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**COMPLETE STREETS POLICY PROGRESS**
Doña Ana County, NM Adopts Policy
On December 8, Doña Ana County became the fourth jurisdiction in the Las Cruces region to adopt a complete streets policy. The County Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of the resolution, which adopted a series of guiding principles so that “every public right-of-way shall be planned, designed, constructed, and maintained so that each resident of Doña Ana County will have transportation options to safely and conveniently travel to their destinations.”
Combined with policies from the City of Las Cruces, the Town of Mesilla, and the Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, this policy will make a real difference in ensuring networks of complete streets throughout the region.
**Topeka, KS Passes Resolution**
By an 8-1 vote, the Topeka City Council approved a resolution to integrate and implement complete streets in future construction or reconstruction of City roadways “where financially feasible.” Councilman Larry Wolgast, the resolution’s sponsor, said, “The important point is that our transportation plan will be designed not for moving vehicles as quickly as possible, but by taking into consideration all who use streets.” Several residents spoke up in favor of the policy, building on a months-long effort to bring complete streets to Kansas. Topeka’s efforts had hit a snag a few months ago with a decision that a new transportation tax would not be used to fund what were termed ‘Complete Streets Elements,’ but the new resolution does not make that distinction, instead calling for a guiding principle of ‘promoting a safe network of access for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities’. Topeka’s resolution is the first in the state.

**Michigan Resolutions Introduced**
State Representative Jon Switalski introduced a resolution expressing support for active transportation infrastructure to promote walking and bicycling and to prevent childhood obesity. The resolution contains language urging county and local road agencies to follow complete streets principles. Rep. Pam Byrnes also introduced a companion House Concurrent Resolution. The Michigan Complete Streets Coalition urges locals to ask their representatives to support the resolutions.

**Indiana MPO to Consider Policy**
The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission’s Mitch Barloga introduced a draft complete streets policy last Tuesday. In introducing the policy, he noted the growth in complete streets policies in the region, including a bill to be introduced in the Indiana General Assembly in 2010. One issue under debate is whether the final version of the MPO policy will penalize projects that don’t meet complete streets standards. The agency’s Transportation Planning Committee has expressed some hesitance, calling for greater public education. A final draft policy is expected in January, addressing the Committee’s comments, and Barloga hopes for final approval of the Commission in February.

**Baltimore Hears Resolution**
A complete streets resolution was introduced at last week’s Baltimore City Council meeting. The resolution would direct the Department of Transportation and Department of Planning to plan for, design, and construct complete streets and incorporate complete streets principles into all applicable plans, manuals, rules, regulations, and programs. The resolution was referred to the DOT and Planning Commission for reports due in January and March. (http://legistar.baltimorecitycouncil.com/detailreport/?key=4611)

**Quick Takes: Policy Progress**

- **Manistique, MI:** A walkability audit, conducted by the Strategic Alliance for Health Coalition and walkability expert Dan Burden, has generated interest in developing a Complete Streets policy to encourage active forms of transportation. *(Daily Press)* (http://www.dailypress.net/page/content.detail/id/516071.html)

- **Washington:** The Transportation Choices Coalition plans to expand its complete streets efforts next year by campaigning for state-level complete streets legislation. (Seattle Transit Blog) (http://seattletransitblog.com/2009/12/07/op-ed-what-to-expect-in-olympia/)

- **Spokane, WA:** Complete Streets Spokane, coalition of local advocates, is developing a complete streets policy campaign. The group cites a number of reasons to pursue a policy, including safety, health, economic development, and improved livability. Their efforts could capitalize on growing political will. New council member Jon Snyder spoke to the *Pacific Northwest Inlander* about his transportation goals for the city, including a complete streets policy. “It costs the city money not having this complete streets policy,” he said. (http://transportationchoicescoalition.blogspot.com/2009/12/complete-our-streets.html) (http://www.inlander.com/content/newscommentary_interview_new_spokane_city_council_member_jon_snyder)

**Federal Policy Update**

The health care debate consuming the Senate includes some policy of note for complete streets advocates. The Senate bill includes a Prevention and Public Health Fund that would fund community transformation grants (p. 1203, Sec 4201), grants the Center for Disease Control would award on a competitive basis to states, local governments and non-profits for disease prevention activities. Activities that could be funded include infrastructure that supports active living, which would include projects to create complete streets. Stay up to date and take action to support prevention policies in the health care bill by visiting the website of Coalition partner the Trust for America's Health. (http://healthyamericans.org/policy/)

The House and Senate are anxiously trying to wrap up and leave town for the holidays but not before they address the need to extend the current transportation law that is set to expire on December 18th. The House has included extensions in two bills they plan to vote on before leaving DC. There is a two-month extension in the Defense Appropriations bill that will need to
be passed by the House and Senate before Friday. The House plans to vote on a new jobs bill before leaving this week as well that includes transportation funds.

The Complete Streets Act of 2009 gained three new co-sponsors this month with Senator Gillibrand [NY] and Representatives Schauer [MI-7] and Ellison [MN-5] signing on to the bill. Make sure your Members of Congress are on the record in support of complete streets by taking action today!

COALITION NEWS
Year End Donation Campaign Launched
The Coalition launched its year-end giving campaign early last week with a generous dollar-to-dollar match from Toole Design Group. Many communities and advocates depend on the resources and knowledge of the Coalition to further local efforts, and we’re establishing close ties with the U.S. Department of Transportation. To best take advantage of this historic opportunity to become a partner in transportation work nationwide, the Coalition needs additional resources. We’ve set our year-end goal at $5,000 and are nearly a third of the way there. Early donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar by our newest Complete Streets Partner, Toole Design Group. Please consider donating today!

Charlotte Wins EPA Award
On December 1st, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded Charlotte, NC’s Urban Street Design Guidelines – a model in complete streets planning and design – with the coveted National Award for Smart Growth Achievement in Policies and Regulations. The Guidelines use a six-step planning process that is taught in our Complete Streets Implementation Workshops. They promote sustainable development patterns and streets that are more pleasant and safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. Read more about the award on our blog.

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NACTO Launches ‘Cities for Cycling’
On Tuesday December 8, Janette Sadik-Khan, New York City’s Transportation Commissioner and President of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), announced a new initiative – Cites for Cycling – to promote and implement bicycle best practices in American cities. Flanked by Representative Earl Blumenauer of Portland, OR and Talking Heads front man David Byrne, Sadik-Khan announced NACTO’s plan to create new documents that reflect emerging best design practices for urbanized areas at a faster pace than traditional national guidance; several first versions are available on the initiative’s website. Though still in its earliest phases, the initiative by Complete Streets Bronze Partner NACTO will surely become an essential tool in many communities.

COMPLETE STREETS NEWS
Citrus Heights Residents Want Complete Streets
Walt Seifert, Executive Director of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates, sent us an account of a public workshop held in Citrus Heights, California last month. When discussing the addition of complete streets elements in the general plan update, the tenor quickly moved from “Do we really want complete streets in Citrus Heights?” to “We are a leader in complete streets!” Read more about the meeting on our blog.

Texas Moves Toward Creating Streets for People
The Texas Department of Transportation became the first state DOT to adopt the Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities, written by the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Congress for the New Urbanism in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency. The document provides guidance in creating streets for all users that are consistent with the surrounding community. As NRDC’s Kaid Benfield points out, the result should be more and better sidewalks, more appropriate vehicle speeds, safer and more frequent pedestrian crossings, landscaping and stormwater management, and safer intersections – complete streets. Ov er on Citiwire, Columnist Scott Polikov provides context into TxDOT’s decision and how other states are beginning to move toward “sustainable development patterns, rather than just mitigating traffic congestion.”

Continued Coverage of Pedestrian Safety Report
Communities around the country continue to respond to the Dangerous by Design report and the national epidemic of preventable pedestrian deaths. These articles, from prominent publications like TIME Magazine as well as local newspapers across the country, continue the positive trend of highlighting a key point of the report: that in many cases the root of the
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problem is in road design. *TIME* highlighted the dismal conditions in Florida, home to the four most dangerous metro areas in the country for pedestrians. Floridians, however, are starting to take action: in **Southwest Florida**, for example, cities like St. Petersburg and Punta Gorda have started repairing their streets to make them more accessible for walkers and bicyclists, and Lee County just passed a resolution in support of complete streets. In **New Jersey**, where pedestrians represent nearly 20 percent of traffic deaths, a recent editorial argues that pushing for complete streets “is not asking too much in the name of public safety. North Jersey is one of the most densely populated parts of the country. But just because it’s crowded doesn’t mean it cannot also be made safe: Safe for those who drive, and safe for those who walk.” And **Buffalo, NY**, which gets a relatively safe ranking, isn’t content to rest on its laurels: complete streets legislation passed in 2007 is helping to ensure all streets are safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. 

(http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1942986-1,00.html)
(http://www.buffalorising.com/2009/12/dangerous‐by‐design‐a‐pedestrian‐hazard‐study.html)

**Three Girls Die on Incomplete Street: Viridiana Roa, sisters Ana and Jacqueline Segura**

Three girls, aged 12, 14, and 16, were killed last Friday while trying to cross a street in their neighborhood in Terrell, TX. Newly constructed, State Route 34 slices through a community filled with residential neighborhoods and local shopping opportunities, yet fails to include crosswalks or crossing signals, or adequate lighting. Because the new highway is still under final review, a speed limit has not been set for it; drivers must only adhere to the Texas state speed limit of 70 mph. An editorial in the *Dallas Morning News* said highway planning failed the girls, citing the extremely high speed limit, lack of safe pedestrian infrastructure, and the design of roads that cater solely to cars as key contributors to the girls' deaths.


**Quick Takes: Complete Streets Talk Around the Country**

- **Huntsville, AL**: A recent town hall meeting to discuss “greening” the city included plenty of chatter about adopting a complete streets policy. In making the streets safer for all users, advocates argue, more would travel by foot, bike, or bus. Advocates have jumped on this opportunity by creating an online complete streets petition. (*Huntsville Times*)
(http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/adopt‐complete‐streets‐policy‐in‐city‐of‐huntsville‐alabama)

- **Bakersfield, CA**: Bike Bakersfield’s Robert Smith cited California’s Complete Streets law as impetus for the city to shift from auto-centric street design to a model that considers all users, including low-income individuals. Street design is a hot topic in the city after *Dangerous by Design* ranked Bakersfield as the worst in the state for pedestrian injury and death from automobiles. (*Bakersfield Californian*)
• **Grayslake, IL:** (In)Complete Streets - a report from the League of Illinois Bicyclists that grades recent road projects - garnered more media attention late last month. The Grayslake Review visited a number of locations where streets are not designed with bicyclists and pedestrians in mind - despite a state law requiring it. ([http://www.bikelib.org/other-advocacy/complete-streets-audits/incomplete-streets-report/](http://www.bikelib.org/other-advocacy/complete-streets-audits/incomplete-streets-report/)) ([http://www.pioneerlocal.com/grayslake/news/1900664,bicyclists-pedestrians-danger-112509.article](http://www.pioneerlocal.com/grayslake/news/1900664,bicyclists-pedestrians-danger-112509.article))

• **Monroe, LA:** Resident Ann Daigle sent a letter to the News-Star editorial board expressing her disappointment that a recent road project focused mostly on beautification, with little concern for slowing speeds or improving conditions for transit riders and bicyclists. ([http://www.thenewsstar.com/article/20091212/OPINION03/912120314](http://www.thenewsstar.com/article/20091212/OPINION03/912120314))

• **Lansing, MI:** Winter’s arrival brings trouble for resident Stuart Reynolds, who walks to work every day. Despite a clear city ordinance requiring residents and businesses to clear their sidewalks of snow and ice, Reynolds finds very few comply. As a result, his commute is often icy and dangerous. *(Lansing State Journal)* ([http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/article/20091212/COLUMNISTS09/912120322/1016/COLUMNISTS09/Schneider-Pedestrian-gets-heated-up-over-perilous-wintry-walk](http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/article/20091212/COLUMNISTS09/912120322/1016/COLUMNISTS09/Schneider-Pedestrian-gets-heated-up-over-perilous-wintry-walk))

• **Philadelphia, PA:** Residents were overwhelmingly supportive of recent road diets on Pine and Spruce Streets in Philadelphia, adding much-needed east-west bicycling routes and promoting safety for pedestrians. Bicycle use has nearly doubled while automobile traffic was not significantly delayed. *(Philadelphia Inquirer)* ([http://www.philly.com/philly/news/breaking/79064347.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/news/breaking/79064347.html))

• **Dallas, TX:** Recognizing the current paradigm shift occurring to “humanize” our cities, Russ Skies of the Congress for the New Urbanism highlighted the recent completion of the Main Street Garden in Dallas as a step in the right direction. He recommends the use of Complete Streets and other practices as inexpensive tools to further transform our cities in to places and spaces that are safe for all users, not just drivers. *(Dallas Morning News)* ([http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/opinion/viewpoints/stories/DN-sikes_21edi.State.Edition1.15e1085.html](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/opinion/viewpoints/stories/DN-sikes_21edi.State.Edition1.15e1085.html))

**RESOURCES**

**Building a Coalition for Complete Streets**

Members of one of the most successful local complete streets coalitions in the country – Sacramento’s Partnership for Active Communities – document their process, successes, and lessons learned in a recent article in the *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*. ([http://www.ajpm-online.net/article/S0749-3797%2809%2900569-8/abstract](http://www.ajpm-online.net/article/S0749-3797%2809%2900569-8/abstract))

**New MUTCD Released**
The new Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices was issued today (Dec. 16th), and it includes a number of improvements in line with Complete Streets principles, such as using a slower walking speed to set pedestrian signal timing and requiring use of pedestrian countdown timers. The manual sets the standards for road safety throughout the country.
(http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/)

Active Travel Reduces Greenhouse Gas, Improves Public Health
A recent article in The Lancet emphasizes the link between improved public health and policies that increase the appeal and safety of active urban travel. Researchers found the benefits of reduction in CO2 from motor vehicles through lowering emissions alone was not as effective in improving health as increased amounts of active transportation and decreased use of automobiles. EPA’s recent ruling that greenhouse gas emissions endanger public health bolsters this finding. Motor vehicles are the number two contributor to total greenhouse gas emissions in the United States.
(http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2809%2961714-1/abstract)
(http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment.html)

Motorized Traffic Discourages Biking, Walking
A June article in Injury Prevention reveals how fast, heavy car traffic makes non-drivers feel unsafe and discourages walking and bicycling. Researchers concluded that interventions to reduce traffic speed and volume are likely to promote walking and bicycling and thus result in public health gains.
(http://injuryprevention.bmj.com/content/15/6/369.short?rss=1)

Walkable Streets Resources
New Urban News has created a one-stop location for news, resources, and case studies on designing walkable, complete streets.
(http://www.newurbannews.com/walkablestreets.html)

QUOTES
“If it were truly the department of transportation, it should be about all forms of transportation, not just through-put of cars.”
– Illinois State Rep. Elaine Nekritz in the Grayslake Review, as she questioned whether Illinois DOT is doing enough to implement its complete streets policy
(http://www.pioneerlocal.com/grayslake/news/1900664,bicyclists-pedestrians-danger-112509.article)

“What costs us money is when we have to go in and put in a bike lane or a sidewalk or some sort of traffic calming enhancement years later. It has to be done — like they’re proposing to do it up on Lincoln — all at once. It costs the city money not having this complete streets policy. We don’t want that stuff piecemeal. We need to do it comprehensively.”
– Spokane, WA Councilman Jon Snyder in the Pacific Northwest Inlander, on the need for a Complete Streets policy
(http://www.inlander.com/content/newscommentary_interview_new_spokane_city_council_member_jon_snyder)