

# MISSOURI COMPLETE STREETS

RURAL PERSPECTIVE

## COMPLETE STREETS

Rural Missouri is as diverse as America. With rates of poverty, health disparities and fatal car crashes often higher in rural areas, many small towns are stepping up to identify strategies to reverse trends and revitalize their communities.

**SMALL TOWNS ACROSS MISSOURI ARE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO PRESERVE THEIR CULTURE. FROM EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE FOOT TRAFFIC IN DOWNTOWN SHOPPING AREAS, TO CREATING ACTIVITY-FRIENDLY ROUTES SUCH AS RECREATIONAL TRAILS, COMPLETE STREETS FEATURES CAN HELP SUPPORT THESE GOALS.**



### COMPLETE STREETS IN RURAL AREAS

Complete Streets provide all people, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation, with safe and healthy travel options throughout their communities. Whether in a big city or a small town, residents need safe access to local resources and destinations, whether they're walking, biking, catching a bus or driving a car.

### SMALLER COMMUNITIES FACE UNIQUE TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

Major roads that bring traffic through town are key transportation routes and are important to the economic vitality of a community. However, these roads can also pose significant safety barriers for residents on foot or on bike. As these roads are often controlled by outside agencies, such as the State or County, a Complete Streets approach can empower municipalities to coordinate with agencies on new project designs that will ensure the local community is served in addition to its visitors.



For more information, visit [MOCompleteStreets.com](http://MOCompleteStreets.com)

## COMPLETE STREETS CAN ATTRACT YOUNG ADULTS TO SMALL TOWNS

Many young adults appreciate smaller town culture and want to settle in areas where they know their neighbors, their kids can safely walk to school, and they have easy access to outdoor recreation. Rural towns already have these assets and many are capitalizing on them by opening businesses for visitors who in turn put money back into the town for residents and visitors to use.



## COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES: A GAME CHANGER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

Having a Complete Streets policy in place can be an invaluable tool for communities planning for future growth. Grantors of community development and infrastructure grants like to see communities with an approved plan that supports development projects (i.e. sidewalks, cross walks, bike lanes, trails). Having a Complete Streets policy in place can help increase the community's chances of receiving funding for these projects.

## RURAL SUCCESSES

### CARUTHERSVILLE, MO

"We want to be able to redo the sidewalks and streets, but like a lot of rural communities, we do not have a budget for that. If you want grants to help with redevelopment, you have to have something in place to say that it is an important issue to your community— 'our streets are important and the sidewalks are important.' Now that [Complete] Streets has passed, we can say we have a [Complete] Streets Ordinance and we need help."

- Dawn Jordan, Caruthersville Healthy Communities Coordinator, Pemiscot County Initiative Network

### MCDONALD COUNTY, MO

McDonald County passed Complete Streets policies in four of its towns: Anderson, Pineville, Noel, and Southwest City. While passing these policies was a two year process, it's already at work across the county.

"Where do you want to see your community in 20 years? Do you want it to be abandoned, or do you want to improve it? That's where Complete Streets comes in. You want to prepare for the future growth of your community. People [and funders] want to see that you are doing things like Complete Streets policy because it all starts with policy. [Our goal] is to finish the walking trail that's in Anderson around our ball parks and then eventually build nice trails that connect Anderson to Pineville."

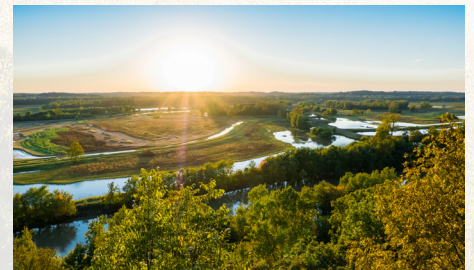
- Brandy Smith, Health Educator, McDonald County Health Department

### WARSAW, MO

Warsaw (population 2,127) has worked to integrate bicycling, walking, trails, parks, and components of a healthy lifestyle into its city and region-wide economic development plan. The city has developed a mountain bike park, a system of trails and bicycle routes in and around the city, an improved, walkable downtown area, a system of parks connected by trails, a beautiful riverfront harbor and park connected to downtown, and much more. The city has recently adopted an ambitious regional trails and bike-way plan. The Complete Streets Policy is an essential part of the city's planning to make the entire city and region walkable and bike friendly. The Complete Streets elements allow every neighborhood, school, and commercial area of the city to make the "last mile" connection to the city's trails and bike-ways system.

The result is that people can--and do--regularly bike to destinations around the city, including downtown, parks, and schools. People from all around the county and region come to Warsaw to use the trail and bike-way system.

- Written by Brent Hugh, Director, Missouri Bicycle and Pedestrian Federation



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