



# LIVABLE STREETS TALKING POINTS

## *So, what is Livable Streets?*

*A livable city is an organized city, with a soul.*

Livable Streets isn't just about building sidewalks and bike lanes, it's about making our communities more connected and open to people regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation. Livable Streets policies promote healthy, vibrant communities that businesses want to invest in, people want to live in and tourists want to visit.

---

Missouri is a national leader in the Livable Streets movement, with more than 2.7 million Missourians living in municipalities with Complete Streets policy. Missouri Livable Streets was formed in 2010 as a public-private partnership between state, local and private organizations and citizens to help more communities learn about the benefits of transportation planning for all users.

There are no street design requirements for Livable Streets. The design is simply meant to provide what is needed, where it is needed for the safety of all street users. New street design features will look different whether you're in a big city, suburb or rural town. Typically, features include:

- Shoulders on rural roads
- Sidewalks, crosswalks and curb ramps
- Bicycle lanes
- Median refuges
- Speed bumps
- Bump outs for sidewalks and bus stops
- Audible pedestrian signals

### **Livable Streets work in rural communities**

Across Missouri more than 35 Livable Streets policies have been successfully implemented in rural communities, large cities and diverse counties. These are communities that have decided where they want to be in 20 years and are taking the steps to move towards that vision.

**In Missouri, passing a Livable Streets policy does not cost anything, but can have great appeal to grantors when looking for funding opportunities.**

Each community will have a different goal in mind when adopting Livable Streets, some for health reasons, some for recreational reasons, or both! Regardless of your reason(s), here are some talking points to get you started talking about Livable Streets in your community.





## Economic Impact

LIVABLE STREETS POLICIES FIT INTO THE LARGER MOVEMENT of creating more dynamic, connected communities. There are many benefits to this movement, but one of the strongest is the benefit for local economies- investment in Livable Streets infrastructure correlates with increased consumer spending.<sup>1</sup>

- A town's walkability spurs investments from businesses. Businesses want to increase foot traffic in their stores and they value infrastructure that provides customers with more ways to access their business (i.e. walking, biking, etc.).<sup>2</sup>
- When choosing places to live, more and more young people want to settle in areas that support easy accessibility and interaction among the places they live, work and play through trails, sidewalks, parks, bike lanes, etc.<sup>2</sup>
- Communities with bike, pedestrian and transit-friendly infrastructure attract more businesses than those that do not.<sup>2</sup>
- Residential, office and commercial property values increase with landscape and urban design improvements.<sup>2</sup>



Warsaw, Mo sidewalk construction

### Revitalization Projects Bring New Life to Warsaw, MO

There is a lot in Warsaw (population 2,127) that other cities around Missouri can emulate. The city created a trails plan and then found the resources (i.e. grants) to follow through and implement it. They have transformed the city's riverfront that now connects people directly to the revitalized downtown area. Forming key alliances with engineers, local government bodies and agencies, as well as working to develop citizen support for its initiatives has made all the difference in bringing the vision to a reality.

The result is a more beautiful city with bicycle, pedestrian, trail and parks facilities that help improve the city's health and attract visitors and businesses that help make the area's economy healthy as well. And they still have plans for more development. It's no wonder Warsaw was named as one of the "Best Complete Streets Initiatives of 2017" by Smart Growth America.

- Portions from [mobikefed.org](http://mobikefed.org), by Brett Hugh

Image source: [mobikefed.org](http://mobikefed.org)

Image links: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mobikefed/albums/72157631106442360/with/7799674386/>

License: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/legalcode>



## Kids' Health

*CHILDREN ARE LESS ACTIVE TODAY than they were 40 years ago- and it's showing. Currently 23% of children get no regular physical activity, which has resulted in approximately 25 million (or more than 33%) being overweight or obese.<sup>3</sup> With simple policy changes to support Livable Streets, a host of health issues can be prevented or reduced for children.*

- Childhood obesity increases the risk of diseases such as coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases that they will have to manage for the rest of their lives.<sup>4</sup>
- Walking one mile each way to school is two-thirds of the daily-recommended 60 minutes of activity suggested for youth.<sup>3</sup>
- The presence of sidewalks is positively associated with physical activity among kids and teens.<sup>3</sup>
- Among parents' top concerns about children walking to school are traffic-related safety issues- which can be reduced through Livable Streets design (SRTS Guide).<sup>3</sup>
- In 1969, 48% of children (aged 5-14) walked to school, by 2009 that number had dropped to 13% among the same age group.<sup>3</sup>



### McDonald County is Using Livable Streets as a Tool to Increase Recreational Opportunities

Not all kids live in areas where they can walk or bike to school. However, increasing accessibility to parks and recreational areas where they can safely exercise is one way to help them live more physically active lives.

"The city of Anderson and the city of Pineville want to connect communities with a trail," said Brandy Smith, McDonald County Health Educator. "So funding would probably be to finish the walking trail that's in Anderson around our ball parks and then eventually building nice trails that connect Anderson to Pineville." Leadership in McDonald county established a vision for their communities and are using Livable Streets as a tool to help accomplish their long-term goals.

"It doesn't cost anything to pass a Livable Streets policy, but it is good when you are looking for funding to improve your community. That was my selling point. People want to see that you are doing things like Livable Streets policy because it all starts with policy."

# Adult Health

*LIKE CHILDREN, THE RATE OF OBESITY AMONG ADULTS IS ALSO INCREASING. In 1990 11.3% of Missourians reported being obese. In 2016 that number rose to 31.7%, making Missouri the 17th most obese state.<sup>5</sup> One-quarter of health care costs can be attributed to obesity, or more than \$190 billion in annual medical spending.<sup>6</sup>*

Obesity can lead to more chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD) and more. Adults also move less today than in previous decades, with sedentary jobs and proliferation of inexpensive and unhealthy foods and snacks, putting them at greater risk for chronic diseases.

- Walking is the most basic form of transportation and can be an important source of daily physical activity. Adults report lack of access to safe places to walk and exercise (i.e. sidewalks, paths, trails, parks) as one of the main reasons for not being more physically active (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).<sup>7</sup>
- Moderate, daily physical activity, such as bicycling or walking, has long been recognized as an essential ingredient of a healthy lifestyle. Safe infrastructure for Livable Streets supports physical activity.
- Residents who commute by walking report being happier than their fellow citizens who commuted by more inactive modes, such as a car or bus.<sup>8</sup>
- Obesity-related health care costs cause ripple effects at the local level : (1)People pay higher insurance premiums, (2)Medical costs directly spent on illnesses related to obesity, (3)Loss of productivity due to lost days of work from obesity-related illnesses and (4)Lower wages and income linked with obesity-related illnesses.<sup>6</sup>



*Sidewalk construction in Warsaw, Mo*

## **Parks and Recreation Manager, Mac Vorce on Making Warsaw Fitness-Friendly...**

"You gotta use what you have," Mac says. "We are not going to be able to bring in multi-million dollar theme parks. We are not going to have casinos. So what do we have to offer? Water, trails, walking and running paths, mountain bike trails. This health thing is not a fad anymore. A lot of people are planning their vacations on what they are going to be able to do physically while they are there. Randy's (Warsaw City Administrator) vision has brought that to Warsaw."

-Quote excerpt from Rural Missouri magazine, by Jim McCarty

Image source: [mobikefed.org](http://mobikefed.org)

Image links: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mobikefed/albums/72157631106442360/with/7799674386/>

License: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/legalcode>

# People with Disabilities

COMMUNITIES ACROSS MISSOURI ARE CONSIDERING THE IMPACT STREET DESIGN AND PLANNING have on the physical activity of residents as well as the impact on those who have cognitive, visual, physical or temporary disabilities. Approximately 1 in 5 Americans has a disability.<sup>9</sup> Infrastructure that lacks safe sidewalks and cross walks and does not consider the needs of all pedestrians are dangerous for those with disabilities.



The American Community Survey identifies persons with disabilities based on their difficulty with the following: hearing, visual, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care and independent living. Having an ambulatory disability was the most reported of all disabilities at 8.1%, followed by independent living disability at 6.2% and cognitive disability at 6.0%.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of Livable Streets is to make communities more inclusive and accessible for all residents, yet many communities lack basic road features that provide a safe environment for those with an ambulatory, visual, hearing or cognitive disability.

- Livable Streets supports ADA compliance: The revised Disabilities Act of 1990 now requires newly designed, constructed or altered state and local government facilities, public accommodations and commercial facilities be readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities.<sup>11</sup>
- Painted crosswalks, crossing cues for pedestrians whom are blind or deaf, curb ramps, even surfaces, appropriate rise and slope are a few ADA-compliant features that help people with disabilities navigate the roads.<sup>11</sup>
- Many people are not able to drive, making them reliant on others or forcing them to use roads that are unsafe to get to work, go to doctors appointments, run errands or exercise.



# Safety

*CREATING SAFE PUBLIC REALMS IS ONE OF THE MOTIVATIONS BEHIND LIVABLE STREETS.* Approximately one-third of Missourians cannot drive because they are too young (under 16), too old (some people over 65), have a disability or do not own a car.<sup>12</sup> Livable Streets connects these residents with economic, social and other opportunities to get around town.



Since many Missourians are not able to drive, they are forced to either rely on others for transportation, or use roads and damaged sidewalks that are unsafe for people who walk, bike, use wheelchairs or other walking aids. With the increase in accidents caused by distracted driving (i.e. texting while driving) in Missouri, pedestrians are left more vulnerable than before.<sup>13</sup>

- Pedestrian fatalities are on the rise in Missouri. Nearly 10 percent of all Missouri traffic fatalities are pedestrian deaths.<sup>14</sup>
- Without sidewalks, people are twice as likely to be struck by a vehicle.<sup>3</sup>
- There are six times more collisions with walking on high-traffic roads without sidewalks compared to low-traffic roads.<sup>3</sup>
- From 2014-2016, adults 66 and over made up 14% of pedestrian fatalities, individuals 21-25 made up over 12% of pedestrian fatalities, and 9-20 year olds made up just over 11%.<sup>15</sup>



Check out these resources (under the “Resources” section) for more detailed, supportive material for being an effective advocate for Livable Streets!

Livable Streets Advocacy Manual

Design Guides

## References

1. The Economic Benefits of Complete Streets. Vibrant NEO Full Report. February 2014. Retrieved from [http://vibrantneo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Vibrant-NEO-Final-Report\\_3-31-14\\_lowres\\_SPEC\\_complete-streets.pdf](http://vibrantneo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Vibrant-NEO-Final-Report_3-31-14_lowres_SPEC_complete-streets.pdf).
2. Complete Streets Stimulates the Local Economy, Smart Growth America. Retrieved from <https://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/app/legacy/documents/cs/factsheets/cs-economic.pdf>.
3. Quick Facts and Stats. Safe Routes to School National. Retrieved from <https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/healthy-communities/101/facts>.
4. Childhood Obesity Causes and Consequences. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. December 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/causes.html>.
5. The State of Obesity in Missouri. State of Obesity. 2016. Retrieved from <https://stateofobesity.org/states/mo>.
6. Obesity Prevention Source. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Retrieved from <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/obesity-consequences/economic/>.
7. Overcoming Barriers to Physical Activity. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. December 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adding-pa/barriers.html>.
8. Sturgis. S. Want to Be Happier? Try Walking Even Part of the Way to Work. City Lab. 2014. Retrieved from <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2014/09/want-to-be-happier-try-walking-even-part-of-the-way-to-work/380158/>.
9. Nearly 1 in 5 People have a Disability in the U.S., Census Bureau Reports. U.S. Census Bureau. July 25, 2012. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/miscellaneous/cb12-134.html>.
10. 2015 Disability Status report in Missouri. 2015. Disability Statistics. Retrieved from <http://disabilitystatistics.org/>.
11. 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Department of Justice. 2010. Retrieved from <https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/2010ADASTandards.pdf>.
12. How many Missourians are Non Drivers. Missouri Bicycle and Pedestrian Federation. 2005. Retrieved from <http://mobikefed.org/2005/09/how-many-missourians-are-non-drivers>.
13. Tallan, E. Distracted Driving Leading to More Accidents, MSHP says. Fox2 Now St. Louis. April 21, 2016. Retrieved from <http://fox2now.com/2016/04/21/distracted-driving-leading-to-more-accidents-mshp-says/>.
14. Pedestrian Fatalities on the Rise. Arrive Alive. December 7, 2016. Retrieved from <https://savemolives.com/news-resources/news-item/pedestrian-fatalities-on-the-rise>.
15. Total Fatalities by Age and Target Area 2014-2016. MoDOT. 2018. Retrieved from <http://www.modot.org/BluePrintReports/Pedestrians%20Killed2014%20-%202016-en-us.pdf>.