COMPLETE STREETS POLICY PROGRESS

Senators Harkin, Carper, Rep Matsui Introduce Complete Streets Bill in US Senate and House
Miami Passes Resolution
Unanimous Support in Rochester and St. Paul
Complete Streets in Cobb County
Progress in Missouri...
...and in Connecticut!
Stimulus Watch

COALITION NEWS

Complete Streets on the Hill
Public Transportation Ridership Up
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc and NACTO Join as Bronze Partners
Transportation For America Rolls Out
Thunderhead Alliance Becomes Alliance for Biking and Walking
Become Our Friend on Facebook!

COMPLETE STREETS NEWS

MA Transportation Reform & Finance Legislation
Exciting Changes on Broadway
Incomplete Street Results in Death
CDC Calls for Additional Safety Measures
Quick Takes: Complete Streets Talk Around the Country

RESOURCES

Study: Bike Lanes Won’t Hurt Business
Study: Prevent Cancer by Walking, Bicycling
Submit Your Complete Streets Policy for the EPA’s Smart Growth Awards

QUOTES

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY PROGRESS

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The Complete Streets Act of 2009 was introduced in both houses of Congress on Thursday, March 12. Senator Harkin (IA) sponsored S. 584 with Senator Carper (DE) as original cosponsor. In the House, Congresswoman Matsui (CA-5) sponsored H.R. 1433 with Representatives Tauscher (CA-10), Maloney (NY-14), and Wu (OR-1) as original cosponsors. The Complete Streets Act of 2009 defines effective complete streets policies that are flexible enough to use in daily transportation planning practice. The introduction of these bills is a key step in ensuring safer, better-designed streets across the country.
Organizations from the YMCA to the National Association of Realtors have lined up behind the measure, because they see the benefits complete streets will provide on issues ranging from the obesity epidemic to greenhouse gas reduction to providing inexpensive transportation alternatives in tough economic times. See what everyone is saying about the bills (pdf).

Use our quick online form letter to let your Senator and Representative know about this important bill and ask them to sign on!

**Miami Passes Resolution**
Miami Mayor Diaz has been a strong proponent of the federal bill, and it is with great pleasure that we announce Miami has unanimously adopted a complete streets resolution. The resolution directs the City Manager to develop guidelines establishing a complete streets program to provide appropriate and safe facilities for all who use Miami’s roads. Check back on our website next week for more information.

**Unanimous Support in Rochester and St. Paul**
In its March 3 meeting, the Rochester, MN City Council unanimously instructed the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance to amend its Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Manual to incorporate complete streets. Mitzi Baker, a planner in the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department, spearheaded the movement toward complete streets through the Rochester Active Living group, bringing national experts to town for a daylong Complete Streets Policy Implementation Workshop. According to the *Post Bulletin*, at least six people at the Council meeting spoke out in support of the regulatory changes, which are intended to help Rochester continue improving its stature as a safe, clean, and healthy city.

In another display of unanimous support for complete streets, the St. Paul City Council adopted a complete streets resolution this week. Introduced by Councilmember Russ Stark, the resolution requests the Planning Commission create guidelines for implementing complete streets by January 1, 2010. Read more about the resolution and the statewide movement at Twin Cities Streets for People.

**Complete Streets in Cobb County**
The Cobb County, GA Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted a Complete Streets policy (pdf) on January 27. Officials pledge to consider safe access for all users, including motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities, during the planning, design, construction, and operation of County roads. The new policy is the second adopted in the Atlanta area. As the policy does not contain many of elements of an ideal complete streets policy, advocates in the area urge continued vigilance and support to ensure its full implementation.

**Progress in Missouri...**
Complete Streets News – March 2009

A Complete Streets bill (House Bill 642) went before the Missouri House Transportation Committee last Tuesday, March 3. The Missouri Bike Federation assembled an incredible list of supporting organizations and individuals who provided over thirty minutes of positive testimony and local advocates feel optimistic about the upcoming vote. "There is absolutely no way we could have done all this on our own in our state with the resources we have. But having the you folks working things out on the national level really helps us to leverage all the things you put in place, here at the state & local level," said Brent Hugh, MOBikeFed's Executive Director. The groups and individuals showing support last week included:

American Heart Association, American Planning Association (Missouri Chapter), American Society of Landscape Architects (Prairie Gateway Chapter), Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee of the East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Let's Go KC Alliance for Transportation Choice, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Missouri PTA, Missouri Public Transit Association, PedNet Coalition of Columbia, Les Sterman, Executive Director of East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Thomas Hart Benton Group of the Sierra Club, and Trek Bicycle Stores (in Kansas City, Omaha, and St. Louis)

All Missourians are encouraged to add their names to MOBikeFed's list of Complete Streets supporters.

...and in Connecticut!
The Connecticut Transportation Committee heard testimony on its Complete Streets bill (SB 735) Wednesday morning. The legislation requires ConnDOT or any municipality receiving funds to provide facilities for all users. It also requires at least one percent of these funds (and 25% of certain federal grants) be dedicated to pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation access projects and provides for three exemptions from the law. The Central Connecticut Bicycle Association is meeting with ConnDOT next week to work out areas of concern. The move for a state law has grown out of local movements across the state, including the Safe Streets Coalition of New Haven and regional work from the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, which wrote about the law on their blog. The New Haven Independent offers information on the advocates who visited the Capitol last month, upon the bill's introduction in the House.

Stimulus Watch
The recently passed American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) included $48 billion for transportation infrastructure investments. Of that $48 billion, more than $27.5 billion are in funding categories that make funds eligible for use in projects with complete streets elements, and another $3.8 billion are available for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

So far, we're hearing stories both bad and good. Texas is coming under fire for using most of its funds on 20th-century style highways, including a massive loop road around
Houston. North Carolina's DOT is preparing to use $9 million in federal stimulus money to widen a 1.5-mile stretch of N.C. 73, a road envisioned by local communities to be easy for bicyclists and pedestrians to use with a 35-mpg speed limit. The Charlotte Observer notes that despite local requests for a true multi-modal facility, the State disagrees with their vision. And, see this post from a blogger in Franklin, Wisconsin, indicating the funding won't help much help to multi-modal travel in some areas.

But a few places are incorporating complete streets into their stimulus plans: The checklist adopted by the San Francisco Bay Area MTC to ensure routine accommodation of all travelers. The MTC's Routine Accommodation checklist applies to will be used as a screen for any projects with stimulus money. Completed checklists can be viewed online.

Santa Cruz County, California has committed to Complete Streets in its ARRA Projects. According to Cyclelicio.us, at a meeting last month, the Regional Transportation Commission voted to add a Complete Streets requirement (pdf) to any road projects funded through ARRA; the county is set to receive at least $5.8 million. The vote requires "project sponsors to add bicycle lanes, cross-walk striping, curb cuts, and other accessibility improvements as part of road repair projects, where appropriate and feasible."

Resources for Spending the Stimulus Right
The National Complete Streets Coalition created a new repository of resources for communities interested in identifying opportunities for building complete streets with ARRA funding, including sample resolutions to attach to ARRA funding measures.

Smart Growth America, in collaboration with state and local groups across the country, has released a new report, Spending the Stimulus. The report lays out 20 ways that state officials can and should spend the federal funding on ready-to-go projects that will address long-neglected transportation priorities while providing speedy and robust job creation and economic recovery. It also has a list of example ready-to-go projects.

COALITION NEWS

Complete Streets on the Hill
The League of American Bicyclists, the American Public Transportation Association, and the Transportation Equity Network all held their legislative conferences this week, and all discussed complete streets. Rep. Doris Matsui addressed the 600-plus Bike Summit attendees and discussed why she is sponsoring the Complete Streets Act of 2009; the next day advocates fanned out for more than 400 meetings with their lawmakers to seek co-sponsorship.

Public Transportation Ridership Up
The New York Times reports that more people have taken a bus, subway, or commuter
rail in 2008 than any year since 1956. The American Public Transportation Association, a member of the Complete Streets Steering Committee, has found that Americans took nearly 10.7 billion rides on public transportation, an increase of 4% over 2007. Ridership has been increased 38% since 1995, almost triple the growth rate of the population (14%). APTA's report comes as they launch a new advocacy campaign, *Public Transportation Takes Us There*.

**Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc and NACTO Join as Bronze Partners**

The Coalition is pleased to welcome Fitzgerald and Halliday, Inc. and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) as Complete Streets Partners.

FHI is a full-service planning consulting firm, providing services to public and private sector clients since 1987, and working from a variety of office locations in Connecticut, New Jersey, and Oregon. With a staff experienced in transportation, ecology, environmental compliance, community planning, historic resources, public involvement, GIS, and other planning disciplines, FHI helps its clients move projects from concept to reality. It was recently selected for the Mohawk-Erie Multimodal Transportation Corridor Study and the Connecticut Statewide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update.

NACTO, founded in 1996 by then Commissioner Elliot Sander of New York City's Department of Transportation, views the transportation departments of major cities as effective and necessary partners in regional and national transportation efforts. NACTO encourages the exchange of transportation ideas, insights, and practices among large central cities while fostering a cooperative approach to key national transportation issues.

Thanks to Fitzgerald and Halliday and NACTO for supporting Complete Streets!

**Transportation For America Rolls Out**

Transportation For America had its official launch in late February, releasing its full campaign platform for the upcoming transportation bill. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (OR) and Mayor John Robert Smith of Meridian, MS, were the featured speakers; Smith's keynote address is available online. T4A is helping to build local interest through town halls and house meetings across the country and with a series of webinars beginning next week.

**Thunderhead Alliance Becomes Alliance for Biking and Walking**

Thunderhead Alliance, the North American coalition of 140 biking and walking advocacy organizations, will now be officially known as Alliance for Biking and Walking. The new name and brand identity are the result of a yearlong rebranding process. To learn more about the Alliance and its name change, check out www.peoplepoweredmovement.org.

**Become Our Friend on Facebook!**

The National Complete Streets Coalition has a Facebook Group. Join us to discuss complete streets in your community, share ideas with others who support complete
stretches, and keep up on our activities!

**COMPLETE STREETS NEWS**

**MA Transportation Reform & Finance Legislation**
Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick has introduced a bill (pdf) to implement his plan to reform the transportation system in Massachusetts. A key component of its Healthy Transportation Compact is the development and implementation, in consultation with the Massachusetts Bicycle and Pedestrian advisory board, of "administrative and procedural mechanisms, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, consistent with...the MassHighway Project Development and Design Guide...to encourage the construction of complete streets...for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages to safely move along and across roadways in urban and suburban areas." MassBike urges constituents to ask their elected officials to support the Governor's plan.

**Exciting Changes on Broadway**
New York City announced late February plans to close sections of Broadway to vehicular traffic in order to improve traffic flow on cross streets for cars, trucks, and buses, give more space to people entering and exiting nearby subway stations, and allow pedestrians and bicyclists more breathing room in heavily-visited midtown Manhattan. These closures follow on the heels of last summer's successful Broadway Boulevard initiative, when the city narrowed lanes, improved bike lanes, and gave pedestrians more room to walk and relax in the streets. As Ian Sachs points out, the new project, while temporary for the time being, represents a larger, more important policy shift throughout the City's Department of Transportation.

**Incomplete Street Results in Death**
According to the *Northwest Herald*, after leaving a restaurant on Richmond Road in McHenry County, IL, Nicholas Polischuk, 40, was killed by a car on March 1. Polischuk was legally blind. Despite the high level of commercial development in the area, there are no sidewalks or crosswalks in the area, and no accessibility improvements for people with disabilities.

**CDC Calls for Additional Safety Measures**
CDC's influential Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report addressed geographic differences in traffic deaths late last month and noted that while the annual motor vehicle death rate dropped by 43% between 1969 and 1992 as drunk driving, seat belt and child restraint laws, and other safety improvements went into effect, the rate remained nearly constant from 1999 through 2005. The report calls for "additional and vigorous measures" if the Healthy People 2010 national objective of 9.2 deaths per 100,000 population is to be met." The current rate is 15.4 deaths per 100,000.

**Quick Takes: Complete Streets Talk Around the Country**
• **Atlanta, GA:** The Atlanta Regional Commission has introduced its Green Communities Program, a voluntary certification program encouraging local governments to become more sustainable. It awards 10 points to communities that adopt a complete streets policy.

• **Chatham County, GA:** The Chatham Environmental Forum drafted a plan to reduce the government and public impact on the environment. The plan includes a requirement for complete streets in new developments and retrofitting when possible. (via the Savannah Morning News)

• **Baton Rouge, LA:** The push for complete streets continues in the Parish. Several members of the community are interviewed, highlighting the need for the city to shift focus from moving only cars to moving people. (via the Baton Rouge Business Report)

• **Las Cruces, NM:** The Las Cruces City Council is considering adoption of a complete streets policy as a step in becoming a Bicycle-Friendly Community. (via the Las Cruces Sun-News)

**RESOURCES**

**Study: Bike Lanes Won’t Hurt Business**
The Clear Air Partnership in Toronto decided to take a closer look into fears that improved walking and biking conditions through reallocation of road space would hurt business downtown. In *Bike Lanes, On-Street Parking and Business* (pdf), researchers found that the spending habits of cyclists and pedestrians, their relatively high travel mode share, and the minimal impact on parking all demonstrate that reallocating on-street parking space to a bike lane would likely increase commercial activity, not harm it.

**Study: Prevent Cancer by Walking, Bicycling**
A recent public health report by the World Cancer Research Fund and the American Institute for Cancer Research has found that about one-third of cancers in developed countries, not including those preventable by not smoking, can be prevented through diet, exercise, and weight control. Researchers found that modern cities have impeded walking and bicycling. They recommend widespread dedicated walking and cycling facilities and traffic management policies that encourage people to walk or bike.

**Submit Your Complete Streets Policy for the EPA’s Smart Growth Awards**
The EPA is accepting applications for its National Award in Smart Growth Achievement. Awards will be given to projects in up to five categories, including "Policies and Regulations." This category looks at current regulatory and policy initiatives that support the principles of smart growth. We encourage representatives of our state and local policies across the country to apply! Additionally, the "Smart Growth Streets" category recognizes new or retrofitted streets that promote walkability, support healthy ecological systems, and create vibrant public spaces. Visit the EPA Smart Growth website to read more.
QUOTES

"As Americans age, it will be critical to have mobility alternatives in order for older Americans to get where they need to go and stay engaged in their communities. Absent better transportation and pedestrian safety infrastructure policies and investments, we run the risk of having a whole generation of older adults 'stranded in the suburbs.' Complete Streets policies are essential to creating communities where all Americans can live while maintaining an active and independent lifestyle."
-Nancy LeaMond, AARP Executive Vice President, Social Impact

"Complete streets not only make our communities safer, they also make them healthier by encouraging walking and bicycling. At a time when far too many Americans—especially our children—are overweight and inactive providing the opportunity for increased physical activity can help prevent chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. It makes sense to provide people with as many options as possible for incorporating physical activity into their daily lives."
-Neil Nicoll, President and CEO, YMCA of the USA