

## Complete Streets Policies

Attached please find a somewhat “watered-down” version of the sample resolution the Planning Commission reviewed last month. This version does not contain language that binds the Planning Commission or Council to any specific action, but lets current and future city boards, commissions and councils know that the “complete streets” methodology is encouraged in the design of future circulation improvements.

From August:

Attached please find a brochure from the Conservation Alabama Foundation which outlines a program called “Complete Streets.” This program is a joint effort by Conservation Alabama, the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, Jefferson County and the National Complete Streets Coalition to engage local Alabama cities in the adoption of Complete Streets policies.

The brochure describes what types of policies are involved and how the adoption of such policies can benefit the City and the region. You may notice that the City of Mountain Brook is already implementing strategies that closely align with the policies described in the brochure.

At this time staff is asking the Planning Commission to review the attached sample resolutions and consider adopting a similar Planning Commission resolution and/or encouraging the City Council to adopt one as well.

Other local Alabama cities that have passed Complete Streets resolutions:

- Birmingham
- Bessemer
- Homewood
- Midfield
- Sylvan Springs

Local Alabama cities that are expected to pass a Complete Streets resolution in the near future:

- Adamsville
- Fultondale
- Irondale
- Pleasant Grove

**Complete Streets Resolution  
City of Mountain Brook  
Planning Commission**

**WHEREAS**, “Complete Streets” are defined as streets that are designed to accommodate all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists; and

**WHEREAS**, “Complete Streets” can include a range of elements to accommodate all users, including, but not limited to, sidewalks, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, signage, crosswalks, pedestrian control signalization, bus pull outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, roundabouts, and other traffic calming measures; and

**WHEREAS**, The implementation of “Complete Streets” methodology may vary depending on the context, but should always be guided by the principle that streets should promote multiple transportation options for all people; and

**WHEREAS**, “Complete Streets” supports local community health efforts to create more opportunities for physical activity, and thus reduce obesity and improve long-term health outcomes; and

**WHEREAS**, “Complete Streets” can spark economic development by helping to create walkable, vibrant communities where businesses can thrive; and

**WHEREAS**, “Complete Streets” can play a role in improving air quality by reducing traffic congestion, both by promoting alternative forms of transportation and by helping to improve traffic flow; and

**WHEREAS**, the people of the City of Mountain Brook have expressed a strong desire for increased transportation options, including walking and cycling; and

**WHEREAS**, Whenever practicable, “Complete Streets” principles should guide both new and retrofit projects in the City of Mountain Brook.

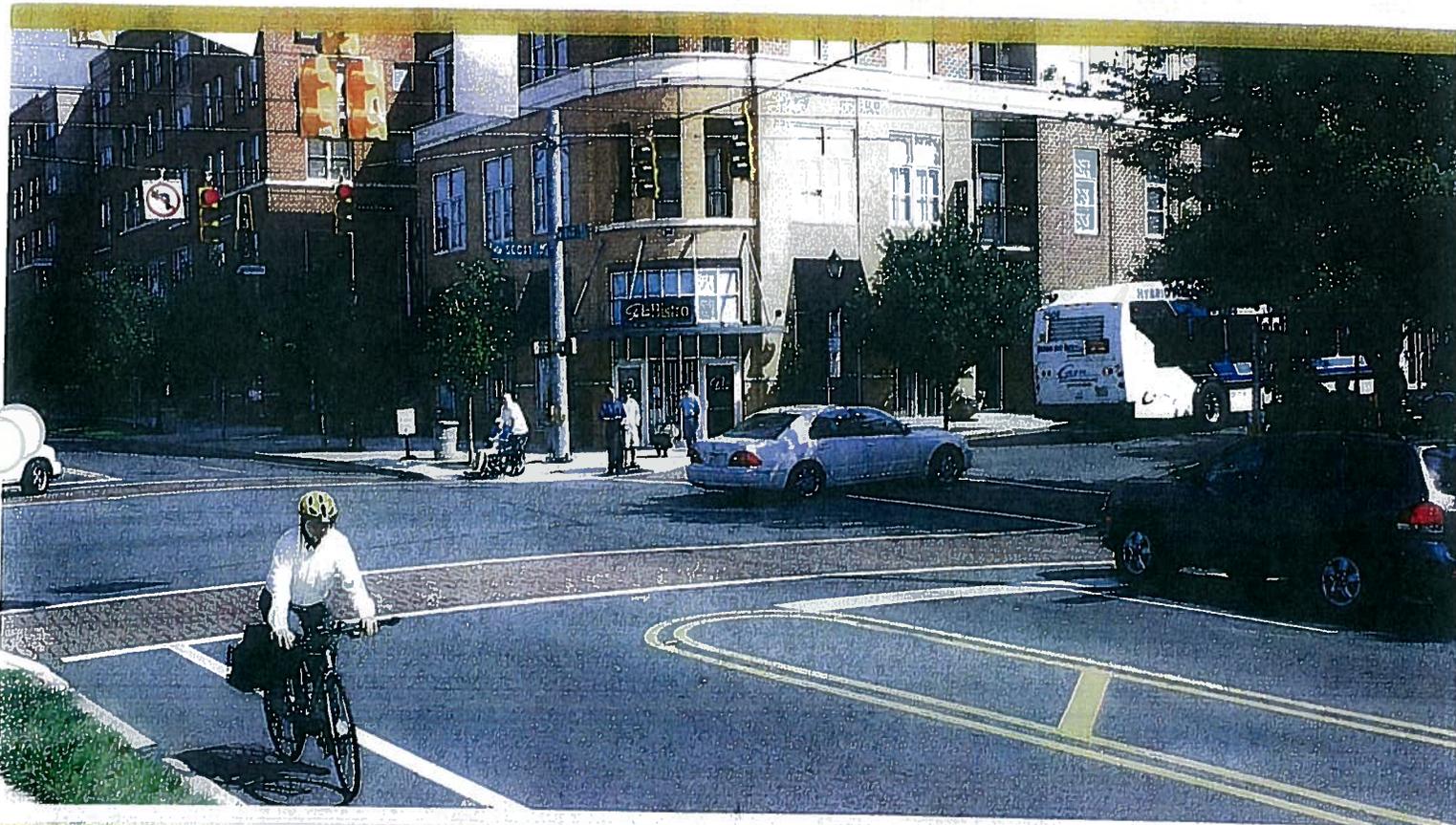
**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Mountain Brook Planning Commission supports a Complete Streets approach for the City of Mountain Brook to enhance transportation options and to improve quality of life for its residents. The Planning Commission urges the City Council to continue to adopt and implement policies and practices that will support the following:

- Serves as a guide to the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the City’s roadways, and promotes safe and convenient access and travel for all users and people of all abilities;
- Creates a comprehensive and integrated transportation network;
- May apply to both new and retrofit projects;
- Is incorporated where practicable;
- Recognizes the need for flexibility and identifies “Complete Streets” solutions that fit the context of the community.



CONSERVATION  
ALABAMA  
FOUNDATION

## Let's Complete Alabama's Streets



East Blvd. in Charlotte, NC | Credit: Charlotte, NC Department of Transportation

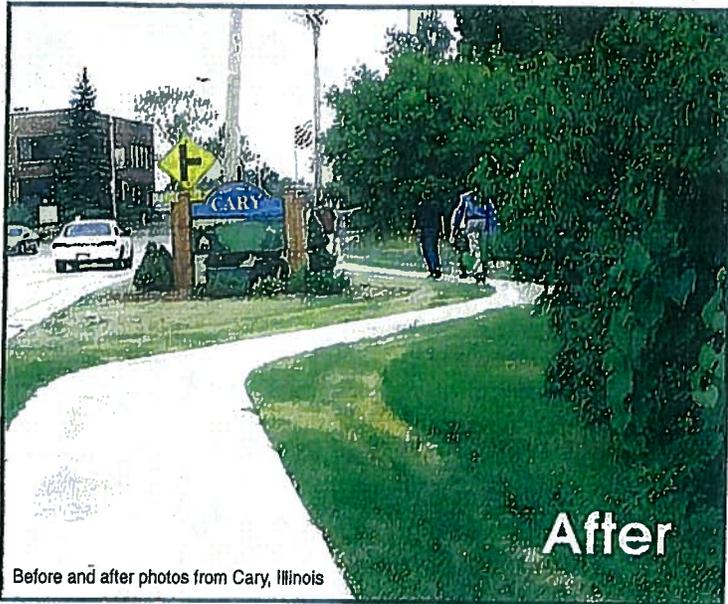
a proven, cost-effective way to improve safety  
and accessibility for everyone using the roads

**HEALTH  
ACTION**  
IT TAKES COMMUNITY



During difficult financial times, local governments are looking for ways to grow their economies while protecting public health and the environment. Local governments are looking at new, innovative ways to approach public infrastructure investment. Some of the most important infrastructure a city, county, state can invest in is in the transportation sector. Across the country, government leaders are realizing that having roads and transit corridors solely focused on vehicles limits economic opportunity, puts the environment at risk, and contributes to decreased public health. There is a new trend toward completing the streets – making sure existing and new roads are safer, more livable, and welcoming to everyone.

A complete streets policy ensures that the entire right of way is routinely designed and operated to enable safe access for all users.



Before and after photos from Cary, Illinois

“Complete Streets” are a proven, cost-effective way to improve safety and accessibility for everyone using the roads – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and people of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets provide more transportation choices; encourage healthier and active living; and contribute to the quality of life in neighborhoods by incorporating economic, social, and mobility functions into their design.

## WWW.COMPLETESTREETS.ORG

- Provides information on the basics of complete streets, including the many types of complete streets, frequently asked questions, an atlas of all current policies, fact sheets on the many benefits of complete streets and policy implementation, and links to a number of articles, presentations, resources, and guidance.
- Assists in collaboration with national and regional partners.
- Enables you to share information on your organization's efforts.
- Connects you with leading national and local organizations working on complete streets.
- Email newsletter connects you to the key complete streets highlights sent out every month.



## Complete Streets Designs

Each Complete Street is unique because each roadway has its own challenges and needs. Common features include sidewalks, bike lanes, wide shoulders, plenty of crossing opportunities, bus shelters, dedicated bus lanes, curb cuts, accessible bus stops, and audible pedestrian signals.<sup>1</sup>

1. [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org) - Complete Streets FAQ  
 2. 2035 Birmingham Regional Transportation Plan - page 3-34  
 3. [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org) - Policy Elements

# Complete Streets Benefits

## ECONOMIC:

- Improves economic vitality of neighborhoods
- Increases property values
- Increases foot traffic for businesses
- Makes efficient use of existing infrastructure
- Stimulates mixed land-use
- Improves access to public transit

## HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE:

- Encourages increased physical activity, which can help reduce obesity and health problems that can result from obesity (for example, cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure and diabetes)
- Improves neighborhood access to parks and greenways
- Contributes to communities being more livable and walkable
- Offers more opportunities for walking and bicycling
- Decreases safety concerns by putting more “eyes on the street”
- Increases transportation choices for getting to schools, grocery stores, community services, work, public transit, etc.

## ENVIRONMENTAL:

- Improves air quality
- Reduces carbon footprint
- Encourages reuse of existing infrastructure – in-fill development
- Preserves open space
- Reduces traffic congestion



Top Photo:  
Route 1, Virginia | Credit: Cheryl Cort, Coalition for Smarter Growth

Bottom Photo:  
University Place, Washington | Credit: Dan Burden, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute

# Complete Streets Policies

Complete Streets policies identify solutions to help communities achieve a balanced approach to maximizing transportation investments. Policies require that new road projects and road repair projects accommodate all road users. Effective policies routinely integrate the needs of all road users into transportation planning, design and construction processes.<sup>2</sup>

Typically a Complete Streets policy includes a plan that:

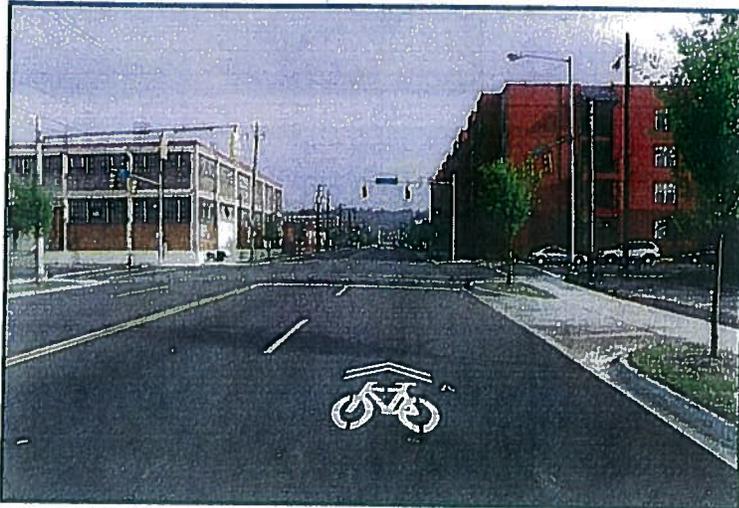
- Identifies a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets;
- Defines “all users” to include pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit users of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses, and automobiles;
- Outlines a comprehensive, integrated, diverse, and connected network for all modes of transportation;
- Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right-of-way;
- Specifies steps for implementation of the policy; and
- Offers guidance for the procurement and provision of financial investments that can help achieve balanced and sustainable growth and create livable communities.<sup>3</sup>

lected officials can adopt a Complete Streets policy by resolution, ordinance, and executive order. In addition, MPO’s can adopt policies that are included in planning documents as statements of intent for project sponsors to give due consideration to Complete Streets and the routine accommodation of bicycles, pedestrians, citizens with disabilities, and transit supportive infrastructure in project planning and design.

## Costs of Complete Streets

Existing transportation budgets can incorporate Complete Streets projects with little or no funding through re-prioritizing projects and allocating funds to projects that improve overall mobility.

Complete Streets allow for optimal use of limited resources – money, personnel, fuel, land, public health, and the environment.



14th Street, Birmingham  
Credit: Ryan Parker, United Way of Central Alabama

## National Cities with Complete Streets Policies

Charlotte | Chicago | Louisville  
Nashville | New York City

## Alabama Cities with Complete Streets resolutions include:

Chickasaw | Daphne | Fairhope  
Florence | Orange Beach | Prattville

## Alabama Cities in the process of adopting Complete Streets policies include:

Huntsville | Mobile | Montgomery

### For more information contact:

Conservation Alabama Foundation – [www.conservationalabamafoundation.org](http://www.conservationalabamafoundation.org)

Greater Birmingham Regional Planning Commission – [www.rpcgb.gov](http://www.rpcgb.gov)

Jefferson County Department of Land Planning & Development Services – [www.jeffco.jccal.org](http://www.jeffco.jccal.org)

National Complete Streets Coalition – [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org)

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