

What is Complete Streets?

Complete Streets is a policy and design approach by which streets are designed to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel to users of all ages and abilities regardless of mode, be it walking, bicycling, or driving. Various safety, traffic calming, health, economic, environmental, and policy benefits have been attributed to Complete Streets policy across the United States and Canada.

Will the Town implement Complete Streets on any other streets?

It is the intent of the Town of Tonawanda Complete Streets Committee to implement Complete Streets on other strategic streets within the Town. It is expected that this project will serve as a model for future Complete Streets projects throughout the Town.

What is the Complete Streets Committee?

The Town of Tonawanda Complete Streets Committee includes 20 members. More information on the Committee can be found at <http://www.tonawanda.ny.us/departments/planning-development/plans/complete-streets>.

How is the project funded?

The Town of Tonawanda intends to pursue a combination of Federal and State funding sources such as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), among others.

There is a bike path two blocks away. Why add bike lanes to Parker Boulevard?

The goal of this project is to serve as a pilot project for future Complete Streets improvements in the Town of Tonawanda. The existing Rails-to-Trails provides an excellent bicycle corridor but does not serve users who must navigate roads to reach residences, businesses, parks and other points of interest. The goal of the town-wide Complete Streets initiative is to provide a lateral network of bicycle-friendly corridors throughout the Town to provide safe and convenient access to such locations.

Parker Boulevard was identified as an ideal location to pilot a Complete Streets project based in part on its proximity to the bike path and several major points of interest.

Will this project widen the street?

Nearly all work proposed under this project will occur within the footprint of the existing curbs. Exceptions to this include grading around the roundabout at Decatur Road and earthwork

impacts required to remove the existing concrete steps along the sidewalks just west of Parker Boulevard at Harrison Avenue.

How wide are the bike lanes?

The bike lanes will be 6 feet wide. This is a widely recommended bike lane width.

What happens to the bike lanes at either end of the project?

At the Englewood Avenue end of the project, the bike lanes will terminate at the intersection. Bicycle traffic on Englewood Avenue currently shares the lanes with motor vehicles.

At the Sheridan Drive end of the project, the bike lanes will transition to shared vehicular lanes between Woodland Drive and Sheridan Drive. Bicycle traffic Parker Boulevard north of Sheridan Drive will share the lanes with motor vehicles.

Will the speed limit be changed?

The speed limit on Parker Boulevard will remain at 30 miles per hour after project completion. Advisory speed limits of 15 miles per hour will be posted at the mini-roundabouts.

What about police enforcement of speed?

Motorists tend to travel at the perceived maximum safe speed of any given roadway. The wide, straight and flat nature of Parker Boulevard thus leads to a higher perceived safe speed. This has the effect of making the speed limit significantly more difficult to enforce.

By reducing the width of roadway available to vehicles, drivers will be encouraged to drive more attentively. Slower speeds will seem more natural to motorists. The reduced available width will also discourage risky maneuvers such as passing slower vehicles.

How will snow plowing be affected by the project?

Winter maintenance will be unaffected by the project. Snow plow drivers are able to and will adapt to the changes made by the project.

Why replace the traffic light at Decatur Road?

The existing traffic light has served well beyond its intended life span and is no longer justified. The vehicle detection no longer functions properly, resulting in unnecessary vehicle stops and

driver frustration. Such unnecessary stops often lead to motorist speeding further down the road as they attempt to “make up” the lost time.

Additionally, due to the traffic light no longer being warranted at this location, construction of a replacement traffic signal would have to come directly from Town funds as the it would be incompatible with the funding sources being sought to cover construction costs.

Why roundabouts?

Modern roundabouts offer significant capacity and safety improvements over traditional intersection control practices such as traffic lights and stop signs. In addition, they provide numerous safety benefits to pedestrians and other roadway users in the form of reduced vehicle speeds and shorter crossing distances. There exists some debate as to the level of benefit to certain segments of the population, such as aged or blind persons, but the benefits to the population as a whole vastly outweigh those of traditional intersections.

What is a mini-roundabout?

A mini-roundabout is a relatively recent development in modern roundabout design. Whereas a roundabout will often feature a non-traversable center island, the center island of a mini-roundabout is intended to be fully traversable to allow the intersection to continue to accommodate any vehicle that the traditional intersection layout could handle.

Mini-roundabouts are well-suited as replacements for traffic signals and four-way stops in developed areas where it is desired to avoid the right-of-way acquisition and earthwork impacts which would be required to construct a full-sized roundabout.

What is the cost difference between a traffic signal and a roundabout?

A new traffic signal will typically costs between \$150-200,000 to install, with an additional \$10-15,000 per year in operating and maintenance expenses. The roundabouts proposed as part of this project are expected to cost \$250,000 (at Decatur Road) and \$85,000 (at Harrison Avenue) to construct, with no special future operating and maintenance costs.

How will pedestrians get across Parker Boulevard at Lincoln Park?

There will be three crosswalks across Parker Boulevard between Decatur Road and Darlington Drive. These three crosswalks will be substantially better delineated than the two existing crosswalks they will replace.

The existing crosswalk on the north side of Decatur will be shifted north to comply with the typical location of a crosswalk on approach to a roundabout. This will better align the crosswalk with the wide sidewalk presenting existing in front of the pool and arena. This crosswalk will be raised and consist of two 13-foot crossings with a 6-foot wide pedestrian refuge island in the middle. As is standard with roundabout crossings, pedestrians will be very visible to approaching motorists and will face substantially shorter crossings against one direction of traffic at a time. The presence of the roundabout island geometry and lower speeds will all but eliminate the risk of red light running pedestrian conflicts that currently exists at this location. A Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon ("RRFB") is also proposed for this crossing.

A new mid-block crosswalk will be placed just north of the DFK Pavilion parking lot under this year's Loop Trail. This crosswalk will be upgraded to a raised crosswalk under the Complete Streets project. A RRFB will also be placed under the Loop Trail project. It is expected that the addition of this crosswalk will substantially reduce the occurrence of pedestrians attempting crossings at random locations along this block.

Finally, the existing crosswalk on the south side of Darlington Drive will be replaced with a curb extension on the west side of Parker Boulevard and new ADA-compliant curb ramps on the east side. The curb extension will improve the visibility of pedestrians intending to cross to approaching motorists as well as shorten the total crossing distance.