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COMPLETE STREETS POLICY PROGRESS

World Class, Sustainable, and Complete Streets in New York City
Innovations in streets designed for all New Yorkers have been a regular occurrence in the Big Apple lately. The release of Sustainable Streets, the strategic plan for NYCDOT in 2008 and beyond, marks the adoption of a formal complete streets policy. As part of their commitment to complete streets, NYCDOT will adopt new design templates emphasizing safety and pedestrian accommodation for different types of streets, ranging from walking-only streets to major bus and truck routes. They followed up this strategic plan with World Class Streets (pdf), outlining new policies and approaches to develop and improve the public realm.

Erie County, NY Passes Resolution
Late last month, Erie County Legislature approved a resolution urging its Public Works staff to include bicyclists and pedestrians in all new street construction and reconstruction. Despite support from most of the legislature, The Buffalo News reports
the Public Works Commissioner is not enthused by the new policy. The resolution complements similar legislation passed in Buffalo, the county seat, earlier this year.

**MO Cities Adopt Ordinances**
The cities of DeSoto and Ferguson, Missouri worked with local active living advocate Trailnet to adopt Complete Streets ordinances this month. Both cities view the policies as a solution to the obesity epidemic, as to tool to increase independence of the aging population, as a way to ensure safe routes for children walking or biking to school. Read both policies online: DeSoto (pdf), Ferguson (pdf)

**Greenville, SC Resolves to Complete Streets**
At the November 24th City Council meeting, the City of Greenville adopted a complete streets resolution (pdf). The new policy is an important step in the City's Bicycle Friendly Community campaign and reinforces its commitment to improving travel conditions and choices for people of all ages and abilities.

**Federal Policy Update**
Washington DC has been abuzz with talk of a stimulus bill with transportation funding. Trouble is, the bill currently discussed would simply send a big chunk of money to the state Departments of Transportation, and could end up building a lot of ‘incomplete’ streets. Additional highway lanes, often planned years ago without provision for other road users, threaten bicycle and pedestrian safety (see news section, below). The National Complete Streets Coalition has been working with Transportation for America and other partners to ask Congress to ensure that any infrastructure spending looks to the future and gives local governments a shot at using the money for complete streets, bicycling, pedestrian, and transit projects.

With Congress adjourned for the remainder of the year, it is an excellent time to schedule an in-district meeting with your representative. As a constituent, your issues and concerns speak louder than we can on your behalf. Call your representative’s district office and ask to schedule a meeting. Use our talking points (doc) to get started! Don’t forget that you can also write letters to your representative. We have a simple online letter ready for you to customize and send.

The National Complete Streets Coalition is preparing to re-introduce our complete streets bills in the U.S. House and Senate early in the new Congress, advocating on both sides of the aisle for their passage, and positioning ourselves for a major win in the 2009 transportation bill authorization. But we need your help to make 2009 a very big year. Today, the Coalition asks that you make a tax-deductible, year-end donation in support of our campaign. Our Coalition's work is supported primarily by our membership. Through donations made by national groups, local organizations, progressive consulting firms, and individuals, we are making complete streets a reality. Read more about our accomplishments and make a donation today!
COALITION NEWS

MN Workshops Report Back
The National Complete Streets Coalition and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota have been busy in their campaign to complete the streets across the State of Minnesota. In the first week of December, national experts in transportation policy and engineering lead workshops in Ramsey County, Hennepin County, and the City of Rochester. These initial workshops attracted engineers, planners, policy makers, and elected officials, and covered the range of complete streets, from a basic understanding of the principles to the development of policies to the successful implementation strategies.

What’s to Come for California’s Complete Streets Law
In its Cool Connections blog, Complete Streets Partner Fehr & Peers, reprints “Complete Streets - completing the vision” from the latest newsletter (pdf) of the Northern Section of the California Chapter of APA. The article discusses California’s new state law, what its implementation can mean, and how complete streets can incorporate a variety of other visions for public space.

Streetfilms Features Boulder, CO
Having recently been awarded with a platinum-level designation by the Bicycle Friendly Community program, the City of Boulder is featured in a several recent Streetfilms.

Safety Fact Sheet Available
Our updated safety fact sheet is now available to download and distribute. Use it at public meetings, to share with elected officials, and spread the word on how complete streets improve safety for everyone. Other fact sheets are also offered.

COMPLETE STREETS NEWS

Deaths on Incomplete Streets in Georgia, Minnesota
Altamesa Walker led her four young children across a major five-lane thoroughfare in suburban Atlanta early morning on November 17, according to MyFox Atlanta. The family had missed their bus and was attempting to cross the street to catch a different bus. However, there is no crosswalk between the stops, which are several hundred feet from the nearest intersection with crosswalks, and the road has no median. Walker's four-year-old daughter was fatally struck by a car. An opinion in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution calls for safer streets through education and improvements to the built environment.

An SUV struck and killed an 86-year-old man as he walked in the crosswalk of a busy highway early Wednesday while on his way to daily mass. The Star Tribune reports that Jerome Meuwissen of Chaska, MN was crossing Hwy 41 at 2nd St. Meuwissen was walking to Guardian Angels Catholic Church, less than two blocks from where he was hit and a few blocks from his home, said the Rev. Paul Jarvis. Older parishioners who live
on the east side of Hwy 41, where Meuwissen lived, often cannot walk to church because of the speeding traffic, Jarvis said.

A recently released report from the CDC names falls and motor vehicle accidents as the leading causes of unintentional injury and death among American children and teens. Most of the deaths due to unintentional injury (60%) were traffic-related, involving pedestrians, cyclists, or occupants of motor vehicles.

"Big Green" Wants Complete Streets
Twenty-nine of the country's largest environmental groups have released Transition to Green (pdf), a comprehensive list of actions and policies for President-Elect Obama to take on. In the first 100 days, they ask for the economic stimulus package to include public and active transportation infrastructure and maintenance of bridges to roads to be consistent with a complete streets policy, as well as a adoption of a national complete streets policy in the next transportation bill. Read more about the transportation element on NRDC's Switchboard blog.

Audit Finds Baton Rouge, LA Is "Out of Step"
A recently completed audit of the city-parish's Department of Public Works specifically recommends the adoption and implementation of complete streets, according to The Advocate. The department's processes, policies, and practices were reviewed and analyzed for compatibility with the established principles of smart growth. The greatest impact DPW has on achieving those principles is through its roadway design, according to the audit's author, DPW transportation coordinator Melissa Guilbeau. However, Public Works Director Peter Newkirk remains unconverted, stating that the department's position that accommodating pedestrians and cyclists is costly and their needs are secondary to moving automobiles reflects the community's desires.

Quick Takes: Complete Streets Talk Around the Country

- **Asheville, NC** - Activate Asheville, YMCA’s new initiative in Asheville, NC to promote healthy communities, recommends implementation of a complete streets policy in the region. (via the Citizen-Times)
- **Howard County, MD** - The planning staff is recommending a complete streets amendment to the general plan as a way to achieve multimodal transportation system. (available from the Department of Planning and Zoning (pdf))
- **Charlotte, NC** - An editorial in the Charlotte Observer delineates eight ways to make cities "shine." Alex Marshall and Neal Pierce take their cues from the City of Charlotte, including its dedication to complete streets. (via the Charlotte Observer)
- **Raleigh, NC** - The manager of the Public Works Department's Transportation Services Division recently spoke with community members on complete streets and how Raleigh is working to make them a reality. An update of the
comprehensive plan is likely to include complete streets philosophy. (via the Lineberry Alliance)

- **Maui, HI** - In advocating incorporation of health goals into the General Plan, the Nutrition & Physical Activity Coalition is recommending adoption of a complete streets policy as part of an effort to create long-lasting environments that invited physical activity. (via the Maui News)

- **Honolulu, HI** - State Department of Health hosted a workshop for elected officials on active living policies on the state and county level related to the built environment and public health. Mark Fenton, former editor-at-large of WALKING Magazine and host of the PBS series America's Walking, recommended implementation of a complete streets policy in the state, using the recently passed law in California as an example. (via the Hawaii Reporter)

- **Portland, OR** - As the 2009 legislative session begins, Governor Ted Kulongoski will propose an amendment to 1971's "bike bill," increasing the required minimum percentage of state highway funds to spent on bicycle and pedestrian projects from 1% to 1.5%. (via Bike Portland)

- **Tacoma, WA** - In updates to the City's comprehensive plan, officials and staff embrace smart growth strategies and include complete streets in several proposed policies. (via the News Tribune)

**RESOURCES**

- Conference Presentations and Webcast Available
- Photos, videos, and presentations from Pro Walk Pro Bike
- Presentations from Rail~Volution 2008
- Materials from the complete streets panel at 1000 Friends of Connecticut's Statewide Smart Growth Conference, via the Tri-State Transportation Campaign
- A LISC webcast on complete streets and safe routes to school, available as downloadable presentation and audio files and as streaming video/audio.

**Safe Routes to School: Improves the Built Environment**

In this recently released report (pdf), Safe Routes to School National Partnership focuses on case studies describing how ten states (California, District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, New York, Oklahoma, Texas and Virginia) are awarding their SRTS federal funds to support improved infrastructure such as sidewalks, bike lanes, pathways, improved intersections, traffic calming, and more.

**Active Transportation and Obesity Report**

New research illustrates the health benefits of regular biking, walking, or taking public transportation, reports The Associated Press. Researchers David Bassett and John Pucher compared active transportation and obesity rates in Europe, North America, and Australia, finding that countries with the highest levels of active transportation generally had the lowest obesity rates. Europeans walked more than Americans (382 versus 140 km per person per year) and bicycled more (188 versus 40 km per person per year) in
2000. Walking and bicycling are far more common in European countries than in the United States, Australia, and Canada, and active transportation is inversely related to obesity in these countries. Although the results do not prove causality, they suggest that active transportation could be one of the factors that explain international differences in obesity rates. The full report, "Walking, Cycling, and Obesity Rates in Europe, North America, and Australia," is available for purchase from the Journal of Physical Activity and Health.

QUOTES

"People always think about the cost of something like this, without thinking of the cost of not acting."
- Erie County Majority Leader Maria R. Whyte, in the Buffalo News