation requirements are in alignment with the goals and strategies in the General Plan (Chapter 1, Major Strategy #6 – Streetscapes for People; Chapter 5 – Transportation Network Designations; and Chapter 6 – Transportation Policies). Current city policies and practices are consistent with, and generally meet or exceed, the principles and implementation requirements of the Complete Streets Resolution.

Endorsement of NACTO’s Design Guidance

The overarching goals of the NACTO Design Guides are to focus on improving safety for all users of the roadway, and to build cities for people and not for the priority of cars. These same overarching goals are central to the City’s General Plan and Vision Zero Strategy. Only through the type of design articulated in the NACTO Design Guides and the San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines, and ultimately its implementation across the City, can we expect to ultimately achieve Vision Zero, the elimination of all fatalities and severe injuries on City streets as a result of transportation related crashes.

NACTO has developed a variety of design guides to cover the range of urban, street and travel mode elements of city street and transportation systems, including the following:

- Urban Street Design Guide
- Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- Transit Street Design Guide

- Global Street Design Guide
- Urban Street Stormwater Guide
- Bike Share Station Siting Guide
- Blueprint for Autonomous Urbanism

The Guides can be found at <https://nacto.org/publications/design-guides/>.

COORDINATION

The San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines have been developed in coordination with the Departments of Public Works, Planning Building and Code Enforcement, Environmental Services, and the Fire Department. The Design Guidelines were also reviewed by the VTA. The memorandum and resolution were coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

CONCLUSION

The San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines is an ambitious, yet essential step forward towards realizing the goals in the City's Envision 2040 General Plan, Vision Zero Strategy, and in creating a city and street system to better serve the people of San Jose. Given it is ambitious and in many respects transformative, realization will be accomplished incrementally as streets are improved through private development activities or through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) of the City. The Department of Transportation has proactively been applying and implementing complete street designs and projects in alignment with the new Guidelines and NACTO's guidance for a number of years through a variety of capital and grant projects, private development activities and the growing pavement maintenance program, including the protected, buffered and green bike treatments emerging across the City.

Staff will present additional information and material at the February 5, 2018 T&E Committee to illustrate the essential elements of the San José Complete Streets Guidelines. Staff recommends that the Committee accept the report and support the recommendations for full City Council consideration and support.

/s/
JIM ORTBAL
Director of Transportation

For questions, contact Zahi Khattab, Principal Engineer, at (408) 975-3252.

Attachment: San José Complete Streets Design Guidelines