

Complete the Streets

A movement is growing to complete the streets of our communities. 110 cities across the country have taken on the challenge of adopting a “Complete Streets” Policy. In the spring of 2009, Rochester became the first city in Minnesota to adopt a “Complete Streets” Policy. Currently, a statewide coalition has formed to bring a Minnesota state Complete Streets Policy to the legislature. Could Grand Rapids be next?

Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. The needs of drivers, pedestrians, transit vehicles and users, bicyclists, commercial and emergency vehicles and other users regardless of age or ability are considered in the scope and design of all roadway construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation projects.

Elements of a Complete Streets Policy include:

- A vision of how and why the community wants to complete its streets.
- Specifics that ‘all users’ includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, busses, and automobiles.
- Encourages street connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes.
- Is adopted by all agencies to cover all roads.
- Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design and planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right-of-way.
- Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval for exceptions.
- Directs the use of the latest and best design standards while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs.
- Directs that complete streets solutions will complement the context of the community.
- Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.
- Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy.

A “Complete Streets” Policy directs transportation planners and engineers to consistently design with all users in mind. These concepts have been proven to increase safety, encourage walking and bicycling for transportation as well as health, address climate change and oil dependence, and foster strong communities. Get Fit Itasca believes that as we build and repair our transportation system, it should be built to accommodate the needs of all users.

To learn more about complete streets, or get involved contact Meghan Bown, Community Health Coordinator, 327-1161 ext. 240 or join Get Fit Itasca on Facebook for regular updates.



Bridgeport Way, Tacoma, Washington -Before



Bridgeport Way, Tacoma, Washington -After



Before



After