

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMPLETE STREETS CODES AND POLICIES

NYPF Conference

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Assisting communities since 2009





Katherine Ember, AICP
Founding Principal

Planning4Places is a woman-owned business specializing in community planning. We offer services in land use and transportation planning, public engagement, and disaster preparedness and planning.





AGENDA

Introduction

Pedestrian-supportive zoning

Biking-supportive zoning

Transit-supportive zoning

Design

Complete Streets policies

Real world examples

Wrap-up

INTRODUCTION





On average, of all the daily trips taken in the U.S., 52% of all trips were less than 3 miles, with 28% of trips less than a mile.

- 2021 Bureau of Transportation Statistics

[FOTW #1230, March 21, 2022: More than Half of all Daily Trips Were Less than Three Miles in 2021 | Department of Energy](#)

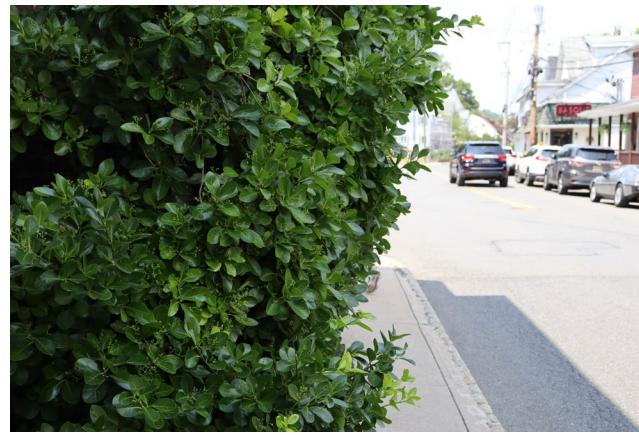
WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?



Streets for Everyone

“Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enables safe access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.”

Source: [Complete Streets - Smart Growth America](#)



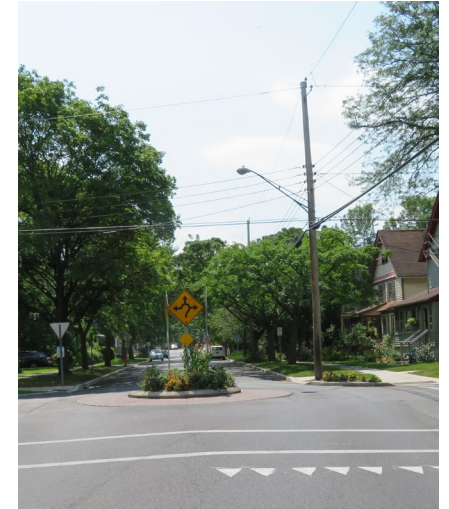
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BEFORE?

Sidewalks with overgrown landscaping, crosswalks to nowhere, and bicycle racks are technically there but...

What could be done to make sure this doesn't happen?

TRAFFIC CALMING & ROAD DIETS

- Reducing the number of travel lanes or removing a parking lane calms traffic and allows for more options within the available right-of-way such as:
 - Wider Sidewalks
 - Adding a bike lane
 - Adding a transit lane
 - Parklets (outdoor dining)
 - Adding bump-outs



PARKING REGULATIONS

- Shared Parking
- Less Curb Cuts
- No Parking Minimums
- Parking Maximums
- Bike Parking

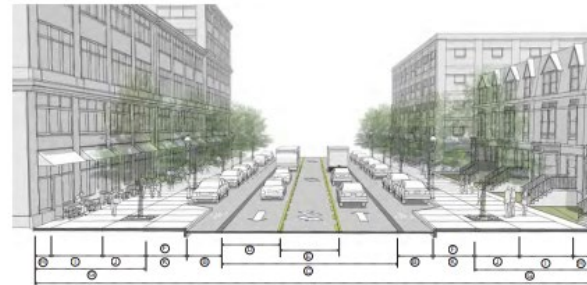


FORM-BASED CODES

- Form-Based Codes focus on form and function rather than use alone
- Addresses the streetscape and looks at the public realm
- Addresses the transportation system and uses a grid street system (no cul-de-sacs/dead ends)
 - Provides standards for different street types

DECEMBER 2016

G. Mixed-Use Avenue



General

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Traffic volume range | 1,500 to 30,000 VPD |
| Target speed | 25 to 30 MPH |
| ⊙ Right-of-way width | |
| Two travel lanes (min/preferred) | 58/73' |
| Two travel lanes, plus one turning lane (min/preferred) | 68/83' |
| Four travel lanes (min/preferred) | 78/93' |
| Four travel lanes, plus one turning lane (min/preferred) | 88/103' |
| Driveway access | Permitted, but not encouraged |
| Pedestrian facility type | Sidewalk |
| ⊙ Bicycle facility type (preferred) | Shared or bike lane/cycle track |
| Freight movement (generally) | Local truck route |

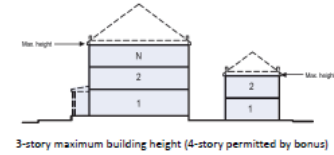
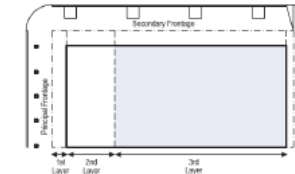
Vehicular Way

| | |
|---|----------|
| ⊙ Number of travel lanes | 2 to 4 |
| ⊙ Travel lane width (min/max) | 10/12' |
| Median | Optional |
| ⊙ Turning lane | Optional |
| Curb Parking | Required |
| ⊙ Parallel curb parking width (min/max) | 7/8' |

Pedestrian Way

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| ⊙ Total pedestrian way width (min/preferred) | 12/19.5' |
| ⊙ Frontage zone (min/preferred) | 2/3' |
| ⊙ Throughway zone (min/preferred) | 6/9' |
| ⊙ Edge and furnishing zones (min/preferred) | 4/7.5' |
| ⊙ Extension zone, if provided (max) | Width of the parking lane |

| Building Placement & Parking Lot Placement | |
|--|--|
| Setback | |
| Front | 0-10 ft or 15 ft with outdoor dining/plaza |
| Side | 5 ft |
| Rear | 5 ft |
| Front Setback Encroachments | |
| Open Porch | 100% max |
| Balcony and/or bay window | |
| Stoop or terrace | |
| Sidewalk Encroachments | |
| Awning or gallery | Within 2 ft of curb |
| Parking Placement | |
| 1st Layer | Not permitted |
| 2nd Layer | Not permitted |
| 3rd Layer | Permitted |



| Building Form | | |
|--|--|------------|
| Maximum Building Height | | |
| Max. Building Height ¹ | 3-story, 4-story by Bonus see Section 4.1 | |
| Lot Requirements | | |
| Lot Size | 5,000 sq. ft. | |
| Max. Lot Coverage | 80% | |
| Min. Lot Width | 30 ft | |
| Building Frontage - See Required Private Frontage Types (Table 3) | | |
| Principal Frontage | Porch & fence, stoop, terrace, forecourt, shopfront, gallery | |
| Secondary Frontage | Porch & fence, stoop, terrace, forecourt, shopfront, gallery | |
| Minimum Window Transparency | | |
| | Residential-only | Other Uses |
| Ground Floor | 20% | 60% |
| Upper Floors | 20% | 35% |
| Ceiling Height | | |
| Ground Floor (commercial) | 12-18 ft | |
| Upper Floors | Up to 14 ft | |

¹Maximum building heights shall be consistent with the International Building Code (currently Section 504.3 as adopted by NYS) and subject to approval by the Fire Marshall and Code Enforcement Officer.

VILLAGE OF STILLWATER FORM-BASED CODE

16 | P A G E

Example Form-Based Codes

FORM-BASED CODES STREET STANDARDS

- Standards for width of sidewalk including frontage zones, throughway zones, furnishing zones
- Bicycle facility types
- Travel lane width
- Minimums/Maximums and Options to allow some flexibility

E. Mixed-Use Street



General

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Traffic volume range | 1,000 to 15,000 VPD |
| Target speed | 25 MPH |
| Ⓐ Rights-of-way width (min/preferred) | 58/66' |
| Driveway access | Permitted, but not encouraged |
| Pedestrian facility type | Sidewalk |
| Bicycle facility type (preferred) | Shared |
| Freight movement (generally) | Local deliveries only |

Vehicular Way

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Ⓔ Number of travel lanes | 2 |
| Ⓒ Travel lane width (min/max) | 10/11' |
| Median | Optional |
| Turning lane | Not permitted |
| Curb parking | Required |
| Ⓓ Parallel curb parking width (min/max) | 7/8' |

Pedestrian Way

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Ⓔ Total pedestrian way width (min/preferred) | 12/18' |
| Ⓒ Frontage zone (min/preferred) | 2/2.5' |
| Ⓒ Throughway zone (min/preferred) | 6/8' |
| Ⓒ Edge and furnishing zones (min/preferred) | 4/7.5' |
| Ⓒ Extension zone, if provided (max) | Width of the parking lane |

PEDESTRIAN- SUPPORTIVE ZONING



SIDEWALKS

Encourage wide sidewalks in downtown and main street areas



Edge
Zone

Furnishings
Zone

Throughway
Zone

Frontage
Zone

MAKE STREETS MORE WALKABLE AND ACCESSIBLE



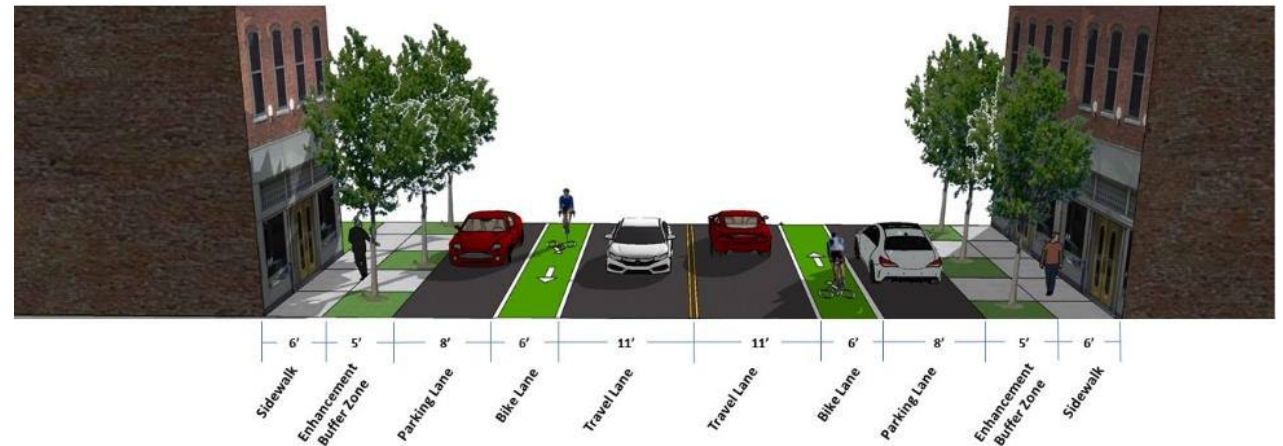
What's the right sidewalk width for your community?

- You can require more than 4 feet minimum.
 - If you want a wider sidewalk system, require a minimum of 6 feet.
 - For downtown areas you can require 10-12 feet.
 - Can have different widths for different street types or zoning districts.
-

MAKE STREETS MORE WALKABLE AND ACCESSIBLE

Example: All development that involves new construction of a principal building, expansion of an existing principal building by 2,500 square feet or more, or substantial renovation of an existing principal building, must provide for sidewalks of the minimum dimensions prescribed by the right-of-way type per Section 10.2.8. Sidewalks must be installed, widened, or modified, as appropriate, prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. (City of Buffalo, Unified Development Ordinance, Section 10.2.2.A)

Example Cross-Section



SIDEWALK DISCUSSION

Do you require wider sidewalk widths in your community?

Does each development have to install sidewalks or paths?

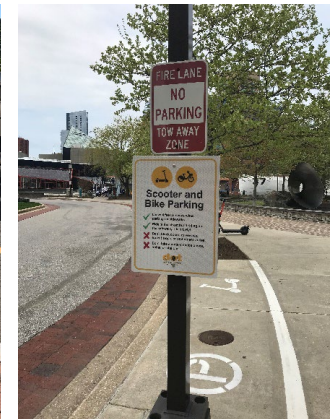
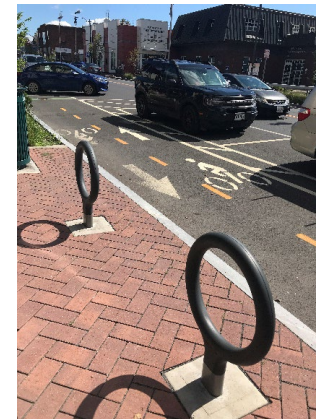


BICYCLE- SUPPORTIVE ZONING



ADD BIKE PARKING TO PARKING REGULATIONS

People are more likely to bike if they have a place to park their bike



- Require bike parking in your parking regulations
- Example: Bicycle parking is required for some uses (applies to new construction). A minimum of 2 spaces are required. See City of Saratoga Springs UDO, Section 10.5.E

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE DISCUSSION

Do you require bike parking in your community?



TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE ZONING



TRANSIT NEEDS DENSITY

More people...more transit opportunities and frequency



MIXED USE ZONING

- Mixed use zoning creates a 24/7 environment
- Creates opportunities for transit



MIXED USE ZONING

Transit Needs Density

- Allows for a mix of residential and commercial/office/institutional uses.
- Purpose statements can note that these areas are next to transit.
- Example Districts:
 - Neighborhood Center
 - Urban Core
 - Urban Neighborhood
 - Arts and Culture
 - Mixed-Use Corridor
 - Downtown



TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Transit Needs Density

- Train or Bus station is the feature of the district
- Has a mix of uses (office, residential, retail, and civic)
- Walkable area around the train station (10-minute walk)
- May encourage other modes – other connections – bus, bicycle, shared mobility



TRANSIT DISCUSSION

Do you have mixed use zoning near transit or transit-oriented development district in your community?



DESIGN



PLACEMAKING

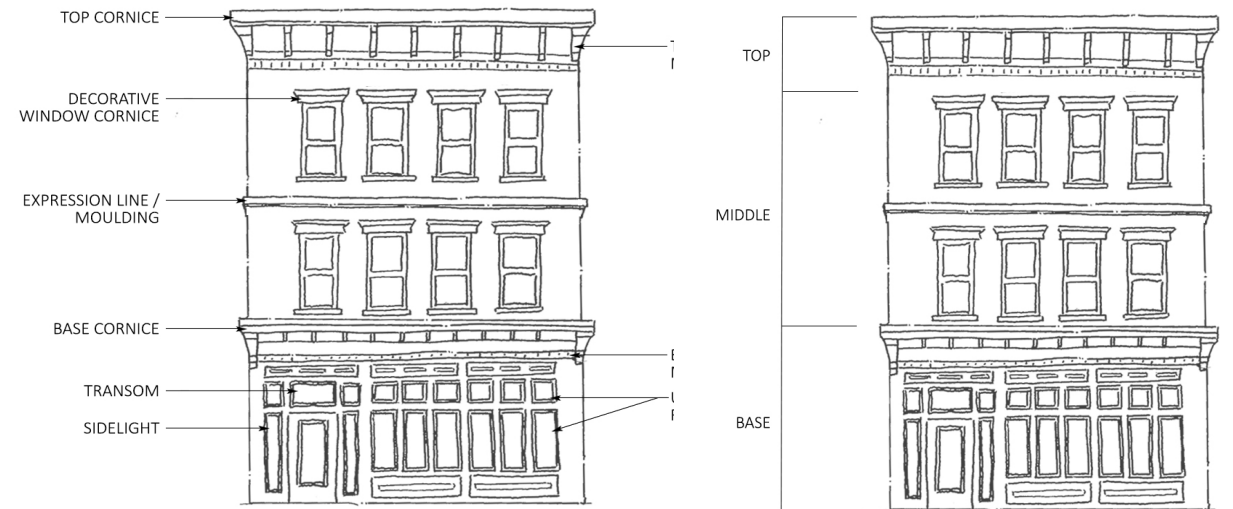
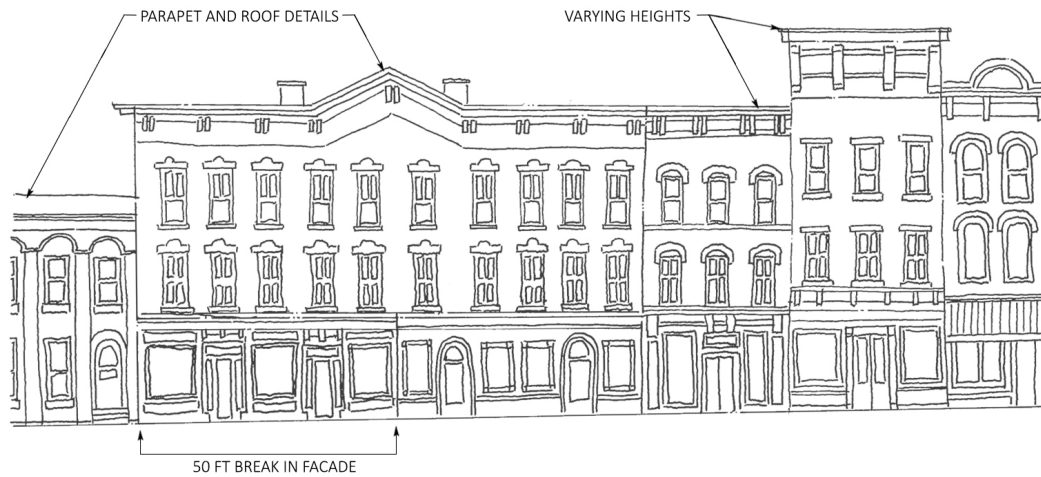
Zoning can also promote placemaking, particularly through design guidelines and standards.

Streetscape improvements can be required or encouraged.



DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

- Windows
- Blank Walls



DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

- Build-to Lines – 0 ft front yard setback or setback for outdoor dining, plaza, etc.
- Public Spaces – add open space requirements, requirements for plazas, pocket parks, squares
- Outdoor dining – appropriate location, can the furniture remain outside after the restaurant is closed?



DISCUSSION

Do you encourage or require streetscape amenities in your community?

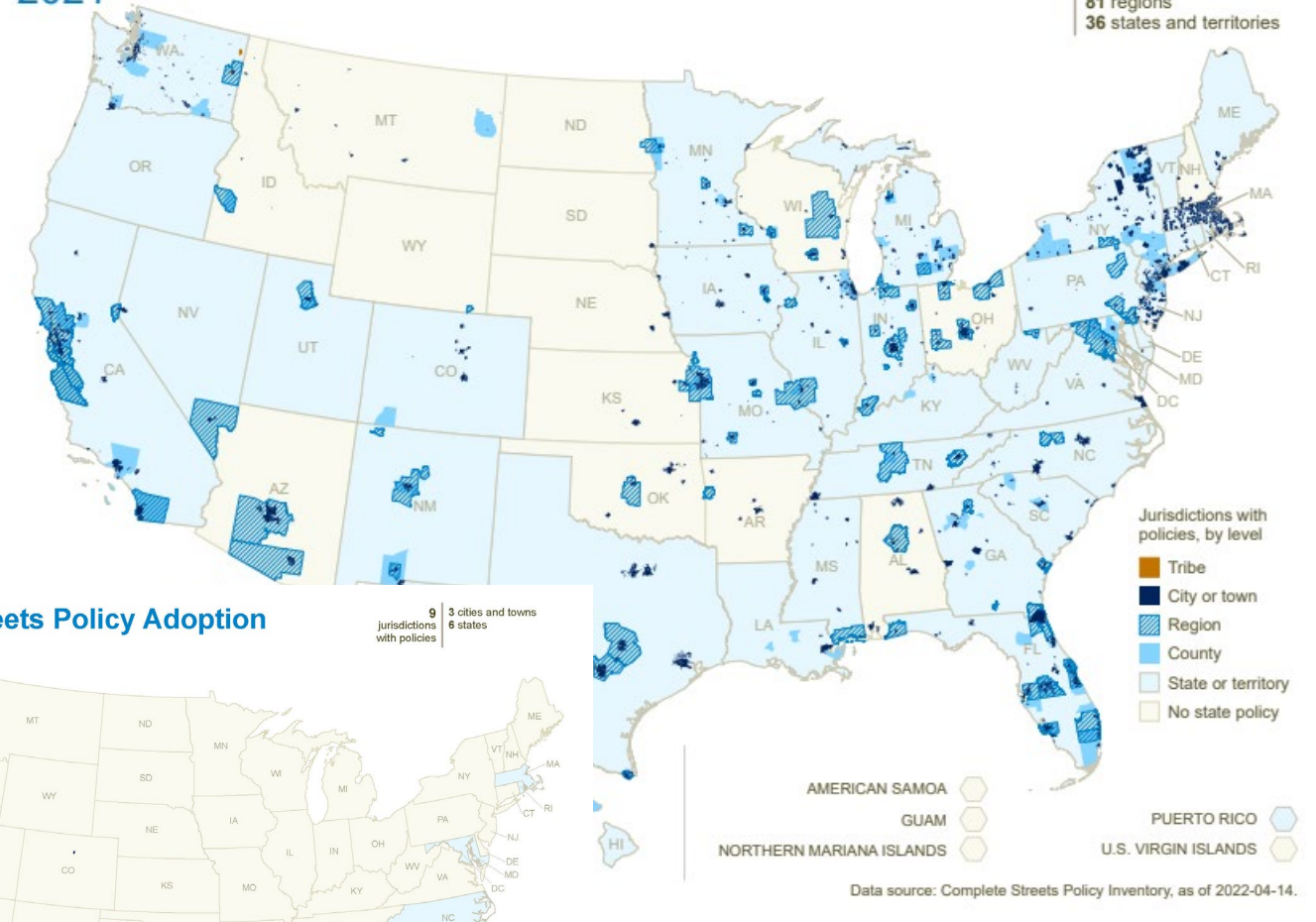
Plazas, street trees, street furniture, pedestrian-scale lighting, landscaping, etc.



COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES

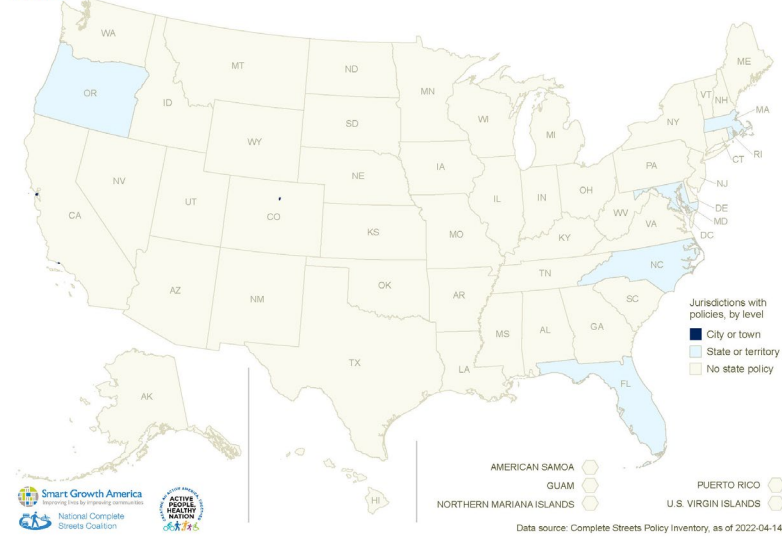
Complete Streets Policy Adoption 2021

1,533 jurisdictions with policies
 1,320 cities and towns
 95 counties
 1 tribe
 81 regions
 36 states and territories



Complete Streets Policy Adoption 2000

9 jurisdictions with policies
 3 cities and towns
 6 states





<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/a-decade-into-the-movement-complete-streets-needed-a-complete-overhaul/>

COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES

- Complete Streets policies detail how a community will plan, design, and maintain streets – safe for all users of all ages & abilities
- Focuses on a Complete Streets approach & process
- 1,740 of policies nationally (2022)
- NYS Complete Streets Act (2011)
- 153 Municipalities, 15 Counties identified in NY [Counties and Municipalities with Resolutions \(ny.gov\)](#), 155 by CS Coalition



<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/a-decade-into-the-movement-complete-streets-needed-a-complete-overhaul/>

COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES

1. Establishes commitment and vision
2. Prioritizes underinvested and underserved communities
3. Applies to all projects and phases
4. Allows only clear exceptions
5. Mandates coordination
6. Adopts excellent design guidance
7. Requires proactive land-use planning
8. Measures progress
9. Sets criteria for choosing projects
10. Creates a plan for implementation



[Complete & Green Streets for All: Model Policy & Guide - New Jersey Safe Routes \(saferoutesnj.org\)](#)



[Best Complete Streets Policies \(2023\) - Smart Growth America](#)

SUCCESSFUL POLICIES

- Include accountability
- Public involvement
- Ordinance instead of a resolution (law instead of statement)
- Complete Streets are prioritized in the project selection process
- Make sure the land-use codes are consistent with the policy
- Reference the Complete Streets Policy in your ordinances and Comprehensive Plan

REAL WORLD EXAMPLES



EL PASO, TX

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

- Adopted as an ordinance - scored 96/100
- Clear vision & intent and implementation (website)
- Addresses land use regulations “the City shall review and, in coordination with our development community, revise land use policies, plans, zoning ordinances, and/or other relevant documents and procedures to incorporate the vision of the Complete Streets Policy.”



PIERMONT, NY

- Popular tourism destination
- Lots of walkers and bikers
- Currently discussing transportation recommendations as part of the Comprehensive Plan
- Has a Complete Streets Policy and a Complete Streets Plan



PIERMONT, NY

Zoning

- Mixed use districts
- Off-site off-street parking spaces must within 250 feet of the food/beverage service establishment
- Fee-in-lieu of parking program
- Some design standards in certain districts
- Site plan review criteria mentions safe, adequate and convenient pedestrian access and circulation

Discussion: Thoughts on this code?



PORT JERVIS, NY

- Would like to improve the streetscape
- Have done some recent streetscape projects
- Would like to implement Complete Streets

Existing



Proposed



PORT JERVIS, NY

Zoning

- Retail and business uses can be built to the sidewalk.
- Parking is required to the side or rear for multiple dwellings.
- No specific design standards or landscaping standards; however, the site development plan section references character and appearance and notes that the use, building, and signs should be in harmony with the character of the area as determined by the City's Design Review Board.

Discussion: Thoughts on this code?



CONSHOHOCKEN, PA

- Added density around the train station
- Upgraded streetscapes
- Mixed use development



CONSHOHOCKEN, PA

Zoning

- Has a Design Review Board and Façade Improvement Guidelines, Design Standards in some Districts
- Parking requirements for commercial or institutional uses within 500 feet of a public parking facility may be waived (subject to a parking analysis)
- Not more than 5% of the required parking shall be permitted in surface parking areas on the lot
- Required riverfront public access and 15% open space
- 0 ft setbacks in some locations (build-to-line)

Discussion: Thoughts on this code?



ALEXANDRIA, VA

- Tourist destination
 - Walkable (accessible?)
 - Biking routes signed
 - Scooter and bike parking
 - Sections closed to automobile traffic for outdoor dining
 - Chain stores in historic buildings
-



ALEXANDRIA, VA

Zoning

- Historic District for Old Alexandria
 - Board of Architectural Review
- King Street Transit Parking District
 - No parking is required for the first 10,000 square feet for restaurants and retail
- Metro Station Walkshed Area requires less parking
- Outdoor dining listed as a use

[Zoning | Alexandria, VA | Municode Library](#)

Discussion: Thoughts on this code?





Make sure your zoning matches
your Complete Streets goals



WRAP-UP

1. Add streetscape amenities to your code.
2. Specify minimum amenities you would like to see.
3. Use design standards or guidelines.
4. Have mixed use zoning in your downtown and main street areas and near transit.
5. Encourage all transportation modes (Complete Streets) and address pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure.
6. Reference your Complete Streets policy and plans & your Comprehensive Plan in the purpose statements.



QUESTIONS?

Katherine Ember, AICP | kember@planning4places.com | planning4places.com