

Any changes or alteration in the draft healthy streets policy for Streets for people challenge can be mailed to gangtoksmartcity@gmail.com 12 pm before 12.10.2022

**DRAFT HEALTHY STREETS
POLICY-
*GANGTOK***

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Message from the Chief Executive Officer, Gangtok Smart City

Dear friends,

Transport systems influence a major part of our everyday lives. In Gangtok, most journeys take place by foot, cycle, or public transport, through our network of streets. It is our duty to make these streets healthy for the well-being of our citizens, to empower local businesses, and for the safety, liveability, and resilience of the city.

Gangtok has embarked on multiple initiatives in the past to provide a safe, efficient, and inclusive transport system.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted the need for better streets and transport systems which will benefit all users, especially the most vulnerable. Gangtok has responded to the pandemic by transforming streets for walking and cycling through pilot initiatives. However, there are many measures still required to inspire and ensure widespread change. By creating Healthy Streets, Gangtok envisions a city that is liveable, resilient, and one that is created by the people, for the people.

The Healthy Streets Policy is a guiding vision that will enable Gangtok to carry out strategic changes to make our streets and cities better for everyone. In the coming years, Gangtok will lead the way for different government departments and citizens to work together towards a cleaner, greener, and safer transport environment.

Through the Healthy Streets Vision, the city will prioritise walking and public transport to enable all citizens to access work, education, and nearby amenities easily, safely, and affordably. In this process, Gangtok will ensure that no one gets left behind. Vulnerable users will be placed at the core of all initiatives, through barrier-free transport and a 'Vision Zero' philosophy, to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries. Through education, campaigns, and enforcement, we will make all citizens aware of the role they need to play in fostering this vision. The city will integrate Healthy Streets Goals into existing initiatives and introduce ambitious and well-planned projects for the future.

As the world heads into a period marked by rapid urbanisation and extreme climate events, the Healthy Streets Policy is a bold, unified plan for the future. This vision will only be possible with participation from local communities and diverse stakeholders. We thank you for your support in this journey. I am confident that together, we will use this opportunity to make Healthy Streets in Gangtok a reality.

CEO, Gangtok Smart City

Healthy Streets Pledge

Gangtok pledges to create streets that are safe, attractive, and comfortable for everyone in the city. The Healthy Streets Policy formalises this commitment by laying out the fundamental strategies needed to transform the city's streets.

On behalf of Gangtok, we commit to work in harmony with all the relevant departments and with the citizens to embed the principles of Healthy Streets into the city's transport system and take necessary action to achieve the goals.

Preface

Streets are the lifeline of a city, moving diverse groups of people through different modes of transport everyday. The streets in the city also act as important public spaces providing different social, economic, and recreational opportunities for our people, including children, the disabled, and elderly.

But recently, the city's streets have been reduced to a more restricted role of serving as conduits for the movement of automobiles. This has made Gangtok streets less desirable to walk, cycle, or take public transport, thereby making driving often the most comfortable choice. The people of Gangtok also face adverse consequences of private motor vehicles (PMV) which impact their health, well-being, and safety. There is an urgent need to look at streets as places where people walk, talk, cycle, shop, and perform the multitude of social functions that are critical to the health of cities.

In recent years, Gangtok has taken various initiatives to promote more sustainable mobility modes such as walking, cycling, and public transport. For a city like Gangtok, walking is fundamental to urban life. The transportation of essential commodities, access to health care, access to education and in fact access to the world and the last mile connectivity is by footpaths. Besides footpaths have a low carbon footprint and promotes health benefits too. One of the Proposal comprises improvement of existing footpath from Vajra Hall to Ranipool(Approx 12 km Existing obstructions shall be relocated to sides to create a free flow of pedestrian. Rectification, addition and replacement of railings and replacement of cement pavers have been ongoing along with tactile tiles for visually impaired. The project is on implementation phase.

What is the vision?

Gangtok's vision for the future is to transform its streets into 'Healthy Streets' which are designed for the people – where everyone can move around with ease. A city which is well-connected, where people prefer to walk, cycle, and use public transport over cars. It is a city with pleasant streets and vibrant public spaces where citizens can linger, socialise, and visit local businesses.

How will Healthy Streets benefit the city?

The Healthy Streets approach which places safety, vibrancy, and comfort at the core of its interventions can have multiple benefits for the city and its citizens. In New York, pedestrian-friendly streets have resulted in a 26% reduction in injury from crashes, 16% decrease in speeding, and has also fostered neighbourhood interaction.¹ Pedestrianisation can also lead

¹ [Child in the City](#)

to reduction in crime rates. In Mexico City, pedestrianisation of the city centre led to a reduction in 96% of violent crime.²

Walking and cycling improvements also benefit the environment by reducing traffic congestion and noise pollution, and lowering carbon emissions from motor vehicles. This can be seen in Paris, where the city went car free for a day in September 2015 and exhaust emissions were reduced by 40%.³ There are economic benefits as well. A *Transport for London* report shows that improving streets for walking and cycling can boost retail sales by up to a staggering 30% by increasing the opportunity to interact with local businesses.⁴

What is the Healthy Streets Policy?

The Healthy Streets Policy sets out the vision, goals, and the steps required to transform Gangtok's streets into safe, attractive, and comfortable spaces. It lays out different initiatives that citizens can expect from the city in the coming years to achieve this vision. The policy heralds a change in the city's focus by committing to a long-term strategy to transform its streets in collaboration with its citizens.

The Healthy Streets Policy is centered around three key principles -

- **Equity** - To include all groups of people, especially the vulnerable and the marginalised.
- **Sustainability** - To meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations.
- **Quality of Life** - To promote dignity and improve the quality of life for everyone.

Healthy Streets are streets where...

1. Every citizen gets a fair share of road space

To provide every citizen a fair share of limited road space, Gangtok will prioritise space-efficient modes like walking and public transport and discourage modes that occupy more space per person, such as cars.

2. Everyone breathes clean air

Gangtok will prioritise zero emission modes like walking and cycling, shared modes like public transport that emit less per capita, and low emission modes that employ clean vehicle technology.

² [Rapid Transition Alliance](#)

³ [Rapid Transition Alliance](#)

⁴ [TARSAP Report - Harrow Street Spaces - Appx C - August 20](#)

3. No lives are lost

Gangtok will encourage safe driving and design streets to reduce conflict between motor vehicles and vulnerable road users like pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists by mitigating speed and accounting for human error.

4. Walking and cycling are attractive

Gangtok will create a network of safe, shaded, and clean walking and cycling spaces that connect all parts of the city.

5. Public transport is easily accessible

Gangtok will ensure that public transport services are within easy reach and interconnected by walking and cycling facilities, and that public transport stops provide safe shelter for all, at all times.

6. Everyone moves around the city seamlessly

Gangtok will remove hindrances to the movement of vulnerable and disabled citizens to facilitate their independent mobility.

7. Women, children, and the elderly feel safe at all times

Gangtok will eliminate opportunities for crime on its streets—especially against women, children, and the elderly—through better design and activity management.

8. People enjoy street life

Gangtok will design streets as vibrant public spaces that invite everyone including women, children and elderly to spend more time outdoors and socialise, thus improving the mental and physical well-being of citizens.

9. Local businesses flourish

Gangtok will enhance livelihoods by integrating street vending and local retail businesses in the street design.

10. The design adapts to climatic changes

CITY NAME will use materials and designs that enhance the life of infrastructure, ease maintenance, and are responsive to the environment.

Approach

Gangtok commits to the following approach to achieve 'Healthy Streets'-

By the people, for the people

Gangtok can only deliver on its mission of Healthy Streets with citizens' support, feedback, and participation. The city will inform and engage citizens from all walks of life—of different incomes, genders, ages, and abilities—throughout the process of planning, designing, testing, and implementation.

Test-Learn-Scale

Before finalising designs and making substantial investments, Gangtok will first test the design through low-cost and temporary means, learn from them to refine the design, and finally make it permanent and scale it up across the city.

Data-driven decision-making

Gangtok will gather and share relevant data on the performance of infrastructure and services to government agencies, policy makers, and citizens, for data-driven decision-making on initiatives, investments, research, and communication strategy.

Key Steps to achieve Healthy Streets

Gangtok commits to take the following steps to achieve Healthy Streets. These steps will help to make walking, cycling, and public transport attractive across the city.

Foundation - Gangtok will create the following that form the basis for subsequent actions and communication.

a. Institution and processes

- Establish the Healthy Streets Apex Committee: Its role is to set goals to implement this Policy, envision Healthy Streets initiatives and monitor their implementation, and ensure coordination between relevant public agencies*.
- Establish the Healthy Streets Department: Its role is to engage with various stakeholders, develop Healthy Streets initiatives, and implement them to meet policy goals*.
- Set up the Healthy Streets data centre for data-driven decision making, future investments, research, and communications*.

b. Policies and guidelines

- Adopt Healthy Streets guidelines and standards for planning, design, and implementation of Healthy Street initiatives that achieve the goals of this Policy .
- Adopt other policies that complement the Healthy Streets policy such as parking and road pricing policy for better road space demand management⁵ to ensure every road user gets a fair share of road space, road safety policy to ensure no lives are lost due to road crashes, and street vending policy that enhances livelihood without obstructing the right of others to street space*.
- Embed the Healthy streets network plan and guidelines in the city master plan (development plan) to achieve statutory backing and to inform future initiatives.

c. Capacity development

- Train municipal staff and other relevant stakeholders on various aspects of Healthy Streets such as planning, design, implementation, management, communications, and community engagement.

⁵ Policy that aims to manage existing parking, instead of creating more parking. The policy will manage the parking demand through limited parking supply and market-based pricing.

Action - The city will create the following to develop and implement Healthy Streets initiatives -

- a. Plan and budget
 - Create a city-wide Healthy streets network plan to ensure citizens have access to safe, attractive, seamless, and enjoyable streets across the city*.
 - Create a city-wide parking management plan for better road space management and ensure all road users have a fair share of road space.
 - Create annual budget plans for Healthy Streets.
- b. Implementation
 - Hire competent designers for the design of Healthy Streets and contractors that can deliver high-quality implementation.
 - Develop a work-zone management plan to ensure all road users can use streets safely and conveniently during implementation*.
 - Conduct reviews and audits to identify and rectify gaps in a timely manner during the design and implementation of Healthy Streets initiatives.
- c. Monitoring and evaluation
 - Develop monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the effectiveness of Healthy Streets initiatives with respect to the Healthy Streets goals.

Communication - The city will do the following to build support for Healthy Streets amongst the citizens -

- a. Information
 - Provide information on way-finding, bus routes, real-time location of bus, expected travel time and others to make walking, cycling, and public transport attractive and reliable*.
 - Inform citizens on various Healthy Streets initiatives.
- b. Participation
 - Create a community engagement strategy to involve citizens in the Healthy Streets initiatives for collaborative decision-making, understand citizens' perception, and increase awareness*.
- c. Inspiration
 - Launch Healthy Streets Campaign through open streets events, street design competitions, cycling and walking tours, and cycle training among others to build support among citizens.

Next Steps

Gangtok will work towards creating a detailed action plan to achieve the above steps. The action plan will include details on targets, intermediate steps, timelines, and the responsible agencies/departments.