

MISSOURI LIVABLE STREETS ADVOCACY MANUAL



**INTRODUCTION TO LIVABLE STREETS
ADVOCACY 101
BUILDING A LIVABLE STREETS CAMPAIGN
ENGAGING POLICY MAKERS
SPEAKING AT A PUBLIC MEETING**



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Introduction to MISSOURI LIVABLE STREETS

Livable Streets is about improving the safety and accessibility of roads for everyone

For much of the last 50 years, transportation planning and design in the United States focused almost exclusively on moving automobiles. However, during the last decade, there has been a change to make our communities more accessible to people who use, by choice or necessity, different modes of transportation.¹

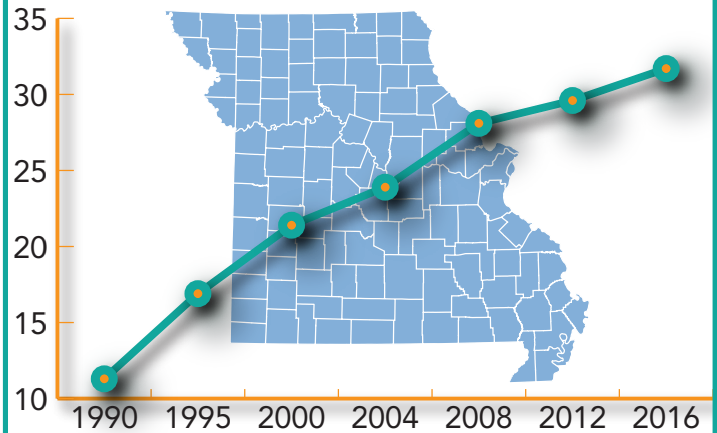
Many Missourians are not able to drive, making them reliant on others to get around or forcing them to use roads that are unsafe for their mode of travel. These individuals include children, youth, senior citizens and 14.5 percent of Missourians who have a visual, hearing, ambulatory, cognitive, or self-care disability.²

Obesity in Missouri

Our habit of designing infrastructure for automobiles has also left an absence of safe, accessible areas for people to be active in many communities, a trend that has added to Missouri's increasing overweight and obesity rates.³



Adult Obesity Rates in Missouri
1990-2016



*From 1990 to 2016 obesity rates increased from 11.3 percent to 31.7 percent (stateofobesity.org).³

Livable Streets supports ADA compliance

In 2010, the Department of Justice amended the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by revising accessibility standards in the "2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design". Revisions now require newly designed, constructed or altered state and local government facilities, public accommodations and commercial facilities be readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities. Livable Streets policies embody this approach, which is why communities across the state are working to adopt and implement Livable Streets policies in their transportation design.



What are Livable Streets?

Livable or Complete Streets are transportation considerations that ensure accessibility, comfort, safety and efficiency for all users. This includes bicyclists, pedestrians, people with disabilities, transit riders and car drivers. Livable Streets designs and policies can be customized to fit the needs of each community. Most policies apply to new street construction, however some refer to existing streets. All Livable Streets policies direct planners and engineers to consider all modes of transportation.

Common elements of Livable Streets:

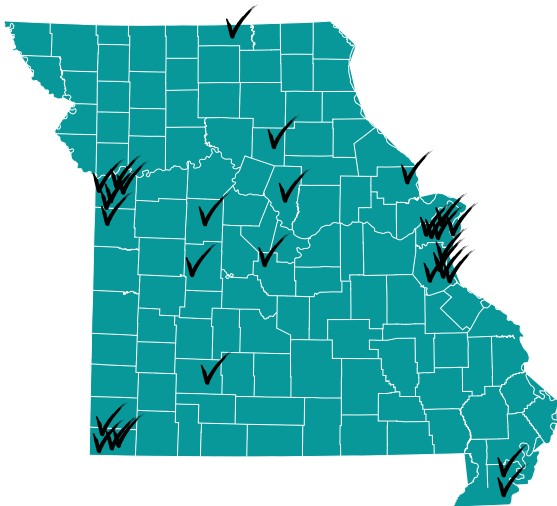
- Sidewalks and crosswalks
- Wheelchair ramps and curb cuts
- Bicycle lanes and mixed-use paths
- Bus stops and parking facilities
- Paved shoulders in rural areas

As of 2018 there are more than 1,200 Complete Streets policies nationwide and 33 state governments (including Missouri) that recommend or require these principles to be used. Citizens across the state, in cities and small towns such as Caruthersville, have shown their support for Livable Streets policies and many have passed their own policies and ordinances formalizing this support.

The purpose of this manual is to help you become an effective advocate for Livable Streets. It will provide you with the knowledge, tools and skills needed to plan a public policy change in your community that will eventually result in the creation of streets that are safer and more accessible for everyone in your community.



Livable Streets policies across Missouri



As of April 2018, there are more than 35 (and counting!) policies or ordinances in Missouri.

Check out these resources (under the "Resources" section) for more information on being an effective advocate for Livable Streets!

Livable Streets Talking Points

Livable Streets Policy Case Study

MISSOURI LIVABLE STREETS ADVOCACY 101



BECOMING AN INFORMED ADVOCATE
JOIN AN ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION
EDUCATE OTHERS
ACKNOWLEDGE OTHERS' PERSPECTIVES
SET REASONABLE GOALS
APPEAL TO ALL POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES



ADVOCACY 101

Becoming an informed advocate

To be an effective advocate for Livable Streets, it is helpful to understand the elements that create Livable Streets.

Specifically, advocates should understand:

- Livable Streets elements
- Benefits of Livable Streets
- How to influence decision makers
- Who to contact to impact street design
- Policies and procedures for funding, planning and constructing roads

Join an advocacy organization

Join a local, statewide or national Complete Streets, bicycle/pedestrian or disabilities advocacy organization for opportunities to meet other advocates and learn from their experiences. It may also create opportunities for recruiting additional organizations to assist with a campaign. To learn more about where to find an advocacy organization, go to <http://www.livablestreets.missouri.edu/advocate/tools/>.



Educate others

Advocates can educate others in formal settings like a presentation to a civic club or a letter to the local newspaper. The main focus should be simply to talk about the issue often and practice key messages.

At a certain point in the campaign, it will be necessary to communicate key messages effectively to policymakers. Becoming informed on the issue enables advocates to provide accurate and credible testimony in public forums like city council meetings.

To learn more about where to find an advocacy organization, go to www.livablestreets.missouri.edu/advocate/tools/.

What is the difference between **advocacy** and **lobbying**?

The main difference between advocacy and lobbying is that there are restrictions on the use of different types of funds for lobbying.

Advocacy is a general concept and it does not have a technical or legal definition. An advocate may discuss public safety with a neighbor or testify at a council meeting about a new city ordinance that will affect the entire community.

Lobbying is a form of advocacy defined by law. In general, lobbying is working to influence policymakers about a specific piece of legislation. Working to influence a citizen's vote or the vote of an elected official, like a city council member, would be considered lobbying.

Acknowledge others' perspectives

Generally, advocates for Livable Streets have a very different perspective on transportation policy from that held by the majority of the public, which has been influenced by decades of driving culture.

Questions that prompt self-examination can be a way to get people thinking about street design issues. For example, an advocate might ask, "If you wanted to bicycle to work one day, do you think you would feel safe?" or "If your kids wanted to walk to school, would you let them?" By acknowledging the other person's perspective, the advocate may help guide someone to a better understanding of needs that can be addressed by Livable Streets.

Set reasonable goals

When people understand the concept of Livable Streets, most support the general idea. But, these same people may still oppose policies because they have concerns about costs to install, whether the facilities will be used and interference with traffic.

It's more effective to work in partnership to achieve a small goal than to work in opposition to try to win something larger. If the sidewalks are installed and people like them and start using them regularly, it will be much easier to get crosswalks and traffic calming projects later.

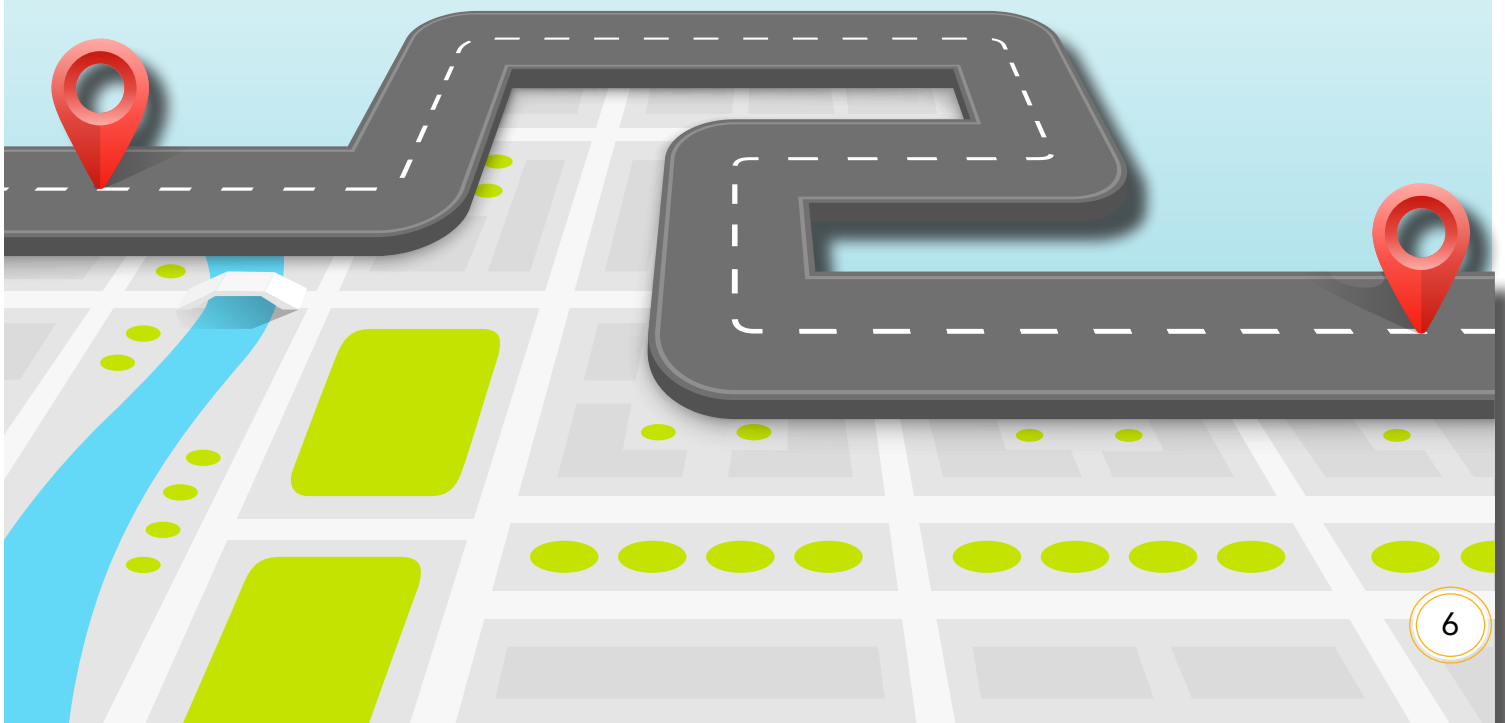
Be polite and persistent

In today's age of instant communication, people are easily overwhelmed by email and telephone messages, so it is important to be persistent and try multiple times to contact stakeholders.

A good rule of thumb is to call two times, send two e-mails and send a written letter to each stakeholder. If those communications do not elicit a response, it is safe to assume Livable Streets is not a priority for this person and move on, for now. Too much persistence may lead to alienation.

27% of all trips are 1.5 miles or less⁴, yet only...

10% of all trips are on foot or by bike.⁵



Emphasize the benefits of LS policies

- **Mobility:** It's important to provide a variety of transportation options so people are not restricted to their homes and can travel where they need to go independently.
- **Health:** Missouri is the 17th most obese state. Livable Streets policies support safer opportunities to get out and moving.³
- **Safety:** There are high rates of traffic fatalities in Missouri. Design elements like paved shoulders, crosswalks and speed bumps are meant to make roads safer for pedestrians and drivers.
- **Economy:** Businesses are attracted to healthy, vibrant communities. They also know young adults want to settle in areas that offer them active things to do, like biking/walking trails, parks, etc. This is the focus of many Livable Streets policies.



Engaging different viewpoints pays off

It is important to reach out in a positive way, present the benefits of Livable Streets and try to understand the position of others.

Missouri's PedNet Coalition worked for four years (2000-2004) to update the City of Columbia's Street Design Standards and create Missouri's first Complete Streets policy. During the campaign, PedNet encountered strong opposition from private developers who feared the change would increase their building costs. Advocates were careful to emphasize the positive, conduct themselves professionally and stick to the facts.

Years later, these same business owners became allies on a sales tax provision to support parks and trails, due to their enhanced understanding of active transportation infrastructure.

Check out these resources (under the "Resources" section) for more information on being an effective advocate for Livable Streets!

Roadway Planning and Design Process

Livable Streets Talking Points

Livable Streets Policy Case Study

Stakeholder Communication Materials

Sample Communication Materials for Media



MISSOURI LIVABLE STREETS

BUILDING A LIVABLE STREETS CAMPAIGN



**IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS
PRIORITIZE AND REACH OUT
SECURE STAKEHOLDER COMMITMENTS
DEVELOP AND DELIVER TALKING POINTS
EMPHASIZE THE BENEFITS OF LIVABLE STREETS**



BUILDING A LIVABLE STREETS CAMPAIGN

The following steps will outline how to build a partnership of committed stakeholders and develop consistent messages to increase public support.

Identify stakeholders

People with disabilities and senior citizens should be the first groups considered as they face unique challenges when using sidewalks and roads.

Health professionals are often strong supporters of Livable Streets because of the growing body of research that shows the connections between the built environment and health.

Environmentalists are natural allies for Livable Streets, as are **economic development professionals** who specialize in compact, mixed use development and downtown-area redevelopment.



Business owners see economic opportunity in areas where automobile access is restricted and active modes are the norm. In addition, employers save on insurance costs when employees live healthier lives.

Transportation planners and engineers have a strong influence on street design. In addition, the **city council and county commission members** who actually make local transportation policy should be addressed.



Prioritize and reach out

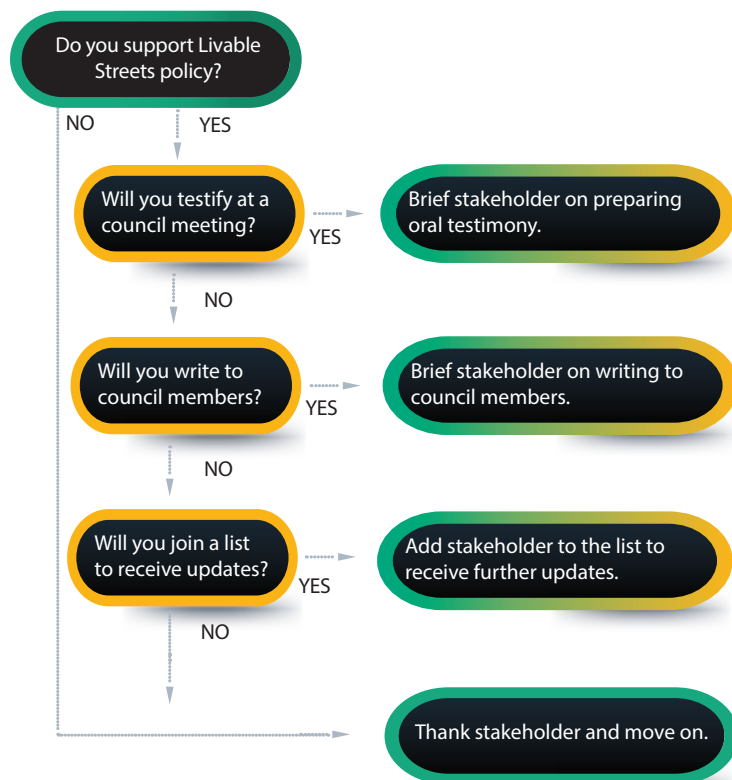
Once you make a list of stakeholders, prioritize your list on whom to contact first. Prioritization may be based on a number of factors:

- Level of influence in policy making
- Level of influence over other stakeholders
- Whether they support Livable Streets
- How well you know the stakeholder

Obtain stakeholder commitments

The main goal of a stakeholder meeting (face to face or telephone) is to win the stakeholder's commitment to support Livable Streets. The commitment can be the stakeholder's agreement to attend Livable Streets meetings or participation in a signature campaign. In a signature campaign, advocates ask stakeholders to sign on as a supporter of a specific Livable Streets vision.

DECISION CHART FOR STAKEHOLDER ACTION



Develop and deliver talking points

One of the most important tasks for the partnership is to develop a consistent set of talking points. Because Livable Streets bring many benefits, the partnership needs to discuss and negotiate which benefits and talking points to emphasize, which will depend on local priorities and preferences of key partners.

All partners need to agree on and deliver consistent messages. There are a number of ways to reach citizens through the media:

Op-eds signed by community members and pitched to the editor that explain why Livable Streets is timely and relevant.

Local radio and TV shows allow you to present talking points to many people at once and address misconceptions.

Earned media means making your own news. For example, hosting a walk-to-school event or issuing a press release.

E-newsletters update subscribers on news about the partnership; can be sent weekly or monthly.

Blogging allows partners to post longer messages about their work; also provides material for e-newsletters; should be updated weekly.

Social networking sites are inexpensive and powerful ways to make your message public. Update weekly and make use of pictures and hashtags.

Check out these resources (under the "Resources" section) for more information on being an effective advocate for Livable Streets!

Livable Streets Talking Points

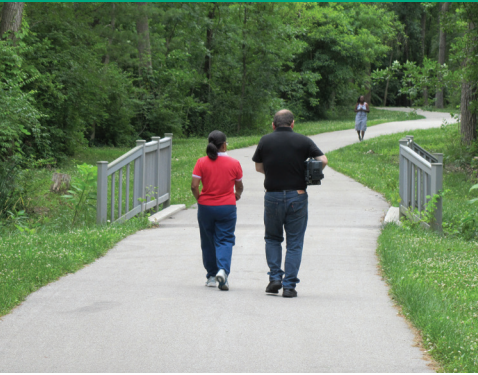
Stakeholder Communication Materials

Sample Communication Materials for Media

Livable Streets Design Case Study

MISSOURI LIVABLE STREETS

ENGAGING POLICYMAKERS



**IDENTIFY A CHAMPION
SCHEDULE A MEETING
BE CREDIBLE
FOCUS ON KEY MESSAGES
DELIVER THE SPECIFIC ASK
FOLLOW-UP**



ENGAGING POLICYMAKERS

Identify a champion

In order for a Livable Streets policy to be approved by a city council or county commission, it is essential that at least one member of the council be a “champion” for the policy.

Start early in identifying a champion so he or she has time to identify selling points to get other members on board and lay the ground work for council approval.

Even while the champion is engaged in advocacy, it is still important for other advocates to build their partnerships, develop talking points and implement a positive media campaign.

Do your research

Advocates should research elected officials’ backgrounds, values and legislative priorities. How has each voted on key issues? Which groups in town support the different members?

The answers to most of these questions should be available from either council members’ campaign websites or through public information channels like the community’s website.



Schedule a meeting

Because elected officials serve their constituents, it is generally quite easy to schedule a face to face appointment with a council member. In fact, council members often hold regular open hours in a community setting like a coffee shop. In this setting, constituents can discuss issues with a council person without making an appointment. Although this public setting is not ideal for an in-depth discussion of Livable Streets and a request to lead a policy initiative, it is the right place for a brief conversation and to schedule an appointment in a more private setting.

Sharing a Vision

For two years, McDonald County Health Educator, Brandy Smith, led the effort to rally support for Livable Streets policies among city leaders, community organizations and council members. “The people I’ve talked to do see the possibilities in the future and this policy may bring funding for sidewalks, trails and bike paths,” Smith said.

Livable Streets policies can help get the ball rolling on community development projects, but one important consideration Smith points out is identifying partners to help with the cause, **“You have to make partners with people who are already in with the city.** I want things to get done, but you have to work at the city’s pace, and that’s not always very fast.”

Be credible

Advocates can sometimes give the wrong impression. For example, a bicycle advocate who arrives in an elected official's office covered in sweat and still wearing a bike helmet may not be taken very seriously.

It is important to counter negative stereotypes by displaying the kind of professional appearance, dress code and behavior that are the norm in legislative offices. The goal is to make active transportation, as well as the advocates themselves, seem like the norm.

Focus on key messages

As with any stakeholder, advocates will need to convince the council member of the benefits of Livable Streets. The advocate should focus on the key messages and talking points that align with the council member's interests. It may be very effective to show photographs from other communities that have already adopted Livable Streets policies. Knowing that other Missouri communities have already implemented Livable Streets policies may help the council member feel that the idea is not too radical.

Most importantly, advocates should be positive, emphasize the benefits of Livable Streets, demonstrate the strength of support in the community, and offer the council member the opportunity to be the leader of a positive change movement inside the city council.

Deliver the "ask"

When advocates speak with elected representatives, it is a good idea to have a specific request. In this case, the "ask" involves speaking with a council member about supporting the Livable Streets campaign. Delivering a specific "ask" at any legislative visit gives the advocate a purpose for follow-up.

Follow-up

A few days after any meeting with an elected representative, advocates should send a brief note or e-mail message thanking the official for taking the time to meet and following up on any unanswered questions.

Check out these resources (under the "Resources" section) for more information on being an effective advocate for Livable Streets!

Livable Streets Talking Points

Livable Streets Policy Case Study

Livable Streets Design Case Study

Sample Communication Materials for Media

TOP 4 CATALYSTS THAT HELP PASS POLICY⁵



**Stakeholders from Missouri communities and regional organizations identified the top catalysts that helped pass Livable Streets policy in "Topline Findings from Key Informant Interviews with Stakeholders from Livable/Complete Streets Communities in Missouri" (Health Communication Research Center, University of Missouri, 2013).*

MISSOURI LIVABLE STREETS

SPEAKING AT A PUBLIC MEETING



**RESEARCH PROTOCOL
COORDINATE STAKEHOLDERS
DEFEND POLICY
ORDINANCE VS RESOLUTION
CASE STUDY: PERSISTENCE IS KEY**



SPEAKING AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

A successful Livable Streets campaign will eventually lead to a public meeting (usually a city council meeting) at which the legislative body will hear public input before debating and voting on whether to adopt a Livable Streets ordinance or resolution.

Research protocol

Before the city council meeting, advocates should research the meeting rules and protocol. They should learn the order in which things take place, which parts of the agenda include public comment and which do not, how long members of the public are allowed to speak, and whether they are allowed to use slide presentations or distribute documents to the council members.

The best way to research the meeting protocol is to attend a number of city council meetings or watch meeting broadcasts. The Livable Streets partnership's legislative champion should also be able to provide valuable information that will help with planning. It is very important to be well prepared.

Coordinate stakeholders

Since city council members are often volunteers who have a tremendous amount of information to process for every issue they legislate, they rely heavily on testimony provided before and during the council meeting. For this reason, it is very important to coordinate communications with the supportive city council members during the final days before the meeting, and to plan and practice a convincing presentation involving multiple kinds of stakeholders before the meeting. There is always a possibility that individuals or organized opposition groups may testify against the Livable Streets policy.



Final preparations include informing testifying stakeholders about meeting protocol, an overview of the audiovisual aids, handouts and notes for testimony, as well as directions to the meeting.

Even experienced advocates who have testified previously usually refer to notes while giving testimony, and some write out their speech in full to be sure they can stay inside the time limit. Advocates should be prepared to answer questions, and engage in conversation and debate.

About a week before the council meeting, the partnership leaders, including any well-known community leaders, should author an op-ed in the local newspaper that identifies the benefits of Livable Streets. During the final days before the meeting, partnership members should call and e-mail council members expressing their support of the Livable Streets policy.

Some council meetings run very long, so ask whether members prefer a few **key presentations** as opposed to numerous speakers. To demonstrate support, the presenter can ask those in attendance to stand or raise their hand if they support Livable Streets.

Defend the policy

The work is not over when a Livable Streets policy is adopted. Advocates must pay attention to the details of the policy and make sure the policy is correctly implemented. They must also guard against attempts to repeal or weaken the policy, especially if the vote of the city council was not unanimous.

What is the difference between a Livable Streets ordinance and a resolution?

An ordinance is a local law that is passed by a legislative body (city council), signed by the city executive (mayor), and subsequently enforced by local police and the court system. A Livable Streets ordinance requires city transportation staff to design and build streets according to specific instructions spelled out within the ordinance. This ordinance may include appointment of a Livable Streets citizens' advisory committee that can help staff review existing policies and plans for compliance with the new ordinance.

A Livable Streets resolution is a non-binding and unenforceable statement in favor of Livable Streets made by the city council. Although resolutions do not mandate city staff to change the way streets are designed or built, they send a strong signal and empower advocates to step up their efforts.



Persistence is Key in Passing Policy

Dawn Jordan, leader of the Walking School Bus Program for Caruthersville, has seen first-hand the need for safer sidewalks, especially for children walking to school. "Some of the sidewalks have trees that are uprooted and moving the sidewalk," said Jordan, "There are so many kids that are tripping on uneven sidewalks and some streets don't have sidewalks, so we have to walk into the streets to get to school."

Though it took one year to pass a Livable Streets policy, one was eventually approved in April 2017. Jordan noted her persistence with council members as playing a vital role in the policy passing.

"One of the council members said that it was because of my persistence that the ordinance was passed. I did not let a meeting go by that I wasn't there bringing up the issue. It may take awhile for it to be approved, but never give up."

Check out these resources (under the "Resources" section) for more information on being an effective advocate for Livable Streets!

Livable Streets Talking Points

Livable Streets Policy Case Study

Stakeholder Communication Materials

Sample Communication Materials for Media