Laying the Foundation for Complete Streets

Palm Beach County
December 8, 2015

Streets are inadequate
No sidewalks
Too dangerous to cross on foot

Streets are inadequate
Unsafe for bicyclists

Streets are inadequate
Traffic jams on arterials
Too many crashes

Streets are inadequate
Uninviting for bus riders

Streets are inadequate
Inaccessible for wheelchair users
Streets are inadequate
No room for people!

We know how to build right
We know how to build right
We know how to build right
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We know how to build right
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Yet many roads are built like this

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Introductions 1: Who are you?
- Planner?
- Engineer?
- Elected Official?
- Interested Citizen?
- Transit?
- Public Health?
- Advocacy?
- City?
- County?
- MPO?
- State?
- Other?

Introductions 2: Who are we?
- Ryan Snyder
  - President
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- Tom Errico, PE
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What are Complete Streets?
Complete Streets are streets for everyone, no matter who they are or how they travel.
Today's agenda

• Welcome and Introductions
• Introduction to Complete Streets
• Complete Streets Performance Measures
• Creating Room for Complete Streets
• Introduction to Complete Streets Policy
• Policy Development Process
• Implementation
• Local Policies and Topics
• Exercise: Congress Avenue Redesign
• Discussion: Next Steps
• Adjourn – 4:30 pm

Everyone wins with Complete Streets

Complete Streets policies provide for all users

A Complete Streets policy...

Ensures that the entire right-of-way is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide safe access for all users

Why have a Complete Streets policy?

To make the needs of all users the default for everyday transportation planning practices
• Reverse burden of proof: assume bike, walk, transit unless proven otherwise

Why have a Complete Streets policy?

To shift transportation investments so they create better streets opportunistically
• Take advantage of all planning, construction, operations and maintenance activities
Why adopt a policy?
To make streets better each time you touch them, not just via capital planning
• Small, low-cost, quick projects can have high impact

Why have a Complete Streets policy?
To ensure every project creates better streets now with current funding sources

Why have a Complete Streets policy?
To save money
• Retrofits cost more than getting it right initially

Why have a Complete Streets policy?
To gradually create a complete network of roads that serve all users

Why have a Complete Streets policy?
To give transportation professionals political and community support for innovative solutions that help make active living possible

Why have a Complete Streets policy?
To apply solutions across a community and address systematic inequities
Complete Streets in demand

66% of Americans want more transportation options so they have the freedom to choose how to get where they need to go.

73% currently feel they have no choice but to drive as much as they do.

57% would like to spend less time in the car.

Future of Transportation National Survey (2010)

Who wants Complete Streets?

47% of older Americans say it is unsafe to cross a major street near their home.

54% of older Americans living in inhospitable neighborhoods say they would walk and bike more often if the built environment improved.

56% express strong support for adoption of Complete Streets policies.

Planning Complete Streets for the Aging of America, AARP

Who needs Complete Streets?

1 in 12 households do not have access to a vehicle

1 in 5 Americans aged 65+ do not drive

100% of children under 15 do not drive

2009 National Household Travel Survey

The tremendous potential

Of all trips:

50% are less than 3 miles

28% are less than 1 mile

60% are driven

of these trips...

2009 National Household Travel Survey

Changing preferences

- Aging population: by 2025, 1 in 5 will be 65+
- Younger generation prefers multimodal travel
- More demand for “in town” living

Total VMT is declining

Source: FHWA and Census Bureau. Image: State Smart Transportation Initiative
Per capita VMT is declining

Source: FHWA and Census Bureau. Image: State Smart Transportation Initiative

Are our plans changing?

Image: State Smart Transportation Initiative

Complete Streets = best practices

New paradigm: “proactive” design

- Changes behavior through design
- Guides users through physical and environmental cues
- Slows vehicle speeds
- Encourages walking, bicycling, transit use
- Key to successful Complete Streets implementation

Old paradigm: “passive” design

- “Forgives” behavior through design, assumes worst case
- Designed for high speeds and high volumes
- Encourages high-risk behaviors from all users:
  - Driving too fast; crossing mid-block; bicycling on sidewalks
- Limits land use and building types, street life

Built environment matters
Pedestrian scale is safer for everyone

Incomplete streets are unsafe

More than 40% of pedestrian deaths in 2007 and 2008 occurred where no crosswalk was available.

Incomplete streets are unsafe

Especially for:
- People of color
- Low-income communities
- Older adults

Pedestrian crashes

- 88% with sidewalks
- 69% with hybrid beacons
- 39% with medians
- 29% with street conversions

Pedestrian Fatalities 2003-2012

Improved safety for people on foot

Safer travel speeds

Reduce crashes

Collisions fell in about 70 percent of projects.
Injuries fell in about 56 percent of projects.

Safer conditions save money

• Every avoided collisions produces cost-savings for individuals.
• Within a sample of 37 projects, the improvements averted $18.1 million in one year
• For individual projects, these savings alone can justify the cost of these improvements.

People with disabilities

Nearly 1 in 5 Americans have a disability
Sidewalks make a community accessible for all
• ADA requires sidewalks be accessible, but doesn’t require their construction
Reduce the need for expensive paratransit

Children

More than 1/3 of kids and teens are obese.
Unhealthy weight gain brings higher risk for pre-diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, and joint problems

Children

Dedicated, safe space for bicycling and walking help kids be active and gain independence.
Being physically active helps kids learn and improves their mental health

Transit service

Connect to work, shops, schools, and homes
Create smooth, predictable trips by planning and designing for transit routes
Fixed route accessibility

1 year of paratransit service for 1 daily commuter: $38,500
Making a transit stop accessible: $7,000 - $58,000

Health

We are moving without moving

60% are at risk for diseases associated with inactivity:
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Other chronic diseases

Chronic disease

Lowest levels of biking & walking → highest rates of diabetes, high blood pressure, & obesity.

1/3 of regular transit users meet minimum daily physical activity requirement during their commute.

Economic development

Washington, DC:
- $8m public investment 2003–2004
- $8m private investment 2005-2007
- 32 new business establishments
- $80,000 in sales tax annually
Economic development
Lancaster, California:
• Reconstruction project
• $11.6m public investment
• 48 new businesses
• 802 new jobs
• Vacancy rate: 4%
• Sales tax revenue: ↑ 96%

Walkability = value
+1 point on Walk Score scale = + $500–$3,000 in home value.
Walkable commercial neighborhoods in DC: 75% higher office rents than auto-oriented suburban neighborhoods.

Wallet-friendly
Transportation is second largest expense for families

Wallet-friendly
Middle-class households spend more on transportation as share of total spending

Wallet-friendly
Complete Streets give people more control over their expenses.

Prioritizing transit
Fordham Rd:
• 20% increase in bus speeds
• 10% increase in bus ridership
• 71% increase in retail sales (at locally-based businesses) compared to 23% borough-wide
Budget savings in Washington state

500 miles of highway system are “main streets.”

Over 10 years, 47% of projects on these streets had scope, schedule, or budget changes resulting in delay.

Pilot project: consult community during planning, Complete Streets approach.

Result: Complete Streets planning could have saved $9m per project—about 30%

Cost-effective investments

Richfield, Minnesota road needed replacement after sewer work. Priced at $6 million to replace road as is.

MnDOT re-evaluated transportation needs and found no need for wide roadway. Reallocated road space for all users, saved $2 million

“Feels like home”

Environmental benefits

Fewer emissions
Less noise pollution
Less pavement

Complete Streets changes the built environment

Changes intersection design
Changes intersection design

Changes intersection design

Changes intersection design

Changes bicycling

Changes bicycling

Changes transit
Complete Streets is NOT:

- One ‘special’ street project
- A design prescription
- A mandate for immediate retrofit
- Only accomplished with special funding source
- A silver bullet; other initiatives must be addressed:
  - Land use (proximity, mixed-use)
  - Environmental concerns
  - Transportation Demand Management

Rural roads with shared paths
Suburban thoroughfares

Protected bike lanes

Transit routes

Bus Rapid Transit

Traffic circles

Modern roundabouts
Busy multi-modal thoroughfares

Complete Streets and trails

Streets provide access to trails

Complete Streets + trails = comprehensive network

Complete Streets take pressure off overcrowded trails

Complete Streets & Context Sensitive Solutions

• Complementary ideas
• Respond to unique transportation and land use needs
• Emphasize stakeholder involvement
• Applied to every street project

What do the design guides say?

The AASHTO “Green Book” states: “Sidewalks are integral parts of city streets” Not added to = a part off!

Shoulders are desirable on <…> urban arterials

Bike lanes are shoulders reserved for bicycle use!

2010 USDOT Policy Statement

"...DOT encourages transportation agencies to go beyond the minimum requirements, and proactively provide convenient, safe, and context-sensitive facilities that foster increased use by bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, and utilize universal design characteristics when appropriate."

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/policy_assn.cfm

2013 FHWA memo

Memorandum

Supports “taking a flexible approach to bicycle and pedestrian facility design”

Recommends using AASHTO, ITE, and NACTO guidance

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/design_guidance/design_flexibility.cfm
Designing for Emergency Access: Best Practices

- Street design
- Land use and street network planning
- Equipment purchases

Street Design

- Parking placement strategies
- Mountable curbs
- Use of materials and paint
- Roundabouts
- Appropriate use of traffic calming measures

Land Use Planning

- Compact neighborhoods
- Land use controls
  - Building height, setbacks
  - Tree spacing
  - Limit development in hazardous areas
- Sprinkler requirements
- Street connectivity

Equipment Purchasing

- Retrieving from side compartments
- Ground ladder retrieval
- Deploying stabilizers
- Side-mount pumps
- Appropriate fleet
- Fire trucks

What about funding?

- Complete Streets is about using existing resources differently:
  - No special funding needed!
  - Usual suspects: Alternative Transportation, HSIP, State, Palm Beach MPO, bond measures, sales taxes, property taxes/assessments, business improvement districts, etc.
- Retrofit funding is important, it is not necessary to get started
- Additional funding is not needed

Does it cost more?

- The cost per mile to build Complete Streets projects vs. an average arterial road

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12/10/2015
Does it cost more?
- Avoid costly retrofits
- Requires minimal additional funding
- Save money with better design
  - Comprehensive ROI including benefits in health, safety, economic, environmental, etc.
- Scope projects well
  - Budgets typically reflect project goals

Low-cost improvements
- Restripe for bike lanes without moving curbs
- Do not construct overly wide lanes
  - 10’ or 11’ instead of 12’+

Low-cost improvements
- Add Sidewalks during drainage project for little cost
- Signal timing for safety and speed control
- Countdown ped signals: low cost, reduce crashes

Exercise
How would your community benefit from a Complete Streets policy?
Each table brainstorms 3-5 ideas

Benefits for our community:
- A

Benefits identified in Miami Valley OH
- Connecting people to trails and to trails to each other
- Changing attitudes
- Livability
- Increased community interaction
- Reducing paratransit costs
- Connects development
- Improving visibility for seniors, the disabled, and other travelers
- Creating a sense of place
- Health benefits
- Reducing community isolation
- Better health through accessing facilities
- Incomplete streets are costly and inefficient to maintain
- Public education leverages political pressure for CS
- Intermodal connectivity
- Provides transportation for those w/ low income
- Established framework for design
- Some CS projects lower costs
- Reduce per capita vehicle trips
- Improved safety
- Promotes health.
  - Knot satellite land use and housing
- CS promotes attractive public design.
Benefits identified in Baton Rouge
• Integrate design elements into beginning of project/reduce costs (2)
• Attract attention about CIDs
• Influence locals about design decisions
• Avoid timelines (especially MBT)
• Provide good examples
• Economic development – place making (3)
• Improve public transportation
• Increase physical activity and health benefits (2)
• Create Connectivity/Compact development (3)
• Improve safety (3)
• Access management
• Socialization
• Decrease liability issues
• Managing priorities
• Increase real estate value
• Increase independence/options for travelers

Benefits identified in Moorhead/Fargo
• Increased safety (6)
• Acknowledge the high demand for transport choices (4)
• Environmental benefits/Sustainability (4)
• Health benefits (4)
• Promotes Mixed-use development/Supports land use objectives (2)
• Give permission to use available designs (2)
• Encourages retrofitting (2)
• Cost savings (2)
• Sense of pride/the city for good first impression.

Benefits identified in Chattanooga, TN
• Health
• Air quality (2)
• Social interaction
• Save $ (2)
• Safety–fewer cars, eyes on the street
• Aesthetics
• Accessibility – universal
• Encourage all modes / Transportation choices
• Inviting roads – connectivity
• Consistent approach

Benefits identified in Northwest Georgia
• Economic benefit – e.g., streetscape project in Rockmont increased retail sales (2)
• Safety (2)
• Accessibility for people with disabilities
• Air quality—reduced pollution from increased walking and biking
• Aesthetics
• Commercial centers are more accessible for lower social economic groups
• Communication among various departments
• Sense of place/community
• Outlying areas have access to downtown
• Resolve parking needs
• Economic re-development
• Bike and pedestrian facilities in project planning
• Elected officials support – don’t need to lobby
• Health benefits
• Increased connectivity (see also 6 and 9)