

GETTING TO COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION

New York Planning Federation Conference

April 17, 2023



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

What is Complete Streets?

How to talk about Complete Streets

Try-out Demonstration Projects

Complete Streets in Different Contexts

Successful Implementation



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BEFORE?

People using what they must to get around even if the infrastructure isn't there...



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BEFORE?

Right idea... wrong application



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BEFORE?

Sidewalks and pedestrian lights are technically there but...

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



1-mile walk (20 minutes @ 3 MPH)



3-mile bike ride (18 minutes @ 10 MPH)



Driving went down in 2020, but deaths of pedestrians increased by 4.7%

[Complete Streets - Smart Growth America](#)

timesunion News Sports Business Entertainment Living Blogs Jobs Homes Cars

Bicyclist dies after being hit by SUV in Albany

Washington Avenue Extension reopens after investigation

Updated 1:21 pm, Thursday, October 19, 2017

✉️ 📧 📧 📧 📧 📧 📧

THE DAILY GAZETTE | Friday, April 20, 2018

LOCAL NEWS

Police: Pedestrian killed in Rotterdam hit-and-run

Crash occurred late Friday on Hamburg Street

timesunion News Sports Business Entertainment Living Blogs

Pedestrian killed crossing Menands road

By Kenneth C. Crowe II Updated 9:40 pm, Thursday, September 1, 2016

timesunion News Sports Business Entertainment Living Blogs

Man in wheelchair dies after hit by car in Schenectady

By Emily Masters Updated 5:01 pm, Friday, September 2, 2016

THE DAILY GAZETTE

GLOVERSVILLE

Bicyclist seriously injured in Monday vehicle-bike crash in Gloversville

By Steven Cook | May 18, 2021



PHOTOGRAPHER: FILE PHOTO

MARC SCHULTZ/GAZETTE PHOTOGRAPHER
Gloversville police vehicle car web stock

WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?



DISCUSSION

What do Complete Streets mean to you?



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](#)

WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?

An approach to streets that provide safe access for all users:

- Pedestrians
- Bicyclists
- Motorists
- Transit riders
- People who don't have cars
- People living with disabilities
- Underserved communities
- Children
- Older Adults

Streets are for everyone...no matter who they are or how they travel



HOW TO TALK ABOUT COMPLETE STREETS



DISCUSSION

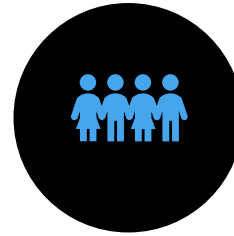
Are you able to use the term “Complete Streets” in your community? Do you talk about it in a different way?



LOOK FOR THE CLUES AND TALK WITH YOUR COMMUNITY ABOUT WHAT IS NEEDED



Identify
“goat paths”



Where do kids
like to **hang**
out?



What are the
main routes
bicyclists and
pedestrians use?



What are
the key
destinations?



EXPLAIN WHAT IS APPROPRIATE IN WHICH LOCATION

APPLICATION

Bike Lane

Speed and Volume

Appropriate on streets with moderate volumes and moderate speed. May function on multilane streets with heavy traffic but fails to provide a low-stress experience in this condition, which would appeal to larger numbers of bicyclists.

PREFERRED

POTENTIAL

The graph for Bike Lanes shows two regions: a solid green 'PREFERRED' region and a hatched 'POTENTIAL' region. The y-axis represents Motor Vehicle Volume (ADT) from 0 to 12k, and the x-axis represents Motor Vehicle Operating Speed (MI/H) from 0 to 50. The preferred region is bounded by speeds up to 40 MI/H and volumes up to 9k ADT. The potential region covers speeds from 0 to 50 MI/H and volumes from 0 to 12k ADT, with some areas overlapping the preferred region.

APPLICATION

Sidepath

Speed and Volume

For use on roads with high volumes, and moderate-to high-speed motor vehicle traffic.

PREFERRED

POTENTIAL

The graph for Sidepaths shows two regions: a solid green 'PREFERRED' region and a hatched 'POTENTIAL' region. The y-axis represents Motor Vehicle Volume (ADT) from 0 to 12k, and the x-axis represents Motor Vehicle Operating Speed (MI/H) from 0 to 50. The preferred region is bounded by speeds up to 50 MI/H and volumes up to 12k ADT, with a lower speed limit of 10 MI/H for volumes below 4k ADT. The potential region covers speeds from 0 to 50 MI/H and volumes from 0 to 12k ADT, with a lower speed limit of 10 MI/H for volumes below 4k ADT.

APPLICATION

Sidewalk

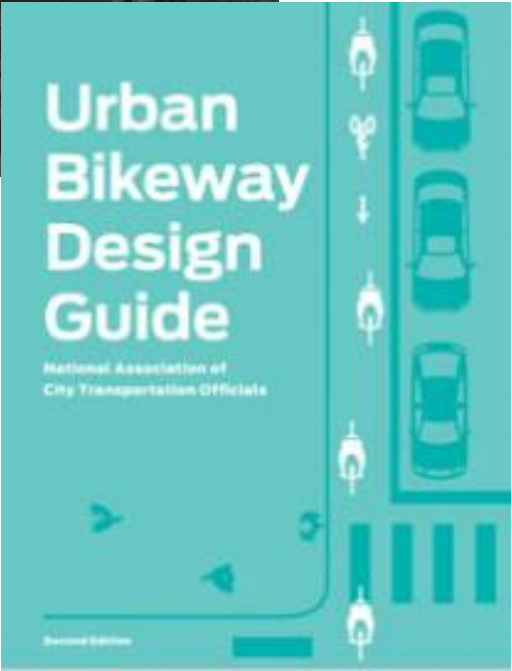
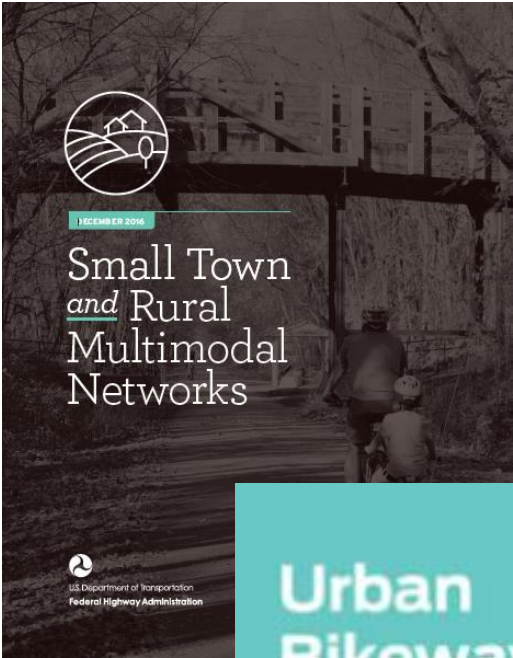
Speed and Volume

Sidewalks are recommended on all but the most low-speed and low-volume roadways.

PREFERRED

POTENTIAL

The graph for Sidewalks shows two regions: a solid green 'PREFERRED' region and a hatched 'POTENTIAL' region. The y-axis represents Motor Vehicle Volume (ADT) from 0 to 12k, and the x-axis represents Motor Vehicle Operating Speed (MI/H) from 0 to 50. The preferred region is bounded by speeds up to 50 MI/H and volumes up to 12k ADT, with a lower speed limit of 10 MI/H for volumes below 2k ADT. The potential region covers speeds from 0 to 50 MI/H and volumes from 0 to 12k ADT, with a lower speed limit of 10 MI/H for volumes below 2k ADT.



HIGH-VISIBILITY CROSSWALK & SIGNAGE

- Improves driver awareness
- Clearly shows pedestrian crossing
- Designed for safest crossing location



BIKE OPTIONS

There are **many options** when designing bikeway facilities

Bicyclist comfort = Level of Protection
Volume/Speed of
car traffic



Protected Bike Lane
or Sidepath

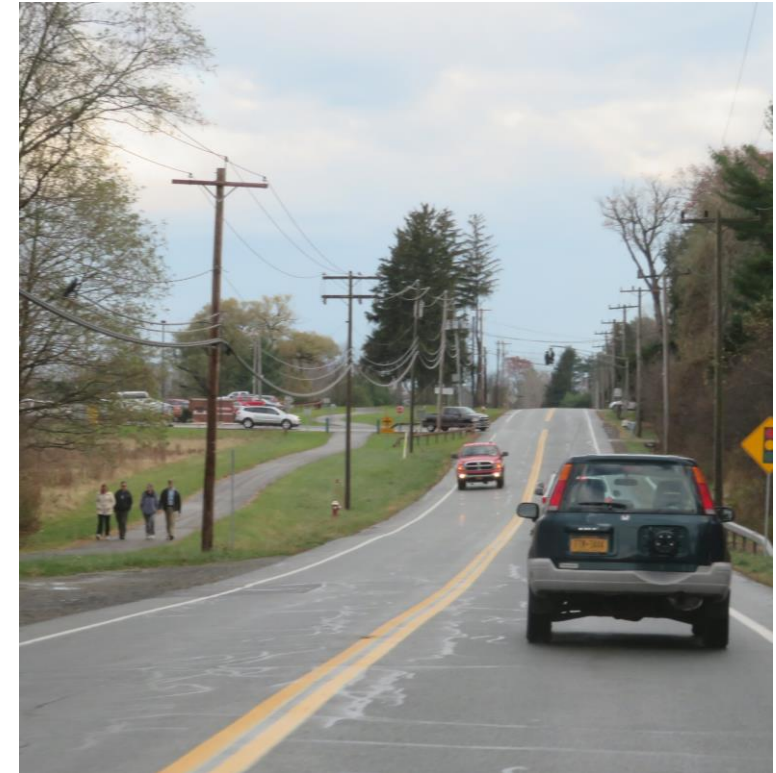
Buffered Bike
Lane

Bike Lane

Shared Lane/
Sharrows

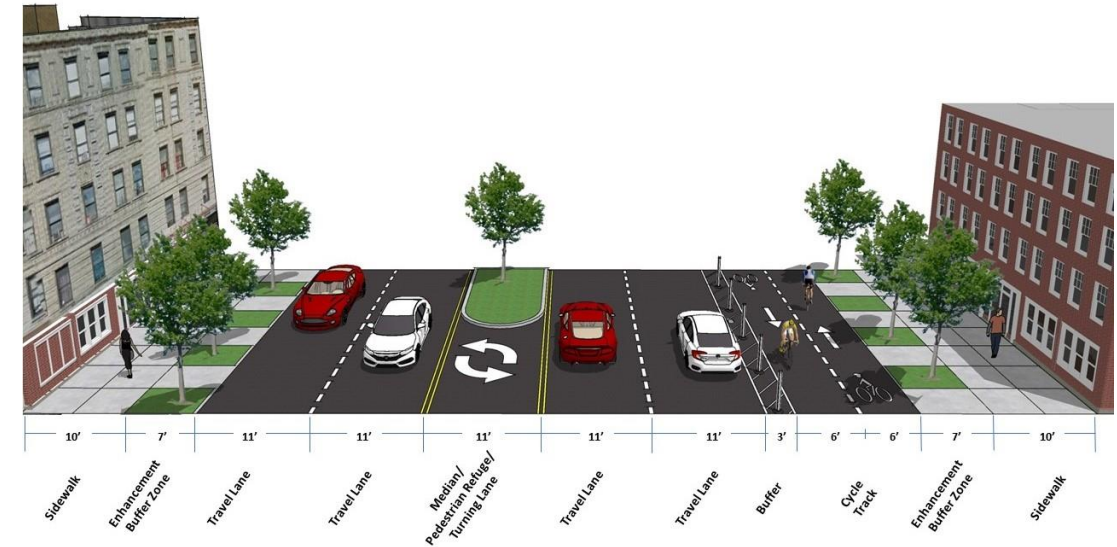
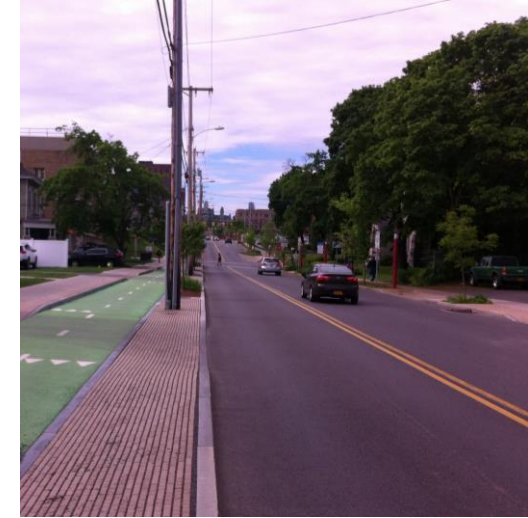
SHARED-USE PATH (SIDEPATH)

- Most appropriate in low-density contexts
- Treatment at driveways + cross streets is critical
- Wayfinding (for trail networks)
- Right-of-way considerations



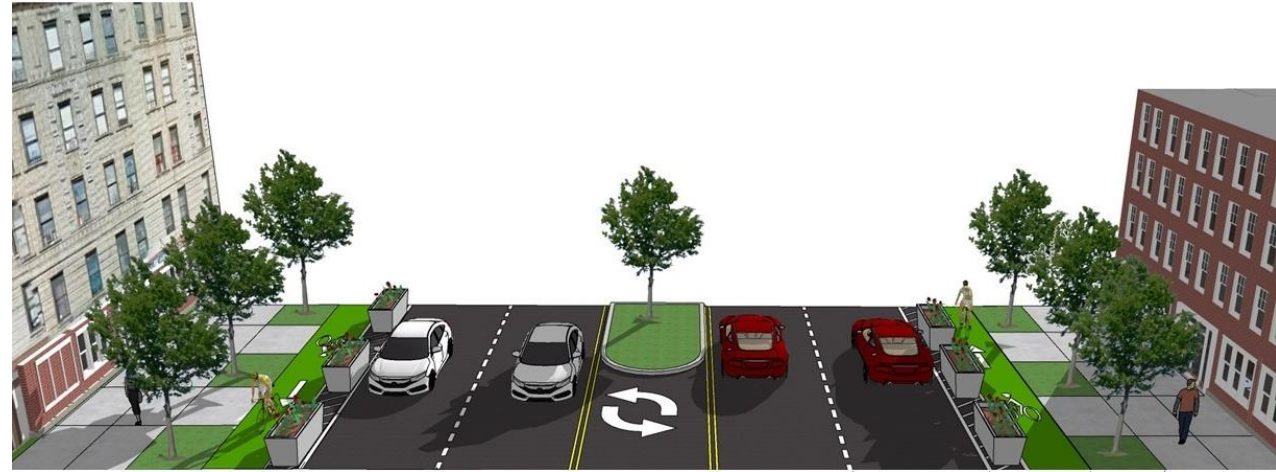
SEPARATED BIKE LANE/ CYCLE TRACK

- Two-bicycle travel
- Provides physical separation between the travel lane and bike lane
- Appropriate for higher traffic volumes and speeds
- Appeals to a wide range of cyclists
- Requires more space
- Design & maintenance impacts



PROTECTED BIKE LANE

- Provides physical separation between the travel lane and bike lane
- Appropriate for higher traffic volumes and speeds
- Appealing to a wide range of cyclists
- Requires more space
- Design & maintenance impacts



BUFFERED BIKE LANE

- Require equivalent space of a travel lane or parking lane
 - Appropriate for higher volume/higher speed streets
 - Appeals to a range of cyclists
 - Cyclist path is clearly delineated
-



STANDARD BIKE LANE

- Separates bicyclists from vehicle traffic
- Greater visibility than shared lanes
- Appeals to more cyclists than shared lanes



GREEN BIKE LANES

Enhances visibility in high-conflict locations



SHARED LANE (SHARROW)

- Denotes a priority street for bicycling
 - Minimally affect traffic patterns
 - Simple to implement
 - Only appropriate for lower volume/lower speed streets
 - Improves motorists' awareness of cyclists
 - Placement indicates desired path of cyclist
 - Of limited appeal to most cyclists
-



SIDEWALKS

Consider all users and the space they need



Frontage
Zone

Pedestrian
Zone

Curb/
Planter Zone

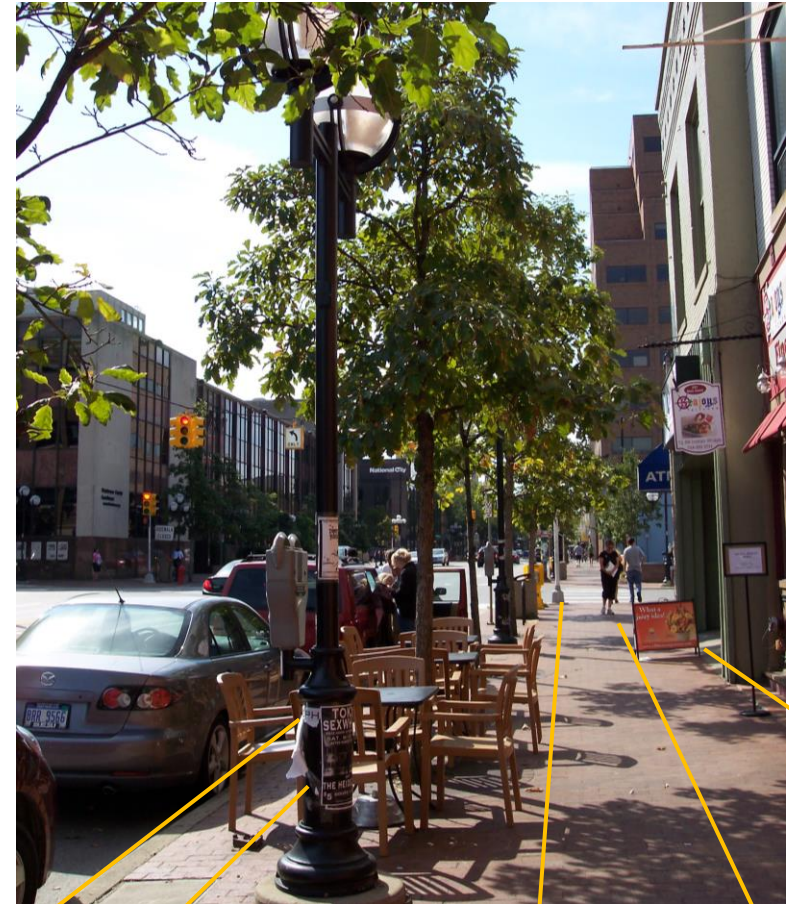
Edge
Zone

Edge
Zone

Furnishings
Zone

Throughway
Zone

Frontage
Zone



COMPLETE STREETS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS



COMPLETE STREETS IS NOT

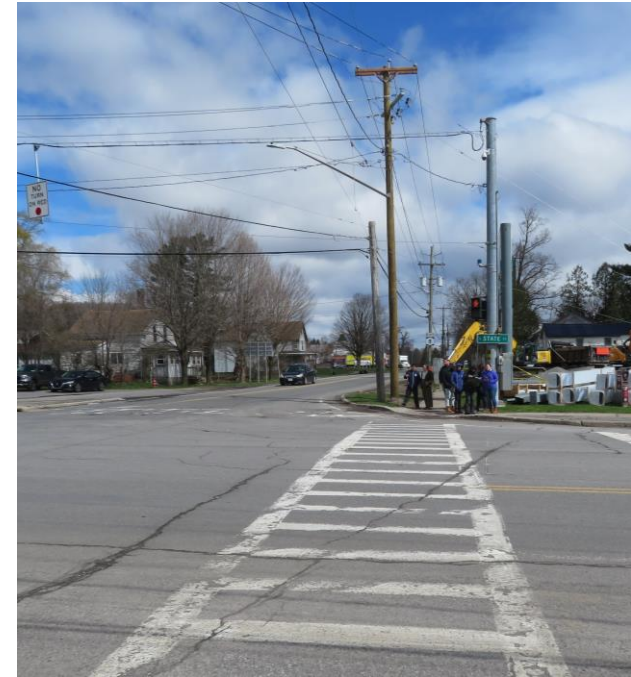
One-Size-Fits All



One Type of Street



Only for Urban Areas



DISCUSSION

What elements work in urban, suburban, and rural places?



TRY-OUT DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS



It's okay to try something new!





FUNDAMENTALS

- Identify the street for the demo project
- Public engagement about the demo project – contact the neighbors
- Get volunteers to install the demo project



FUNDAMENTALS

- Include signage about the demo project
- Get feedback on the demo project – surveys work great
- Evaluate what worked and what didn't
- Apply for funding to implement your project longer-term



WHY TRY NOW?

Constituents/residents are increasingly informed and interested in Complete Streets. We are seeing:

- More demonstration projects
- Safety improvements
- Increase in non-vehicular projects
- Focus on sidewalk conditions and sidewalk connections including connections to schools

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION



WHY IMPLEMENT COMPLETE STREETS NOW?

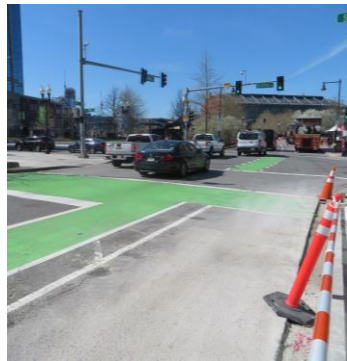
Save Money

- Retrofits cost more.
- Install sidewalks in when development occurs – even if they initially don't connect.



There is \$\$ Available

- There is more grant funding now:
[Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)
[Guidebook to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) | [Build.gov](#)
| [The White House](#)



Prioritize safety

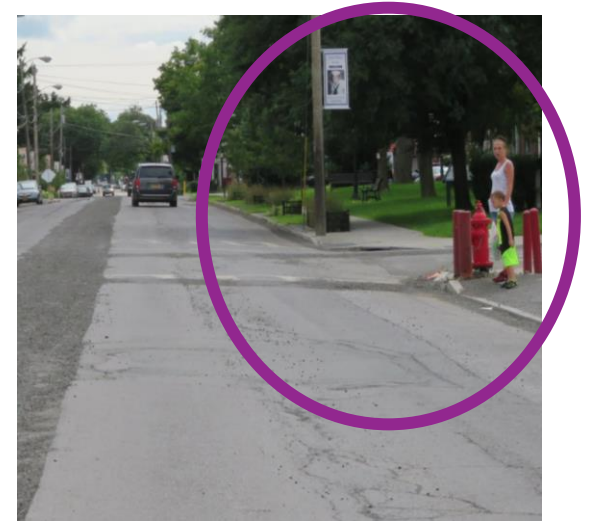
- Add crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands where you can.
- Pedestrian beacons are also being installed more to alert motorists to pedestrians in crosswalks.



WHY IMPLEMENT NOW?

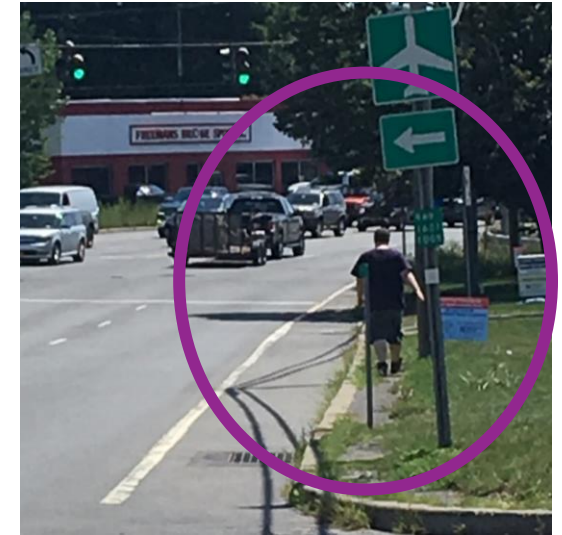
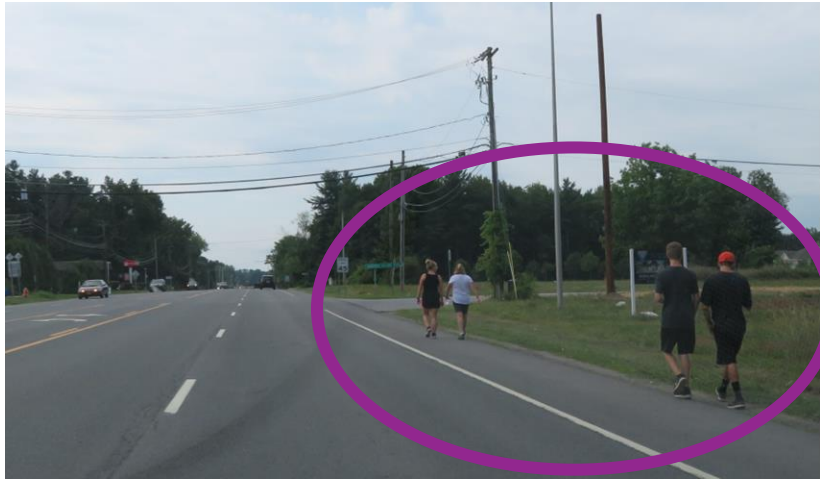
Change our “Business as Usual”

Make the needs of all users the default for everyday planning & maintenance practices



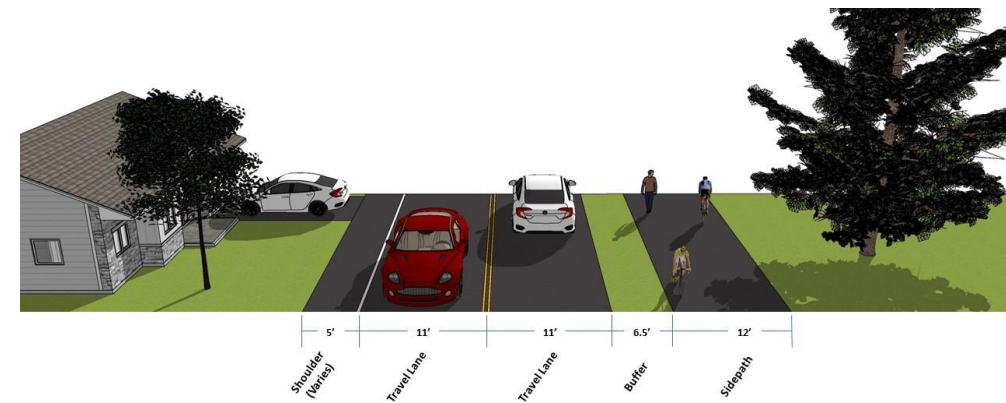
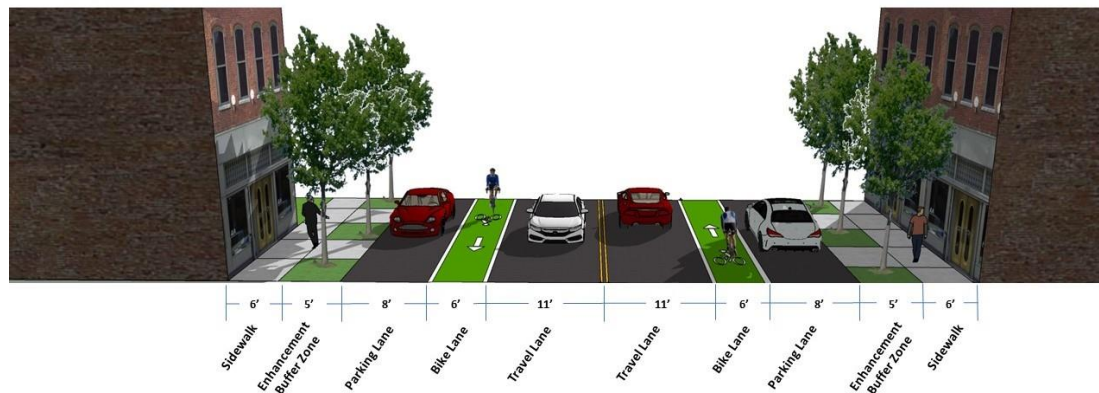
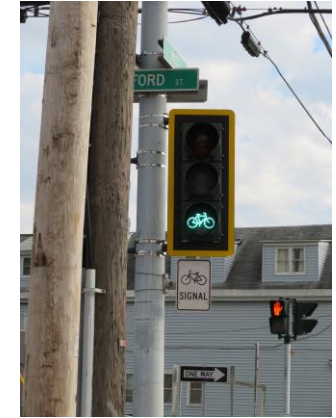
MAKE WALKING MORE ACCESSIBLE

Make walking more comfortable



MAKE BIKING EASIER

People are more likely to bike if they are comfortable doing so



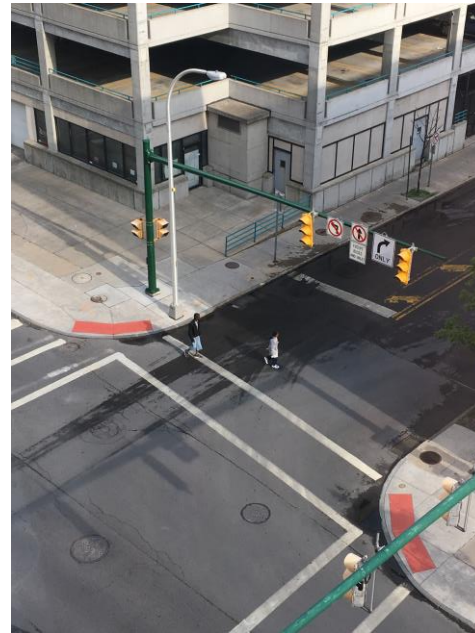
MAKE TRANSIT MORE ACCESSIBLE

Make transit more comfortable



MAKE STREETS MORE ACCESSIBLE

Make it possible to use a stroller or wheelchair to get around



IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Fix sidewalks and stormwater at the same time – and there is funding for green infrastructure!



INCORPORATE PLACEMAKING TOO

A great street is for all ages and abilities...

...but also makes you want to stay awhile!





Start talking with your community about how to plan for all ages and abilities.



SUMMARY

1. Talk about Complete Streets
2. Try out Demonstration Projects to start the conversation
3. Remember – different Complete Streets solutions are needed for different streets and different contexts
4. Pick one easy project to start



QUESTIONS?

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