

# **Traffic Council Policy 3: Prioritization of On-Street Parking and Bicycle lanes**

**Date Adopted: October 25, 2012**

**Date Revised: January 1, 2016**

As defined by City ordinance, it is the purpose of the Traffic Council to take action on requests for site-specific changes to parking and traffic regulations. The Traffic Council aims to be fair and consistent in its decisions when similar situations present themselves and, over time, its actions have evolved into some implicit policies. Members of Traffic Council hope that this information offers guidance to the public, City Councilors, and staff as it affects projects or proposals they may consider.

## **BACKGROUND**

The *Newton Comprehensive Plan*, adopted by the City Council (former Board of Aldermen) on November 19, 2007, called for reducing reliance on auto driving and supporting a full range of travel modes, including walking, cycling, carpooling and taking transit. The Plan specified that “bicycles are considered an integral part of the transportation mode mix, and the design of the streets and sidewalks includes appropriate facilities for them.”

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), in their *Transportation Advisory Committee Recommendations to Mayor Setti D. Warren November 17, 2011*, subsequently endorsed by the Mayor, calls for the City to adopt a Complete Streets Policy, where all users, not just motorists, must be taken into consideration in the design and redesign of our street network. The TAC recommended that the Department of Public Works, Traffic Council, and City Council support a greatly expanded bicycle infrastructure, with at least 20 miles of bicycle lanes or other specific roadway accommodations to be implemented by 2015. The policy statement, shown below, is intended to act as a reference in those cases where street width does not allow both parking and bicycle lanes.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The City of Newton is committed to a Complete Streets Policy, with the goal of improving safety for and addressing the needs of all users. Motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and abutters shall be taken into consideration in the design and redesign of our street network. The City of Newton is also committed to building a bicycle network. Therefore, when considering the removal of on-street parking to construct bicycle lanes, Traffic Council members shall consider factors such as the Newton Bicycle Network Plan, connectivity between key destinations, parking demand and alternative parking locations, in addition to street widths, volume, safety and other concerns. Each member of Traffic Council shall determine his or her final vote only after careful consideration of the aforementioned Citywide goals and all relevant and site-specific information provided by residents, elected officials and other interested parties.