

Complete Streets for Spokane



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

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 *all* street users 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.

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:

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 elements after construction is complete is typically more costly than considering them early in the process.

Complete streets can change travel patterns.

Recent studies comparing neighborhood types found that residents of highly-walkable areas reported approximately two times more walking trips per week than those in less walkable neighborhoods. Increasing the share of walking is likely to reduce motor vehicle use.

Complete streets improve air quality. Spokane County produces 136,000 tons per year of carbon monoxide emissions. Vehicle sources account for 65% of those emissions. 22% of Spokane County adults say air pollution is a serious problem to them.

Complete streets encourage walking and bicycling. Residents are 65% more likely to walk in neighborhoods with sidewalks. In addition to positively impacting carbon emissions and oil dependence, this increases rates of physical activity, thereby reducing the prevalence and severity of health problems including:

- **Obesity.** In Spokane County, 63% of adults 18 years and older are overweight and obese and 24% of teens are overweight or obese.
- **Heart Disease.** The second leading cause of death in Spokane County is heart disease. In 2007, heart disease accounted for almost a quarter of all deaths.
- **Diabetes.** One of every 10 health care dollars spent in the United States goes toward diabetes. The incidence of diabetes in Spokane County is 7%.



SAFETY ADVANTAGES OF COMPLETE STREETS:

Complete streets improve safety by reducing collisions through safety improvements, both collisions involving multiple vehicles and those involving vehicles, pedestrians, and/or bicyclists. Using traffic calming measures- such as center islands, median barriers, and speed bumps- increases the likelihood that a pedestrian or bicyclist will survive a crash. One study found that installing raised medians and redesigning intersections and sidewalks reduced pedestrian deaths by 28%.

Spokane County has a significantly higher rate than Washington State for non-fatal *bicyclist* injuries, at about 11 injuries each year. An average of 34 *pedestrians* are injured in non-fatal motor vehicle crashes each year in Spokane County. An average of 4 pedestrians are killed in motor vehicle crashes each year.

Complete streets also affect perceived safety. Fear of crime also can be an impediment to walking. 14% of Spokane County adults report that neighborhood safety is a serious problem to them.

Complete streets are child-friendly. Streets that provide safe opportunities for bicycling and walking encourage children to be physically active and gain independence. More children walk to school where safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle amenities are in place.

FEATURES THAT MAY BE NEEDED:

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, plus guidelines included in local plans such as Comprehensive Plans, Bicycle Plans and Pedestrian Plans will be taken into consideration..

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 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



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 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 paid for complete streets through funding sources such as:

- 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

Brought to you by the Education Coalition for Safe & Complete Streets: Futurewise • Neighborhood Alliance • City of Spokane • The Lands Council • Spokane Regional Health District • Spokane Transit • Spokane County Commute Trip Reduction Office • Spokane Plan Commissioner Gail Prosser • YMCA of the Inland Northwest • Spokane Regional Transportation Council • Community Assembly • Bicycle Advisory Board • Spokane County