



Safe Routes
to School
National
Partnership

GREATER WASHINGTON DC

Fact Sheet Implementing Complete Streets Policies

Complete Streets policies formalize a community's intent to plan, design, and maintain streets so they are safe for all users of all ages and all abilities.

The next important step is to implement the policy and actually make the transportation infrastructure safer. Five communities in the Greater Washington region have adopted Complete Streets policies and are in various phases of implementation. The National Capital Area Transportation Planning Board adopted a Complete Streets policy in spring 2012 and encourages local jurisdictions to adopt policies for their own communities.

Complete Streets Implementation

The [National Complete Streets Coalition](#) (NCSC) recommends including implementation steps in a Complete Streets policy. Even if implementation steps are not included in a policy, the NCSC recommends the following four steps, at minimum, to effectively implement Complete Streets in local communities.

1. Restructure or revise related procedures, plans, regulations and other processes to accommodate all users on every project. This includes procedural document such as checklists and decision trees.
2. Develop new design policies or guides or revise existing policies and guides to reflect the current state of best practices in transportation design.
3. Educate transportation staff, community leaders and the general public.
4. Develop and institute ways to measure progress and performance. Performance measures can show how streets are serving all users.

Arlington County, VA

Arlington County's Complete Streets policy is in its [Master Transportation Plan](#) (MTP). The county's staff report that multimodal transportation is policy applied to all their work. Engineers are now transportation engineers instead of traffic engineers.

Restructure or revise procedures, plans and regulations:

- The Capital Improvement Program now has a Complete Streets section focusing on putting more money toward Complete Streets projects and addressing corridors.
- Raised the annual car registration fee by \$8 and dedicated the additional revenue to Complete Streets, bike-sharing and trails projects.

Restructure or revise procedures:

- Pedestrian, bike and transit Level of Service measures are being developed.

Education

- Engineers, planners and other staff regularly participate in continuing education regarding complete streets and design accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists and persons with disabilities.
- All projects are Complete Streets projects and when presenting projects to the public, the benefits of multimodal projects are discussed.
- The County has an extensive encouragement program aimed at getting more residents and visitors to walk, bicycle and use transit for their travel in the County.

Performance Measures

- A Multimodal Quality of Service performance measure is being developed.
- The County has installed more than a dozen automatic counters to identify the use of streets, trails and bridges by pedestrians and bicyclists. Data is showing increasing trend of walking and bicycling.



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The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) Complete Streets policy is a departmental policy. Multimodal planning is part of all DDOT projects.

Plans and design standards were updated leading up to the adoption of the formal Complete Streets policy, including:

- [Bicycle Master Plan](#)
- [Pedestrian Master Plan](#)
- [Design and Engineering Manual](#)
- [Context Sensitive Design Manual](#)

Restructure or revise procedures:

- Utilize a multi-modal level of service planning process in addition to traditional vehicle level of service.

Education

- Engineers regularly participate in continuing education.
- Since all projects consider all modes, each project includes an educational section on the Complete Streets policy.

Performance Measures

- Track the miles of sidewalks, trails, bicycle lanes and cycle tracks.
- Count bicyclists on major bike facilities and bridges.

Resources

National Capital Area Transportation Planning Board
The [Complete Streets Policy](#) includes template language for local jurisdictions' policies.

National Complete Streets Coalition
The [Local Policy Workbook](#) outlines how to write a Complete Streets policy including implementation steps.

Polices from Greater Washington region

- [City of Alexandria, VA](#)
- [Arlington County, VA](#)
- [Prince George's County, MD](#) (See trail, bikeways and pedestrian mobility chapter)
- [City of Rockville, MD](#)
- [Washington, DC](#)

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