

Complete Streets at WSDOT

WSDOT VISION: WASHINGTON TRAVELERS HAVE A SAFE, SUSTAINABLE AND INTEGRATED MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

Over the last hundred years, we have made great strides in improving our road network for vehicles. Today, drivers can get nearly anywhere, and expect a standard of functionality and efficiency when they drive. But not everyone can drive, or wants to drive everywhere.

Some places have made significant advances in making it more comfortable to walk and bike, and others have not, resulting in a fragmented network. Sidewalks can be inconsistent, bike lanes can suddenly end, and comfortable crossings may be far from your destination. When we do not provide for all people, we do not support the full transportation needs of our communities.



How can we strengthen these links, building roads that are comfortable for all people using all forms of transportation?

The Complete Streets Approach

Complete Streets is a comprehensive approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining our roads. At WSDOT, it refers to the requirement signed into law in 2022 and codified in [RCW 47.04.035](#) to address existing deficiencies in the walking and bicycling networks in communities when we are doing state transportation projects.

What does a Complete Street look like? There is no singular design for a Complete Street. Each road is unique and needs to fit its community context. WSDOT Complete Streets projects all have common project steps and goals. All projects:

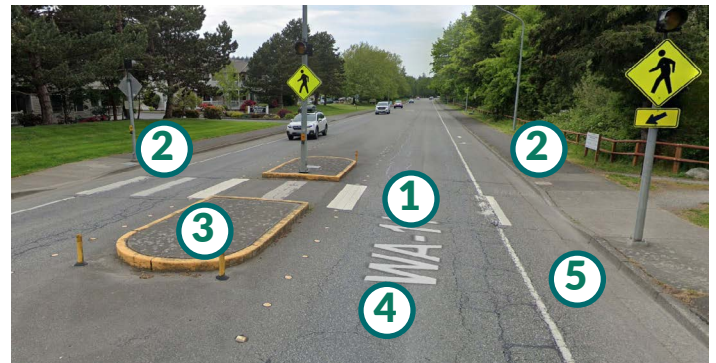
- Are developed together with the local community to understand needs and priorities.
- Seek to provide facilities that make it easier and more comfortable to walk, bike, roll, and access transit along and across the project area.
- Balance trade-offs, which may sometimes lead to a phased approach with near-term improvements built with the current project and a plan developed for future improvements.

Some design solutions in the photo are:

1. Frequent, visible crosswalks
2. Sidewalks on both sides
3. Islands in the middle of road crossings to separate people walking from vehicle traffic
4. Narrower vehicle lanes
5. Bike lanes

Additional design solutions not pictured include:

- Roundabouts
- Lowering speed limits



What do Complete Streets mean for communities?

- Complete Streets are **more comfortable** for people using all forms of transportation. Businesses near Complete Streets are accessible to more people arriving in more ways. People are invited to travel to, not just through, places. People are not stuck in traffic congestion with no options. It is easier for everyone to get where they need to go when people can choose more cost-effective, space-efficient transportation options. Our communities can thrive when we **diversify our transportation portfolio**.
- When we make a road safer for people walking or add a protected bike lane, we **reduce serious and fatal crashes** for people using all forms of transportation.
- These benefits have been **recognized** for decades by a growing list of jurisdictions in our state. It's newer for WSDOT projects but not for many counties, towns and cities.
- Each Complete Streets project has a goal to reflect local context, local active transportation plans and be responsive to community needs. Shared use paths, sidewalks, flashing beacons, raised crosswalks – we have a lot of **different tools** to choose from to achieve project outcomes.
- We have 1,900 miles of state roads in communities across Washington and we **work with local communities** to consider Complete Streets improvements when we work on those roadways. That includes building new facilities and maintaining what we already have. Each project with Complete Streets elements is another step toward a complete network.

Not a Complete Street

- Where do I bike?
- What's discouraging cars from speeding?
- Will drivers see me if I cross the road?



Complete Street

- Narrower lanes increase driver attention and lower speeds
- Bike lanes provide a defined space for people bicycling
- Curb extensions reduce pedestrian crossing distance
- Median splits the crossing into two shorter parts, instead of one long crossing
- More comfortable access to businesses for everyone



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