

APPENDIX A

Findings for Complete Streets Laws and Resolutions

Developed by the National Policy & Legal Analysis Network
to Prevent Childhood Obesity (NPLAN), a project of
Public Health Law & Policy (PHLP)

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Introduction

This document supplies a variety of evidence-backed factual conclusions that support a community's decision to enact a complete streets resolution or law. An adopting body should select those findings it views as most significant for its community and add findings related to local conditions or concerns. All policies should include the first finding, which defines complete streets.

FINDINGS

WHEREAS, the term "Complete Streets" describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicle drivers, public transportation riders and drivers, [*insert other significant local users if desired, e.g. drivers of agricultural vehicles, emergency vehicles, or freight*] and people of all ages and abilities, including children, youth, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities;

COMMENT: This clause introduces and defines the concept of Complete Streets. This finding should appear as the first finding in every policy and should not be omitted.

WHEREAS, streets that are not designed to provide safe transport for all users present a danger to pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders, particularly children, older adults, and people with disabilities;¹ more than 110,000 pedestrians and bicyclists are injured each year on roads in the United States,² with children and older adults at greatest risk and disproportionately affected;³ many of these injuries and fatalities are preventable, and the severity of these injuries could readily be decreased by implementing Complete Streets approaches;⁴ and [Municipality / State / Regional body] wishes to ensure greater safety for those traveling its streets;

WHEREAS, [Municipality / State / Regional body] wishes to encourage walking, bicycling, and public transportation use as safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and economical modes of transportation that promote health and independence for all people;

WHEREAS, [Municipality / State / Regional body] acknowledges the benefits and value for the public health and welfare of [reducing vehicle miles traveled and] increasing transportation by walking, bicycling, and public transportation in order to address a wide variety of societal challenges, including pollution, climate change, traffic congestion, social isolation, obesity, physical inactivity, limited recreational opportunities, sprawl, population growth, safety, and excessive expenses;⁵

COMMENT: This clause describes the greater social and environmental benefits of encouraging non-vehicular travel.

WHEREAS, sedentary lifestyles and limited opportunities to integrate exercise into daily activities are factors contributing to increased obesity among adults and children and numerous correlated adverse health consequences, such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, certain cancers, asthma, low self-esteem, depression, and other debilitating diseases;⁶

COMMENTS: This clause and the following two clauses set out various additional problems that Complete Streets solve or alleviate.

See <http://healthyamericans.org/state/> and <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/Trends/TrendData.asp> for state-specific information.

WHEREAS, [Municipality / State / Regional body] recognizes that the careful planning and coordinated development of Complete Streets infrastructure offers long-term cost savings for local and state government, benefits public health, and provides financial benefits to property owners, businesses, and investors, while yielding a safe, convenient, and integrated transportation network for all users;⁷ in contrast, streets that are not conducive to travel by all impose significant costs on government and individuals, including the cost of obesity, which may amount to \$147 billion in direct medical expenses each year, not including indirect costs;⁸

[**WHEREAS**, in light of the numerous statewide benefits of Complete Streets for public and environmental health, including the ability to travel freely throughout the state for people with disabilities or those traveling by foot, bicycle, or public transportation, [State] wishes to establish minimum statewide standards, while not reducing the ability of local jurisdictions to establish additional requirements;]

COMMENT: This finding is designed to be included in policies adopted by states, as it helps demonstrate that this topic is an appropriate subject for state regulation while clarifying that the policy is not intended to preempt local efforts that provide for additional requirements.

WHEREAS, streets are a key public space, shape the experience of residents of and visitors to [Municipality / State / Region], directly affect public health and welfare, and provide the framework for current and future development;^{9,10}

COMMENT: Where streets comprise a significant portion of the land in a particular municipality—particularly likely in the case of a larger city—a municipality may wish to describe the percentage of area occupied by streets. This may be done by inserting a reference such as “comprise ___ % of Municipality’s land area” following the phrase “streets are a key public space.”

WHEREAS, the one-third of Americans who do not drive include a disproportionate number of older adults, low-income people, people of color, people with disabilities, and children,¹¹ and the inequitable distribution of safe alternative means of travel adversely affects their daily lives;

WHEREAS, the dramatic increase in the population of older and very old adults that will be seen by 2020 and 2030, with the concomitant decrease in driving, requires that changes begin to occur now to street design and transportation planning;¹²

WHEREAS, numerous states, counties, cities, and agencies have adopted Complete Streets policies and legislation in order to further the health, safety, welfare, economic vitality, and environmental well-being of their communities;¹³

COMMENT: This clause establishes that there is considerable precedent for policies of this type.

WHEREAS, [Municipality / State / Regional body] wishes to build upon its existing policies that recognize the importance of addressing the transportation needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders, such as [*insert references to and brief descriptions of existing policies that incorporate any elements of the multi-modal/non-motorized travel concepts in Complete Streets*];

COMMENTS: This clause affirms the existing efforts of the jurisdiction, and establishes that although the Complete Streets policy involves a new commitment to making the streets safe for all users, the adopting body is not necessarily departing from its current practices but building upon and improving them.

If a state or regional body does not have applicable policies, but bodies within it do, it may reference those by adopting this alternative language: “**WHEREAS**, [State / Regional body] wishes to build upon existing policies in [State / Region] that recognize the importance of Complete Streets, such as [*insert relevant language*];”

WHEREAS, [Municipality / State / Regional body] wishes to encourage public participation in community decisions concerning street design and use to ensure that such decisions: (a) result in streets that meet the needs of all users, and (b) are responsive to needs of individuals and groups that traditionally are not incorporated in public infrastructure design;

WHEREAS, [Municipality / State / Regional body] recognizes the importance of Complete Streets infrastructure and modifications that enable safe, convenient, and comfortable travel for all users, such as sidewalks, shared use paths, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders, street trees and landscaping, planting strips, accessible curb ramps, crosswalks, refuge islands, pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, bicycle parking facilities, public transportation stops and facilities, transit priority signalization, and other features assisting in the provision of safe travel for all users, such as traffic calming circles, narrow vehicle lanes, raised medians, dedicated transit lanes, transit bulb outs, and road diets [, as well as other features such as *insert other accommodations if desired*] [, and those features identified in *insert name of Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan if it exists*]; and

COMMENT: Although features such as street trees and landscaping have traditionally not been included in transportation infrastructure, these features are crucial for pedestrian comfort and safety; they are included here to ensure that Complete Streets infrastructure addresses the needs of all users.

WHEREAS, [Municipality / State / Regional body] therefore, in light of the foregoing benefits and considerations, wishes to [initiate a / expand upon its] Complete Streets program and desires that its streets form a comprehensive and integrated transportation network promoting safe, equitable, and convenient travel for all users while preserving flexibility, recognizing community context, and using the latest and best design guidelines and standards;

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- ¹ King MR, Carnegie JA, Ewing R. “Pedestrian Safety Through a Raised Median and Redesigned Intersections.” *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board*, 1828: 56-66, 2003.
- ² NHTSA’s National Center for Statistics and Analysis. *Traffic Safety Facts 2007 Data*. DOT HS 810 993. Washington DC, p. 12. Available at: www.nhtsa.gov/portal/nhtsa_static_file_downloader.jsp?file=/staticfiles/DOT/NHTSA/NCSA/Content/TSF/2007/810993.pdf.
- ³ Henary BY, Ivarsson J, Crandall JR. “The influence of age on the morbidity and mortality of pedestrian victims.” *Traffic Inj Prev.*, 7(2): 182-90, June 2006; Henary BY, Crandall J, Bhalla K, Mock CN, Roudsari BS. “Child and adult pedestrian impact: the influence of vehicle type on injury severity.” *Annu Proc Assoc Adv Automot Med*, 47: 105-26, 2003.
- ⁴ Von Kries R, Kohne C, Böhm O, von Voss H. “Road injuries in school age children: relation to environmental factors amenable to interventions.” *Injury Prevention*, 4(2): 103-5, June 1998.
- ⁵ Frumkin H, Frank L and Jackson R. *Urban Sprawl and Public Health*. Washington: Island Press, 2004.
- ⁶ US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. *The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity*. Rockville: US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Office of the Surgeon General, 2001. Available at: http://surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact_adolescents.htm.
- ⁷ Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. *Paved with Gold: The Real Value of Good Street Design*. London: Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 2007. Available at: <http://cabe.org.uk/files/paved-with-gold.pdf>.
- ⁸ Finklestein E, Trogdon J, Cohen J, and Dietz W. “Annual Medical Spending Attributable to Obesity: Payer- and Service-Specific Estimates.” *Health Affairs*, 28(5), 2009: w822-w831; see also US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Preventing Obesity and Chronic Diseases Through Good Nutrition and Physical Activity*. 2005, p. 1. Available at: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/publications/factsheets/Prevention/pdf/obesity.pdf.
- ⁹ Frumkin H, Frank L and Jackson R. *Urban Sprawl and Public Health*. Washington: Island Press, 2004, p. 2–3.
- ¹⁰ Victoria Transport Policy Institute. *Transportation Cost and Benefit Analysis II – Conclusions and Recommendations*. 2009, p. 7. Available at: <http://vtpi.org/tca/tca11.pdf>.
- ¹¹ US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. “Highway Statistics Series.” Chapter 6, 2007. Available at: www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2007/dl1c.cfm.
- ¹² National Institute on Aging. *Aging in the United States – Past, Present and Future*. Available at: www.census.gov/ipc/prod/97agewc.pdf.
- ¹³ See, e.g., Illinois Hwy Code § 4-220 (Public Act 095-0665, 2007); Hennepin County, Minn., Board of Commissioners Action Request 09-0058; Seattle, Wash., Ord. No. 122386 (2007); Columbia, S. Caro., Resolution No. 2006-021 (2006); Scottsdale, Ariz., Transportation Master Plan (2008). For a complete list, see www.completestreets.org/complete-streets-fundamentals/complete-streets-atlas/.