

Complete Streets are streets that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for everyone who uses them – people walking, bicycling, driving, or taking public transportation, whether they are children, teens, older adults, and people of all abilities, genders, races, and income levels. Complete Streets policies work at the local or state level, requiring that every new road construction and reconstruction project ensure that streets are safe and comfortable for everyone. Complete Streets policies provide a flexible, affordable way to move toward creating safe, equitable transportation networks that work for all users.

Why Complete Streets Matter

- Complete Streets can reduce injuries and deaths from vehicle crashes, especially those that involve people walking and biking.^{1,2}
- Complete Streets make it easier for people to incorporate physical activity in their day.³
- Incomplete streets are more common in low-income communities and communities of color, which can have fatal consequences.^{4,5}

What Makes a Good Policy?

Complete Streets policies work best when they include these requirements:

- All transportation projects, including new construction, reconstruction, repair, and maintenance, must create Complete Streets that enable reasonably safe travel for everyone who uses them.
- Exceptions to the Complete Streets requirement should be established, but should be strictly limited and available only with a strong showing of need and approval by an agency head.
- Complete Streets policies should require specific steps and plans to prioritize neighborhoods that have received less investment, increase safety for demographic groups with higher rates of transportation injuries or fatalities, and support a more equitable transportation system.

A Complete Streets policy sets out a jurisdiction's commitment to routinely design, build, and operate all streets to enable safe use by everyone, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.



Additional Resources:

- To learn more about Complete Streets policies and how health can be a key focus, read the National Partnership's [Complete Streets Policies and Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans: Key Tools for Supporting Healthy Active Communities](#).
- To see the 10 principles of Complete Streets, atlas of current Complete Streets policies, and many additional resources, go to the National Complete Streets Coalition's [website](#).
- See ChangeLab Solutions' [model Complete Streets resolution](#) for local governments with example language and relevant findings.

References

1. Jamila M. Porter et al. "Law Accommodating Nonmotorized Road Users and Pedestrian Fatalities in Florida, 1975 to 2013", *American Journal of Public Health* 108, no. 4 (April 1, 2018): pp. 525-531. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2017.304259.
2. Robert J. Schneider, "Complete Streets" Policies and Eliminating Pedestrian Fatalities," *American Journal of Public Health* 108, no. 4 (April 1, 2018): pp. 431-433.
3. Anderson G, Searfoss L, Cox A, Schilling E, Seskin S, Zimmerman C. "Safer streets, stronger economies: Complete Streets project outcomes from across the United States." *ITE Journal*. 2015;85(6):29-36.
4. K. Gibbs, S. Slater, N. Nicholson, et al., "Income Disparities in Street Features that Encourage Walking – A BTG Research Brief." Chicago, IL: Bridging the Gap Program, Health Policy Center, Institute for Health Research and Policy, University of Illinois at Chicago (2012), http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/asset/02fpi3/btg_street_walkability_FINAL_03-09-12.pdf.
5. M. Maciag, "Pedestrians Dying at Disproportionate Rates in America's Poorer Neighborhoods," *Governing* (August 2014), <http://www.governing.com/topics/public-justice-safety/gov-pedestrian-deaths-analysis.html>.