

Complete Streets for Spokane

~ What It Means To Business ~



Complete streets are designed to enable safe and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, freight, transit vehicles and people of all ages and abilities.

Complete streets can also improve retail and commercial development and overall economic development.

If you believe we should plan for streets in our community that serve all users - cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users as well as drivers of cars and trucks - consider supporting a complete streets policy.

A complete streets policy would direct planners and engineers to consistently design roadways with all users in mind. This means pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit vehicles would be considered just as important as motorists. Complete streets also help provide safe access for people who use wheelchairs, have vision impairments, and for older people and children.



Incomplete streets, or ones that aren't built for all users, have the potential to restrict economic development. Complete streets can help build viable communities by creating infrastructure for non-motorized transportation. A network of complete streets is safe and appealing to residents and visitors, which is good for retail and commercial development.

As an example, lowering automobile speeds by changing road conditions has been shown in some instances to improve economic conditions for both business owners and residents. This can be done by narrowing traffic lanes to slow down cars and accommodate other users, such as by adding bike lanes or wider sidewalks. This can increase foot traffic to businesses.

Often, potential shoppers are left with no choice but to drive to access the businesses they frequent, in which case they sometimes opt to stay home. This is particularly true for seniors. According to the National Complete Streets Coalition website (www.completestreets.org), half of all non-drivers age 65 and over - **3.6 million Americans** - stay home on any given day because they lack transportation.

Even when given the option to walk, bicycle or use public transportation to reach businesses and services, many still choose to stay home because of a lack of convenient and safe bus stops, sidewalks, and crosswalks.

The economy cannot reach its maximum potential when buyers are unable to reach retail destinations

Complete streets also boost the economy by increasing property values, including residential properties, as generally homeowners are willing to pay more to live in walkable communities.

Features That May Be Needed:

- Crosswalks
- Sidewalks
- Lighting
- Median islands
- Pedestrian signals
- Street trees
- Bike facilities
- Traffic calming measures
- Dedicated bus lanes
- Transit stop enhancements
- Well-placed crossing opportunities
- Congestion relief
- Separated sidewalks

BENEFITS OF COMPLETE STREETS FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES:

Complete streets can change travel patterns. Studies comparing neighborhood types find that residents of highly-walkable areas report approximately two times more walking trips per week than those in less walkable neighborhoods. Increasing the share of walking is likely to put people at eye level with local retailers' windows and products, meaning an increase in support for local and small businesses.

Complete streets can affect the workforce. Businesses involved in the 'Commuter Trip Reduction' program in Spokane County have reported a significant increase in alternative modes of transportation. So far in 2010, participants report a reduction of 2,623,950 miles driven alone in private vehicles. Those participants found alternative ways to get to work, including taking the bus, walking, and bicycling.

Complete streets make economic sense. Without a complete streets policy, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation accommodations are often considered late in the design process. Adding these features after construction is complete is often more costly than including them during construction.

WHAT COMPLETE STREETS MEANS TO YOU:

Q. Will every street be provided with every element under a complete streets policy?

A. No. *Many streets, such as rural roads and some city streets, don't need items like sidewalks or bike facilities. All streets should be evaluated to determine the specific needs of users.*

Q. How will streets be evaluated to determine if they are meeting the needs of users?

A. *Either regional criteria will be developed or jurisdictions may be responsible for developing their own criteria. The intention is to use plans already in existence or in development, such as Comprehensive Plans, Bicycle Plans, and Pedestrian Plans, to help guide the selection process of which amenities to include on each street.*

Q. Are some jurisdictions already including complete streets facilities in their projects?

A. Yes. *Although not called 'complete streets,' many jurisdictions have requirements in their street standards that fall under that category, such as requiring sidewalks on new or improved streets, allowing the installation of calming devices on residential streets, and more.*

HOW MIGHT COMPLETE STREETS BE FUNDED?

The misconception is that every street would be equipped with every type of infrastructure under a complete streets policy. This is not accurate.

Many roads do not need complete streets elements as they are rural or do not carry enough traffic to warrant them. Priority areas for complete streets enhancements will include linking people to transit stops and services, children to schools, and shoppers to commerce.

Depending on the context of the street, a road equipped with complete streets elements can cost more than a street without the same types of infrastructure.

Other communities have used the following funding sources to pay for complete streets:

- Transit-oriented federal funding sources
- Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program funding
- Implement a tax increase
- Transportation benefit districts
- Constructing fewer projects per year

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED:

- Join the Facebook 'Complete Streets Spokane' page for updates on the local complete streets movement.
- Communicate with your City Council representative.
- Get involved with your neighborhood council or association.

**CONTACT SPOKANE CITY COUNCILMAN JON SNYDER
FOR MORE INFORMATION AT (509) 625-6255 OR
JSNYDER@SPOKANECITY.ORG**

Brought to you by the Education Coalition for Safe & Complete Streets:
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