CDTC Complete Streets Workshops Series

In 2016, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) undertook the first workshop series in what has now been three separate educational and outreach efforts over the past 4 years. The primary goal of CDTC’s Complete Streets Workshop Series is to assist local governments with developing and implementing Complete Streets policies and projects.

Many communities in the Capital District have developed, and/or are in the process of developing, Complete Streets policies. Also, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the Complete Streets Act (Chapter 398, Laws of New York) on August 15, 2011, requiring state, county, and local agencies to consider the convenience and mobility of all users when developing transportation projects that receive state and federal funding.

Despite local and state regulations favoring Complete Streets, many of our local governments have faced challenges when developing and implementing their policies. The Complete Streets Educational & Technical Assistance Workshops help our transportation planning practitioners and decision-makers identify and overcome Complete Streets policy and implementation barriers.

The workshops are made available to local governments through a competitive application process. There is no local cost share, however communities are required to assist with meeting logistics and documenting attendance per CDTC’s in-kind match requirements.

Acknowledgments

A special thank you to Trustee Kormos for spearheading this effort and to Mayor Woolbright, Trustee Fitzpatrick, Trustee Raymond, and Trustee Shaw for their support of this workshop and the follow-up effort, a CDTC Linkage Study, which will help advance Complete Streets efforts in the Village.

Finally, CDTC staff plays an instrumental role in developing and executing each workshop and thanks go to Chris Bauer, Carrie Ward, Jacob Beeman, and CDTC Executive Director Michael Franchini for their work and support of the Workshop Series.
The recommendations in this document are conceptual in nature and do not commit NYSDOT, the Village of Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, or any other entities to the proposed projects. The concepts presented in this document may need to be investigated in more detail before any funding commitment is made. Undertaking additional engineering or other follow-up work will be based upon funding availability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Overview</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation Summary</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation &amp; Workshop Concepts</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Steps</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Documentation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“This workshop was fantastic...thank you for your work..”

November 19th workshop attendee
44 Attendees on Nov. 19th
The workshop kicked-off with presentations and discussions covering Complete Streets basic concepts, local examples, a discussion of Complete Streets in Ballston Spa, and design concepts.

52 Assessments Submitted
The workshop utilized a holiday to provide a one-week opportunity for attendees to assess existing conditions in the Village utilizing an Assessment worksheet (shown at left).

31 Attendees on Dec. 3rd
The workshop finished with an overview of the Assessment results, discussion on the importance of adopting a Complete Streets policy, and presentation and discussion of concept ideas.

2020: A Virtual Workshop
This year brought about many changes including the format with which the Workshop Series is delivered. In the past, workshops were one-day in-person events but due to COVID, this workshop was conducted virtually in two separate sessions.

Attendance at the workshop was generally consistent with that seen at the in-person events held in the past. While the format of the presentation and discussion was very similar, input from attendees was primarily provided via typed comments in the virtual platform’s chat box. While different, the workshop garnered significant input and discussion that helped put a local perspective on the discussion items.

A local perspective and significant local input were realized through the Complete Streets Assessment forms submitted by several attendees. These forms were not only completed as intended, but significant additional input was often included providing an expanded and detailed assessment of issues and opportunities that exist throughout the Village. Those results were summarized during the presentation into several slides, a few of which are shown below.
Presentation Summary

The Workshop included six educational modules presented over two sessions. The following are summaries of each session.

**Module 1: Overview & Local Examples:** This presentation provided an overview of the basics of what Complete Streets are and why they are important. It covered benefits including access and mobility, safety, health, economic development, and social equity. It also provided an overview of different examples of Complete Streets already found throughout the Capital Region.

**Module 2: Where have we been and where are we going:** Communities and those interested in Complete Streets need to know what Complete Streets exist in their community as a baseline for discussing implementation. The Village has a Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code with sidewalk maintenance requirements, a newly developed Economic Development Plan and at a regional level, the CDTC Capital District Trails Plan which includes recommendations for connections within and to the Village. Additionally, the Village undertook an open streets effort with outdoor dining this past summer on Front Street. The future includes undertaking a CDTC Linkage Study and potentially updating the Comprehensive Plan.

**Module 3: Complete Streets Design:** When considering design possibilities, it was noted that communities need to look at each project & location as a unique situation - there is no one-size-fits-all application. Context-sensitive designs need to be assessed and incorporated and all projects should fit into a long-term vision. Identifying priorities and characteristics of the roadways and corridors are vital. Consideration of where people want to go and how do they want to get there (for example, are there goat paths in unpaved areas indicating a route many people take) is key to considering initial priorities. This module also explored the design toolbox and common Complete Streets applications.

**Module 4: Project Development Process, Getting Results & Self-Directed Assessment Findings:** A fundamental element of ensuring proper implementation of Complete Streets is developing and instituting a project development process that works for the Village. This module discussed the general steps that need to be taken - from potentially restructuring processes, procedures, policies, plans and programs, to developing or updating design guidance, creating performance measures, and providing educational opportunities. Related to this, members of the community undertook a Complete Streets Assessment of several intersections and road segments to not only document existing conditions, but also to take the opportunity to possibly look at their streets from a different, Complete Streets perspective.

**Module 5: Complete Streets Policies:** As noted above, policies are a key element of a comprehensive Complete Streets program. Policies were discussed as being vital to helping ensure that the entire right-of-way is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide safe access for all users of the transportation system. Examples of policy elements were highlighted.

**Module 6: Concept Sketches:** The final element of the Workshop was a presentation and comment session focused on several concept sketches that the Consultant Team created not only to show what is possible, but also to gauge interest in different potential approaches to realistic changes that could occur within the Village.
Top 10 Comments noted @ the Workshop

- Finding funding is a priority
- Need to slow vehicle speeds
- Need to fill sidewalk gaps
- Increase enforcement efforts
- Safety improvements needed
- Need technical assistance
- Repainting lines needed
- Truck traffic is a concern
- Link to Zim Smith Trail needed
- Maintenance is key

Throughout the Workshop, attendees were provided the opportunity to comment on presented material, expand upon what was presented, and discuss specific issues, opportunities and concerns with infrastructure in the Village.

While we have listed comments made most often during the Workshop to the left, there were dozens of other comments made that can generally be grouped as follows:

- Parking can be an issue in the CBD *(it was also noted that parking isn’t an issue)*
- Need to coordinate with adjacent municipalities
- Need to expand sidewalks where they are missing
- Snow removal is a concern, especially for bump-outs
- Promote the existing sidewalk reimbursement program
- A car-free outdoor dining area would be great to continue
- Concern about bump-outs and conflicts with truck traffic
- Focus on school accessibility—Ballston Ave./Garrett worked well
- Need to identify high-crash locations
- A tree replacement program, especially for the Malta Ave. school, is needed *(the Village has applied for a grant to address street & park trees)*
- Consider altering traffic patterns to slow incoming traffic, for instance at South St/Doubleday Ave.
- Consider historic district needs when discussing implementation

During the Workshop, several attendees volunteered to participate on a Complete Streets Committee. *Thank you for offering your time to help make Complete Streets happen in the Village of Ballston Spa!*
Implementation: A Summary Recap

Implementation is the ultimate goal, but getting there requires resources and commitments from all levels.

**Resource Needs**

**VILLAGE DEPARTMENT SUPPORT**
- Financial Resources
- Staffing Resources
- Communication Protocols
- Other Unique Elements?

**A COMMITTEE PROVIDING GRASSROOTS SUPPORT**
- Work plan/Project List
- Volunteer Commitments
- Communication Protocols
- Other Unique Elements?

**Functional Needs**

- Leadership & Consistent Vision
- Project Planning
- A Prioritized Project List
- Securing Necessary Funding
- Project Design Assistance
- Project Implementation Approach
- Ongoing Maintenance Considerations
- Regular Program Evaluations
Workshop Concepts

The Workshop included conceptual photo simulations of what could be implemented in a few locations within the Village. For more information, please see the comments below and webinar recordings.

Intersection of Hyde Boulevard and Malta Avenue looking west. In this concept sketch, a sidewalk has been added to the southwest corner of the intersection along with a crosswalk on Hyde Boulevard. A mini-roundabout has also been added with a slight widening of the road and the stop-controlled intersection would become an all-way yield.
Front Street @ Spring Street looking west. The concept above shows the addition of sharrows to the road to guide cyclists and alert drivers.

Front Street @ Spring Street looking east. In this concept, the crosswalk has been repainted and curb ramps have been added. Sharrows have been painted and parking has been changed to back-in angled parking.
Hyde Boulevard looking north toward Malta Avenue. Hyde Boulevard is a very wide residential road @ ~46’ of pavement. This concept retains on-street parking and adds a center median several feet wide. A sidewalk is also shown along the west side along with a crosswalk at Columbia Ave.
Oak Street @ Zim Smith Trailhead. Given the low volume on Oak Street, sharrows are proposed to guide cyclists and alert drivers.

Oak Street @ curve near East High Street. This concept continues the use of sharrows and adds signage. It also includes a proposed new multi-use path along the utility ROW. Continuing sharrows to East High Street instead of constructing a new multi-use path is also an option.
East High Street @ railroad overpass looking west. This concept utilizes the existing 40’ width under the railroad overpass by removing the sidewalks that exist and replacing them with a physically separated side path. This path could connect to a new multi-use path along the utility ROW and/or continue to Oak Street and beyond to connect to the existing sidewalk further to the east.
Workshop Concept Comments

A main objective of the concept drawings is to gauge how certain ideas are received by residents, business owners, elected officials, and others. After each concept was presented, attendees provided input which is summarized below.

Intersection of Hyde Boulevard & Malta Avenue:
- Should we add a crosswalk to the Park? Answer: Yes, it just was not part of this sketch.
- Most comments noted that this intersection is a problem that should be assessed.
- It was noted that many children live close to the intersection and older children walk to the pool.

Front Street at/near Spring Street:
- Consider implementing a demonstration project similar to Henry Street in Saratoga Springs.
- Look at parallel routes with lower vehicle volumes for bicycle accommodations.
- Assess viability of turning Front Street into a one-way street.
- Add bike racks to provide place for cyclists to leave bikes and shop.

Hyde Boulevard:
- Consider removing a lane of parking and adding bike lanes.

Zim Smith Trailhead Connection:
- Consider using the existing railroad spur to provide access to the Village.
- The sidewalks along East High Street are in poor condition.
- Assess cost/benefit to a utility ROW multi-use path or extending side path to Oak Street along East High Street.
- Consider how this concept would connect to Hyde Boulevard and work in the vicinity of Kayleen Road.
Next Steps

This workshop was not only an educational and outreach effort to kickstart Complete Streets discussions within the Village, it was also the lead-in to a CDTC Linkage Study secured by the Village.

**Kickoff of the CDTC Ballston Spa Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Linkage Study:** The Plan was proposed by the Village of Ballston Spa to help pursue goals of enhancing the Route 50 corridor, promoting economic development, improving safety, and creating a connected and integrated multi-modal transportation network for users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit users, freight, children, elderly, and people with disabilities.

**Continue the Complete Streets Assessments to include all blocks within the Village:** A significant effort was undertaken by residents to assess streets as part of the Workshop. Many attendees voiced interest in continuing to complete this effort for blocks not covered by the Workshop Assessment effort.

**Adopt a Complete Streets Policy:** Policies ensure that the right-of-way is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide safe access for all users. Adopting a policy is an important early implementation step that helps develop, and guide, the implementation process.

**Develop a Village Complete Streets Checklist:** A checklist is a document that is typically used during a potential or proposed project to assess different Complete Streets criteria in conjunction with the project. It can also be used to simply undertake a detailed assessment of a location.

**Evaluate Communication Protocols and the Development Review Process:** Integrating a Complete Streets policy and executing the policy and a checklist into existing communications protocols and the development review process is integral to ensuring these elements are utilized as a common practice within the Village.

**Build Institutional and Financial Support for Complete Streets:** Proper procedures and financial support for departmental needs, project execution, and committee needs help ensure the process becomes a part of regular Village operations.
Supporting Documentation

The following section provides information developed or received as part of the Workshop series.

1) Self-Directed Assessment Summary Map Images & Assessment Forms
2) Complete Streets Toolkit Document
3) Copies of Workshop Agendas
Complete Streets Self-Directed Assessment
Overall Appeal

Complete Streets
Self-Directed Assessment
Why do we need Complete Streets?

Safety
Mobility
Health
Social Equity
Economic Development
Social Equity

Complete Streets take many forms. They refer to a set of street design concepts that ensures all users - pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and drivers - are safely accommodated regardless of how they travel or what their special needs may require.

Complete Streets designs can significantly improve safety and reduce pedestrian-related crashes. They can also help reduce congestion, provide more efficient travel within the community and spur economic development (NYSAMPO, Complete Streets Fact Sheet).

Complete Streets improve mobility for the young and old, and those without access to a vehicle. An AARP study found that 47% of older Americans felt it was unsafe to cross a major street near their home. Strong support for adoption of Complete Street policies was expressed by 56% of survey respondents.

In 2010, a Future of Transportation National Survey found that 66% of Americans wanted more transportation options so that they have the freedom to choose how to get where they need to go - 73% felt that they had no choice but to drive as much as they do while 57% would like to spend less time in their car.

What is the HEALTH benefit?

There are wide-ranging benefits from implementing Complete Streets including the ability to walk or bike from one’s front door and certainly in the case of Ballston Spa, to provide the option to make local trips without requiring an automobile.

It is also important to remember that there is currently a health crisis in this country highlighted by the following statistic of the benefits of regular physical activity:

A 50% reduction in the risk of becoming obese, developing adult diabetes and developing coronary heart disease.

(Todd Litman for the APTA - Eval. of Public Transportation Health Benefits- Apr. 2020)

The amount of moderate intensity activity, such as brisk walking, recommended by the CDC.

High School Students and adults reporting getting enough physical activity to meet the aerobic & muscle-strengthening key guidelines according to the U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services.

Complete Streets are for everyone - No matter who they are or how they travel!
The Village of Ballston Spa has the benefit of being designed as a generally walkable community. Approximately 15 miles of sidewalks exist throughout most of the Village and it has a compact land use pattern with an accessible and vibrant Downtown.

Pedestrian elements such as ADA curb cuts, crosswalks, and pedestrian countdown timers are found throughout the Village. However, there is no notable bicycle infrastructure.

In addition, the Village is a crossroads for significant north-south, and to a lesser degree, east-west traffic primarily via NYS Route 50 and NYS Route 67. While high-traffic roads, they are still generally manageable by non-motorists. In addition, Route 50 has been identified by CDTC as an on-road bike route in the CDTC Bicycle & Pedestrian Prioritization Tool and the Village includes both Tier 1 and Tier 2 Pedestrian Districts. Information on the Tool can be found at: https://www.cdtcmpo.org/page/57-whatwedo/pedestrian/43-bicycle-and-pedestrian-priority-network.
An estimated 2.9% of Ballston Spa workers over the age of 16 years do not have access to a vehicle.

An estimated 3.8% of workers 16 and over walked to work, this is higher than Saratoga County as a whole at 1.8%. Another 3.0% of Ballston Spa workers took public transportation or used a mode other than a car, truck, or van.

982 residents (~18%) in Ballston Spa are under 16 years of age meaning that they can not drive and must get a ride or find alternative means of transportation if they can not walk or bike.

-2018 U.S. Census ACS Estimate
Why implement Complete Streets now?

- We are all pedestrians at the beginning and end of our trips.
- Whether or not it is designed for a specific mode or action, people are using the infrastructure.
- Case studies show that Complete Streets have a significant positive impact on the local economy.
- The Pandemic has increased the amount of walking and bicycling.
- Implementing Complete Streets now can save money in the long run. In general, infrastructure projects do not get cheaper as the years pass.
What is the Safety Benefit?

Pedestrian crash analysis findings by the NHTSA show that approximately 16% of all traffic fatalities in 2017 were pedestrians.

There is a huge pedestrian crash reduction potential with Complete Streets infrastructure in-place:
- 89% with sidewalks
- 69% with leading pedestrian intervals
- 46% with medians & pedestrian crossing Islands

Source: FHWA - Proven Counter Measures

Low/No-Cost Options

Special funding is not necessarily needed to undertake Complete Streets implementation efforts. Thinking ahead and coordinating efforts can result in noticeable changes and improvements with little to no additional funding necessary.

- Work with local agencies & utilize existing expertise: the CDTC, NYSDOT, CDRPC and Saratoga County all have staff available to support municipalities.
- Attempt to find efficiencies using municipal staff - for example staff could do some of the preparation work typically done by contractors at a fraction of the cost (clearing, grading or seeding) as off-season, “rainy day” or work done as part of another effort. Volunteers are also often willing to assist to get a project done.
- Intersection improvements are often lower cost upgrades that can generally be easily implemented (crosswalk striping, crosswalk buttons, countdown timers, etc.)
- Restriping of roadways to provide adequate width shoulders, or bike lanes, for bicycle travel.
- Plan for, design, and construct sidewalks as part of planned drainage, grading, widening, or development projects. There is real potential to link Complete Streets and green infrastructure projects.
- Leverage planned development projects by working with developers early-on to bring about the best projects possible every time. Make the requirements clear and well-known. The adoption of a Complete Streets policy and associated design standards can go a long way in ensuring consistent implementation.

Complete Streets Policies

Policies ensure that the right-of-way is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide safe access for all users.

There are many examples of policies that have been adopted and implemented throughout the Capital Region and New York State and copies of policies in New York have been collated and are available on the NYSDOT website at: www.dot.ny.gov/programs/completestreets

CDTC has an active Complete Streets Advisory Committee and information on the committee can be found on their website at: www.cdtcmpo.org/page/66-project-programs/complete-streets/62-complete-streets-advisory-committee

Additional information on where policies have been developed across the U.S. can be found on the Smart Growth America website at: www.smartgrowthamerica.org

Complete Streets do not necessarily require special funding. It is often about using existing resources differently!
Economic Development

In the Summer of 2020, due to the Pandemic, the Village undertook an effort to support restaurants by undertaking an Open Streets initiative that utilized on-street parking as space for expanded outdoor dining. This concept has been mostly undertaken as “demonstration projects” in the past, but has been widely implemented across the country and the world as a way to permit dining at restaurants in an open-air setting during the Pandemic: a setting which health experts cite as safer than congregating indoors.

Open Streets and Complete Streets directly benefit and support economic development and business viability and retention efforts by providing options for people to access and patronize businesses.

This concept should be part of any Complete Streets toolkit and as an effort already underway within the Village, assessed for future implementation and expansion, where feasible.
Funding Opportunities

- Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC): https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/capital-region
- Consolidated Funding Application (CFA): https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa
- NYS DOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): & Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program: https://www.dot.ny.gov/TAP-CMAQ
- TIP Number RG103 - Bicycle/Pedestrian Network Set-Aside https://www.cdtcmpo.org/tiplist19/RG103.HTM

Online & Print Resources

- CDTC Committee(s): Complete Streets, Bicycle & Pedestrian https://www.cdtcmpo.org/committees
- CDTC Open Streets Webpage https://www.cdtcmpo.org/page/457-open-streets
- NYS DOT Complete Streets Webpage https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/completestreets
- NYASMPO Fact Sheets https://nysmpos.org/fact-sheets
- NYASMPO Useful Links https://nysmpos.org/useful-links
- National Complete Streets Coalition https://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) https://www.nacto.org/programs/#designing-better-streets
- American Planning Association Complete Streets Database https://www.planning.org/research/streets
- Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) https://www.ite.org/pub/?id=E1CFF43C-2354-D714-51D9-D82B39D4DBAD
About CDTC

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the funding agency for development of this Toolkit and the associated Complete Streets Workshop Series, is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Capital District. The CDTC carries out federal requirements for cooperative transportation planning and programming within the metropolitan area surrounding the Albany-Schenectady-Troy and Saratoga Springs urbanized areas.
2020
Complete Streets Workshop Series
Village of Ballston Spa, NY
Three-part virtual educational workshop

November 19th @ 7:00PM.

Agenda

1) Welcome by CDTC
2) Introduction by Planning4Places, LLC
3) Workshop
   - Module 1: Overview & local/regional examples
   - Module 2: Where have we been & where are we going?
   - Module 3: Why implement now?
4) Next Steps:
   - Part 2: Self-Directed Complete Streets Assessment. Send forms by 11/29/20 to jevy@planning4places.com
   - Workshop Part 2 - 12.3.20 @ 7:00PM

When this workshop is completed, you should:

- Know what Complete Streets are and the different implementation options that are available.
- Better understand how to plan for and create streets that are safe for all users.
- Be able to identify how Complete Streets can build a more active and healthier Village population.
2020 Complete Streets Workshop Series
Village of Ballston Spa, NY
Three-part virtual educational workshop

December 3rd @ 7:00PM.

Agenda
1) Welcome by CDTC
2) Introduction by Planning4Places, LLC
3) Workshop
   - Module 4: Assessment Results & Project Development Process
   - Module 5: Complete Streets Policies
   - Module 6: Ballston Spa Concepts

When this workshop is completed, you should:
• Know what Complete Streets are and the different implementation options that are available.
• Better understand how to plan for and create streets that are safe for all users.
• Be able to identify how Complete Streets can build a more active and healthier Village population.