Complete Streets in the States

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Overview

• Introduction
• Complete Streets
  – Policies
  – Implementation
  – Funding
• Other SGA state transportation initiatives
• Questions
Smart Growth

**Smart growth** means building urban, suburban and rural communities with **housing and transportation choices** near jobs, shops and schools.

These strategies **support thriving local economies** and protect the environment.
What I’ve heard about smart growth

Wengen
Smart growth is ugly.
We have no history with it.
Nobody would want to live there.
It just doesn’t work here.
Shut up and drive!
We know how to build right
We know how to build right
Yet too many roads still turn out like this:
or this:
or this:
The Solution: Complete Streets Policies
Complete Streets policies

A Complete Streets policy ensures that the entire right of way is planned, designed, operated and maintained to provide safe access for all users.
Many Types: Rural to Urban
Policy adoption accelerates
Policies adopted in all types of communities

- Small Towns and Rural: 18.7%
- Small Suburb: 33.8%
- Midsize Suburb: 11.9%
- Large Suburb: 5.8%
- Small City: 11.1%
- Midsize City: 9.4%
- Large City: 9.4%
Streets Can Benefit Communities

- Improve safety
- Provide choices
- Better health
- Support economic dev.

- Reduce costs
- Manage congestion
- Smarter growth
- Conserve resources

before

after
Complete Streets means:

• A policy approach
• A change to the everyday decision-making processes and systems
• Long-term changes to built environment
Complete Streets doesn’t mean:

• One ‘special’ street project
• A design prescription
• A mandate for immediate retrofit
• A silver bullet; other issues must be addressed:
  – Land use (proximity, mixed-use)
  – Environmental concerns
  – Transportation Demand Management
From Policy to Practice

Effective implementation means:

– Organizing implementation activities
–Restructuring procedures, policies, and programs
– Rewriting or updating design guidance
– Offering training opportunities to transportation staff, community leaders, and the general public
– Creating new performance measures
State Implementation

• California
  – www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ocp/complete_streets.html

• Minnesota
  – www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/completestreets/

• New Jersey
  – www.state.nj.us/transportation/eng/completestreets/
What about funding?

• Complete streets is about using existing resources differently:
  – STP, Equity Bonus, CMAQ, TE, State, bond measures, gas tax, sales taxes... the usual suspects

• While retrofit funding is important, it is not necessary to get started

• Additional funding is not needed
Think Ahead, Think Smart

• Complete Streets can save money
• Narrower travel lanes require less land, less pavement
• Provide more options = reduce need for widening some intersections
• Do it right the first time, not when forced to later – at a higher price

“If we think we don’t have the time and money to do it right, what makes you think we have the time and money to do it over?”

– Dr. Mark Nicholson
Sample Low-Cost Improvements

• Restripe for bike lanes without moving curbs/drainage
• Do not construct overly wide lanes (12’ instead of 11’)
• Sidewalks installed during drainage project add little cost
• Timing signals to control speeds and increase safety
• Countdown ped signals reduce crashes
Low-cost rural application: paved shoulders
Saving Money: Washington State

500 miles of the state highway system are ‘main streets.’

Over ten years, 47% of projects on these streets had scope, schedule, or budget changes resulting in delay.
Saving Money: Washington State

Pilot project consulted community ahead of time.

Complete Streets planning could have saved an average of $9 million per Main Street project – about 30% – in reduced scope, schedule, and budget changes over the last 10 years.

http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/research/reports/fullreports/733.1.pdf
Complete Streets Resources

• Fact sheets, photos, brochures
• Policy tracking & examples
• Information on technical assistance & workshops
• Complete Streets blog and monthly newsletter
• Links to research & publications
• Complete Streets Best Practices
SGA’s state transportation program
Themes

• **Save Money by Taking Better Care of What You Have**
  – Maintain and repair existing roads and bridges

• **Grow the Economy by Making Your Transportation Investments More Strategic**
  – Fund the biggest job creator: public transportation
  – Spark innovation and cost-savings through a competitive transportation solutions program
  – Revisit near-term spending decisions and long-term project selection process
Save money by taking better care of what you have

• SGA and Taxpayers for Common Sense
• National Report June 1, 2011
• 50 State profiles on SGA website
Repair Priorities

- 57 percent of funds spent on just 1 percent of the nation’s roads
- 43 percent spent on the 99 percent of the system that already existed

![Pie chart showing repair and expansion priorities]
Condition of existing roads

- 52% of major roads (732,500 lane-miles) in “fair” or “poor” condition
- ASCE Report Card
  - 2001: D+
  - 2005: D
  - 2009: D-
- $43 B/yr needed for preservation and repair
- More than we spend on all road projects today
Cost of deferred maintenance

Cost (in thousands of dollars)

- $15 for 5
- $39.5 for 10
- $15 for 15
- $55.5 for 20
- $15 for 25

Total Cost:
- $140 for cost of preserving one lane-mile
- $490 for deteriorating to poor condition and then making major repairs
Fund the biggest job creator
Transit investment creates more jobs
Transit investment catalyzes economic development

- Hudson-Bergen (NJ) LRT - $5.3 billion
- Dallas, TX LRT - $4.2 billion
- Portland Streetcar - $4 billion
Spark innovation and cost savings
Example – Connect Oregon
Revisit project selection process
“Bay Area transportation projects to be judged on benefits vs. costs” – Silicon Valley Mercury News
Headline news?

“Talk to any business person about not having a benefits-vs.-cost discussion and they'll say, 'Duh, you mean you don't do that?' " said the commission's executive director, Steve Heminger. "They insist on it, but in the transportation profession it is not all that common. ... This levels the playing field."
DOT reform handbook

- Collaborative project with SSTI
- Advisory Group of current and former DOT executives
- Targeted at Governors, State Legislators, DOT CEOs
- Report release September 4, 2012
Focus areas

• Funding and financing
• Revenue allocation and project selection
• Increasing transportation system efficiency
• Pricing
• Improve options for non-automobile mobility
• Integrate transportation and land use decision-making
• Streamline internal DOT operations
• Freight’s ever-important role in our economy
Demonstration Projects

WPA Mural – Wilkinsburg, PA
Results – Oregon

• Over 60 funding sources studied
• 12 Consensus funding sources
• 4 consensus financing measures
• 2013 Legislative Session
Results – Tennessee

1. Develop **new metrics** to measure and prioritize all proposed projects against broad system goals
2. **Audit** the current project list for opportunities to better achieve system goals
3. Establish a system for identifying public and private transportation/land use planning partners
4. Effectively articulate a full range of **benefits** tied to broad system goals
5. Identify new **funding partners** based on benefits
6. Broadly communicate **flexible design standards** for context sensitive solutions

Transportation Process Alternatives for Tennessee

Removing Barriers to Smarter Transportation Investment

Smart Growth America

National Complete Streets Coalition
We have the freedom to make informed, humane, and intelligent choices about the kind of world we want to leave for our children and grandchildren. We also have the freedom to make uninformed, selfish, and stupid choices. Which will it be?

- Greg Pahl
Thank you!

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