



New York Can Address More Than Transportation With Complete Streets

Often thought of in a silo, investing in Complete Streets can deliver much more for New York than just improving its transportation network. *Complete Streets* refers to roadways that are thoughtfully designed and constructed to accommodate all users, including people walking, biking, using transit, and driving. Complete Streets projects help repair New York's roadway network, which over the past several decades, has suffered from design centered around moving cars as quickly as possible.

By rebuilding roadways as safe, comfortable, and attractive places for all users, we realize them as the dynamic public spaces in our towns, villages, and cities. New York's streets connect people to housing, jobs, businesses, schools, healthcare, places of worship and more. Investing in Complete Streets projects will improve New York's transportation network, but it will also improve the lives of residents in both more critical and nuanced ways:

- Safety and Public Health - Complete Streets infrastructure improves safety by calming traffic¹ and creates adequate facilities for people on foot and bicycle
 - In 2022 alone, over 1000 New Yorkers were killed in motor vehicle crashes, including over 300 pedestrians. Also in 2022, over 10,000 people were seriously injured in motor vehicle crashes.²
 - Investing in Complete Streets reduces chronic disease, including asthma, heart disease, and diabetes, by improving air quality and physical activity³
- Economic Development - Increased levels of employment and higher property values typically follow the completion of Complete Streets projects⁴
 - Reducing crashes saves New Yorkers money. Between 2011 and 2018, injuries and fatalities on Capital Region roadways alone cost taxpayers over \$103 Million.⁵
- Climate Mitigation and Adaptation - Investing in a walkable, bike-friendly, and transit-oriented system is absolutely crucial to meet New York's climate goals
 - In NYS, transportation consistently contributes more GHG emissions than any other economic sector⁶. Electric cars and trucks reduce tailpipe emissions, they

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation. (August 12, 2019) *Traffic Calming to Slow Speeds*

<https://www.transportation.gov/mission/health/Traffic-Calming-to-Slow-Vehicle-Speeds>

² Institute for Traffic Safety Management & Research. (2023) *Traffic Safety Statistical Repository*

<https://www.itsmr.org/traffic-safety-statistical-repository/>

³ New York State Department of Health. (2013) *Prevention Agenda 2013-2018*

https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2013-2017/plan/chronic_diseases/ebi/docs/complete_streets_fact_sheet.pdf

⁴ Smart Growth America. (2015) *Safer Streets, Stronger Economies*

<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/evaluating-complete-streets-projects-a-guide-for-practitioners/>

⁵ Capital Region Transportation Council. (2020) *New Visions 2050*

https://www.capitalmpo.org/images/new_visions/NV2050BikePed9-20.pdf

⁶ NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. (2022) *2022 Statewide GHG Emissions Report*

https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/ghgsumrpt22.pdf

still require significant energy production and come with their own host of environmental related issues, including air and water pollution from tires⁷

- Facilities for walking and bicycling are smaller, cheaper, and easier to maintain. These modes of transportation can be more resilient following extreme weather events, like flooding.
- Equity and Justice - Dangerous, car-centric roadway design disproportionately impacts people of color, particularly Native and Black Americans, and the working class.
 - In the US, between 2016-2020, the rate of pedestrian deaths per 100,000 people for white, non-hispanics was 1.5, compared to 3.0 for Black or African Americans, and 4.8 for American Indians or Alaska Natives⁸
 - The working poor commute using public transit, biking, and walking more than higher income workers. Car ownership is extremely expensive, the second most costly household expense after housing itself⁹
- Community - The importance of face to face interactions and connecting with others has never been more clear. Investing in walkable communities is an investment in mental health and building community.
 - Locals in Downtown Troy, one of the most walkable places in the Capital Region, affectionately call “The Troy 20” the 20 extra minutes it takes to stop and chat with a familiar face or two while walking to their destination

New York must invest in Complete Streets to create walkable, bike-friendly, and transit oriented communities that are truly sustainable, equitable, and economically resilient.

Capital Streets strongly supports the following bills:

- SAFE Streets Package - transalt.org/safe
 - Complete Streets Maintenance - S2714 (Kennedy) | A01280 (Rivera)
 - Defined Safe Passing - S1724 (Harckham) | A04346 (Steck)
 - Stop As Yield - S2643 (May) | A3986 (Fahy)
 - Complete Streets NYSDOT Budget Appropriation
- Ride Clean Rebate Program - S.314 (Salazar) / A.275 (Carroll)
- Greenway Trails for a Green Future Act - ptny.org/our-work/advocate/greenway-trails
 - Right-of-Way for All Trail Users in Crosswalks | A8272 (Fahy) / S8210 (Cooney)
 - CHIPS Funding Formula Update | A8273 (Fahy) / S7890 (Harkham)
 - Recreational Use Statute | S2701 (Harckham) / A6004 (Barrett)
 - Bicycle & Pedestrian Access on Bridges | A8300 (Fahy)
 - Power Line Trails | A8311 (Fahy)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Assistance - S.7870 (May)

⁷ YaleEnvironment360. (2023) Road Hazard: Evidence Mounts on Toxic Pollutants from Tires <https://e360.yale.edu/features/tire-pollution-toxic-chemicals>

⁸ Smart Growth America. (2022) Dangerous By Design 2022 <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>

⁹ U.S. Department of Transportation. (2012) *Commuting Expenses: Disparity for the Working Poor* https://www.bts.gov/archive/publications/special_reports_and_issue_briefs/issue_briefs/number_01/entire

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