

BY THE NUMBERS

70% REDUCTION
in commercial vacancies



Vacant locations offer opportunities for new development after corridor redesign. Multimodal redesigns can reduce commercial vacancies by 70%.

20% INCREASE
in jobs



Design changes within a new BRT corridor in Cleveland, Ohio led to an increase in jobs of 29% between 2003 and 2013. In Gainesville, Florida corridor redesign increased jobs by 21%, compared to a citywide increase of 17%.

5% INCREASE
in project cost



In 2012 the City of Charlotte Department of Transportation (NC) reported that bike lanes and sidewalks increased the cost of a project on the order of 3 - 5%.

Streets designed and operated to enable safe use for walking, bicycling, driving, and transit offer something for everyone. These “Complete Streets” provide safer places to travel and increase physical activity at the same time. In many cases, economic growth is enabled by connecting people to jobs, shopping, and services. Complete streets reflect the context of their environment and users. They offer designs to support people of all ages and abilities.

COMPLETE STREETS

MAKING CONNECTIONS

What can you do to support your local economy?

Think about places in your community where sidewalks, bike lanes, and other improvements can make a difference. Partner with organizations such as schools, churches, senior centers, and neighborhood associations that can help gather input from residents on their needs. Where would people like to walk but feel unsafe? Are there barriers between neighborhoods or corridors that could use a boost in retail activity? Consider neighborhoods or organizations that may need support for improvements. Can you organize a pedestrian/biking road safety audit? What technical assistance can you offer? Sometimes the first step may be to include complete street elements in larger reconstruction projects.

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/health_in_transportation/



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



What are the economic benefits of supporting complete streets designs?



FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Lower cost

Biking and walking can save you money related to health care costs and sick leave. One study of the economic benefits in Michigan found that the state saved \$256 million on avoided health care costs and \$187 million from reduced absenteeism. Another study in Lincoln, Nebraska, found that every \$1 invested in trails resulted in \$2.70 in medical benefits.



Decreased demand for government services

Pedestrian and bicycle connections to accessible transit can reduce the need for paratransit or other government services. These multimodal connections bring transit service to a larger community and increase its cost effectiveness. Curb cuts, lighting, and high visibility crosswalks can improve the perception of safety and remove barriers for vulnerable populations, allowing them to travel independently.



FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Increased jobs

Investing in Complete Streets designs can bring in new businesses and grow existing ones, generating new jobs. A Complete Street redesign in Gainesville, Florida that enhanced safety and mobility led to a 21% increase in jobs in the corridor, compared to a citywide increase of 17%. Similarly, a new bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor with a Complete Streets design in Cleveland, Ohio, led to an increase in jobs of 29% from 2003 to 2013, compared to a citywide decrease of 4%.

Saves transportation costs

It's cheaper to walk, bike, or take transit than it is to drive if there are attractive alternative options to get around. New Yorkers save about \$20 billion annually in transportation costs by walking, bicycling, and taking transit.

Increased residential property values

According to a survey from the National Association of Realtors, over 80% of people look for a home with sidewalks and places to walk comfortably and safely. Homes along a new BRT, Complete Streets corridor in Cleveland have a price premium of 30% over home values in the rest of the city. When West Palm Beach, Florida implemented traffic calming measures in a residential neighborhood, it took only three years for the average home sale price to rise from \$65,000 to \$106,000.

FOR BUSINESSES

Attracts new business and decreases vacancies

Street redesigns, including adding sidewalks, bike lanes and traffic calming, can reduce commercial vacancies by 50-70%. A complete streets approach with traffic calming in Lancaster, California encouraged 40 new businesses and private investment that exceeded \$100 million. After sidewalk, crosswalk, and transit stop improvements in downtown Decatur, Georgia over 700 new housing units were built and the number of retail shops and restaurants doubled.

Increases property values

Industrial and office property values along a new complete streets corridor in Cleveland saw 20% and 11% increases respectively during a period in which the prices citywide rose only 7%.



Sources in this brief include: Strategies for Accelerating Multimodal Project Delivery, FHWA (2018), The Economic Benefits of Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School National Partnership (2017), The New Real Estate Mantra Location Near Public Transportation, APTA (2013), Active Transportation Alliance, Complete Streets Make Economic Sense, NITC, (2017), The Walkability Premium in Commercial Real Estate Investments, Journal of Real Estate Economics (2011). Photos: Shutterstock.