

Diane Nichols Tradd  
*Assistant City Manager/DPD Director*

Kevin E. Coughlin  
*Deputy Director*

February 23, 2017

John Robert Smith, Senior Policy Advisor  
Smart Growth America  
1707 L St. NW, Suite 250  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Smith,

Attached please find the one month Complete Streets follow up memo from the City of Lowell per our MOU with Smart Growth America. We found the Complete Streets implementation technical assistance workshop to be very helpful for us as we continue working towards introducing more Complete Streets concepts into our infrastructure.

We look forward to providing you another update in six months and hope there will be more exciting project updates to share.

Sincerely,



Diane N. Tradd  
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

## ATTACHMENT

### City of Lowell One Month Follow Up Memo

In December the City of Lowell received an EPA funded technical assistance workshop from Smart Growth America about Complete Streets implementation. The two workshop presenters Emiko Atherton, of Smart Growth America and Mike Jelen from VHB provided a follow up memo to the City of Lowell in January with next step suggestions for the city to consider. Per the memorandum of understanding signed by the City of Lowell and Smart Growth, Lowell is required to provide three follow up memos, this is the first memo of the series.

Since the workshop in December the city has continued working on Complete Streets implementation. After the next steps memo arrived planning department staff reviewed the memo and met to discuss ways we could implement some of the suggested strategies.

Below is a summary of ongoing Complete Streets related work staff is undertaking:

- The city has a Complete Streets Committee (CSC) comprised of staff from Planning, Engineering and MIS, participants include: City Engineer, Traffic Engineer, Senior Planner, Neighborhood Planner, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, and GIS Manager.
- The city's existing project review process now includes comments from the Bicycle and Pedestrian coordinator in reports to Planning and Zoning Board.
- The CSC created the City of Lowell's first Complete Streets implementation plan. Projects were discussed and ultimately ranked by priority based on:
  1. Complete Streets needs: safety, ADA accessibility, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, and operations and access for transit, vehicles and freight
  2. Complete Streets project type: traffic and safety, bicycle facilities, transit facilities and pedestrian facilities
  3. Project origin: projects presented in planning documents such as the city's master plan, capital improvement plan, capital needs assessment, bicycle and pedestrian audit
  4. Other city priorities including: impact on environmental justice populations, connection to existing infrastructure, coordination with new or planned roadway and infrastructure projects
- The CSC created online tools to help give the public details about the current Complete Streets priority projects. These online tools will be updated as we complete projects and add new priorities to our plans.
  1. Complete Streets Prioritization Plan:  
<http://lowell.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=1da2fcea8a5f4ec7bd8e51ed44f1aea2>
  2. Lowell Complete Streets Map Tour:  
<http://lowell.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/index.html?appid=e3d81165a148430aa24b19b457f8ed84>
- Traffic Engineer Nicolás Bosonetto made a Complete Streets presentation to the City Council's Transportation Subcommittee. The presentation updated the council members about the city's ongoing Complete Streets work and current prioritization plan. The subcommittee reported back to the full council regarding the ongoing Complete Streets work in the city.

The City of Lowell has two major infrastructure projects on the prioritization plan that are in the design phase with funding secured: the Lord Overpass Project and the South Common Shared Use Path project.

**Lord Overpass Project:**

The Lord Overpass, originally constructed in 1959 is a grade separated interchange comprised of four closely spaced, signalized intersections and a counter clockwise circulation pattern. The current layout of the Overpass does not meet the current city needs. Traffic back up at the four signalized intersections creates lengthy backs up as vehicles queue in between the short distances between lights. Although sidewalks do exist the traffic patterns make pedestrian crossings very unsafe. Below the elevated overpass is a four lane road with no sidewalk accessibility. The plans to improve the Overpass include the infill of the elevated overpass creating a boulevard along Thorndike Street and the creation of exclusive bus lanes and bike lanes. The pedestrian experience will be significantly improved with better sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic islands and a more clearly organized flow of vehicular traffic. The Lord Overpass improvements will significantly improve connections along Thorndike Street from the highway and the city's multi-modal transportation center the Gallagher Terminal to the city's center. Funding for this project has been secured from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), design work for this project is currently underway and construction is expected to begin in the summer of 2018.

**South Common Shared Use Path:**

The South Common Project is being done as part of the overall South Common Master Plan and will dovetail with the new multi-modal improvements being done as part of the Lord Overpass reconstruction project. Project managers are anticipate beginning construction in the spring of 2017. The Complete Streets component of this project includes the creation of two multi use paths which will create east/west and north/south paths through the park. In addition to the \$400,000 of Complete Streets related work, the total project budget is over 1 million dollars and will include multi-lane use paths, new lighting, improved parking lot area, landscaping and drainage improvements. The shared use path will connect the Gallagher Multi-Modal Bus/Train Terminal, the Rogers School STEM Academy, and the Markham Village low-income apartments. Additional multi use trail paths will run parallel to Thorndike Street from the Highland Street intersection to the Gallagher Terminal intersection and one between the school and the tennis courts.

**Next steps:**

City Planning staff will continue to research funding opportunities to support the implementation of additional Complete Streets projects. In addition, staff will continue outreach to local neighborhood groups to gather input and feedback about potential complete streets projects. The City's Traffic Engineer will make presentations to the city's Conservation Commission and Zoning and Planning Boards to better inform members about our complete streets policy and encourage their reviews take into consideration complete streets practices.