

1 Sponsored by: Councilmembers Stan Flemming, Connie Ladenburg, and Rick Talbert
2 Requested by: Executive/Public Works and Utilities - Transportation Services

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8 **ORDINANCE NO. 2014-44s**

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12 **An Ordinance of the Pierce County Council Endorsing the Concept of**
13 **Complete Streets, Which Promotes Roadways that are Safe and**
14 **Convenient for all Modes of Travel; and Identifying**
15 **Circumstances for Exceptions to Complete Streets**
16 **Construction.**

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18 **Whereas**, the Complete Streets concept promotes streets that are safe and
19 convenient for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motor
20 vehicle drivers of all ages and abilities; and

21
22 **Whereas**, streets constitute a large portion of the public space and should be
23 corridors for all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit;
24 and

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26 **Whereas**, streets that support and invite multiple uses, including safe, active,
27 and ample space for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit, are more conducive to the public
28 life and efficient movement of people than streets designed primarily to move
29 automobiles and trucks; and

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31 **Whereas**, Pierce County currently has a number of land use and transportation
32 policies, plans, programs and regulatory requirements that focus on various
33 components of the transportation system including congestion management, multimodal
34 coordination, non-motorized improvements, access control, street trees, street lighting,
35 traffic calming, and transit services; and

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37 **Whereas**, trends in energy and transportation costs, air quality and public health
38 necessitate a more comprehensive approach to mobility within communities that offer a
39 greater variety of mobility choices and which is not strictly automobile based; and
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1 **Whereas**, many of the existing roadways where Pierce County residents walk
2 and bicycle are incomplete and lack sidewalks or crosswalks, have lanes too narrow to
3 share with bicyclists, and make no accommodation for transit riders or for people with
4 disabilities; and

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6 **Whereas**, recent trends indicate that Pierce County will experience increased
7 traffic congestion and travel times as the population increases and the number of
8 commuters to employment centers within the County increases; and

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10 **Whereas**, there are practical limits to the expansion of roadways in response to
11 traffic congestion; and

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13 **Whereas**, promoting pedestrian, bicycle and transit travel as an alternative to the
14 automobile reduces negative environmental impacts, promotes healthy living and is less
15 costly to the commuter; and

16
17 **Whereas**, the development of a more complete transportation network or
18 Complete Streets can improve pedestrian safety, increase the capacity of the
19 transportation network and promote improvements in public health; and

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21 **Whereas**, the Federal Highway Administration has confirmed that designing the
22 street with pedestrians in mind significantly reduces pedestrian risk. About one-third of
23 Americans do not drive, including low-income Americans who cannot afford cars, and
24 an increasing number of older adults. Whether they walk or bicycle directly to their
25 destinations or to public transportation, these individuals require safe access to get to
26 work, school, shops and medical visits, and to take part in social, civic and volunteer
27 activities. In 2006, nearly one quarter of pedestrian fatalities were children (8 percent)
28 and older adults (15 percent); and

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30 **Whereas**, studies have found that providing more travel options, including public
31 transportation, bicycling and walking facilities, is an important element in reducing
32 congestion. Many studies show that when roads are better designed for bicycling,
33 walking, and taking transit, more people do so; and



1 **Whereas**, the construction of Complete Streets can be an essential component
2 in reducing automobile trips as evidenced by the 2001 National Household
3 Transportation Survey which revealed that 50 percent of all trips in metropolitan areas
4 are three miles or less and 28 percent are one mile or less--distances easily traversed
5 by foot or bicycle. Yet, 65 percent of trips under one mile are now made by automobile,
6 in part because of incomplete streets that make it dangerous or unpleasant to walk,
7 bicycle, or take transit; and

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9 **Whereas**, a 2007 Washington State Department of Transportation survey found
10 that a lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes,
11 is a primary reason why Washington residents do not walk or bicycle more frequently;
12 and

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14 **Whereas**, the United States Congress and the National Association of Local
15 Boards of Health specifically recommend Complete Streets policies as a strategy to
16 increase pedestrian and bicycle travel modes; and

17
18 **Whereas**, other jurisdictions and agencies nationwide have adopted Complete
19 Streets legislation, including the United States Department of Transportation, numerous
20 state transportation agencies, and cities such as San Francisco, Sacramento, San
21 Diego, Boulder, Chicago, Seattle, Kirkland, Redmond, and Portland; and

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23 **Whereas**, the Complete Streets concept is supported by the Institute of Traffic
24 Engineers, American Planning Association, United States Centers for Disease Control
25 and Prevention, American Public Health Association, and many other transportation,
26 planning, and public health professionals; and

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28 **Whereas**, on August 26, 2008, the Pierce County Council adopted Resolution
29 No. R2008-89s, which expressed support for the Complete Streets concept and
30 requested that a Complete Streets policy be included as a component of the
31 Transportation Plan Update; and

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33 **Whereas**, the 2015 update to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan will
34 contain policies supporting Complete Streets; and

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36 **Whereas**, the Washington State Legislature adopted a Complete Streets Grant
37 Program in 2011, codified in Section 47.04.320 of the Revised Code of Washington;
38 and



1 **Whereas**, funding from the Washington State Complete Streets Grant Program
2 will only be available to jurisdictions that have adopted a Complete Streets Ordinance;
3 and
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5 **Whereas**, Sections 4-5, 4-7, and 4-11 of the "Manual on Design Guidelines and
6 Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction in Pierce County" contain requirements
7 of the County for providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and bus turnouts; and
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9 **Whereas**, the Pierce County "Standard Drawings" contains design standards for
10 sidewalks, walkways, and paved shoulders; and
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12 **Whereas**, Titles 17B, "Construction and Infrastructure Regulations - Road and
13 Bridge Design and Construction Standards," and 18J, "Development Regulations -
14 Design Standards and Guidelines," of the Pierce County Code contain requirements of
15 private developers for providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and bus turnouts on
16 both public and private roads; **Now Therefore**,

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18 **BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of Pierce County:**
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20 Section 1. Pierce County endorses the concept of Complete Streets, which
21 promotes roadways that are safe and convenient for those of all ages and abilities,
22 including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motor vehicle drivers. Pierce County
23 strives to provide and require the implementation of facilities for all users on newly
24 constructed or reconstructed roads. The County Engineer may, in his or her sole
25 discretion, determine that there are exceptions to the provision of these facilities.
26 Among the conditions that may preclude the construction of such facilities are the
27 following:
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- 29 a. Their establishment would be contrary to public safety; or
30 b. Their construction is not practically feasible because of significant adverse
31 environmental impacts to streams, wetlands, steep slopes, or other critical
32 areas; or
33 c. Their construction is not practically feasible because of significant adverse
34 impacts on neighboring land uses, including impacts from right-of-way
35 acquisition; or
36 d. There is no identified need for the improvement; or
37 e. In instances where a documented exception is granted by the County
38 Engineer.
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1 Where these facilities are omitted from a roadway project, the County should
2 consider whether bicyclists and pedestrians can be accommodated by nearby facilities.
3 Aside from new and reconstructed roadways, the County shall consider other measures
4 that can benefit bicyclists and pedestrians, such as standalone shoulder paving
5 projects. Pierce County strives to provide complete street connections to similarly
6 designed roadways of the Washington State Department of Transportation and local
7 Cities and Towns.

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9 PASSED this 5th day of August, 2014.

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11 ATTEST:

12 **PIERCE COUNTY COUNCIL**
13 Pierce County, Washington

14 Denise D. Johnson

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16 **Denise D. Johnson**
17 Clerk of the Council

18 A. Hemmoff
19 **Dan Roach** *Vice Chair*
20 Council Chair

21 Pat McCarthy
22 **Pat McCarthy**
23 Pierce County Executive
24 Approved Vetoed , this
25 19 day of August, 2014.

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27 Date of Publication of
28 Notice of Public Hearing: July 16, 2014

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30 Effective Date of Ordinance: August 29, 2014

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