SUCCESSFUL POLICIES THAT SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANS: A NATIONAL LOOK

GREATER OHIO POLICY CENTER

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ABOUT GREATER OHIO POLICY CENTER

An outcome-oriented statewide non-profit that *champions revitalization and sustainable redevelopment in Ohio*:

- Revitalize Ohio’s urban cores and metropolitan regions
- Achieve sustainable land reuse and economic growth
ABOUT GREATER OHIO POLICY CENTER: HOW WE DO OUR WORK

• Develop and publish research

• Assist communities through strategic assistance and dissemination of best practices

• Use research to advocate for practical policy solutions at the state level

• Build collaborative partnerships to extend our reach and ability to impact change
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION: DEFINITION

“Active transportation is any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking or bicycling.”—Centers for Disease Control

Active Transportation policies and plans often support other state-led plans and goals:

• Strategic Highway Safety Plan
• Statewide Health Improvement Plan
• Chronic Disease Plan
• increased job access for low and moderate income residents
• increased student safety going to/from school
OHIO IN CONTEXT: NATIONAL TRENDS

• 33 states have state-level Active Transportation policies including:
  • All of Ohio’s neighbors except Kentucky
  • All Gulf states, except Alabama
  • States with a mix of urban/suburban/rural like Missouri, Illinois, Tennessee

• There are over 900 local/regional ordinances in the country
  • Policies found in every state, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico

http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/changing-policy/complete-streets-atlas
OHIO: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND POLICIES

Ohio does NOT have a statewide active transportation policy, but **20 local and regional** active transportation ordinances, resolutions, or policies

- 4 MPOs:
  - MORPC (Columbus area)
  - MVRPC (Dayton area)
  - NOACA (Cleveland area)
  - TMACOG (Toledo area)

- 16 local ordinances, policies, etc.

DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL/REGIONAL COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES

Key: **Blue**: Laws & Ordinances
| **Red**: Resolutions | **Purple**: Internal Policies or Executive Orders
| **Magenta**: Plans | **Turquoise**: Policies Adopted by Elected Boards

http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/changing-policy/complete-streets-atlas
FAST ACT & ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

FAST ACT requires Secretary of Transportation to encourage states and MPOs to adopt road design standards that take into account all road users through all phases of planning, development and operation

FAST ACT did not provide new dedicated funding, per se, for active transportation design or implementation
IMPACT OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND POLICIES
INCREASES SAFETY & PREVENTS PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES

Elderly (65+ y/o)

- 22% of all pedestrian fatalities between 2000-2009 were elderly adults of all ethnicities and races (elderly represented 13% of total US population during this time period)
- 173% higher fatality rate among older Latinos than that of older whites

Children

- Latino children 40% more likely than white children to be killed while walking
- African American children twice as likely as white children to be killed while walking

Income

- In counties where >20% of households have incomes below the federal poverty line, pedestrian fatality rate is +80% higher than the national average

http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/complete-streets-fundamentals/factsheets/equity/
HEALTH OUTCOMES IMPROVE

One study found that:

• 43% of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home met recommended activity levels

• Among those without safe places to walk just 27% met the recommendation

• Residents are 65% more likely to walk in a neighborhood with sidewalks

http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/complete-streets-fundamentals/factsheets/health
MARKET AND PROPERTY VALUE STRENGTHEN

2015 study of 37 Active Transportation Infrastructure Projects:

- Property values increased after improvements in 8 of 10 communities with available data
- Eight communities report increased investment from private sector, in part due to AT projects
- Employment levels rose in areas around AT projects
- Net increase in new businesses

In a 2011 University of Cincinnati study found:

- Cincinnati housing prices went up by $9 for every foot closer to a bike/ped dedicated trail. For an average home, homeowners willing to pay a $9,000 premium to be located 1,000 feet closer to the trail
  - Similar market patterns likely around Active Transportation projects

http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/safer-streets-stronger-economies/
http://www.uc.edu/news/NR.aspx?id=14300
MINIMAL TO NO IMPACT ON VEHICLE TRAFFIC

The 2015 analysis found that in some projects where collisions and injuries decreased, automobile volume was unchanged or increased, while pedestrian and bicycle traffic increased.

- In other words, the rate of collision/injury dropped the same or more than the absolute change.
MILLIONS OF $ SAVED THROUGH AVOIDED COSTS

A 2015 analysis of 37 Active Transportation Infrastructure projects across the country determined the projects avoided a total of $18.1 million in collision and injury costs in one year alone.*

These savings start as soon as a project is complete, and continue long after.

* Calculations only apply to 37 analyzed projects.

http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/safer-streets-stronger-economies/
WHAT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND POLICIES LOOK LIKE IN OTHER STATES
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED BUT NOT MANDATED

In Rhode Island, DOT must “consider complete street design features that facilitate safe travel by all users” on roads the DOT constructs or modifies.

In Michigan, Active Transportation infrastructure investments are encouraged but not necessarily required on all state-controlled roads; locally-controlled roads require local active transportation ordinance for active transportation investments from state.

In Vermont, by statute, road engineers for all state and municipally managed transportation projects must consider the safety and accommodation of all system users.
STATE ENCOURAGES INCORPORATION OF ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICY IN ALL STATE PLANS (EVEN NON-TRANSPORTATION)

In Illinois, “bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be given full consideration in the planning and development of transportation facilities, including the incorporation of such ways into State plans and programs.”
STATE PROVIDES MODELS OF LOCAL POLICIES

**Michigan** has a statewide policy for the roads it controls and provides template language for local adoption.

“The state transportation commission shall do both of the following...: (a) Adopt a complete streets policy for the department. (b) Develop a model complete streets policy or policies to be made available for use by municipalities and counties.”
STATE INCENTS AND REWARDS ADOPTION OF LOCAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Massachusetts

• Local government passes active transportation/complete streets ordinance

• Presence of ordinance makes communities eligible for state **planning grants** for active transportation

• Once plan adopted, local community can apply for **funding to implement** infrastructure improvements, per plan (i.e. road construction funds)
  • Plan prioritizes needs and identifies procedures to incorporate AT projects into routine road work
STATES PROVIDES/MAKES ELIGIBLE FUNDING FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AT LOCAL LEVEL

In **Washington**, the state has a grant program that funds context sensitive design solutions that account for all roadway users.

In **Wisconsin**, state statute requires “that bikeways and pedestrian ways are established in all new highway construction and reconstruction projects funded in whole or in part from state funds or federal funds...”
Priority funding considerations or “bonus points” for locating redevelopment projects near active transportation infrastructure and transit access

- **New Jersey’s Transit Villages**: if bike/ped/transit access is present, project gets expedited permitting review and priority consideration of funding related to pre-development activities

- **Maryland’s Sustainable Communities**: if proposed affordable housing project near transit access and bike/ped infrastructure, get 4-8 extra points on applications for affordable housing tax credits
MPOS REQUIRES ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION ON PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH MPOS-CONTROLLED FUNDS

The 4 MPOs that have Active Transportation policies

• Encourage local governments to adopt their own AT policies

• Encourage local governments to follow AT design when making roadway investments

• Require applicants to have active transportation programming on any project that seeks CMAQ, STP, TAP funding
OHIO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS REQUIRE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION DESIGN

Example: City of Piqua requires active transportation design on all streets

“This policy applies to all project identification, planning and scoping, and the design and construction of all new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, rehabilitation, repair, and maintenance of surface transportation network facilities located within the public right of way or on public or private land. Existing improvements, until they are altered or modified, are exempt from this policy.”
FINAL THOUGHTS

• There are a range of ways to achieve active transportation infrastructure
  • Policy that encourages consideration => requires AT programming
  • Carrots (grant funding!) => sticks (mandates)
  • State led => locally led

• There can be a delay between passage of policy and implementation/visible results (that’s just how policy works!)

• Many states try to pair up active transportation policy with other programs and plans to fully maximize state investments
  • locals are doing this and/or expected to do the same
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